

**Sunday April 4, 2021
Easter**

Prelude

Words of Welcome

Announcements

Call to Worship

Leader: Christ is Risen!
People: *(Out loud, but muted)* **Christ is risen, indeed!**
Leader: Hope is alive!
People: *(Out loud, but muted)* **Hope is alive, indeed!**
Leader: God's love is eternal!
People: *(Out loud, but muted)* **Hallelujah!**
Unison: **Let us give thanks for what God has done.**

Opening Prayer **Unison** *(Out loud, but muted)*

**God of grace and power,
we come rejoicing in Christ's empty tomb.
We come trusting in the good news
that tells us Christ is with us.
For the Risen Christ is living proof
that You care about our lives, O God.
The Risen Christ offers to us glimpses of hope,
even in our tears.
As the tomb is not quiet.
It speaks. It proclaims!
Yet there is more to life's story!
It is a promise of eternal life!
Thank you, gracious and almighty God. Amen.**

Hymn #242: The Strife is O'er
(Please see separate attachment for the score)

Refrain:
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

1) The strife is o'er, the battle done,
the victory of life is won;
The song of triumph has begun.
Alleluia! [Refrain]

2) The powers of death have done their worst,
but Christ their legions has dispersed:
Let shouts of holy joy outburst.
Alleluia! [Refrain]

3) The three sad days are quickly sped,
Christ rises glorious from the dead:
All glory to our risen Head!
Alleluia! [Refrain]

4) Christ, by your wounds on Calvary
from death's dread sting your servants free,
That we may live eternally.
Alleluia! [Refrain]

Pastor's Call to Confession

We are called to continue growing past the last ring that has encircled our lives. We are called by our Sacred Source to find new balance, purpose, meaning, and direction by opening our hearts in trust to our Living Christ. Together now we pray for your grace opening us into your eternity of never-ending love. Let us pray together.

Prayer of Confession **Unison (*Out loud, but muted*)**

**God of resurrection grace,
Help us in our pain, despair and fear
so that we are not prone to follow
the path of hopelessness.
Help us, to instead, be like the Risen Christ,
and rise up, as a brave and holy people,
by remaining hopeful in your steadfast love.
Help us, through these days by living in your light of hope, joy, faith, and love.
Amen.**

Silent Prayer

Assurance of Pardon

God hears our prayers of grace and mercy,
and raises our countenance from despair,
into resurrection joy!

God meets us in our life challenges,
comforts us in our tears,
and offers to us new hope,

Can we all say **Hallelujah! together from the bottom of our hearts!**

People: Hallelujah! Say it again – a little louder – Hallelujah!

Passing of the Peace (unmute for Passing of the Peace)

Pastor: The Peace of Christ be with you

People: And also with you!

Reading

Jim Miers

Psalm 118: Excerpts (NIV)

118:1 O give thanks to the LORD, for he is good; his steadfast love endures forever!

118:2 Let Israel say, "His steadfast love endures forever."

118:14 The LORD is my strength and my might; he has become my salvation.

118:19 Open to me the gates of righteousness, that I may enter through them and give thanks to the LORD.

118:20 This is the gate of the LORD; the righteous shall enter through it.

118:21 I thank you that you have answered me and have become my salvation.

118:22 The stone that the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone.

118:23 This is the Lord's doing; it is marvelous in our eyes.

118:24 This is the day that the LORD has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it.

Special Music

Keith Johnson

Gospel Reading

John 20:1-18 (NIV)

20:1 Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the tomb.

20:2 So she ran and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved, and said to them, "They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him."

20:3 Then Peter and the other disciple set out and went toward the tomb.

20:4 The two were running together, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first.

20:5 He bent down to look in and saw the linen wrappings lying there, but he did not go in.

20:6 Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb. He saw the linen wrappings lying there,

20:7 and the cloth that had been on Jesus' head, not lying with the linen wrappings but rolled up in a place by itself.

20:8 Then the other disciple, who reached the tomb first, also went in, and he saw and believed;

20:9 for as yet they did not understand the scripture, that he must rise from the dead.

20:10 Then the disciples returned to their homes.

20:11 But Mary stood weeping outside the tomb. As she wept, she bent over to look into the tomb;

20:12 and she saw two angels in white, sitting where the body of Jesus had been lying, one at the head and the other at the feet.

20:13 They said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping?" She said to them, "They have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid him."

20:14 When she had said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not know that it was Jesus.

20:15 Jesus said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you looking for?" Supposing him to be the gardener, she said to him, "Sir, if you have carried him away,

tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away."

20:16 Jesus said to her, "Mary!" She turned and said to him in Hebrew, "Rabbouni!" (which means Teacher).

20:17 Jesus said to her, "Do not hold on to me, because I have not yet ascended to the Father. But go to my brothers and say to them, 'I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.'"

20:18 Mary Magdalene went and announced to the disciples, "I have seen the Lord"; and she told them that he had said these things to her.

Musical Interlude

Reflection: Kindness - The Surprising Gift

Special Music

Ken Littlefield

Prayers of the People (unmute yourself to offer a request, giving first names only, please)

Hymn #508 Prayer Is the Soul's Sincere Desire (verses 1 and 5)
(sung muted but together)

**Prayer is the soul's sincere desire, unuttered or expressed;
The motion of a hidden fire that trembles in the breast.
O Christ, by whom we come to God, the Life, the Truth, the Way,
The path of prayer you too have trod: Christ, teach us how to pray.**

Pastoral Prayer

The Lord's Prayer **Unison** (*Out loud, but muted*)

Offering Invitation

In that, as an Easter people, we manifest God's never-ending love in the world by the giving of our time, talents, and financial resources.
For it is with Christ's limitless and restorative love,
that we humbly and graciously offer back to God a portion of what God has given us.

Offering and Dedication **Unison** (*Out loud, but muted*)

God of love,

We offer our gifts of time, spiritual gifts, and financial gifts
as a sign of our love for you and the world.

We ask a special blessing on these gifts
where you meet us in our suffering, and raise us up,
so that all may come to know of your abiding love.

O God, we give these gifts as you have given them unto us.
In the name of Jesus Christ, we pray. Amen.

Service of Holy Communion

Words of Preparation **Unison** (*Out loud, but muted*)

On this day, we remember that Mary Magdalene arrives at the tomb
with the intent to anoint the crucified body of Jesus;
and astonished, she finds an empty tomb where Jesus once laid.
Now what?

God's angels and the Risen Christ meet Mary Magdalene in her sorrow,
and speak hope into her heart.

For the Resurrection narrative reveals that love is alive and moves among us in
the least expected ways and times!

The Risen Christ helps us to remember that despair is not the end of our journey.

The Risen Christ also speaks of God's ever-present love,
and gives the church resurrection hope. In this Spirit we prepare ourselves to
celebrate this meal of redemption with our Living Christ!

Leader: Christ is Risen!

People: (*Out loud, but muted*) **Christ is risen, indeed!**

Leader: Lift up your hearts.

People: (*Out loud, but muted*) **We lift them up to the Lord.**

Leader: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People: (*Out loud, but muted*) **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

Declaration of Our New Life in the Risen Christ

Leader: Creator, Redeemer, and Holy Spirit;
Source of Life, Living Word, and Bond of Love:
We praise you for Jesus Christ,
who reminds us that even in fear-filled days,
cloaked with the powers of death,
your eternal love arises, and never leaves us.
For we rejoice with all your people

and with the angels,
because life is stronger than death!
As we proclaim the glory of your name:

People: *(Out loud, but muted)* **Holy is Jesus, God Incarnate, the Risen Christ,
whose mercy gathers us together in community,
whose grace meets us in our brokenness,
and whose loving faithfulness gives us renewed hope.**

Words of Institution

Sharing the Elements

Post-Communion Prayer

Leader: Let us pray:
O Christ, we thank you for this feast of life.
Fed by your love,
and strengthened by your life;
we humbly accept your call to go
into this world to live with hope,
and to share your joy.

People: *(Out loud, but muted)* **You commission us to
feed as we have been fed,
forgive as we have been forgiven,
and love as we have been loved.
Thanks be to God. Amen.**

Hymn #233: Christ the Lord is Risen Today *(Please see separate attachment for the score)*

- 1) Christ the Lord is risen today, Alleluia!
Moral tongues and angels say: Alleluia!
Raise your joys and triumphs high, Alleluia!
Sing, glad heavens, and earth reply: Alleluia!

- 2) Let the Victor's people sing, Alleluia!
Where, O death, is now your sting? Alleluia!
Dying once, Christ lives to save, Alleluia!
Where your victory, O grave? Alleluia!

- 3) Love's redeeming work is done, Alleluia!
Fought the fight, the battle won, Alleluia!
Death in vain forbids Christ rise, Alleluia!
God has opened paradise, Alleluia!

- 4) Soar we now where Christ has led, Alleluia!
Following our exalted Head, Alleluia!
Made like Christ, like Christ we rise, Alleluia!
Ours the cross, the grave, the skies, Alleluia!

Easter Blessing and Benediction **Unison** (*Out loud, but muted*)

May God's abiding love and hope give us new life.
May God's unmerited grace and mercy keep us hope-filled.
And may God's restorative justice bring to us all, perfect peace.
For Christ is risen! Praise God!
Hallelujah!