

“Every Scar Tells a Story”

Order of Worship

*Recorded for the Susquehanna Annual Conference
by Amy Wall, Shavertown United Methodist Church
Edited by Nan Boswell, Shavertown UMC*

Prelude “Oh, How I Love Jesus” **Peter Uritz, Dallas UMC**
Frederick Whitfield, 1855; public domain

Greeting **Lucy Obrzut, West Pittston UMC Youth**
Rev. Victoria Rebeck, Director Connecting Ministries
Susquehanna Conference

Pastor: Open your hearts, calm your thoughts, look toward the Lord.

People: **God is drawing near us.**

Pastor: Jesus invites us to bring to him our burdens, for he will give us rest.

People: **We go to Jesus, trusting in his love and renewed by his resurrection.**

Hymn of Praise “Ye Servants of God” (UM Hymnal, 181)
George Simmons, Organists Vocalists
Cindy Kennedy, Vocalist
from Elm Park UMC

Opening Prayer **Rev. Rebeck**

Our God, who sent Jesus to live, die, and rise among us, we humbly thank you for letting us share in Christ’s dying and rising. Jesus carried to the cross our wounds and pain with his own, and with him we are transformed and receive new life. Guide us to use that life in Christ to bring your grace, healing, and hope to others. In the name of the Risen Christ, we pray. **Amen.**

Sharing Christ’s Peace **Rev. Judy Walker**
Scranton/Wilkes-Barre District Superintendent

Even as we continue to rejoice in Jesus’s resurrection, we admit that we have sometimes failed to practice the compassion and humility that Christ taught us. We confess that we have not always loved God with our whole hearts, and we have rejected, overlooked, or condemned our neighbors. When we humbly ask God for forgiveness and vow to change, God compassionately hears us.

The good news is that Christ died for us while we were yet sinners. This proves God's love toward us. We are forgiven! Glory to God.

May Christ's peace embrace you, and may you share that peace and forgiveness with others.

Psalm 133

Lucy Obrzut

How very good and pleasant it is
when kindred live together in unity!

It is like the dew of Hermon,
which falls on the mountains of Zion.

It is like the precious oil on the head,
running down upon the beard,
on the beard of Aaron,
running down over the collar of his
robes.

For there the Lord ordained his blessing,
life forevermore.

This is God's Word.

Thanks be to God.

Musical Offering

"Jesus Paid It All"

Elbina M. Hall, 1865; public domain

**Matt Blom, Trumpet
and Peter Uritz, Piano, Dallas UMC**

Gospel

John 20:19-31

Rev. Rebeck

Listen to the Good News from the Gospel of John:

When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors of the house where the disciples had met were locked, 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, which are not written in this book. But these are written so that you may come to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through believing you may have life in his name.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

We praise you, Lord Jesus!

Sermon

“Every Scar Tells A Story”

Rev. Walker

Response to the Word “This Is a Day of New Beginnings” (UM Hymnal, 383)

**George Simmons, Organists Vocalists
Cindy Kennedy, Vocalist
from Elm Park UMC**

Prayers of the People

Matthew Oley, Shavertown UMC Youth

God of wonder and strength, as the sun breaks forth new life every morning, Jesus rose from the dead and renews our lives every day. Though we have been wounded in our bodies and in our hearts, through Christ you heal them into scars that testify to hope and transformation. Therefore, today we thank you for the good gifts of new life: the love of family and friends, and reconciliation among those who were estranged. For babies newly born and for those who now rest in the next life with you. For the awe-inspiring natural world that you created. For the ways that Christian disciples are quietly but persistently modeling your love, concern, and acceptance of those who feel most lost, lonely, and left out. For new opportunities to use our talents and gifts to contribute to the peaceable kingdom of your reign. For those you send us every day who need from us the love and welcome you give us.

God of eternity, the Easter story reminds us that you have never abandoned us. Though we bear the wounds of grief, fear, and alienation, you offer the balm of forgiveness and the embrace of grace. We pray for those who are hurting or anxious; those who are sick or in trouble; those who grieve; those who suffer from poverty, hunger, and homelessness; victims of physical and emotional violence; the world’s leaders and their responsibility to pursue peace and the common good; and the church’s leaders, that they would bring wisdom and calm in a time of transition and uncertainty. We humbly ask that you hear our spoken and unspoken concerns and joys, as we pray the prayer Jesus taught us, saying,

Our father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

Mission Moment**Lucy Obrzut**

This month, United Methodists across the nation are celebrating Native American Ministries Sunday. This churchwide special Sunday reminds us of the gifts and contributions that Native Americans make to our society. The special offering supports United Methodist ministries with Native Americans and scholarships for Native American seminarians.

Your generosity helps your church continue as a vital beacon of God's love to your surrounding community. It also helps others in our conference and around the world to experience and grow in God's grace. Indeed, we are not alone; we are better together.

I invite you to make a gift through your church to the Native American Ministries offering, in addition to supporting the important ministries of your church.

Hymn

"Sing with All the Saints in Glory" (UM Hymnal, 702)

George Simmons, Organists
Cindy Kennedy, Vocalist
from Elm Park UMC

Blessing**Rev. Walker**

May the love of God, who created us,
the peace of Jesus Christ, who heals us,
and strength of the Holy Spirit, who emboldens us to love others,
grant you faith, trust, and hope.

Sending Forth into Ministry**Rev. Rebeck**

Go now, as those who bear scars that tell a story,
to bring the story of God's love and healing to all you encounter.
Thanks be to God! Amen.