



The United Church of Christ
of Annapolis

Sunday, March 23, 2025, 10:30am
Third Sunday in Lent
Amistad Sunday
Hybrid In-Person & Online Worship Service Order
YouTube LiveStream

Music: William Kelley
Liturgist: Gloria Paull
Preaching: Rev. Ellen Witko

SERVICE NOTES: "+" before a line is an invitation to rise as you are able.
Responses in BOLD are invitation for all to respond. Hymnals – Purple refers to Glory to God, the purple hymnal, Black refers to the black New Century Hymnal.

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE

+ CALL TO WORSHIP AND BRINGING THE LIGHT OF CHRIST

One: O God, you are our God;

**Many: our souls thirst for you,
as in a dry and weary land
where there is no water.**

One: We have looked upon you in the sanctuary;

Many: we have seen your power and glory.

One: Our lips will praise you as long as we live;

**Many: we lift up our hearts and call on your name.
Let us worship God!**

One: The peace of the Lord be always with you!

Many: And also with you.

— *Share a sign of peace with each other, by commenting on the livestream page, or send a text to someone, or shout "Peace!" to the world!*

+ GLORIA

Gloria, gloria, gloria: in excelsis Deo!

+ HYMN OF PRAISE "Surely, It Is God Who Saves Me" Purple #71

PRAYER OF INVOCATION

Benevolent God, even though we are sinners, you extend your steadfast love to us. You offer all that we need, that we may not hunger or thirst. Give us grateful hearts, that we may seek you with our lives. Make us alert, that we may listen for and hear your voice. We pray that in our seeking and our listening, you would make your thoughts our thoughts and your ways our ways. Amen.

Via Negativa

A time of letting go.

*Even our emptiness — the repressed, the evil, the nothingness —
is all redeemed and we can let go.*

TIME WITH YOUNG DISCIPLES

PRAYER JESUS TAUGHT US

PRAYER OF CONFESSION and ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Trusting in God's forgiveness,
let us in silence confess our failings
and acknowledge our part in the pain of the world.

{We hold silence}

Before God,
with the people of God,
I confess to turning away from God
in the ways I wound my life,
the lives of others
and the life of the world.

**May God forgive you, Christ renew you,
and the Spirit enable you to grow in love.**

Amen.

**Before God,
with the people of God,
we confess to turning away from God
in the ways we wound our lives,
the lives of others
and the life of the world.**

May God forgive you, Christ renew you,
and the Spirit enable you to grow in love. **Amen.**

Via Creativa

We are co-creators with God in the work of our time.

SCRIPTURE READING

Listen now, in the reading of Scripture,
for the word and wisdom of God.

We open our hearts to the word and wisdom of God.

Isaiah 55:1-9 *Contemporary English Version*

If you are thirsty, come and drink water!

If you don't have any money, come, eat what you want!

Drink wine and milk without paying a cent.

Why waste your money on what really isn't food?

Why work hard for something that doesn't satisfy?

Listen carefully to me,

and you will enjoy the very best foods.

Pay close attention! Come to me and live.

I will promise you the eternal love and loyalty

that I promised David.
I made him the leader and ruler of the nations;
he was my witness to them.
You will call out to nations you have never known.
And they have never known you,
but they will come running because I am the Holy One,
the holy God of Israel, and I have honored you.
Turn to the Holy One! God can still be found.
Call out to God! God is near.
Give up your evil ways and your evil thoughts.
Return to our God. God will be merciful and forgive your sins.

The Holy One says:
"My thoughts and my ways are not like yours.
Just as the heavens are higher than the earth,
my thoughts and my ways are higher than yours.

John 5:1-16 *Contemporary English Version*

Later, Jesus went to Jerusalem for another Jewish festival. In the city near the sheep gate was a pool with five porches, and its name in Hebrew was Bethzatha.

Many sick, blind, lame, and paralyzed people were lying close to the pool. Beside the pool was a man who had been sick for 38 years. When Jesus saw the man and realized that he had been crippled for a long time, he asked him, "Do you want to be healed?"

The man answered, "Sir, I don't have anyone to put me in the pool when the water is stirred up. I try to get in, but someone else always gets there first."

Jesus told him, "Pick up your mat and walk!" Right then the man was healed. He picked up his mat and started walking around. The day on which this happened was a Sabbath.

When the Jewish leaders saw the man carrying his mat, they said to him, "This is the Sabbath! No one is allowed to carry a mat on the Sabbath."

But he replied, "The man who healed me told me to pick up my mat and walk."
They asked him, "Who is this man that told you to pick up your mat and walk?"
But he did not know who Jesus was, and Jesus had left because of the crowd.

Later, Jesus met the man in the temple and told him, "You are now well. But don't sin anymore or something worse might happen to you." The man left and told the leaders that Jesus was the one who had healed him. They started making a lot of trouble for Jesus because he did things like this on the Sabbath.

For the Word of God in Scripture,
for the Word of God among us,
for the Word of God within us,
thanks be to God

SERMON "Do the Right Thing"

Rev. Ellen Witko

TIME OF SILENT REFLECTION

Via Transformativa

transforming passion for the world is borne of love. Having given praise, been reminded that we are loved, and participated in the building up of love together, we now prepare ourselves to be transformed by that love to do God's work in the world.

+ HYMN OF INCLUSION "The Church of Christ Cannot Be Bound" Purple #766

COLLECTION FOR THE WORK OF THE CHURCH IN THE WORLD

We are deeply appreciative to receive the offering for the life and work of this beloved community. To support the ongoing work of our church, we ask that you please continue to give via the offering plate, online at our website, use the QR code, or online at our website:



www.uccannapolis.org/giving

or

Text to Give: Text "Give \$25" to (410) 376-5446

Offertory – Solo by Soprano Kayla Currie "Wade in the Water"

+ DOXOLOGY AND PRAYER OF DEDICATION

***Praise God from whom all blessings flow,
Praise Christ all creatures here below;
Praise Holy Spirit evermore;
God in all three whom we adore. Amen***

UNISON PRAYER OF DEDICATION FOR THE OFFERING

You have shown us, O God, the sacrifice that you desire. Now use these gifts—and use our lives—to liberate the oppressed, to break the bonds of injustice, to feed the hungry, welcome the poor, and unite the human family; all in the name and for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

We share our prayers of hope and concern together.

We will conclude our prayers with:

***O Loving God, spirit of hope and peace,
lead us from death to life.***

Lead us from falsehood to truth.

Lead us from despair to hope, from fear to trust.

Lead us from hate to love, from war to peace.

Let peace fill our hearts, our world, our universe:

Peace ... Peace ... Peace,

CHORAL RESPONSE *John L. Bell*

Amen, Amen, Alleluia, Amen!

+ HYMN OF DEDICATION "Go, My Children, with My Blessing" Purple #547

BENEDICTION

May the grace of Jesus Christ,

**and the love of God,
and the companionship of the Holy Spirit,
be with us all evermore, Amen**

POSTLUDE

Permission to podcast/stream the music in this service, and to reprint it, obtained from One License with license #A-724119.

This Weeks Writing Prompt:

"What bad thing might happen to you or others that would allow you to not be fearful and give you courage to be willing to be arrested, put in jail, or die for?"

The United Church of Christ of Annapolis

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We give thanks to God that you could join us today!

Announcements and Upcoming Events:

New Members Sunday – Next Sunday, March 30, we will welcome new members into our community.

Bioretention Clean-out dates – More dates have been added to help with the clean-out of the bioretention area at the church. We will join with the watershed stewards to continue our clean up. March 28 8:00am – 10:00am

Pastor Hours: The pastor will observe days of rest on Tuesday and Friday. Appointments are available by contacting the pastor or the church office.

Home Communion: is available for those who are unable to attend church. Please contact pastor Ellen or the church office to make arrangements.

Sunday School: Sunday School is offered during worship for youth 11 years old and younger during the academic year. Please see Pastor Ellen or Ginger Glasser for more information.

Fellowship Following Services: Please join us after the 10:30 service for a cup and conversation! Third Sunday Potluck luncheons are back! On the third Sunday of each month please bring a dish to share and join us to for lunch and to celebrate birthdays of the month.

UCCA Choir: Come and sing with us! The UCCA Choir meets on Sunday mornings at 9:30am. If you are interested, please join us Sunday morning or contact Rev. Witko.

Pastoral Care: If you would like more information about pastoral care or arrange a meeting, please contact Rev. Ellen Witko at ellenwitko@att.net or (908)-425-6362.

Living the Questions Adult Study Group: The group meets on the first and third Thursday of every month at 10:30am. All are welcome. Meetings are currently online. For more information contact Kathy Walker.

Faith and Film: Meets on the last Thursday of the month at 6:00pm. March's movie is "Within Our Gates" March 27th at 6:00pm. Contact Lisa Clark at jjettxtc@aol.com for the zoom link

April Movie of the Month: April 6 we will have a FREE showing of "Tortured for Christ" (Rated PG-13) at 12:00pm in Caton Hall