



## Worship Celebration

**Second Sunday of Easter**

April 27, 2025

8:15 AM and 10:45 AM

† Indicates stand only as you are able.

### **St. Paul's United Methodist Church**

Welcome to Sunday morning worship. We invite all to rejoice in the good news we celebrate and proclaim this day: the Resurrection of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ as we enter into the season of Eastertide. Over the next 6 weeks we will explore themes from Revelation and the Gospel of John about what is possible when we believe. Our belief is not just something about which we make up our minds. It is also a process that helps us use our hands and feet to seek out and address the hurting ones, including our planet and its most vulnerable people and beyond-human creatures.

St. Paul's 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 201 years! Hymns, prayers, and responsive readings will be on the screen. Hymnals are available in the pew racks if you prefer. If you have a question or need assistance, please speak with the usher.

## PRELUDE

## PRAISE HYMN

*Welcome*

## Worship &amp; Song 3152

1. Let's walk together for a while and ask where we begin \_\_\_\_  
to build a world where love can grow and hope can enter in, \_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_ to be the hands of healing and to plant the seed of peace, \_\_\_\_  
singing welcome, welcome to this place.  
You're invited to come and know God's grace.  
All are welcome the love of God to share \_\_\_\_\_  
'cause all of us are welcome here; \_\_\_\_\_  
all are welcome in this place. \_\_\_\_\_
2. Let's talk together of a time when we will share a feast, \_\_\_\_  
where pride and power kneel to serve the lonely and the least, \_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_ and joy will set the table as we join our hands to pray, \_\_\_\_  
singing welcome, welcome to this place.  
You're invited to come and know God's grace.  
All are welcome the love of God to share \_\_\_\_\_  
'cause all of us are welcome here; \_\_\_\_\_  
all are welcome in this place. \_\_\_\_\_
3. Let's dream together of the day when earth and heaven are one, \_\_\_\_  
a city built of love and light, the new Jerusalem, \_\_\_\_  
where our mourning turns to dancing, every creature lifts its voice, \_\_\_\_  
crying welcome, welcome to this place.  
You're invited to come and know God's grace.  
All are welcome the love of God to share \_\_\_\_\_  
'cause all of us are welcome here; \_\_\_\_\_  
all are welcome in this place. \_\_\_\_\_

† CALL TO WORSHIP<sup>1</sup>

In the rising of the morning sun, the Holy speaks:

**You are my children. Shine!**

In the greening of the Earth and blooming of creation, the Holy speaks:

**You are my children. Grow!**

In the mountains reaching toward the sky, the Holy speaks:

**You are my children. Stand with strength!**

In the darkness of the winter days, the Holy speaks:

**You are my children. Trust!**

In the presence of the skies that float above us and the assurance of the Earth  
beneath us And with the calm of the Spirit within us, the Holy speaks:

**You are my children. Live!**

† HYMN

*Lord of the Dance*

UMH 261

1. I danced in the morning when the world was begun,  
and I danced in the moon and the stars and the sun,  
and I came down from heaven and I danced on the earth,  
At Bethlehem I had my birth.

*Refrain*

Dance, then, wherever you may be;  
I am the Lord of the Dance, said he.  
And I'll lead you all wherever you may be,  
and I'll lead you all in the dance, said he.

2. I danced for the scribe and the Pharisee,  
but they would not dance and they would not follow me;  
I danced for the fishermen, for James and John;  
they came to me and the dance went on.

*Refrain*

3. I danced on the sabbath when I cured the lame,  
the holy people said it was a shame;  
they whipped and stripped and they hung me high;  
and they left me there on a cross to die.

*Refrain*

4. I danced on a Friday and the sky turned bleack'  
it's hard to dance with eh devil on your back;  
they buried my body and they thought I'd gone,  
but I amd the dance and I still go on.

*Refrain*

5. They cut me down and leapt up high,  
I am the life that'll never, never die;  
I'll live in you if you'll live in me;  
I am the Lord of the Dance, said he.

*Refrain*

OPENING PRAYER<sup>1</sup> (in unison)

**Creator God, you call us to take on the holiness you have planted within us.  
In our worship this day, open our eyes and hearts to your movement that  
longs to make a home in us. So be it. Amen.**

JESUS LOVES ME MOMENT

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION<sup>2</sup>

Living God, as the risen Christ came into the locked room of the first disciples,  
may your Word enter into us, by the power of your Holy Spirit, so that we who  
have not seen may yet believe. **Amen.**

SCRIPTURE LESSON                      Revelation 1:4-8 (NRSVUE)

<sup>4</sup>John to the seven churches that are in Asia:

Grace to you and peace from him who is and who was and who is to come and  
from the seven spirits who are before his throne, <sup>5</sup>and from Jesus Christ, the  
faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth.  
To him who loves us and freed us from our sins by his blood <sup>6</sup>and made us a  
kingdom, priests serving his God and Father, to him be glory and dominion  
forever and ever. Amen.

<sup>7</sup>Look! He is coming with the clouds;

every eye will see him,  
even those who pierced him,  
and all the tribes of the earth will wail on account of him.

So it is to be. Amen.

<sup>8</sup>"I am the Alpha and the Omega," says the Lord God, who is and who was and  
who is to come, the Almighty.

RESPONSE

*Worship Leader:* This is the word of God, for the people of God.

*The People:* **Thanks be to God.**

† HYMN

*Blessed Assurance*

UMH 369

1. Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine! O what a foretaste of glory divine!  
Heir of salvation, purchase of God, born of his Spirit, washed in his blood.  
This is my story, this is my song, praising my Savior all the day long;  
this is my story, this is my song, praising my Savior all the day long.

† GOSPEL LESSON

John 20:19-31 (NRSVUE)

*Jesus Appears to the Disciples*

<sup>19</sup>When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors were locked where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." <sup>20</sup>After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. <sup>21</sup>Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you." <sup>22</sup>When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. <sup>23</sup>If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained."

*Jesus and Thomas*

<sup>24</sup>But Thomas (who was called the Twin), one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. <sup>25</sup>So the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord." But he said to them, "Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands and put my finger in the mark of the nails and my hand in his side, I will not believe."

<sup>26</sup>A week later his disciples were again in the house, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were shut, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." <sup>27</sup>Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here and see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it in my side. Do not doubt but believe." <sup>28</sup>Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God!" <sup>29</sup>Jesus said to him, "Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe."

*The Purpose of This Book*

<sup>30</sup> Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples that are not written in this book. <sup>31</sup> But these are written so that you may continue to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through believing you may have life in his name.

SERMON

Believing into Christ: *Embodied Believing*

Pastor Jim

HYMN

*We Walk by Faith*

TFWS 2196

1. We walk by faith, and not by sight: No gracious words we hear  
of him who spoke as none e'er spoke, but we believe him near.
2. 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!"
3. Help then, O Lord, our unbelief, and may our faith a bound;  
to call on you when your are near, and seek where you are found:
4. That when our life of faith is done in realms of clearer light  
we may behold you as you are in full and endless sight.
5. We walk by faith, and not by sight: No gracious words we hear  
of him who spoke as none e'er spoke, but we believe him near.

PASTORAL PRAYER<sup>3</sup>

Maker, Healer, Gatherer God,

You formed our bodies from the dust and called them good.

You made all creation to be in fellowship with one another.

Just as the fungi and the trees have connections so deep that we cannot see them  
on the surface,

So, too, do we have connections to you and one another.

Remind us of our calling to maintain this world;

Guide us in our pursuit of justice for every body that calls this place home;

Enliven us and energize us with the glow of your love.

May we show that love to every being that comes near to us.

Ever near God, draw us in to see the wounds of the world.

Give us the strength to bear witness.

Grant us the courage to proclaim what we have seen.

Open the ears of all that are there to hear.

God, gather us together in your love;  
Strengthen our resolve to collaborate;  
Open our hearts to your possibilities.  
May it be so.

#### JOYS AND CONCERNS

#### PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION<sup>4</sup>

Sisters and brothers in Christ,  
God invites us to bring our doubts and fears,  
our joys and concerns, our petitions and praise,  
and offer them for the earth and all its creatures.

#### *Prayers of the People*

Receive these prayers, O God,  
and transform us through them,  
that we may have eyes to see and hearts to understand  
not only what you do on our behalf,  
but what you call us to do  
so that your realm will come to fruition in glory. **Amen.**

#### 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.**

#### THE PEACE

Leader: The peace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

**People: And also with you.**

Leader: Please turn and offer signs of peace to others.

#### INVITATION TO THE OFFERING<sup>2</sup>

God gives new life to all that is, including ourselves and all that sustains us. So  
let our tithes and offerings be our songs of praise and thanksgiving in response

to the God who love us and frees us!

OFFERING WITH OFFERTORY

† DOXOLOGY

*Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow*  
Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;  
praise him, all creatures here below;  
praise him above, ye heavenly host;  
praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

UMH 95

PRAYER OF DEDICATION<sup>3</sup>

**God, from you comes every bounty.**

**Every sacrifice of life that sustains ours  
is the sacrifice of your beloved.**

**As we return a small part of the bounty you have blessed us with,  
We pray that it will be used to forge stronger connections among all creation  
Until the whole world is redeemed by your love. Amen.**

† SENDING HYMN

*Up from the Grave He Arose*

UMH 322

1. Low in the grave he lay, Jesus my Savior,  
waiting for the coming day, Jesus my Lord!

*Refrain*

Up from the grave he arose, with a mighty triumph o'er his foes;  
he arose a victor from the dark domain,  
and he lives forever, with his saints to reign.  
He arose! He arose! Hallelujah! Christ arose!

2. Vainly they watch his bed, Jesus my Savior;  
vainly they seal the dead, Jesus my Lord!

*Refrain*

3. Death cannot keep its prey, Jesus my Savior;  
he tore the bars away, Jesus, my Lord!

*Refrain*

BENEDICTION<sup>1</sup>

May we go from this place to embody God's love of all creation.



May we rise like those with wings.  
May we know the lightness of those that swim.  
May we have the courage of the four-leggeds.  
And may the Holy be embodied in all our comings and goings,  
this day and every day.  
Go in peace to love and serve our God.

POSTLUDE

### **Worship Participants:**

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

Musician: Kendra Rinard, *piano*

Pastor: Rev. James Martin

Audiovisual Coordinator: Walt Copeland

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**Today's radio broadcast on WMSG 1050 AM and WKTZ 95.9 FM** is sponsored by Willetta Mateer in memory of Paul R. Mateer, Jr.

### **Acknowledgements:**

<sup>1</sup>Written by Sally Johnson, *United Methodist Creation Justice Movement*

<sup>2</sup>Kimberly Bracken Long. *Feasting on the Word Worship Companion: Liturgies for Year C, Volume 1*. Presbyterian Publishing Corporation. Kindle Edition.

<sup>3</sup>Written by Rev. Chad Hornsby, *United Methodist Creation Justice Movement*

<sup>4</sup>Reprinted from *Revised Common Lectionary Prayers*, copyright © 2002 Consultation on Common Texts

<sup>5</sup>Excerpted from *Service of Holy Communion 2010*, posted on the [River of Life](http://RiverofLife.org) website. Re-posted on the re:Worship blog at <https://re-worship.blogspot.com/2012/02/easter-confession.html>.