

The Gospel According to Elton John





CORAL GABLES CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

AN OPEN AND AFFIRMING, JUST PEACE, W.I.S.E. & SANCTUARY CHURCH OF THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

WELCOME TO WORSHIP!

Our Faith is over 2000 years old. Our thinking is not.



We invite you to be a part of our community of faith,
to be blessed by God's grace in our midst.

We invite you to grow spiritually and to find welcome at God's table.

Our vision is to be an inclusive, vibrant, alive, witnessing community of faith.

We are the people of South Florida, a diverse, culturally rich, and intriguing community.

We are young and old, economically fortunate and economically struggling,

Hispanic and African-American, gay and straight;

we are native Miamians and transplants from around the globe.

No matter who you are or where you are on your life journey,
you are welcome in this United Church of Christ congregation.

CCLI License # 11282912



3010 De Soto Boulevard ~ Coral Gables, Florida 33134
305.448.7421 ~ www.gablesucc.org

WE BELIEVE GOD CAN BLOW THE LID OFF ANY BOX AND TURN IT INTO A DANCE FLOOR. WE ARE OUT OF THE BOX PEOPLE.

April 19, 2020

ORDER OF WORSHIP
Our faith is over 2000 years old
Our thinking is not.

11:00 a.m.

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ELTON JOHN

The great thing about rock and roll is that someone like me can be a star.

~Elton John

MANY THANKS TO OUR MUSICIANS THIS MORNING:

Filex Gomez, piano; PJ Avilés, vocals and guitar;
Dorian Reyes, musical director, percussion and vocals

GATHERING MUSIC

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Rev. Megan Smith

*Please check in on Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat or Twitter and
let your family and friends know that you are worshipping with us at
Coral Gables Congregational UCC.*

*Invite your family and friends around the world to worship with us online
each Sunday at 11:00 a.m. at gablesucc.org/live.*

Be sure to “like” us at [facebook.com/gablesucc.org](https://www.facebook.com/gablesucc.org).

THE EASTER GOSPEL CONTINUES...

The Rev. Aaron Lauer

John 20:19-31

Later on that day, the disciples had gathered together, but, fearful, had locked all the doors in the house. Jesus entered, stood among them, and said, “Peace to you.” Then he showed them his hands and side.

The disciples, seeing the Master with their own eyes, were exuberant. Jesus repeated his greeting: “Peace to you. Just as the Father sent me, I send you.” Then he took a deep breath and breathed into them. “Receive the Holy Spirit,” he said. “If you forgive someone’s sins, they’re gone for good. If you don’t forgive sins, what are you going to do with them?”

But Thomas, sometimes called the Twin, one of the Twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. The other disciples told him, “We saw the Master.” But he said, “Unless I see the nail holes in his hands, put my finger in the nail holes, and stick my hand in his side, I won’t believe it.”

Eight days later, his disciples were again in the room. This time Thomas was with them. Jesus came through the locked doors, stood among them, and said, “Peace to you.” Then he focused his attention on Thomas. “Take your finger and examine my hands. Take your hand and stick it in my side. Don’t be unbelieving. Believe.”

Thomas said, “My Master! My God!”

Jesus said, “So, you believe because you’ve seen with your own eyes. Even better blessings are in store for those who believe without seeing.”

Friends, listen. God is still speaking.

Thanks be to God!

OPENING SONG*I'm Still Standing*

Elton John & Bernie Taupin

WORDS OF COMMITMENT

One: This day the living Christ stands in our midst
and we, like those early disciples,
choose whether to believe with our hearts
or only with our eyes.
Faith demands choice.
By the grace of God, we can choose.

May we choose to believe
that light is better than darkness,
sharing is better than hoarding,
truth is better than deceit,
mercy is better than revenge,
love is better than indifference,
God is stronger than chaos,
and that Christ still stands among us
whenever we reach out to our neighbor in love.

We choose to have faith in the God who is love
and choice will verify itself on the long and narrow road of life.
By grace, we choose to believe.
Thanks be to God!

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father (Creator), 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 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.

OFFERING THE PEACE

One: "Jesus says to his disciples, "Peace I leave with you, my own peace I give to
you." May this day bring peace to our hearts, peace among our family and friends,
peace in our community and our nation, and peace throughout the wider world.
May it indeed be so.

ALL: Amen.

MUSICAL REFLECTION*Someone Saved My Life*

Walter Jackson

SPOKEN REFLECTION

The Rev. Dr. Laurinda Hafner

MUSICAL RESPONSE*Don't Let the Sun Go Down on Me*

Elton John & Bernie Taupin

THE MORNING PRAYERS

*At this time, you are invited to text your prayer requests to Pastor Laurie at 305.968.6482
or email her at 3059686482@vtext.com.*

MUSICAL RESPONSE

Candle in the Wind

Elton John & Bernie Taupin

THE RECEIVING OF OUR MORNING OFFERING

Please know that your financial support of the church does great things not only within these walls but far beyond. If you wish to give on your mobile device today, please text "GABLESUCC" to 77977 or go to our church app.

OFFERTORY MUSIC

Rocket Man

Elton John & Bernie Taupin

THE PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

ALL: **Gracious and holy God,
accept what we offer today:
our treasure, our time,
our faltering steps, our gratitude,
our brokenness, our leftovers,
our hope, our risking, our lives.
Bless and transform all that we offer
and all that we hold back,
that new life may be ours,
to celebrate and share in Jesus' name. Amen**

CLOSING SONG

Your Song

Elton John & Bernie Taupin

THE BENEDICTION

*POSTLUDE

I'm Still Standing (Reprise)

Elton John & Bernie Taupin

*Following the service, please join us for our weekly Connection Café at 12:15 p.m.
Come, enjoy some conversation with the pastors and the chance to connect with others.*

Give us a few moments after worship to set up and then you can join us from the livestream page on our website or on our Facebook page. Please note: The Connection Café will be a new video, so you may have to refresh your page to be able to see it. If there is no new video, we have not yet started the new livestream.

You will be able to comment on the new Facebook video to let us know that you are here, or, on the website, send Elena a chat message or write in the chatbox under the video. We look forward to connecting with you.

Visitors, we would LOVE to have you join us!



A WARM AND CORDIAL WELCOME TO ALL GUESTS!

If you are visiting us today, we welcome you. We are grateful we have found each other. And, if somehow, there is something in you, some still small voice seeking a place to live out your faith, to ask important questions and to serve beyond yourself, we invite you into our community. For more information about the church, please contact Pastor Laurie at 305.448.7421, ext. 116 or LaurieH@gablesucc.org.

Invite your family and friends around the world to worship with us online today and each Sunday at gablesucc.org/live.

IN OUR PRAYERS

We remember all those places of war, violence and unrest, as we continue to pray for peace for all people around the world. Today's prayers especially include our global community as well as our own nation and city as all encounter the coronavirus. A lighted candle on the altar symbolizes our prayers for peace, healing, compassion, and unity.

STAY IN TOUCH

Once a week or so, Pastor Laurie emails a pastoral letter, *Laurie's Lines*, to all members and friends, filling them in on the week's events, any special concerns that have arisen, and general church business. If you would like to be included, contact Drew at DrewS@gablesucc.org.

PLEASE NOTE: THE CHURCH IS CLOSED THIS WEEK AND ALL PUBLIC INDOOR EVENTS, PROGRAMS, AND WORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES HAVE BEEN CANCELLED OR MOVED ONLINE.

Be sure to join us through our church website, Facebook page, church app, and Instagram page for our various online offerings.

Online Sunday Morning Worship at 11:00 a.m.

Please also keep checking our various social media outlets for up-to-date information, programs, and community connection time.
www.gablesucc.org

GET OUR CHURCH APP

For all Apple and Android users, get your official Gables UCC App by going to the App Store or Google Play and downloading it. It's free! And it will keep you up-to-date and connected with church information, special announcements, calendar, and the staff. Need help? Contact Elena Korallis, our Director of Communications, at ElenaK@gablesucc.org.

LOTUS HOUSE DONATIONS

Our Sunday School children and youth are supporting Lotus House Homeless Shelter. **In April, we are collecting new children's socks.** You may send your items to Pastor Megan at Gables UCC via Amazon. Thank you.

ZOOM LUNCH AND THE BIBLE

Tuesday, April 21 at Noon

Join us on Tuesday, as one of our pastors will lead us through a focused discussion on one of their favorite or most challenging scriptures. You provide your lunch, we will provide the Bible scripture and lead the discussion. If you would like to join us via Zoom, please contact pastor Megan at MeganS@gablesucc.org and she will send you the Zoom link and password.

SUNDAY MORNING ADULT EDUCATION ONLINE
The Gospel According to Mary Oliver (and Other Women Poets)
Sunday, April 26 at 9:45 a.m.

In this season of Eastertide, we will look at the poems of Oliver and other women poets who teach us about finding the extraordinary in the ordinary, and resurrection joy in all that is. Led by Pastor Laurie.

**WISE (WELCOMING, INCLUSIVE, SUPPORTIVE, AND ENGAGED
FOR MENTAL HEALTH) SUPPORT**

It's okay not to be okay right now. However, being socially distant does not mean having to be socially isolated. **Each Tuesday at 7:00 p.m.** Lisa LeSueur, Minister of Congregational and Staff Care, will lead a Zoom opportunity to connect with other members of our church community as we share stories, as well as survival strategies, for getting through these challenging times. If you are interested in joining, please email Lisa at LisaL@gablesucc.org and the link to the meeting will be forwarded to you.

CHURCH PRAYER LIST

Do you know the Called to Care Team prays together each Wednesday at 12:00 noon from their respective homes or wherever they are? They use a list compiled from your prayer requests texted to Pastor Laurie on Sunday morning (or throughout the week). To be in touch, text Pastor Laurie at 305.968.6482 or email Carol Fifield, Coordinator of the Called to Care Team, at miamifife@gmail.com.

THE COMPASSION FUND

Recently, we established a "Compassion Fund" to help our church family and friends in need through these challenging days. We invite you to give knowing that your gift will assist those struggling to make ends meet. If giving through our church website, app, or by texting "GABLESUCC" to 77977, please go to where it says "Fund," scroll down to the Compassion Fund, and contribute. It's as easy as that and you will be helping fellow church members.

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ELTON JOHN

In this service of worship, we will be drawing from the music of Sir Elton Hercules John, who was born Reginald Kenneth Dwight in 1947. An English singer, songwriter, pianist, and composer, Elton John has worked with lyricist Bernie Taupin since 1967 and together they have collaborated on more than 30 albums. Elton John's high energy piano playing, camp theatrics, and over the top costumes made him one the most popular singers over the past fifty years. His songs have spoken to countless people over many generations and he was said, "Music has healing power. It has the ability to take people out of themselves for a few hours." While there is no religious system that permanently anchors Elton John or his music, (he claims to be an atheist) it could be said that he has a gospel: one of love, personal freedom, and the search for compassion. Today's music is performed by local musicians; we are so grateful for their presence today. We invite you to approach this service with the prayer that whether you are a longtime fan, or have never really listened to Elton John, God will open something new inside you.

REMEMBER:

These are the times that call upon our faith— times like this, when we and those around us need assurance that we're not alone, and that together we will get through whatever lies ahead. Now is the time to draw close to God in prayer, and to one another in acts of compassion and care. You are encouraged to reach out to others in our church family, making sure they are well. And please, if you are in need of groceries, a meal, conversation, a pharmacy run, or anything else, let us know. Many volunteers are ready to help. We really are all in this together. God bless!

CORAL GABLES CONGREGATIONAL UCC STAFF DIRECTORY
305.448.7421 (Extensions listed below)

Ministers

All Members of the Church

Pastoral Staff

The Rev. Dr. Laurinda Hafner, Senior Pastor
The Rev. Megan Smith, Associate Pastor
The Rev. Aaron Lauer, Associate Pastor

LaurieH@gablesucc.org ext. 116
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Program Staff

German Worship Information
Mark Hart, Exec. Dir. of the Community Arts Program
The Rev. Yoli Izquierdo-Yglesias, Spanish Worship
Lisa LeSueur, Minister for Congregational and Staff Care
Dr. Ronald Morgan, Director of Music Ministries
Brooke Bagnall-Koger, Director of Early Childhood Center
To contact Early Childhood Center, please call:

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Support Staff

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Allen Feldman, Pew Organizer
Elena Korallis, Director of Communications
Seth Patterson, Youth Bell Choir Director
Tony Prinzi, Print, Rentals & Reception Coordinator
Dennis Rodrigues CPA, Business Manager
Drew Sandbulte, Events Coordinator
Dr. Gregory Taylor, Parish Musician
Alexandra Woods, Children's Choir Director

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Maintenance and Custodial Team

Rene Dominguez (Lead Custodian)
Carlos Barrios, Rosario Noriega

WE ARE OUT OF THE BOX PEOPLE

