

# SOJOURNERS UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

“A safe place to begin. A safe place to begin again.”

April 4, 2021

In the morning at 10:00am

## **EASTER Sunday**

To Give Thanks for What God Has Done



“We are a community of faith called and empowered by the Holy Spirit to walk in the way of Jesus, by including all peoples in all walks and ways of life, in our life of worship and celebration, nurture and growth, love and service.”

~ Covenant of Sojourners Congregation

**Prelude**      *(A Moment of Silence)*

## **Welcome, Introductions, and Announcements**

### **Gathering Music**                      **“Christ the Lord is Risen Today”**

words by Charles Wesley, 1739; tune from *Lyra Davidica*, London, 1708

### **”Thine Be the Glory”**

words by Edmond Budry, 1904;

music from *Judas Maccabeus*, by G.F. Handel, 1747

sung by The Virtual Mass Choir of the Central Atlantic Conference

Directed by Rev. Darryl L.C. Moch, Dean of Community Practice

### **Call to Worship**

*Tina Griffin & Erin Wallace*

Liturgist:      Christ is Risen!

**All:**      *Out loud but muted*

**Christ is risen, indeed!**

Hope is alive!

**Hope is alive, indeed!**

God’s love is eternal!

**Hallelujah! Let us give thanks for what God has done.**

### **Invocation**

Liturgist:      Let us pray:

**All:**      *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. The tomb is not quiet for it speaks and it proclaims! It is a promise of eternal life! Thank you, gracious and almighty God. Amen!**

### **Confession**

Liturgist:      Let us confess our sins before God and this host of witnesses.

**All:**      *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, living beyond our pain, despair and fear by remaining hopeful in your steadfast love.**

**Help us, we pray. Amen.**

### **Assurance of Pardon**

Liturgist:      God hears our prayers for grace and mercy, and raises our countenance from despair, into resurrection joy! God meets us in our human suffering, comforts us in our tears, and offers to us new hope,

**Hallelujah and thanks be to God!**

## **Collections Cart**

*Tina Griffin & Erin Wallace*

*This is the time the children usually collect donations of food for the food bank from the congregation. The Food Bank and other organizations still need your donations, perhaps even more now than previously. It may be easier right now to contribute financially to the [Blue Ridge Area Food Bank](#).*

## **Time with Children**

*Dylan Duke*

## **Contemporary Reading**

*Tina Griffin & Erin Wallace*

### **Rachel Held Evans**

*“Jesus takes the Resistance beyond prophecy, beyond songs of hope and lamentation, beyond satire and mockery, and beyond apocalyptic visions to declare the inauguration of a new kingdom. With his birth, teachings, death, and resurrection, Jesus has started a revolution. It just doesn’t look the way anyone expects.”*

### **N. T Wright**

*“Jesus’s resurrection is the beginning of God’s new project not to snatch people away from earth to heaven but to colonize earth with the life of heaven. That, after all, is what the Lord’s Prayer is about.”*

## **Scripture Lesson: John 20:1–18**

*Tina Griffin & Erin Wallace*

20 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. 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.” 3 Then Peter and the other disciple set out and went toward the tomb. 4 The two were running together, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. 5 He bent down to look in and saw the linen wrappings lying there, but he did not go in. 6 Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb. He saw the linen wrappings lying there, 7 and the cloth that had been on Jesus’ head, not lying with the linen wrappings but rolled up in a place by itself. 8 Then the other disciple, who reached the tomb first, also went in, and he saw and believed; 9 for as yet they did not understand the scripture, that he must rise from the dead. 10 Then the disciples returned to their homes.

11 But Mary stood weeping outside the tomb. As she wept, she bent over to look into the tomb; 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. 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.” 14 When she had said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not know that it was Jesus. 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.” 16 Jesus said to her, “Mary!” She turned and said to him in Hebrew, “Rabbouni!” (which means Teacher). 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.’ ” 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.

**Liturgist:** *This is the Word of God, for the People of God!*

**All:** *Out loud, but muted*  
**Thanks be to God.**

**Special Music**                      **"How Can I Keep from Singing"**  
words and music by Robert Lowry, 1868  
arrangement by Adam and Matt Podd, 2020

**The Sermon/Message**

*Pastor Marvin L Morgan*

## **HOLY COMMUNION**

Pastor:            As grain that was scattered on the hillside was gathered and made into one loaf, we too, although scattered at tables in our own homes, are bound together around Christ's table and become one.

As grapes grown in the field are gathered together and pressed into wine, so too are we drawn together and pressed by our times to share a common lot and are transformed into Christ's self-giving love for all.

Pastor:            God be with you.

**All:**                *Out loud, but muted*  
**And with your spirit.**

Pastor:            Lift up your hearts  
**We lift them up to God.**

Pastor:            Give thanks to God, Blessed Trinity  
**It is right to give God thanks and praise.**

**Praise to you Divine Creator. Thank you for the gift of life, the beauty of nature, and your steadfast loving kindness.**

**Praise to you Divine Redeemer. Thank you for sharing our human existence, from birth through death to everlasting life you have shown us a way worth emulating, bringing healing and hope to people most in need around the world.**

**Praise to you Divine Sustainer. Thank you for the vision to see beyond the immediate, a calm in the midst of storm, the strength to build an ever-expanding community and the courage to bring about any change necessary within our lives. Amen.**

## **The Words of Institution/Remembrance also Breaking and Pouring**     *The Pastor*

Jesus shared many meals with his friends during his ministry. But in an upstairs room he would have his last meal with his disciples, because one of his friends would betray him. Knowing his time had come, he took bread and after blessing it he gave it to them saying, "Take. Eat. This is my body broken for you." Later after supper he took a cup and after blessing it he gave it to his Disciples saying, "Drink this. This is my blood of the new covenant poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins."

When we eat this bread and drink this cup, we open our mouths to proclaim together:

*[And I invite you to say, after me...]*

Pastor:        Christ has died.                    **All:    Christ has died.**

Pastor:        Christ is risen.                    **All:    Christ is risen.**

Pastor:        Christ will come again.        **All:    Christ will come again.**

### **Prayer of Consecration**

**All:**            *Out loud but muted*

**Holy God, send your Spirit upon these gifts of grain and grapes that they might be for us the presence of the living Christ and pour out your Spirit upon us so we might be taken, blessed, broken and distributed so others might know the blessings of living in *worldwide communion* with you and one another.**

**Through Christ, with Christ and in Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all glory and honor are yours, now and forever. Amen.**

### **The Distribution**

#### **The Blessing**

Pastor:        +May the presence of God, Christ and the Holy Spirit, keep and preserve you to everlasting life.

#### **Thanksgiving**

Pastor:        Let us pray.

**All:**            *Out loud, but muted*

**We have been fed, Dear God, by your presence and led by your light. May we bask in this glow now and forevermore. Amen.**

#### **Invitation to the Offering**

Pastor: The Risen Christ speaks of God's ever-present love, and gives the church resurrection hope. 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.

This is our opportunity to give to the family that nurtures us in new growth. *[We urge you to visit [our webpage](#) and click on the "Donate or Pledge Now" tab, to present your*

gifts.]

### Dedication Prayer

**All:** (out loud, but muted)

**Dear God, we offer these gifts as a sign of our love for you and the world. Bless us in these gifts so all may come to know of your abiding love. Amen.**

### Joys and Concerns

Rev. Karen Mann

*It is more important than ever to hold one another in prayer. If you are participating in this service at-home, we invite you to light a candle and remember your fellow Sojourners in prayer. If you are watching live from home, we invite you to leave a comment, on the "Chat" screen, with your joys or concerns, now. Please remember that this is a PUBLIC forum and can be seen by anyone.*

### Pastoral Prayer by Pastor Morgan

#### Closing Hymn

#### "Come, You Faithful, Raise the Strain"

words from St. John of Damascus, c. 700, translated by John Mason Neale, 1872  
music by Arthur Sullivan, 1872

### Closing Comments by Pastor Morgan

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

**Praise be to God!**

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