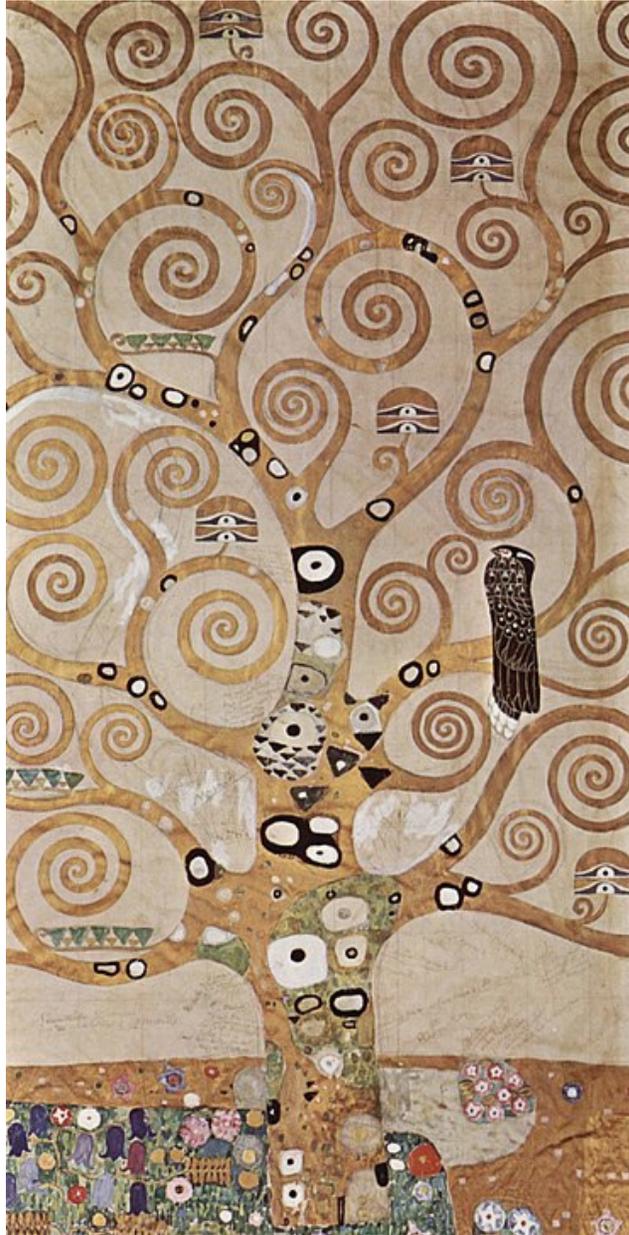


Countryside Community Church WORSHIP



The Tree of Life, Gustav Klimt, 1909

SECOND SUNDAY OF EASTER

April 7, 2024

Order of Worship Sunday April 7, 2024

† Indicates those places where those who are able are invited to stand.
Text in **bold** indicates places where the congregation is invited to join in response.

Gathering

PRELUDE

WELCOME

Rev. Dr. Jenny Shultz-Thomas

†**GATHERING SONG:** *Sing a New World Into Being*

†**CALL TO WORSHIP** (From Psalm 133)

Rev. Sarah Rentzel Jones

One: We have gathered from our different places to worship here.

Many: How good it is to worship together in unity!

One: We come from our different occupations, our diverse activities.

Many: How good it is to worship together in unity!

One: We come as unique individuals, bound together in the love of Christ.

Many: How good it is to worship together in unity!

†**PASSING THE PEACE**

One: The Peace of God be With You

Many: And also with you.

†**HYMN OF RESPONSE:**

All Are Welcome (vs. 1)

Hearing the Word

CHILDREN'S CHURCH

(Children are invited to join Children's Church in the Chapel))

FIRST LESSON: 1 John 1:1-2:2

Reader: Kathy Menke

We declare to you what was from the beginning, what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we have looked at and touched with our hands, concerning the word of life— this life was revealed, and we have seen it and testify to it, and declare to you the eternal life that was with the Father and was revealed to us— we declare to you what we have seen and heard so that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ. We are writing these things so that our joy may be complete.

This is the message we have heard from him and proclaim to you, that God is light and in him there is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with him while we are walking in darkness, we lie and do not do what is true; but if we walk in the light as he himself is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin.

If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he who is faithful and just will forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.

My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and he is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world.

SECOND LESSON: John 20:19-31

Rev. Dr. Jenny Shultz-Thomas

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 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, 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.

MESSAGE*Awaken to Joy*

Rev. Dr. Jenny Shultz-Thomas

Responding to the Word

PASTORAL PRAYER & THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

A TIME FOR COMMUNITY

Rev. Sarah Rentzel Jones

SHARING OUR GIFTS

The Social Justice and Outreach Board has designated Omaha For Us LGBTQ+ Center as the recipient of the April Box donations.

PRAYER OF DEDICATION (unison)

God of the Resurrection, help us use these gifts to offer hope where there is sorrow, peace where there is chaos and love where there is fear. We can do incredible things because your Spirit lives within us. Amen.

COMMUNION HYMN

As We Gather at Your Table

SERVICE OF COMMUNION

Rev. Sarah Rentzel Jones

Invitation to the Table

One: The Lord be with you.

Many: And also with you.

One: Lift up your hearts.

Many: We lift them to God.

One: Let us give thanks to the God of love.

Many: It is right to give our thanks and praise.

Words of Remembrance

As you are able, please come forward to receive the bread and cup. If you prefer to take communion in your seat, raise your hand and a server will bring the elements to you. At Countryside, we serve gluten-free bread and non-alcoholic grape juice to support a diversity of needs. Communion cups may be discarded in the basket as you leave the sanctuary.

Music Reflection

Prayer of Thanksgiving

Thank you, God, for renewing us at your table by the presence of our Christ. Thank you for your eternal love, the Bread of Life, that sustains all creation. May you continue to love us in our faithful acts and by that love discourage us from our unfaithful acts, that we might rejoice as your servants to the world. Amen.

†SENDING HYMN

Startle Us With Joy

†BENEDICTION

Countryside Blessing

POSTLUDE:

Joy Spring

Clifford Brown

Matt Wallace, sax - Rick Avard, piano Alex Ritter, organ
Carlos Figueroa, drums - Steve Gomez, bass

Music Notes

John Coltrane became deeply spiritual after overcoming a battle with addiction. A universalist full of intellectual curiosity, he was influenced by the Muslim faith of his first wife and interest in Buddhism and Hinduism of his second wife who would go on to start an Ashram. This spirituality was borne out in his music, from his masterpiece *A Love Supreme*, to more serene meditative compositions, like *Dear Lord*. Asked frequently by interviewers which god or gods he was referring to, he would answer “any and all.” Wynton Marsalis notes that *Dear Lord* is Coltrane’s “meditation on the profundity of creation. It’s an encompassing kind of divine love, and the song has a healing quality... a serene spiritual ballad that’s also intense and highly optimistic.”

Cover Art Notes

The Tree of Life by Gustav Klimt symbolizes renewal, growth and the promise of new life. Its vibrant colors and intricate design beautifully reflect the themes of resurrection and hope celebrated during Easter. In *The Tree of Life*, Klimt intertwines symbolism with mesmerizing visual elements. The tree, with its sinuous branches adorned in shimmering gold and vibrant colors, serves as a powerful metaphor for spiritual interconnectedness and the cyclical nature of life. His fusion of geometric patterns and organic forms creates a sense of unity and harmony, mirroring the divine order of creation. As you gaze upon this evocative artwork, you’re invited to contemplate the mysteries of existence and the eternal cycle of birth, death and rebirth, resonating deeply with the profound themes of redemption and transformation central to the Easter season.

Joys & Concerns

Join us as we pray for our congregation members and their loved ones who are on our Joys and Concerns list every week on Thursdays at 9 a.m. in the Sanctuary. If you have someone who would benefit from prayer, want to share a joy or be included on the bulletin list and /or on Countryside's Prayer Chain, contact Rev. Sarah Rentzel Jones at 402-391-0350, ext. 225 or sarahrj@countrysideucc.org

CONCERNS

Jan and Mike Brown appreciate all who have been keeping them in prayer. Jan shares that all their test results over the past week have been good and Jan has been released from her oncologist's care. Mike continues to do well with his clinical trial medication and monthly myeloma labs. Thank you, everyone, for your love, support and prayers for them. It means so much to Jan and Mike.

Please keep **Bob (Trish) Newell** in your prayers as Bob begins chemotherapy to prepare for surgery to treat a sinus tumor. Thank you for your prayerful support of them both.



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