



*An Open & Affirming Congregation of
the United Church of Christ*

14 April 2024 – 10:30 AM
THIRD SUNDAY OF EASTER

***indicates the congregation is invited to stand.
Please feel free to remain seated if you prefer.**

PRELUDE *The Kingdom of Heaven Is Like Unto Leaven* Solomon/Alm
JAZZ ON HIGH • Art Alm, piano; Pete Solomon, soprano sax

WELCOME The Rev. Matt Broadbent

*GATHERING SONG “Jubilate, servite” Songs & Prayers from Taizé

**Raise a song of gladness, peoples of the earth.
Christ has come, bringing peace, joy to ev’ry heart.
Alleluia, alleluia, joy to ev’ry heart!
Alleluia, alleluia, joy to ev’ry heart!**

*CALL TO WORSHIP Jim Weller, liturgist

One: Sometimes we don’t see the good that’s right in front of us.

All: Expectation of the worst can make us blind to the best.

One: Open your eyes this day to see the goodness of the Lord.

All: Open our hearts, gracious God, to receive your blessings.

One: Alleluia!

All: Alleluia!

*HYMN 309 [hymn sheet] *We Are Your People* (stanzas 1-4) WHITFIELD

*PRAYER IN THE SPIRIT OF JESUS

**Earth-Maker, Life-Giver, Pain-Bearer, Source of all that is and all that shall be,
Father and Mother of us all, Loving God in whom is Heaven:
May the hallowing of your name echo through the universe.
May your Heavenly will be done by all creatures great and small.
And may your commonwealth of peace and freedom sustain our hope and come on earth.
With the bread we need this day, feed us. For the hurt we inflict on one another, forgive us.
Through times of temptation, strengthen us. From trials too great to endure, spare us.
From the grip of all that is evil, free us. For you reign in the glory of the power that is Love.**

BIRTHDAY BLESSINGS

*GREETING OF PEACE

STEWARDSHIP WITNESS Lisa Hoelsing and Grant Erickson

ANTHEM *Top Seed* Solomon/Alm

The Parable of the Mustard Seed

31 He put before them another parable: 'The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that someone took and sowed in his field; ³²it is the smallest of all the seeds, but when it has grown it is the greatest of shrubs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches.'

The Parable of the Yeast

33 He told them another parable: 'The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and **hid** (κρύφτηκε) in with three measures of flour until all of it was leavened.'

SERMON

Parables: Who Knew?

The Rev. Dr. Susan Thistlethwaite

RESPONSE [seated]

WORLD PEACE PRAYER

**Lead us from death to life, from falsehood to truth,
from despair to hope, from fear to trust.
Lead us from hate to love, from war to peace;
Let peace fill our hearts, let peace fill our world, let peace fill our universe.**

PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH

OFFERTORY

Invitation

www.PeaceUnited.org/Giving

Offertory Music

In Giving We Receive

Solomon/Alm

*COVENANT

We covenant with God and with each other:**to walk together in all God's ways as the Holy is revealed to us;****to give ourselves freely and without reserve to Jesus' ministry in this church;****to celebrate through worship God's amazing gifts of unity and diversity;****to take up Christ's mission around the world, striving for justice and peace;****to care for the earth and all her creatures, reconciling ourselves to them in love;****for God gives immeasurable grace into all life and every life.**

*HYMN 30 [hymn sheet]

Colorful Creator

HOUGHTON

*BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

Alleluia

Solomon/Alm

Susan Thistlethwaite, our preacher this morning, joined as a member of Peace United Church of Christ in October 2023. She is professor emerita of theology at Chicago Theological Seminary where she taught from 1984 until retiring in 2019, and also served as president of the seminary, 1998-2008. An ordained minister of the United Church of Christ, she has been a media commentator and syndicated columnist, author or editor of numerous books, and a translator for two different translations of the Bible. Sue and her husband Richard make their home in Santa Cruz.