

**CELEBRATION AND WORSHIP**  
**4<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY OF EASTER** **APRIL 24 2021**

**GATHERING MUSIC AND WORDS OF WELCOME**

*Thank you for masking and continuing to keep distance.*

**PRELUDE AND BRINGING IN THE LIGHT**

**TO WORSHIP**

We gather together to worship God, the one who has created us, who sustains us, who redeems us, who walks beside us in good times and bad, and who calls us to follow.

**This is our God! Let's worship God together!**

**HYMN OF CELEBRATION**      *The Gift of Love* #408

**OPENING PRAYER OF CONFESSION AND ASSURANCE OF PARDON**

O God who labors without ceasing, to bring all people into wholeness and into oneness with you, we confess our reluctance to live in unity with all your people. Help us to overcome the scandal of our pride – the pride of race, creed, class, and color – that your church might be a worthy witness to your good news of love and forgiveness, through Jesus Christ, our risen Head.<sup>1</sup>      *time of silent prayers*

God is compassionate and does not deal with us according to our sins, but casts them as far as far away from us as the east is from the west. Free of the mistakes of the past, we can begin again. **Thanks be to God!**

**TIME WITH THE YOUNGER DISCIPLES**

**SCRIPTURES FOR TODAY**      1 John 3:16-24

**MORNING REFLECTION**      *Blanket the World with Love*

**HYMN OF DEDICATION**      *God, You Wrap Your Love Around Us*<sup>2</sup>      Tune *What a Friend We Have in Jesus*

God, you wrap your love around us, like a blanket, soft and warm.  
You give rest when we are weary, you protect us from the storm.  
May each person who finds shelter in these blankets that we share  
Also feel the joy and comfort of your love's protecting care.

May the women, men and children fleeing danger every day  
Know, through us, your living presence; you walk with them on their way.  
Spirit, as you give them comfort, teach us here to freely give;  
May we blanket this world over with your love, so all may live.

## LITANY OF BLESSING AND DEDICATION<sup>3</sup>

Let us pray. God of great love who taught us all compassion, we continue to share the blessings that we have received from you with our neighbors.

### **Who are our neighbors?**

A mother sheltering her children from the cold. A family looking for a new home.

A homeless person living on the streets. May we recognize them as God's children.

### **How will these blankets help?**

The blankets we bless today represent our compassion for our brothers and sisters.

With the blankets we send our love and our witness to the presence of God's divine nature in our world.

### **We bear witness. We send our love.**

We first received this love from God and pray that these blankets and our tithes and offerings will be vehicles for sharing God's grace will spread far and wide.

### **This is our prayer.**

May we be so bound in love with those for whom we pray that we may feel their needs as acutely as our own. Open our hearts, Lord, that we may continue to respond with understanding and imagination. This we ask in Christ's name. **Amen**

## LORD'S PRAYER

## HYMN OF SENDING

*Bind Us Together*

#2226

## BENEDICTION AND BLESSING

## POSTLUDE

<sup>1</sup> Ruth Duck

<sup>2</sup> Carolyn Winfrey Gillette

<sup>3</sup>Church World Service

ccli#2736278

Next **Sunday, May 2**, we will recognize those with 50+ consecutive years membership here @ EGUMC, especially those with 75+ years

Confirmation will be **Sunday, May 9**.

## **The Gift of Love**

Though I may speak with bravest fire,  
And have the gift to all inspire,  
And have not love, my words are vain,  
As sounding brass, and hopeless gain.

Though I may give all I possess,  
And striving so my love profess,  
But not be given by love within,  
The profit soon turns strangely thin.

Come, Spirit, come, our hearts control,  
Our spirits long to be made whole.  
Let inward love guide every deed;  
By this we worship, and are freed.

## **Bind Us Together**

Bind us together, Lord  
Bind us together  
With cords that cannot be broken  
Bind us together, Lord  
Bind us together  
Bind us together in Love

There is only one God,  
There is only one King  
There is only one Body,  
That is why we sing.