



Community UCC, 805 South 6<sup>th</sup> Street, Champaign, IL 61820

Worship for Ordinary Time 20A Unraveled 9: Doubting Thomas When the Unimaginable Has Happened

Live Stream Service

August 16, 2020



# Community UCC

*We're worth our words*  
Welcoming Progressive Community  
*Vibrant Messengers of Hope*



Champaign, Illinois *Worship for Ordinary Time 20A Unraveled 9: Doubting Thomas When the Unimaginable Has Happened* Aug. 16, 2020  
Thoughts before Worship:

“It seems you found the way, Thomas, but really, you knew it all along. You knew the way was not a roadmap. You knew the way was not a claim meant to exclude others. You knew the way was not that which you could use to reject others. Instead you knew the way was being in the presence of your Lord and God—and that’s all you wanted. You wanted what Jesus said you know. You asked for what Jesus said you should. You needed what Jesus said is yours—always. And in that moment you saw Jesus as your Lord and as your God. Wow. Thank you, Thomas, for your courage to ask.”

—Karoline Lewis. “The Courage to Ask.” Published on Working Preacher. April 5, 2015.

## Welcome and a Word About Worship

Rev. Leah Robberts-Mosser

Our summer worship series from *A Sanctified Art*, called, “Unraveled: Seeking God When Our Plans Fall Apart,” enters its last few weeks today as we read from the gospel of John as we hear the post-resurrection story of Thomas and his doubt. Sometimes unraveling leads us to our deepest pain. Jesus dies, leaving Thomas and the rest of the disciples alone. Thomas isolates himself from the disciples, perhaps plunged deep into despair and grief. After all of his worst fears have finally come true, Thomas is too blinded by hopelessness to believe in Jesus’ return. Yet, his despair unravels when he touches Jesus’ wounds. His doubt unravels, and he can finally see. He can finally believe in God’s presence after death. Why do we stay wrapped up in our doubt, and how does it unravel into new life? That’s what we’re exploring today. Let’s settle ourselves down and begin.

## Gathering Music

*Faith*

Brian Clark

Music Composer: Michael Finlinson Moody, arr. Laurel Hunt Pedersen

<http://laurelhuntpedersen.com/piano-music/piano-preludes/Free Piano and Organ Sheet Music>

## Call to Worship

Stephen Kolderup

So much in life is unpredictable. Life begins and ends. The weather changes. Love surprises us. Doors close. Others open. Life is unpredictable, but what we can count on is finding God in this space; For this is God’s house, and all are welcome. So bring your questions and concerns, your doubts and wonderings, for in the midst of this unpredictable life, we can predict this: Love lives here. Let us worship God.

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*We welcome you to our service this morning. Celebrating the diversity of creation, Community United Church welcomes persons of any age, ability, race, gender identity, sexual orientation, or life condition. May the Divine Presence become real to you through this time of worship. We hope you come back!*

*These things did Thomas count as real: the warmth of blood, the chill of steel,  
The grain of wood, the heft of stone, the last frail twitch of flesh and bone.*

*The vision of his skeptic mind was keen enough to make him blind  
To any unexpected act too large for his small world of fact.*

*May we, O God, by grace believe and thus the risen Christ receive,  
Whose raw, imprinted palms reach out and beckoned Thomas from his doubt.*

**Call to Confession**

Rev. Leah Robberts-Mosser

**Prayer of Confession**

Rev. Leah Robberts-Mosser

Gracious God, You ask us to follow you, and we respond with logistical questions—

**And the people ask, “How long? Where to? Will we return?”**

God, You ask us to love each other,

**Yet, we respond with excuses, “I don’t know how. We don’t see eye to eye.”**

You ask us to dream and we get stuck in our own heads—

**“Change will never come. Is it worth it?” we say.**

You ask us to believe.

**Like Thomas, we ask for proof, “Unless I see the nails in his hands, I cannot believe.”**

Oh God, forgive us for our small-minded ways.

**Open our eyes as you open our hearts.**

Unravel our doubt. Unravel our unbelief.

**Lead us to rest in you. Gratefully we pray, Amen.**

**Assurance of Pardon**

Rev. Leah Robberts-Mosser

**Children’s Moment and Back to School Blessing**

Rev. Leah Robberts-Mosser and  
Julie McClure, Jessica Smiley

**Prelude to Scripture**

Stephen Kolderup

Whether we take what is written in the Bible as fact, metaphor, myth, or story, let us listen now to the meaning they might hold for us on this day.

**Sacred Reading from the Gospel**

John 20:19-29

<sup>19</sup> 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.’ <sup>20</sup>After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. <sup>21</sup>Jesus said to them again, ‘Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you.’ <sup>22</sup>When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, ‘Receive the Holy Spirit. <sup>23</sup>If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained.’

<sup>24</sup> But Thomas (who was called the Twin), one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. <sup>25</sup>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.'

<sup>26</sup> 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.' <sup>27</sup>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.' <sup>28</sup>Thomas answered him, 'My Lord and my God!' <sup>29</sup>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.'

### **Postlude to Scripture**

Together, let us say:

**May the Spirit bless us with wisdom and wonder as we ponder the meaning of these words for our lives.**

### **Hymn of Reflection**

*Why Must Doubt Be Such A Bad Thing*

Stephen M. Fearing for Unraveled

Led by Jessica Harms

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*Why must doubt be such a bad thing? Why must Thomas be so shamed?  
Through his trauma he was kept from seeing what his friends had claimed.  
He was in the depths of grieving, stuck in his own deathly tomb.  
In his sorrow Thomas left them, soon his hidden hope would bloom.*

*Jesus came to see the others in a household locked in fear;  
showed his arms, his hands, his body, all the scars caused by the spear.  
Jesus breathed the Spirit on them, passed the peace they longed to know.  
On their knees they worshiped Jesus, praised his name, their hearts aglow.*

*Thomas came and soon rejoined them, then they said "we've seen the Lord!"  
But his eyes demanded seeing Jesus' flesh pierced by the sword.  
Jesus came and greeted Thomas, showed him he was no facade.  
Kneeling down and filled with wonder, Thomas said, "My Lord, My God!"*

*Why must doubt be such a bad thing - seeking what we do not know?  
It can help us journey forward; after all, it's how we grow!  
Faith is found in doubtful moments, times when we cannot believe.  
Christ will find us all regardless, more than we could e'er conceive!*

### **Message**

*Unraveling Doubt*

Rev. Leah Robberts-Mosser

### **Call to Offering and Call for Prayer Requests**

Stephen Kolderup

All that we have and all that we are belongs to God – it is hard to see that, sometimes, especially when life is challenging. Thomas reminds us of that. But, Thomas' story also reminds us that Christ continually shows up and invites us to see the world from the viewpoint of resurrection. When we seek to follow, the Spirit moves among us, and transforms our efforts into gifts of grace and mercy for a broken and hurting world. In gratitude for all God has first given to us, we offer our gifts, and we ask God to use them to make the kin-dom manifest among us, even here and even

now. As we offer them, bless us, we ask, O God, with your love, your power, and your grace. If you have finances to share, go to <https://community-ucc.org/> and click “Donate” so that the ministry of this Community of faith might continue. Thank you to everyone who is supporting this ministry through your financial support, your time, your talents, and even your presence – we dedicate these things to God. Thank you for being part of this community of faith.

*(Prayer requests may be submitted by using the Chat Button on Zoom and Commenting on Facebook. These requests will be voiced by the Pastor during the Prayers of the People following the Offertory.)*

## Offertory

*Ubi Caritas*

Performed by Kings Return

Permission granted by Kings Return to use this video

Music by Ola Gjeilo

## Sharing our Prayer Requests

- Jubilee Café Guests
- Violence against our black and brown siblings
  - Tiffany Harris
  - Queasha D. Hardy
  - Brittany Gilliam and family
  - Djibril & Adja Diol and 3-year-old daughter Kadida
  - Hassan Diol and infant daughter Hawa Beye
  - Jeffery Ryan
  - Aja Raquell Rhone Spears aka Rocky Rhone
- Residual trauma all black and brown people experience every time there is trauma against black and brown people in this country.
- People of our country

## Prayers of the People

Rev. Leah Robberts-Mosser

## Commissioning of the Community

Rev. Leah Robberts-Mosser

## Closing Hymn

*God's Eye Is on the Sparrow*

NCH 475

Led by Jennifer Kew and Kathy Lee

Civilla D. Martin, Charles H. Gabriel

*Why should I feel discouraged, why should the shadows come,  
Why should my heart be lonely, and long for heaven and home,  
When God is ever my portion? My constant friend will be:  
God's eye is on the sparrow, and I know God watches me;  
God's eye is on the sparrow, and I know God watches me.*

### *Refrain*

*I sing because I'm happy,  
I sing because I'm free,  
God's eye is on the sparrow,  
And I know God watches me.*

*"Let not your heart be troubled," whenever clouds arise,  
 And resting on God's goodness, I lose my doubts and fears;  
 Though by the path God leads, but one step I may see;  
 God's eye is on the sparrow, and I know God watches me;  
 God's eye is on the sparrow, and I know God watches me.*

*Whenever I am tempted, whenever clouds arise,  
 When songs give place to sighing, when hope within me dies,  
 I draw the close to my Savior, from care I am set free;  
 God's eye is on the sparrow, and I know God watches me;  
 God's eye is on the sparrow, and I know God watches me.*

**Blessing and Benediction**

Rev. Leah Robberts-Mosser

**Believe It or Not!**

But he said to them, "Unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe it." John 20:25

Based on John 20:19-31 (NIV)



Y J M N P S M B J D J Y D J S  
 C X I T A T F M L H O Y W A X  
 W X R K N Y G X P O F O M E D  
 X M A D V Y G E A X C O R E H  
 R X C C J V D R L X H K V S A  
 T L L U V E D A E T N E E D M  
 T K E S H E H I R C I N S D S  
 O X S C W B A S S L O C Y N T  
 G R U O L K N Z E C L R G D N  
 E O H D Q Z D B H J I I D E P  
 T S I U J J S A S R S P F E Z  
 H N T F E K D P I A M I L B D  
 E T W U S N K D D U L G E E E  
 R S R N U K P S E S L V H N S  
 R P T V S V D O U B T I N G B

JESUS	TOGETHER	DOUBTING	RECORDED
MIRACLES	SIGNS	SHOWED	BELIEVED
DOORS	LIFE	HANDS	DISCIPLES
TOUCHED	THOMAS	SIDE	LOCKED

## Serving Today

**Ministers:** The Community of Community UCC

**Preacher:** Rev. Leah Robberts-Mosser

**Liturgist:** Stephen Kolderup

**Organist:** Brian Clark

**Director of Music Ministry:** Kathy Lee

**Audio/Video:** Director of Campus Ministry, Rev Nate Brantingham

**Audio/Video:** Andy Contreras, Andrew Gupta

**Zoom Room Greeter:** Kent Henkel

### CUCC Staff

<b>Pastor:</b> Rev. Leah Robberts-Mosser leah@community-ucc.org	<b>Parish Associate:</b> Rev. Connie Bandy   connie@community-ucc.org
<b>Director of Youth Ministries:</b> Jessica Smiley   jessica@community-ucc.org	<b>Director of Music Ministries:</b> Kathy Lee   music@community-ucc.org
<b>Childcare Coordinator:</b> Courtney Hayman   childcare@community-ucc.org	<b>Organist:</b> Brian Clark
<b>Commissioned Minister of Congregational Health:</b> Linda Morgan   lindamorgan@sbcglobal.net	<b>Office Manager:</b> Carla Rush   info@community-ucc.org

### Your Ministry Team Leaders

<b>-Community Building:</b> Peg Wade and Randy Musser	<b>-Usher Coordinator:</b>
<b>-Care Team:</b> Jeff & Tina Stovall	<b>-Sound Coordinator:</b> Roger Wade
<b>-Prayer Shawls:</b> Elena Kasper	<b>-Clerk:</b> Shane Brownfield
<b>-Meal Train:</b> Jennifer Robbennolt	<b>-Moderator:</b> Jon Ebel
<b>-Driver's Ministry:</b> Becky Sheridan and John Osborne	<b>Past Moderator:</b> John Murphy
<b>-Card Ministry:</b> Peg Wade	<b>-Incoming Moderator:</b> Elizabeth Shack
<b>-Healing Music Ministry:</b> Marilou Hinrichs	<b>-UCC Campus Ministry Liaison:</b> Ilsa Kantola
<b>-Health and Wellness Team:</b> Doug Irwin	<b>-Pastoral Relations:</b> Cara Finnegan
<b>-Finance:</b> Roger Wade (treasurer), David Willcox (financial secretary)	<b>-Personnel Committee:</b> Anna Barnes
<b>-Mission:</b> Nancy Smith and Ramona Oswald	<b>-Sound &amp; Ethical Practices (SEP):</b> Grant Robbennolt and Kyle Mahannah
<b>-Identity:</b> Keri Evans and (pending)	<b>-Buildings &amp; Grounds:</b> Tom Ward and Matthew Hart
<b>-Children &amp; Family:</b> Julie McClure and (pending)	<b>-Contracts &amp; Insurance:</b> (pending)
<b>-Worship:</b> Chase Skye and Susan Pawlicki	

### United Church Foundation (UCC Campus Ministry)

**Director of Campus Ministry:** Nate Brantingham (nate@ucccampusministry.org)

<http://community-ucc.org/campus-ministry/>

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ELEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER  
PENTECOST

August 16, 2020

Genesis 45:1-15

**Bold Moves**

Holy God,  
We know that union with all people is your will for us.  
Hear our prayer for re-union.

We pray for re-union across class and economics.  
Grant to those who have abundance  
the wisdom and courage to share  
in order to strengthen those who have less.  
Grant to those who live in scarcity,  
the strength to organize and speak.  
Hear our prayer for re-union.

We pray for re-union across national borders.  
Where we have erected walls,  
and made political division more important  
than human rights, heal us we pray.  
Help us to remember that all people,  
no matter the color of their skin  
or the language they speak  
or the opportunities into which they were born,  
are your beloved children.  
Hear our prayer for re-union.

We pray for re-union among families.  
Heal us, we pray, so that we not  
Pass the sins of our fathers and mothers  
Forward to the next generation.  
Send your healing love like a balm  
on those families separated  
by violence or misunderstanding.  
In your name, we pray, Amen.



8 1/2" x 14" UCC SUNDAY BULLETIN SERVICE

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