

# First Congregational United Church of Christ

*Empowered by the Holy Spirit and with the help of God,  
we open our doors and hearts to all,  
in service and love as modeled by Jesus Christ.*



*Easter Day  
Resurrection of Our Lord  
The Myth, the Meaning, and the Mystery of Easter*

*The Lord's Day  
Easter Day  
Resurrection of Our Lord  
The Myth, the Meaning, and the Mystery of Easter  
Nine o'clock in the Morning*

## ***The Worship of God***

*Worship is the submission of all our nature to God. It is the quickening of the conscience by God's holiness; the nourishment of the mind with God's truth; the purifying of the imagination by God's beauty; the opening of the heart to God's love; the surrender of the will to God's purpose—all of this gathered up in adoration.*

*~William Temple*

### **The Prologue**

The annual challenge confronting us as the Church celebrates Christ's resurrection is getting a handle on the myriad metaphors that occupy this high and holy festival day. It is sensory overload! Missing in Lent, we just cannot seem to get our fill of "Alleluias!" But another challenge we face every year is the believability factor, buying into what many perceive as nonsensical foolishness. Did he or didn't he? Like Thomas of old, when push comes to shove, the second best refrain we can honestly offer for resurrection, filled with doubt even as we wonder, is a skeptically lame "I believe! Help my unbelief!" It is not the most profound or provocative Easter proclamation! But that is next week's news! Today, we lean into the myth, meaning, and mystery of Easter, knowing this day demands that we give our undivided attention to this mythical, meaningful, and mysterious trinity!

Gathering Music

The Paschal Greeting

Alleluia! Christ is risen!

**The Lord is risen indeed! Alleluia!**

The Call to Worship and Welcome

The Spirit of the still speaking God be with you!

**And also with you.**

The Music for Piano

*The Strife Is O'er, The Battle Done*

arr. Cindy Berry

The Lighting of the Altar Candles

The Gathering

Sing glad songs of victory! God is our strength and our song, creating a new day of gladness and joy! This is the day of our salvation!

**Christ has been raised from the dead! The one who was rejected assures us we are accepted and affirmed, always beloved by our raising God!**

We are chosen by God as witnesses to good news, our lives recounting the deeds of our resurrecting God!

**God reigns! Let all nations and peoples rejoice in resurrection! In Christ, all shall be made alive this day!**

Let us worship God!

The Choral Introit

*Christ Is Risen, Alleluia*

Sally K. Albrecht; Jay Althouse

The Collect

Let us pray,

God of Easter myth, meaning, and mystery, we have gathered on this high and holy festival day to worship the one who has raised Christ with resurrection power, empowering within us the same resurrecting Spirit of God's holy presence; overflowing with thanksgiving, instilled with overwhelming praise and joy, we rejoice in you, marvelous God; how amazing is all your creation; how glorious is the day of new life; come among us now, we pray, continuing to raise us from our fears and doubts, our perplexity and anxiety; we want to believe; we want to trust; we want to dare; we want to live; we want a risen faith living within us; touch us today with a spirit of hope, that our servant discipleship may honor the risen Christ; all this pray through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the holy and still speaking Spirit, one God now and forever.

**Amen.**

\*The Opening Hymn, No. 216 *Christ the Lord Is Risen Today*

EASTER HYMN

\*The Litany of Praise

Rejoice and be glad in God's new creation! In Christ, all shall live!

**Sounds of weeping are changed to joy! Cries of distress are turned to gladness!**

God has anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the holy and still speaking Spirit, raising him to new life, filling us with the joy of resurrection!

**God has raised Jesus from the dead! Christ is the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep!**

We are witnesses to everything Jesus said and did, promises made and promises kept! We will joyfully share the good news of Easter's resurrection power!

**God is our strength and our song! The Holy One has become our salvation!**

**Praise the Lord!**

The Witness from the Christian Scriptures

ACTS 10:34-43

Then Peter began to speak to them: "I truly understand that God shows no partiality, but in every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him. You know the message he sent to the people of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ—he is Lord of all. That message spread throughout Judea, beginning in Galilee after the baptism that John announced: how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power; how he went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him. We are witnesses to all that he did both in Judea and in Jerusalem. They put him to death by hanging him on a tree; but God raised him on the third day and allowed him to appear, not to all the people but to us who were chosen by God as witnesses, and who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead. He commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one ordained by God as judge of the living and the dead. All the prophets testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name."

Listen to what the Spirit of the still speaking God is saying!

**Thanks be to God!**

The Hymn, No. 228

*The Day of Resurrection!*

LANCASHIRE

The Witness from the Gospels

LUKE 24:1-12

But on the first day of the week, at early dawn, they came to the tomb, taking the spices that they had prepared. They found the stone rolled away from the tomb, but when they went in, they did not find the body. While they were perplexed about this, suddenly two men in dazzling clothes stood beside them. The women were terrified and bowed their faces to the ground, but the men said to them, “Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here, but has risen. Remember how he told you, while he was still in Galilee, that the Son of Man must be handed over to sinners, and be crucified, and on the third day rise again.” Then they remembered his words, and returning from the tomb, they told all this to the eleven and to all the rest. Now it was Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and the other women with them who told this to the apostles. But these words seemed to them an idle tale, and they did not believe them. But Peter got up and ran to the tomb! Stooping and looking inside, he saw the linen cloths by themselves. Then he went home, amazed at what had happened!

The Gospel of the Lord!

**Thanks be to God!**

The Sermon

*Easter: Myth, Mystery . . . or Both!*

Timothy W. Shirley

The Music for Meditation

The Concerns of the Church

The Pastoral Prayer and Lord’s Prayer

**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 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.**

\*The Closing Hymn, No. 233

*Alleluia! Sing to Jesus*

HYFRYDOL

\*The Benediction

The Music for Organ

*Last Uns Erfreuen*

arr. Rachel Trelstad Porter

\*You are invited to stand as you are able.

*The color for Easter Day, the Resurrection of the Lord, and for the Season of Easter, known as Eastertide, is White, symbolizing purity and victory, and remind us of Jesus’ victory over death on the cross and his glorious resurrection.*

**Worship Notes:**

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## **Concerns of the Church**

In accordance with CDC guidelines, wearing of masks is now optional. We will continue to sign in for worship. If we have cases of COVID within our congregation brought to our attention, we will notify everyone as soon as possible.

Online Giving is now available on the church website. If you have questions on how to get started with online giving feel free to reach out to Alex at [alex@eagleriverucc.org](mailto:alex@eagleriverucc.org) or give him a call at 715-802-8501, Option 8.

Prayer Concerns: As we worship today our thoughts are with Bob Mather, Linda Sanborn's daughter-in-law, Michelle Sanborn and with our Ukrainian brothers and sisters.

Scripture readers, ushers, and camcorder operators are always needed as well as readers for the Concerns of the Church. You may sign up by visiting our website; or you may also contact Joy Turpin at: [joyfaithchapinturpin@gmail.com](mailto:joyfaithchapinturpin@gmail.com) or (715) 479-6560.

Just a friendly reminder! The last Sunday of the month is always A Unity Service, meeting at Nine o'clock in the Morning. Please put these services on your calendar. (Please take note, the Palm/Passion and Easter Day services will be unity services.)

***Church Staff***

Timothy W. Shirley, Pastor

Debbie Brown, Church Administrator

Jonathan Alexander (Alex) Fluegel, Information and Technology Director

Sharon Breit, Director of Christian Education

Lori Lee Hunter, Director of Music

Linda Brainard, Pianist

Norma Yaeger, Pianist

Christine Clough, Cleaning Services

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First Congregational UCC - Eagle River, WI

April 17, 2022

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