



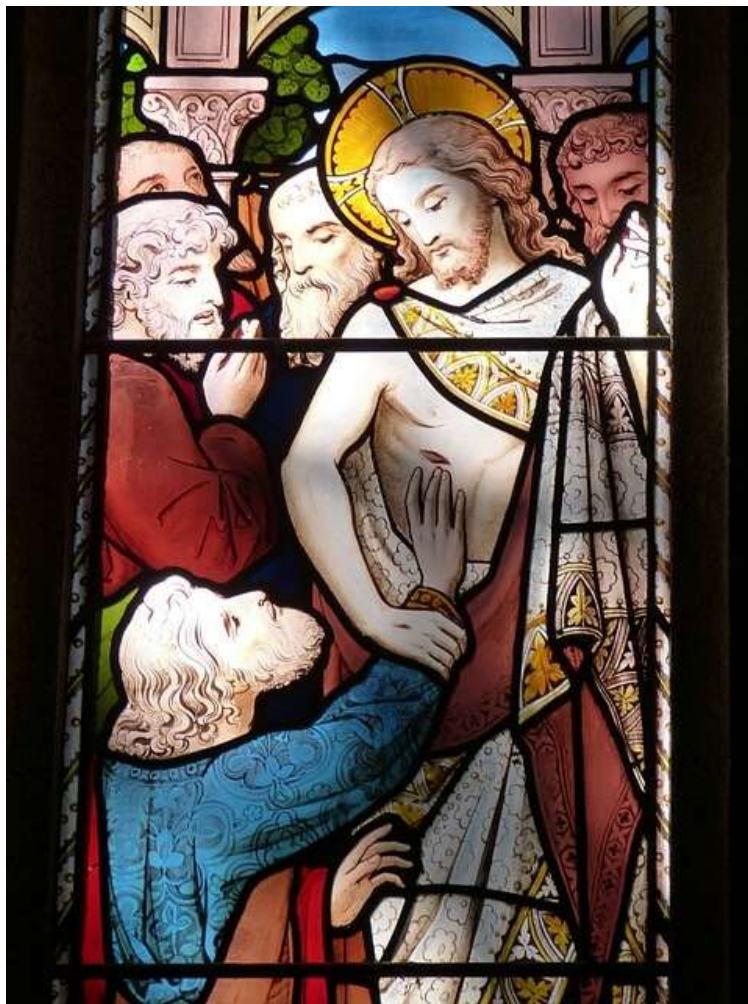
"A Community Of Many Faithing Communities Where All Belong!"

Living Waters Contemplative Life Center | Divine Intervention Ministry to the Homeless
Tippecanoe just.good.food Garden | Food Justice Site PCUSA
Arts and Science Literacy Camps for Children

Welcome To Worship

April 16, 2023

9:30 a.m.



Welcome to this time of being with God and each other.

"Belief and Disbelief, Partners on the Faith Journey" Betsy Gonwa

✧ **Prelude Zo Trembley**

✧ **Welcome and community news**

We invite you to attend our Congregational Meeting to elect new elders/deacons on Sunday, April 23rd right after worship. It will be a brief but important gathering and we ask that as many people attend as possible.

✧ **Readying Ourselves for Worship**

Surely God is in this place, Holy Ground!
Surely God is in this place,
Holy Ground!

✧ **A Reading as we Center Ourselves in this Moment**

The great flood of divine love never ceases.

It flows on and on without stopping.

It flows on and on effortlessly and sweetly and without failing until,
finally, our tiny vessel becomes full and spills over.

Yes, we will be filled to overflowing with love if we don't block it with our own sheer self-will.

If we don't stop grace with our stubbornness, our small vessel will always overflow with God's kindness.

~Mechtild of Maddeburg, (1208-1282), *The Flowing Light of the Godhead*

✧ **Becoming Present to God and Each Other - Our Check-in**

~ **The Joy of Passing the Peace** ~

✧ **Kid's Time**

✧ **Gathering as God's People: Doubt Has a Role in the Faith Journey**

My exciting discovery in the Gospel reading today was that Thomas was not the only one who doubted! All the disciples needed reassurance. It made it more universal somehow, knowing that Thomas wasn't the only one who doubted. It normalized it. As I considered all the implications, I came to believe not only that it's normal to doubt, but that it's necessary. Hence, today's theme: Doubt has a role in the Faith Journey. In looking for music and prayers, I realize that much of the time when we are praying and singing, we are asking God for help to shore up our faith, or even attempting to convince ourselves in a mind-over-matter sort of way that we need to believe in spite of whatever we are struggling with. My hope is that my reflection today will bring some balance to the image of what it means to be faithful. So, today I encourage you to invite your doubting self to come alongside the ideal believer within you and celebrate the "both and" of what it means to walk by faith.

✧ **Gathering Hymn: We Walk by Faith and Not by Sight, #817 (red hymnal)**

✧ **Opening Ourselves to God's Grace**

One: Teach me to trust the hope

ALL: that blooms inside the loss,

One: Teach me to trust the love

ALL: that's at the heart of fear—

One: Teach me to molt, to slough,

ALL: to shed, to doff

One: Teach me to meet the first light

ALL: and then let even that go.

Adapted from *When I Want to Hold On* by Rosemerry Wahtola Trommer

✧ **Sharing our Innermost Lives with God**

ALL: God, I don't want to live falsely, in self-imposed prisons and fixed, comfortable patterns that confine my Soul and diminish the Truth in me.

I want to let my soul out.

I want to risk what's true, to be myself.

Set free the daring in me ~ the willingness to go within, to see the self-lies.

I'll try to run away, but don't let me.

Don't let me stifle the creative revisioning of life and the journey toward wholeness.

I'm scared, God.

Make me brave.

Lead me into the enormous spaces of becoming.

Help me cease the small, tedious work of maintaining and protecting so that I can break the masks that obscure your face shining in my Soul.

Help me to risk becoming the person you created me to be.

I may regret these words, but for now I speak them, for I know that you're somewhere inside them, that you love me and won't leave me alone in their echo.

~From False to True Self Prayer by Sue Monk Kidd (When the Heart Waits)

✧ **Special Music Lord Take my Life** by Howard Hagashi, sung and played by Rosie Rain

✧ **Prayer of Intention**

Holy Spirit, may we hear your precious Word for us today. May we grow in wisdom, strength, and love as we open our ears, our minds, and our hearts to the transformative message you have in store for each of us. Amen.

✧ **Bible Wisdom Teaching Pat Bowne**

Psalm 16

Protect me, O God, for in you I take refuge.

I say to the LORD, "You are my Lord;

I have no good apart from you."

As for the holy ones in the land, they are the noble ones in whom is all my delight.

Those who choose another god multiply their sorrows;
their drink offerings of blood I will not pour out
or take their names upon my lips.

The LORD is my chosen portion and my cup;
you hold my lot.

The boundary lines have fallen for me in pleasant places;
I have a goodly heritage.

I bless the LORD, who gives me counsel;
in the night also my heart instructs me.

I keep the LORD always before me;
because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved.

Therefore my heart is glad, and my soul rejoices;
my body also rests secure.

For you do not give me up to Sheol
or let your faithful one see the Pit.

You show me the path of life.

In your presence there is fullness of joy;
in your right hand are pleasures forevermore.

John 20:19-31

When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors were locked where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you." When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained."

But Thomas (who was called the Twin), one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. So the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord." But he said to them, "Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands and put my finger in the mark of the nails and my hand in his side, I will not believe."

A week later his disciples were again in the house, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were shut, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here and see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it in my side. Do not doubt but believe." Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God!" Jesus said to him, "Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe."

Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples that are not written in this book. But these are written so that you may continue to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through believing you may have life in his name.

One: May we hear anew the origin stories of our faith and draw from the roots of our tradition.

All: Thanks be to our God.

✧ **Message *Belief and Disbelief, Partners on the Faith Journey***

✧ **Reflection Questions**

Recall a time in your life when your experience was incongruent with what you believed and you were unable to see what was right in front of you. Have you ever chosen to break the jar of your notion of God? Is there a part of you that you are afraid to bring out of hiding? Is there a part of you that you want to bring out of hiding?

✧ **Short period of silent reflection**

✧ **Sharing Our Wisdom**

✧ **Hymn Open Our Eyes Lord, #113 (purple hymnal)**

✧ **Community Prayers & the Pastoral Prayer**

The Lord's Prayer

**ALL: O most Compassionate Life-giver,
May we honor and praise you;
May we work with you to establish
your new order of justice peace and love;
Give us what we need for growth,
And help us, through forgiving others, to accept forgiveness.
Strengthen us in the time of testing, that we may resist all evil,
For all tenderness, strength and love are yours,
now and forever.
Amen.**

~Bill Wallace, Aotearoa/New Zealand

✧ **Benediction**

May we allow doubt to play its role in renewing our minds, so that we may continue to be transformed.

May we walk secure in the knowledge that you know our doubts and fears before we even voice them and are already present, ready and willing to reassure us.

When others need reassurance in times of doubt, may we be ready and willing to be present and listen, accepting them where they are just as you accepted Thomas.

Amen.

Now that the worship has ended, may the service truly begin.

✧ **Our Response:**

Holy One, now we your servants go in peace. Your Word lives on in us.

✧ **Postlude Zo Trembley**