



"A Community Of Many Faithing Communities Where All Belong!"

Living Waters Contemplative Life Center | Divine Intervention Ministry to the Homeless
Tippecanoe just.good.food Garden | Food Justice Site PCUSA
Arts and Science Literacy Camps for Children

Welcome To Worship

Easter Sunday

March 31, 2024

9:30 a.m.



Welcome to this time of being with God and each other.

"And I Hope" Rev. Trish Eckert

✧Easter Egg Hunt ~ Happy Easter!

✧**Prelude** *In the Bulb, There is a Flower*

✧**Introit** *Come, O Fount of Every Blessing* (v2 on song sheets)

✧ **Candle Lighting** *314 Longing for Light* (refrain, only)

We light the Christ Candle ~

Light is a gift from God, a gift to be shared. Jesus came into our midst as the light of the world, and the Holy spirit is present to illumine our work and witness. May we celebrate this day, mindful of the light and love of God.

Christ is Risen!

ALL: Christ is risen indeed!



✧Welcome and community news

- We are seeking volunteers and resources for the Tippe gardens - the “Healing Garden” – we need people and we need equipment. If you have gardening tools, gloves, hoses, etc, that you don’t plan on using or want to replace, please consider donating them our “Healing Garden.” Please be in touch with Pastor Trish about volunteering and equipment.
- Siena Retreat Center’s Annual Spring Benefit Concert with Carrie Newcomer
Sunday, April 7 at 2 pm at 5637 Erie Street in Racine (Tickets \$35 in advance, \$40 at the door)
If you’re interested but the price is steep for you, there is support to buy a ticket – just reach out to Pastor Trish. Also, carpooling is available.



✧Readying Ourselves for Worship

***Surely God is in this place, Holy Ground!
Surely God is in this place, Holy Ground!***

✧ **A Poem as we Center Ourselves in this Moment**

Easter Blessing

The blessing of the morning light to you,
may it find you even in your invisible
appearances, may you be seen to have risen
from some other place you know and have known
in the darkness and that that carries all you need.

May you see what is hidden in you
as a place of hospitality and shadowed shelter,
may that hidden darkness be your gift to give,
may you hold that shadow to the light
and the silence of that shelter to the word of the light,
may you join all of your previous disappearances
with this new appearance, this new morning,
this being seen again, new now, and newly alive.

David Whyte: Easter Morning 2015 In Memoriam John O'Donohue

✧ **Becoming Present to God and Each Other - Our Check-in**

~ **The Joy of Passing the Peace** ~

One: May the peace that surpasses all
understanding be with you

All: **And also with you**

One: Thanks be to God



✧ **Gathering as God's People: Our Lenten Theme – Wandering Heart**

Today's theme could be written as an unfinished sentence: "And I hope . . ." We might imagine Peter hearing the women's testimony then uttering these words under his breath, his voice trailing off in the distance as he dashes to the tomb to see for himself. In one of the older verses from "Come Thou Fount," there is the lyric: *And I hope by/ Thy good pleasure/Safely to arrive at home*. I like that the line begins with "and," for Peter shows us a "both/and" faith that persists even after mountain peaks and deep valleys. Peter drew his sword. Peter denied Christ three times. Peter was not there when Jesus died. And Peter ran to the tomb. Peter shows us that we can always begin again. We can add an "and" when we think our stories have come to an end. Does Peter run to the tomb because he believes or because he doubts? Ultimately the tenacity of hope drives him there. Once he sees the linen cloths on the ground, he safely arrives back home, filled with amazement. As Eastertide unfolds, may we remain open to amazement, to awe, to wonder



✧Gathering Hymn *Jesus Christ is Risen Today* 232

✧Opening Ourselves to God's Grace

Yesterday we thought death had won.
Yesterday we thought all was lost.
Yesterday we thought Christ was gone.

But not today.

Today we know that love has won.

Today we know that hope is real.

Today we know that Christ is here.

We have a reason to hope.

We have a reason to sing!

Alleluia!

Alleluia!

Christ is risen today.

✧Sharing our Innermost Lives with God

The stone is rolled away!

We assume it is a mistake.

The angels say, "He is not here!"

We assume their news is fake.

The women tell the story,

but we do not want to hear it.

Peter runs to the tomb,

but we do not understand.

Forgive us, God, for thinking an empty tomb
is nothing more than a prank.

**Forgive us for seeing discarded burial cloths
and still holding tight to death.**

Forgive us for pushing away reasons to hope
when you are alive and well in the world.

Teach us to see what you see.

Unravel the threads of our unbelief.

Amen.

✧Prayer for Illumination



God of new beginnings,
On that first Easter morning, the disciples struggled to hear the good news.
Doubt clouded their minds.
Negativity took root and hope vanished with a simple shake of their heads.
As we return to this familiar text, help us to hear differently this morning.
Open our ears that we might hear
the sound of Alleluias ringing through this text.
Open up our minds that the mystery and joy of Easter
might feel within reach.
Open up our hearts that we might believe
the unbelievable.
And like Peter, in this hearing, may we move closer to you.
God of the empty tomb, we are hungry for your good news.
Speak to us now.
With hope in our hearts we listen and we pray, amen.

✧Affirmation of Faith

**We may weep through the longest nights.
We may stare at the empty tomb with more questions than answers.
We may run our fingers over the burial cloths and still long for more.
But today, we are a people of hope.**

**We believe in new beginnings.
We believe that the God who created the world is stronger than death.
We believe that Jesus abides among us,
healing, teaching, and leaving fingerprints throughout this world.
We believe that a tomb could not hold him.
We believe that the sun does rise.
We believe that Peter was there
with questions, awe, and faith the size of a mustard seed.**

**We believe that the story is not over yet,
for God is among us.
Today we are a people of hope.**

✧ **Special Music** *Before We Fly* ~ by Betsy Gonwa

✧ **Prayer of Intention**

Holy Spirit, may we hear your gracious Word for us today. May we grow in wisdom, strength, and love as we open our ears, our minds, and our hearts to the transformative message you have in store for each of us. Amen.

✧ **Bible Wisdom Teachings**

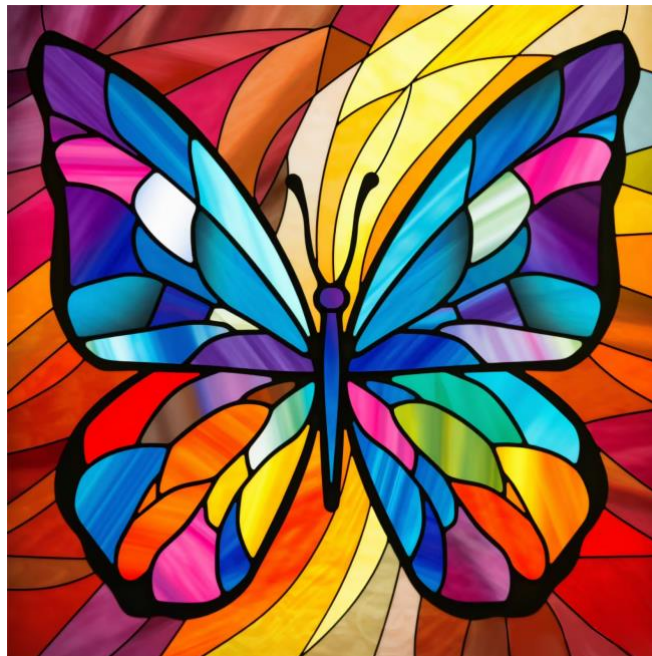
Luke 24: 1-12

24 But on the first day of the week, at early dawn, they came to the tomb, taking the spices that they had prepared. 2 They found the stone rolled away from the tomb, 3 but when they went in, they did not find the body. 4 While they were perplexed about this, suddenly two men in dazzling clothes stood beside them. 5 The women were terrified and bowed their faces to the ground, but the men said to them, 'Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here, but has risen. 6 Remember how he told you, while he was still in Galilee, 7 that the Son of Man must be handed over to sinners, and be crucified, and on the third day rise again.' 8 Then they remembered his words, 9 and returning from the tomb, they told all this to the eleven and to all the rest. 10 Now it was Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and the other women with them who told this to the apostles. 11 But these words seemed to them an idle tale, and they did not believe them. 12 But Peter got up and ran to the tomb; stooping and looking in, he saw the linen cloths by themselves; then he went home, amazed at what had happened.

One: May we hear anew the origin stories of our faith and draw from the roots of our tradition.

All: **Thanks be to our God.**

✧ **Message** *Wandering Heart: And I Hope*, Rev. Trish Eckert



✧ Reflection Questions

- ◇ This Easter, do you find yourself asking, “Could it really be true?” In response, are you moving in the direction of hope? Where are you looking for glimpses of resurrection?
- ◇ In what ways are you experiencing resurrection this Easter? How might you be like Peter, “amazed at what had happened” (Luke 24:12)?
- ◇ Peter shows us that we can always begin again. We can add an “and” when we think our stories have come to an end. When have you experienced a holy “and” when you thought something in your life had come to an end? When have you begun again – despite heartbreak, or grief, or failure?

✧ Short period of silent reflection

✧ Sharing Our Wisdom



✧ Hymn *Christ is Alive* 246

✧ Our gifts of support

Let us offer our gifts alongside our alleluias! Let us offer our hands and feet and voices to take the celebration out of this place into a world that needs hope so desperately! May we go into the world with such energy and intention, that people see in us God’s redeeming love and the triumph of light over darkness! In the name of the risen Christ, we pray. Amen.

✧ Community Prayers

✧ Pastoral Prayer

The Lord's Prayer

**ALL: Our Parent,
Perfect Love,
We turn again to You.**

**Guide us;
help us to love,
so that Your Will be done,
on earth as in heaven.**

**Give us this day
that which we need.
Fill us with hope and trust.**

**Help us to forgive
our brothers and sisters
(and ourselves as well);
and to look on them
as you look on us.**

**Give us strength to resist temptation.
When we are tempted, let us choose peace.**

**Deliver us from our fears.
For what You love is safe.
And Your love remains
forever and always. Amen.**

✧Benediction

Beloved wanderer,
as you leave this place,
may you carry your curious heart on your sleeve.
May you look for God in every face.
May you find the courage to get out of the boat,
to run to the tomb,
and to speak of your faith.
And when the world falls apart,
may you hear God's voice deep within,
saying, "Take heart, it is I, be not afraid."
You are called.
You are blessed.
In both your ups and your downs,
you always belong to God.
Go now in peace.
Go trusting that good news. Amen.

Now that the worship has ended, may the service truly begin.

✧ **Our Response:**

Holy One, now we your servants go in peace. Your Word lives on in us.

Please remain quiet in place until the postlude is finished.

✧ **Postlude** *May the God of Hope Go With Us*

