



Worship Celebration

2nd Sunday of Easter

April 7, 2024

8:15 a.m. and 10:45 a.m.

*Indicates stand as you are able.

St. Paul's United Methodist Church

Welcome to our Easter worship celebration! Christ is risen! Alleluia! Christ is risen! St. Paul's UMC has been making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world since 1824. We are a mission-oriented church family serving God and community in the Wesleyan tradition for 200 years! Hymns, prayers, and responsive readings will be on the screen. Hymnals are available in the pew racks if you prefer having the music for hymns, only words to songs appear on the screen. If you have a question or need assistance, please speak with the usher.

Welcome and Announcements

Betty Pritt (8:15) Melissa Rank (10:45)

Prelude

Kendra Rinard

During this time the Christ candle and the Anniversary candle are lit.

Setting the Stage+

***Hymn No. 304 verses 1-2** "Easter People, Raise Your Voices"

All stand as musician begins playing hymn.

Easter people, raise your voices, sounds of heaven in earth should ring.
Christ has brought us heaven's choices; heavenly music, let it ring.
Alleluia! Alleluia! Easter people, let us sing.

Fear of death can no more stop us from our pressing here below.
For our Lord empowered us to triumph over every foe.
Alleluia! Alleluia! On to victory now we go.

***Call to Worship**

Leader: Bless this day when light returns, love astounds, life prevails.

People: Christ is risen!

Leader: Bless the grieving, the lonely, the hungry. Hope is reborn.

People: Christ is risen!

Leader: Bless the young ones and the old.

Bless the enemies and those despised.

People: Christ is risen!

Leader: Bless this world, gripped by chaos. Peace returns.

People: Christ is risen!

Leader: God makes a way where there was no way.

People: Christ has risen! Christ has risen indeed! Alleluia!

***Sung Response No. 304 verse 3 "Easter People, Raise Your Voices"**

Every day to us is Easter, with its resurrection song.

When in trouble move the faster to our God who rights the wrong.

Alleluia! Alleluia! See the power of heavenly throngs.

***Affirmation of Faith**

Leader: Let us join together in professing the Christian faith as contained
in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments.

Do you believe in God the Father?

**People: I believe in God, the Father Almighty,
Creator of heaven and earth.**

Leader: Do you believe in Jesus Christ?

**People: I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was
conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was
buried; he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose
again; he ascended into heaven, is seated at the right hand
of the Father, and will come again to judge the living and
the dead.**

Leader: Do you believe in the Holy Spirit?

People: **I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting.**

Dedication of 200th Anniversary Giving

Leader: Loving God, from whom all blessings flow, we give thanks for the 200 years of mission that has flowed from the generous hearts, hands, and feet of your faithful people through this church called St. Paul's; for the many opportunities that have been given to us to share the good news of Jesus Christ in our community and beyond, in order to make a difference in the lives of our neighbors.

People: **As Christ's body, the Church, committed to growing in your Spirit since 1824, we dedicate to your glory and honor the books that have been collected during the month of March for West Virginia University Children's Hospital.**

Leader: Bless this gift of books. May they be a source of joy, hope, and healing to those who read them, to the glory of God! In the name of the risen Christ, we pray. Amen.

Sung Response No. 162 Refrain *(sing through twice)* "Alleluia, Alleluia!"

Alleluia, alleluia! Give thanks to the risen Lord.

Alleluia, alleluia! Give praise to his name.

Prayer++

Includes the song "We Walk by Faith" to the tune of Amazing Grace.

Leader: The risen Christ meets us at the tomb,
and turns our tears to joy. For your love and goodness,

People: **we give you thanks, O God.**

All sing: *We walk by faith, and not by sight: No gracious words we hear of him who spoke as none e're spoke, but we believe him near.*

Leader: Christ comes through our locked doors, and turns our fear to courage. For your love and goodness,

People: **we give you thanks, O God.**

All sing: We may not touch his hands and side, nor follow where he trod; yet in his promise we rejoice, and cry, "My Lord and God!"

Leader: Christ comes to daily life and work, and turns our failure to new vision. For your love and goodness,

People: **we give you thanks, O God; and we rejoice in the gift of Christ's risen presence with us. Amen.**

Confession+++

Loving God, you have shown yourself to us by Word and Spirit, with signs and wonders, in flesh and blood, yet we struggle to live and believe the good news of Jesus Christ. Have mercy on us; forgive us. Enter into our lives and cast out our fear and doubt so that we may come to trust in you and have life in Jesus' name. Amen.

Declaration of Forgiveness

Leader: We have an advocate with God – Jesus Christ, the righteous one – who offered his life in love to save the world from sin. This is the good news of the gospel: in Jesus Christ we are forgiven.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

Joys and Concerns

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 trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us.

And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

Prayer of Illumination+++

God of all who doubt and believe, by the gift of your Spirit
enable us to hear with our ears, to see with our eyes,
and to touch with our hands your Word of life – Jesus Christ –
our Lord and our God. Amen.

Jesus Loves Me Moment

*Sacred Story from John 20:19-23

It was still the first day of the week. That evening, while the disciples were behind closed doors because they were afraid of the Jewish authorities, Jesus came and stood among them. He said, **“Peace be with you.”** After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. When the disciples saw the Lord, they were filled with joy. Jesus said to them again, **“Peace be with you. As the Father sent me, so I am sending you.”** Then he breathed on them, and said, **“Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive anyone’s sins, they are forgiven; if you don’t forgive them, they aren’t forgiven.”**

*Sung Response No. 364 verse 1 “Because He Lives”

God sent his Son, they called him Jesus; he came to love,
heal, and forgive; he lived and died to buy my pardon,
an empty grave is there to prove my Savior lives.
Because he lives, I can face tomorrow; because he lives,
all fear is gone; because I know he holds the future,
and life is worth the living just because he lives.

*Sacred Story from John 20:24-31

Thomas, the one called Didymus, one of the Twelve, wasn’t with the disciples when Jesus came. The other disciples told him, **“We’ve seen the Lord!”** But he replied, **“Unless I see the nail marks in his hands, put my finger in the wounds left by the nails, and put my hand into his side, I won’t believe.”** After eight days his disciples were again in a house and Thomas was with them. Even though the doors were locked, Jesus entered and stood among them. He said, **“Peace be with you.”** Then he said to Thomas, **“Put your finger here. Look at my hands. Put your hand into my side. No more disbelief. Believe!”** Thomas responded to Jesus, **My Lord**

and my God!" Jesus replied, **"Do you believe because you see me? Happy are those who don't see and yet believe."**

Following the reading:

Leader: This is a witness to the Word of God for the people of God!

People: **Thanks be to God!**

Message The Promise of Resurrection: Not Merely a Reunion

***Hymn No. 2114 verses 1-3 TFWS** "At the Font We Start Our Journey"

At the font we start our journey, in the Easter faith baptized;
doubts and fears no longer blind us, by the light of Christ surprised.
Alleluia! Alleluia! Hope held out and realized.

At the pulpit we are fashioned by the Easter tale retold
into witnesses and prophets by the power of Christ made bold.
Alleluia! Alleluia! Faith proclaimed, yet still untold.

At the altar we are nourished with the Easter gift of bread;
in our breaking it to pieces see the love of Christ outspread.
Alleluia! Alleluia! Life embraced, yet freely shed.

***Benediction**

***Sung Response No. 2114 verse 4** "At the Font We Start Our Journey"

At the door we are commissioned, now the Easter victory's won,
to restore a world divided to the peace of Christ as one.
Alleluia! Alleluia! Easter's work must still be done.

***Postlude**

Worship Resources:

- + adapted from *Easter from Christ Beside Me, Christ Within Me: Celtic Blessings*. Copyright © 2016 by Beth A. Richardson. Nashville: Upper Room Books.
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Worship Participants:

Liturgists: Betty Pritt (8:15); Melissa Rank (10:45)
Readers: Sharon Caple, JoAnn Lewis (8:15)
Pat Copeland, Herb Lambert (10:45)
Musicians: Kendra Rinard, *piano*; Delaney Rinard, *song leader*
Pastor: Anne Pruett-Barnett, *Interim Pastor*
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