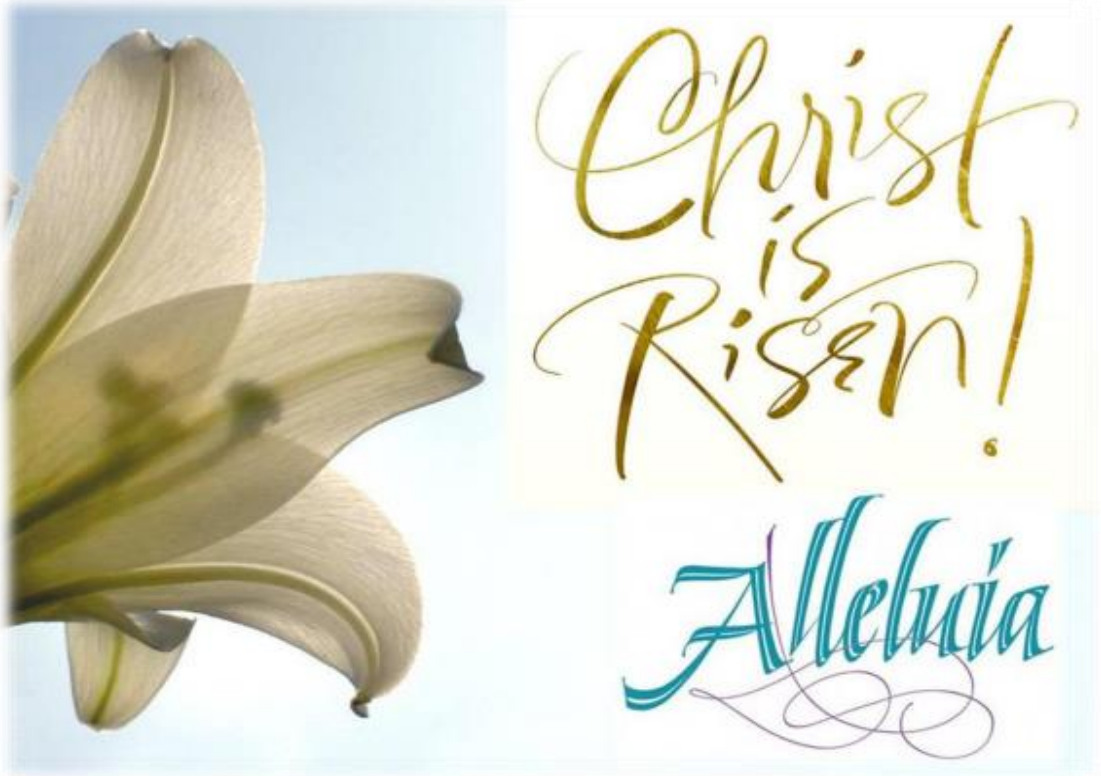


First Congregational United Church of Christ

*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 the Lord*

The Lord's Day
Easter Day
Resurrection of the Lord
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 Gospels give us quite a smorgasbord of resurrection appearance options, covering the whole gamut, a huge range of manifestations crossing the spectrum of credulity. The earliest gospel written, Mark, in about 65 CE, provides a skeletal, even minimalist description of the tomb, describing frightened disciples fleeing the scene in fear and amazement, faith nowhere to be found. Matthew and Luke, written about a decade later, put more meat on the bone, enhancing the story, offering greater detail as Jesus appears to His disciples, their faith emboldened as they are equipped, enabled, and empowered for continuing Jesus' mission and ministry, carrying out his legacy by fulfilling the Great Commission. Finally, the last of the Gospels, John, written in about 100 CE, by far contains the largest continuous narrative carefully describing in minute detail the resurrection and subsequent appearances of Jesus. It is by far the most embellished, exaggerated narrative of the four Gospels. Only one thing is sure, one thing for certain, as John Shelby Spong says, "Something happened!" And it is that great, amazing, monumental event in which we place our hope and trust, and all the belief and faith we can humanly muster, enabling, equipping, and empowering us to live resurrected lives. Christ is risen, and so are we! Thanks be to God! Today is all about "resurrecting Jesus!" Our yearning is to live resurrected lives!

Gathering Music

The Choral Reflection

Mercy Tree

Michael William Neal and Krissy Nordhoff; arr. Joseph M. Martin

Chancel Choir; Lori Hunter, soprano

The Proclamation

An Ancient Easter Acclamation

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 Contemplation
The Lighting of the Altar Candles
The Gathering

This is the day that the Lord has made! Let us rejoice and be glad in it!

The stone has been rolled away, and with it all the doubt and despair of death's depressingly deep darkness!

This is the Lord's doing! How marvelous it is in our eyes!

For we have been raised with Christ to seek the things from above that give us life!

O give thanks to the Lord, whose steadfast love endures forever! Let your glad songs of victory be heard all throughout creation!

The Lord is our strength and our might! Alleluia to the God of our salvation! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

Alleluia indeed and always! Let us worship God!

The Choral Introit

Thine Is the Glory
Chancel Choir

words, Edmond L. Burdy; music, G. F. Handel

The Collect

Let us pray to the Lord,

God of resurrection power, with our heads bowed in the awe of transcendent mystery, we have gathered to worship you, to rejoice on this high and holy festival day that you have made; we come to this hour of worship as perplexed as those who first found an empty tomb; even as you rolled away the heavy stone that betrayed a lifeless body, roll away the doubt and fear that kills our spirits, that we might experience what it means to be fully alive, living resurrected lives; as we celebrate this Easter Day, resurrecting God, we remember your promise and we embrace it as our own—that death will never contain nor consume us; all this we pray through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the holy and still speaking Spirit, one God, forever and ever.

Amen.

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

EASTER HYMN

*The Litany of Praise

Alleluia! Give thanks to the Lord, for the Lord is good! God's steadfast love endures forever!

Let all Israel declare, "God's steadfast love endures forever!"

Open to us the gates of righteousness, that we might enter through them, giving thanks to the Lord!

This is the gateway of the Lord! The righteous shall enter through this holy gate!

The Holy One has answered our prayers, becoming our salvation! It is the Lord's doing!

This is the day that the Lord has made! Let us rejoice and be glad in it!

Blessed is the One who comes in the name of the Lord! Let everyone bless God from this holy house!

O give thanks to the Lord, for the Lord is good! God's steadfast love endures forever! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia! Praise the Lord!

*The Gloria

GREATOREX

Glory to the Creator, and to the Christ, and to the Comforter!

As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,

World without end! Amen! Amen!

The Call to Confession¹

Amid our Easter celebrations, it is well to pause for moments of reflection. How can we share the joy of new life if we have not taken time to examine old ways that lead to death? How will we recognize the risen Christ or even hope to experience resurrection in our lives if we have not walked with the earthly Jesus? In the silence and stillness of these moments, let us confess before the Holy.

The Silent Confession

The Corporate Confession²

Let us pray to the Lord,

Resurrecting God, the message of Easter has come again, and once again, we are surprised by it, far from ready to receive it. The Palm Sunday parade demanded very little of us. We could join in the Hosannas, but the betrayal and denial, the suffering and shame, the agony and death, have left us fearful and shaken, stuck somewhere between Hosannas and Alleluias. We have become enemies of Jesus without intending to be disloyal. We would just as well leave Jesus in the tomb, lest he upset our daily lives. The Jesus of long ago seems more comfortable to us than the Christ who is risen today in our midst, challenging all the preconceptions that guide our daily lives. We confess our reluctance to let Christ claim us and change us. God of resurrection power, we desperately need the forgiveness that only comes from you.

The Assurance of Pardon³

Beloved faith community, hear the good news of Easter! The God of empty tombs and empty hearts, but never empty promises, fills us today with the joy of trusting and believing, that we might rise

from the graves of our misplaced loyalties to live with Christ and serve wherever good news is needed. May gladness flow through us to bring inspiration and hope to sisters and brothers who are locked in their own prisons of despair, that all of us might be risen to live resurrected lives, having the courage to love as you have loved us in Christ Jesus.

Thanks be to God!

The Music for Meditation

Jesus Shall Reign

arr. Jason Krug

Tone Chimes; Susan Krivichi, director

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 people anyone who fears God and practices righteousness is acceptable to God! You know the message God 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 Response, PSALM 118:1-2, 14-24

MIT FREUDEN ZART

Give thanks unto our gracious God, whose love endures forever!

The Lord, our strength and song shall be, from whom no fault can sever!

Sing mighty songs of victory, both now and for eternity, for God will leave us never!

We shall not die, but we shall live, and sing God’s grace with elation!

Though we deserve no more than death, God blesses us with salvation!

The gate that should unyielding be is open wide to welcome us! Give thanks adoration!

Upon the stones the builders judged imperfect, weak and tender!

Now rest the corners of God’s house, still unsurpassed in splendor!

This is the day the Lord has made! God is our sun and God our shade! Rejoice, and praise gladly render!

The Witness from the Epistles

COLOSSIANS 3:1-4

So, if you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God! Set your minds on the things that are above, not on the things that are on earth! For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God! When Christ who is your life is revealed, then you also will be revealed with him in glory!

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

Thanks be to God!

The Anthem

Easter Carol words adapted by Jean Anne Shafferman; arr. Patti Drennan
Chancel Choir; Connie Pellman, flute

The Witness from the Gospels

MATTHEW 28:1-10

After the sabbath, as the first day of the week was dawning, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to see the tomb. And suddenly there was a great earthquake! For an angel of the Lord, descending from heaven, came and rolled back the stone and sat on it! His appearance was like lightning and his clothing white as snow! For fear of him the guards shook and became like dead men! But the angel said to the women, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you are looking for Jesus who was crucified! He is not here, for he has been raised, as he said! Come, see the place where he lay! Then go quickly and tell his disciples, 'He has been raised from the dead, and indeed he is going ahead of you to Galilee! There you will see him!' This is my message for you!" So, they left the tomb quickly with fear and great joy and ran to tell his disciples! Suddenly Jesus met them and said, "Greetings!" And they came to him, took hold of his feet, and worshiped him! Then Jesus said to them, "Do not be afraid! Go and tell my brothers and sisters to go to Galilee! There they will see me!"

The Gospel for today!

Thanks be to God!

The Sermon

Resurrecting Jesus! Resurrecting Us!

Timothy W. Shirley

The Music for Meditation

The Service of Holy Communion

The Concerns of the Church

The Pastoral Prayer

The 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 Receiving of Our Gifts

The Offertory

*The Doxology

OLD HUNDREDTH

*Praise God, from whom all blessings flow!
Praise Christ all creatures here below!
Praise Holy Spirit, evermore!
Praise triune God whom we adore!*

*The Prayer of Thanksgiving

*The Closing Hymn, No. 228 *The Day of Resurrection*

LANCASHIRE

*The Extinguishing of the Altar Candles

*The Procession of the Light

*The Benediction and Blessing

The Music for Reflection

*You are invited to stand as you are able.

Lector: Carol Marshall

Ushers: Mary Lou Congdon and Carlton Schroeder

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

***The flowers adorning the Chancel for today's worship are given
in honor of this high and holy festival day.***

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First Congregational UCC - Eagle River, WI

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