

Emmanuel United Church of Christ

Welcomes YOU on this Easter Sunday

We are warmed by your presence among us this day

Service Liturgy - April 4, 2021 9:30 AM



Gathering around the Word

Gathering in the Darkness and Silence

The Lighting of the Paschal Candle

Leader: We have come together again to celebrate the occasion of great joy when our Lord passed from death to life. This is the Passover of our Lord. When the Jewish people were living in bondage under the Egyptians, the angel “passed over,” bringing life and freedom to the enslaved people of Israel. Today is our Passover—a Passover from enslavement to death to life eternal. We honor our Lord’s death and resurrection, confident that Jesus has called us to share in his victory and to live with him forever. We light this Paschal candle, which reminds us of the Lamb, the Lamb of God, the Easter Lamb. May his light shine eternally into our lives.

All: God, we share in the light of your glory through your Son, the Eternal Light and Life of the world. Make this new fire holy, and enflame us with new hope. Strengthen us by the Easter celebration, and bring us all one day to the feast of your eternal light, through Jesus Christ our Lord, the King of kings, and Lord of lords. Amen.

Leader: Through the light of the Paschal candle, we proclaim Jesus Christ, the Eternal Light of the world. He is the same yesterday, today, and forever. To him be all the glory and the praise!

All: May this light of Christ dispel the darkness in our lives and enflame us with new life, new faith, and new hope. Amen.

The Procession of Light to the Altar

To be repeated three times during the procession...

Leader: Christ our light.

All: Thanks be to God.

Prelude

Leader: Grace to you from Jesus Christ, who was, and is, and is to come. Hear the word of God: In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. In the Word was life, and the life was the light of all humanity. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

*Call to Worship

Leader: This is the day

All: angels bring light into our shadows, and gardeners harvest good news.

Leader: This is the day the Lord

All: awakens us with unexpected grace, and the sun breaks out in song.

Leader: This is the day the Lord has made!

All: The day when life triumphs over death, when love pushes aside fear, when hope walks with us in every moment.

***THE EASTER PROCLAMATION**

Leader: Christ the Lord is risen today!

All: CHRIST THE LORD IS RISEN TODAY!

The Light Returns and Ringing of the Bells

Prayer of Invocation

Call to Confession

A Unison Prayer of Confession

We think this story is so old, imaginative God, that we cannot hear the astonishing news of triumph over death. We are so afraid of our own shadows, that we cannot see the Light of life which is streaming all around us. Convinced that there is nothing beyond these days we call life, we cannot sense your resurrection hope which is calling to us by our names. On this day of new wonders and everlasting grace, God of our lives, may we be glad that you have not forgotten us. May we rejoice in the ancient promises which are proclaimed afresh this morning. May we turn with our questions, our doubts, and our hearts towards Jesus, the Gardener of grace, who calls us by name and pours resurrection love into us. Amen.

(Silence is kept for personal reflection and prayer)

Assurance of Pardon

Leader: On this Easter, as on the first; on this day, as on every day; God turns to us, calls us by name and plants forgiveness and hope in our lives.

All: Alleluia! This is the good news! Christ is our peace, the peace we need, the peace which will heal the world. Alleluia! Christ is Risen! Amen!

Listening for the Word

Special Music

“In the Garden”

Prayer for Illumination

The Scripture Readings

The Old Testament Lesson Psalm 118: 1-2, 14-24

The Gospel Lesson John 20: 1-18

Sermon

“The End”

Pastor Cope

Responding to the Word

Call to Offering

Offertory

***Prayer of Dedication**

Thank you, God, for the gift of this amazing day of resurrection! Our hearts are overflowing with the joy and excitement of Easter. We pray that you will take our exuberance and use it to bring light and hope to those trapped in darkness and despair. Use these gifts of money to empower our work with those who have not yet seen the risen Lord in their midst. Use the gift of our very lives to empower our calling to carry your love into the world. We pray this with the boldness of those who have encountered the living Christ. Amen.

THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

Bearing the Word into the World

Piano Duet

“Celebration Overture”

***Charge and Benediction**

Leader: We could just return to our homes and go back to life,

All: but we will go to rebuild our neighbors and share the light we have received.

Leader: We could just stand around and wonder where Jesus has gone,

All: but we will turn and, as he calls us by name, follow to bring hope and healing to our world.

Leader: We could just keep quiet and not whisper a word to anyone,

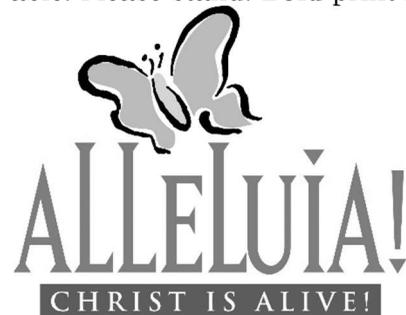
All: but we will go to tell others of the good news that Jesus is alive in our midst.

***Three-fold Amen**

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*Postlude

*Indicates that all who are able. Please stand. **Bold** print indicates unison reading.



THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

The Great Prayer of Thanksgiving

Leader: The God of every morning be with you.

All: And also with you.

Leader: People of Easter morning, lift up your hearts!

All: We lift them to the One who has raised Jesus from the grave.

Leader: People of Easter's joy, give thanks to the One who raises us to new life.

All: We sing our alleluias to the God of everlasting love.

Leader: It is right and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere, to give thanks to you, Living God. Time after time, you draw us here to inspire us, feed us, and save us. Especially when our love fails, you are here, steadfast and true. You created this world and called it good. You created us to proclaim Your good to all. And so, on this day of resurrection, we raise our voices to proclaim this timeless truth:

All: Christ has died. Christ has risen! Christ will come again! Pour out your Holy Spirit on us, your people, and on these gifts of bread and cup. Make us believers and tellers of your word. Make us healers and bestowers of grace. And make us one body in Jesus Christ. All glory and honor is yours, Almighty God, now and for all time! Amen.

Words of Institution

Sharing the Elements

Prayer of Thanksgiving

Our Lord's Prayer (using debts and debtors)

