

FAITH
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST



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Rev. Dr. Bruce C. Stevenson, Lead Pastor
Mr. Dennis J. Duda, Organist-Director of Music

SERVICE OF WORSHIP
EASTER SUNDAY – THE RESURRECTION OF OUR LORD
SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION
MARCH 31, 2024

ASSEMBLE IN GOD’S NAME

PRELUDE

A PRAYER UPON ENTERING GOD’S HOUSE

Resurrecting God, Strengthen in us the will to go out, sharing your Good News of God’s redeeming love. Guide us in telling the story of your endless love through our words and deeds. Remind us of your presence. Fill our hearts with your ways of love that bring about peace and justice for all. With your loving embrace, protect us in the face of terror and hateful actions. Bring us your hope found in the excitement of eternal life and saving love exemplified in Jesus, the Risen Christ! Amen.

WORDS OF WELCOME

CENTERING OUR HEARTS ON WORSHIP

*** OPENING HYMN: ALLELUIA! ALLELUIA! HEARTS TO HEAVEN**

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*** CALL TO WORSHIP:**

Pastor: Yesterday we thought death had won.

People: **Yesterday we thought all was lost.**

Pastor: Yesterday we thought Christ was gone.

People: **But not today.**

Pastor: Today we know that love has won.

People: **Today we know that hope is real.**

Pastor: Today we know that Christ is here.

People: **We have a reason to hope.**

Pastor: We have a reason to sing!

People: **Alleluia!**

Pastor: Alleluia!

Unison: **Christ is risen today.**

REJOICING IN GOD'S GRACE

* CALL TO AND CONFESSION OF SIN:

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.

* THE KYRIE

Leader: Lord, have mercy upon us.

Congregation: Lord, have mercy upon us.

Leader: Christ, have mercy upon us.

Congregation: Christ, have mercy upon us.

Leader: Lord, have mercy upon us.

Congregation: Lord, have mercy upon us.

* ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Pastor: O Lord, open our lips.

People: And our mouths shall show forth your praise.

* THE GLORIA PATRI

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Glory to the Creator, the Christ, the Holy Spirit, Three-in-One; as it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen. Amen.

* WE SHARE PEACE – *LET THERE BE PEACE OF EARTH*

Let there be peace on earth and let it begin with me

Let There Be Peace on Earth The peace that was meant to be

With God our Creator, we are Family

Let us walk with each other In perfect harmony.

Let peace begin with me Let this be the moment now.

With ev'ry step I take Let this be my solemn vow

*To take each moment and live Each moment in peace eternally
Let there be peace on earth And let it begin with me*

LEARNING ABOUT GOD

**THE CHILDREN'S SERMON
PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION
THE SCRIPTURE LESSONS:**

Gospel: Luke 24:1 – 12

SERMON: *Keep Going*

DEDICATING OURSELVES TO GOD'S WILL

*** EASTER AFFIRMATION OF FAITH:**

Unison: 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.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Pastor: God of today and tomorrow, God of the garden and the tomb, God of our faith and our doubt, we are running toward you. Like Peter on that Easter morning, we simply cannot stay away. So with beating hearts and wide eyes, we have arrived in this sanctuary, bringing with us questions, hopes, joys, and concerns. Hear these prayers as we draw closer to you. God of the dawn, we start with our hopes: Thank you for the gifts of this world that instill buoyancy in us. Thank you for the curiosity of children, for the sound of your people singing in unison, for crowded tables and neighborly kindness, for the sun after the rain, the spring after the frost, love after loss, and faith after doubt. Like Peter, we have countless reasons to hold onto hope. Highest among them is the joy and promise of this day. Thank you for these holy breadcrumbs on the journey of faith. However, before we found ourselves in the garden, before the joy and the alleluias of this day, we found ourselves at the foot of the cross. So for the things that erode our hope, for the things that stitch doubt and fear into our hearts, we ask for your comforting hand. Wrap your arms around all who are still locked in that upper room. Wrap your arms around all who cannot find healing after their longest night. Wrap your arms around all who look for reasons to hope, but cannot find those breadcrumbs amidst reasons to grieve. Holy God, like Peter, fan the flames of our faith. Like Peter, invite us to step out of our boats. And like Peter, use us to care for those in need, to tell your story, and to build a better world. We remember, and we believe.

(At this time feel free to speak the names of people, locations, or situations, both local and farther removed, that you wish to life up to God as your prayer of petition)

Pastor: So with awe-struck, wildly-beating, grateful hearts, we run toward you. With feet in the garden and eyes on the cross, we pray to you, saying the words your son taught us to pray:

Unison: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed by 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 debts as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

GIVE THANKS TO GOD

THE FELLOWSHIP OF SHARING

Pastor: Loving God, the abundance of your generosity is exemplified in the dawning of the sun.

People: Thank you for the joy and hope of new mercies found in the morning sun.

Pastor: Even in moments when we are showered by the rain, remind us that your love never fails.

Unison: Rain down your abundant love and redeeming grace upon us.

Pastor: Let us give our offerings with generosity and joy to the One who has faithfully and generously given to us love, grace, and mercy.

OFFERTORY

SENIOR CHOIR ANTHEM: *GLAD EASTER PRAISES*

*** OFFERTORY RESPONSE – THE DOXOLOGY**

Praise God from whom all blessings flow; Praise God, all creatures here below; Praise God above, you heavenly host; Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

*** PRAYER OF DEDICATION:**

Let us remember that weeping may endure for a night, but joy comes early in the morning. May these gifts of blessing be a sign of the love, light, and glory of our redeeming God who has created a world of abundance with all that we need. May we remain thankful for your generosity, O God, as we dedicate these offerings to you and your beloved creation.

THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

THE INVITATION

Pastor: When the women got to the tomb on that Easter morning they were met by angels, who told them, “He is not here! But remember what he told you.” I can’t help but wonder, there in that garden as the sun rose over the trees, if they remembered it all. I wonder if they remembered Jesus telling 5,000 people to sit together in the grass, passing out baskets of fish and bread. I wonder if they remembered how he stopped in the middle of the crowd to ask, “Who touched my robe?” I wonder if they remembered how he ate with Zacchaeus or scooped up the children onto his knee. I wonder if they remembered him teaching in the temple, telling people, “Love your neighbor as yourself.” I wonder if they remembered how the wind stopped with the sound of his voice. I wonder if they remembered how he washed their feet and said, “This is my body, broken for you.” I wonder if they remembered it all. Friends, just like the women in the garden, we need those same reminders. The suffering of the world can erode the muscle memory of grace and


welcome that we hold. Don't let it. Come to the Table and remember. Remember how Jesus fed everyone. Remember how none were turned away. Remember how he said, "Do this in remembrance of me." Come and remember. There is room for you here.

PRAYER OF PRAISE

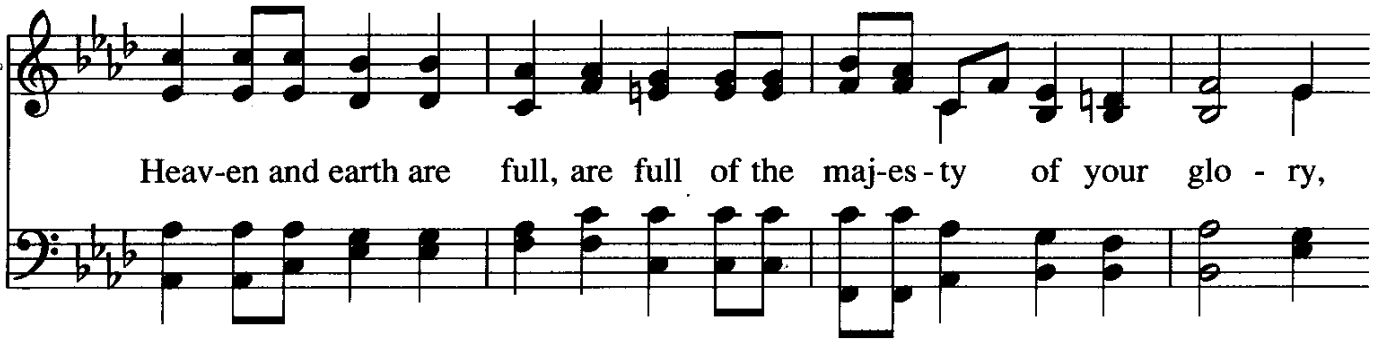
Pastor: Praise to You, God of glory! You created the universe and all living things. You breathed life into our dust and gave us a paradise. You sought us when we hid ourselves, ashamed of our sin. You made a people for yourself and saved them from oppression. In the fullness of time, your love came also to us in Your servant Jesus. He ministered to us, healing, overcoming divisions, and welcoming all. He died on the cross of shame. But You vindicated Him, giving Him a life that is forever new! This is the life He shares with us: a life of justice, mercy, and citizenship in Your realm of peace. All Your creatures testify to Your mighty deeds! They declare Your everlasting love! We too proclaim it, as with the angels of heaven we sing:

SANCTUS

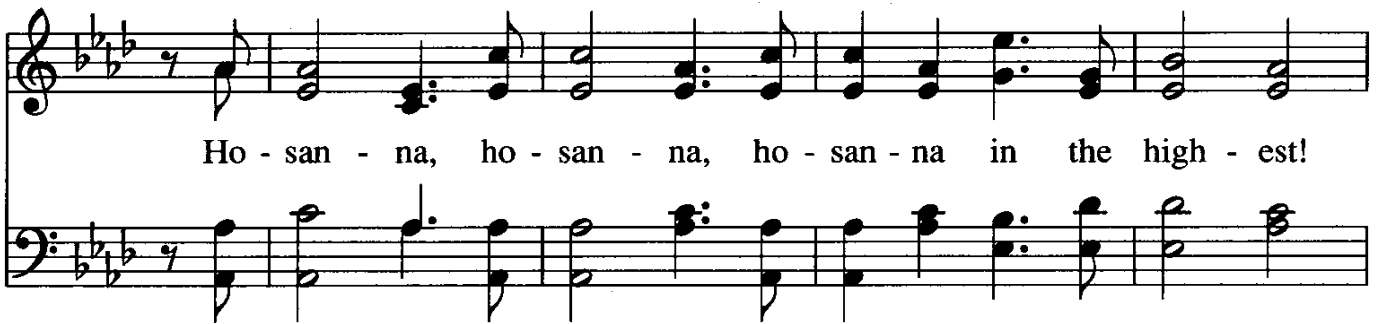
Music: Alonzo P. Howard (1838-1902)



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly, God of the heaven-ly host;



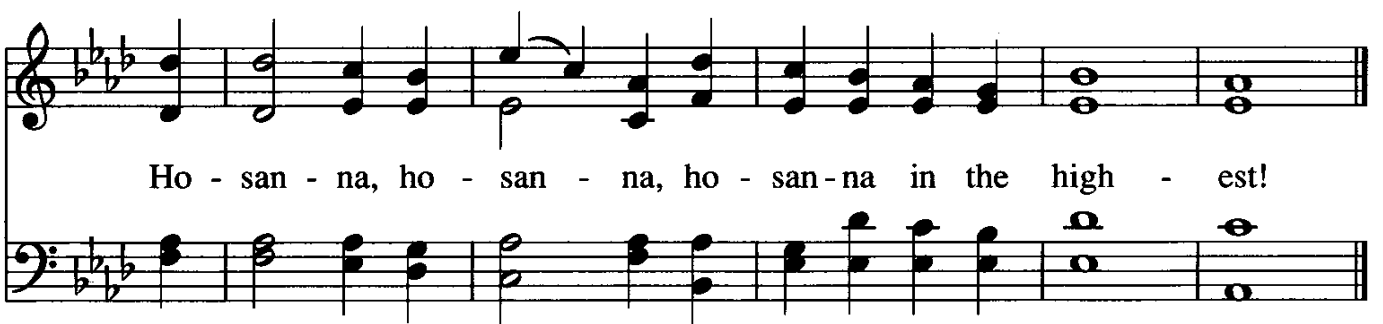
Heav-en and earth are full, are full of the maj-es-ty of your glo - ry,



Ho - san - na, ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high - est!



Bless-ed the one who comes in the name of our God,



Ho - san - na, ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high - est!

PRAYER OF INSTITUTION AND CONSECRATION

Pastor: Now, O God, with grateful hearts we remember Jesus.
We remember that He was laid in a borrowed grave.

People: **A heavy stone sealed up the tomb.**

Pastor: We remember that the women came, early in the morning, on the third day.

People: **They did not find Him among the dead.**

Pastor: We remember that His disciples met Him on the road.

People: **They said to Him, “Stay with us, for it is evening.”
So He went in with them.**

Pastor: And while they were at the table, He took bread, gave thanks, and broke it for them to share. Then their eyes were opened, and they knew Him in the breaking of the bread.

And now come, Holy Spirit, bless this bread that earth has given and human hands have made. Bless also this fruit of the vine, created for our gladness. Make them the food and drink of everlasting life, body surrendered, blood poured out.

People: **As we rejoice in the resurrection, give us love for each other, and make us servants of peace, until Your New Realm is revealed, and every creature beholds it and encourage us to share from our bounty so that there is plenty for all. We pray in the name of Jesus, who lives and presides at this table, our host and our feast.
Amen.**

THE PRESENTATION OF THE BREAD AND THE CUP

Pastor: The bread which we break is the communion of the of Christ.

The cup of blessing which we bless is the communion

of the blood of Christ.

CALL TO THE SUPPER

Pastor: The gifts of God for the people of God. Come, for all things are ready.

LENTEN SONG: *Return To You – FAPC Chapel Choir*

SHARING THE ELEMENTS

(The bread in the cups on the trays are gluten free. The glasses in the center ring of the communion trays contain grape juice.)

(After receiving the bread.)

Pastor: Take and eat, this is the body of Christ broken for you.

People: Amen!

(After receiving the cup.)

Pastor: Drink this, for it is the blood of Christ, shed for you.

People: Amen!

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

Pastor: Let us pray

Unison: Thank You, God, for life in the Spirit of Jesus, for gladness in this bread and cup, for love that cannot die, for peace the world cannot give, for joy in the company of friends, for the splendors of creation, and for the mission of justice You have made our own. Give us the gifts of this holy communion – oneness of heart, love for neighbors, forgiveness of enemies, the will to serve You every day, and risen life that never ends. In Christ's name we pray. Amen. Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

COMMISSIONING

Pastor: You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hid. Nor does anyone light a lamp and put it under a bushel, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. May Your light so shine before all people, that they may see Your good works and give glory to God who is in heaven.

GO IN GOD'S NAME

- * **CLOSING HYMN: *CHRIST THE LORD IS RISEN TODAY* 233**
- * **BENEDICTION AND THREEFOLD AMEN**
- * **MEDITATION**

Almighty God, grant that the words we have heard this day with our ears may be grafted into our hearts through your grace, that they may produce in us the fruits of a good life, to the praise and honor of your name; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

* **POSTLUDE**

*Would those who are able please stand.

CHOIR ANTHEM: *GLAD EASTER PRAISES* - L. Larson

We welcome glad Easter when Jesus arose, and won a great victory over His foes. Then raise your glad voices, all Christians, and sing, bring your glad Easter praises to Jesus, the King! We tell how the women came early that day, and there at the tomb found the stone rolled away. We sing of the angel who said, "Do not fear! Your Savior is risen, and He is not here, He is not here." We think of the promise which Jesus did give; "That those who believe in Me also shall live!" Then raise your glad voices! Come raise your glad voices and sing Easter praises to Jesus, the King! Alleluia!

Welcome to Faith Church this Easter Sunday. We are glad to have you worshiping with us. May our time together serve as an inspiration for the days and weeks ahead. Please sign and pass the Friendship Pads provided for you in the pews.

Thank you to all who helped decorate the Chancel with Easter lilies and tulips. Please take your flowers with you after the service.

The Easter Flowers are presented by:

~LaMar Beck & Family in memory of Arlene and Ray Beck

~Joan Hassler in memory of Mom and Dad

~Tom & Brenda Hovis in memory of Evelyn, Eugene, Louise, and Richard

~Tim Hovis & Family in memory of Loved Ones

~Betty Leibensperger in memory of Bonnie and LeRoy

~Bob & Patti Shelly in memory of Loved ones

~Bob & Patti Shelly in honor of our Grandchildren

~Tom & Deb Herstine in honor of Lina Lippincott

~Diane Neidermeier in honor of Brian, Rachel, Grayson, and Ellie

~Sandi & Tony DiSanto in memory of our loving parents – Margaret and Raymond Eckman, Caroline and Angelo DiSanto, and Matt Eckman

~Rose Mirth in memory of Robert F. and Harriett Ann Mirth

~Rose Mirth in honor of Patrick and Genevieve McAndrew

~Eric Hite in honor of New Beginnings

~Bruce & Linda Torrence in memory of John and Dorothy Shive and Ed and Costella Torrence

- ~Donna Kuhns in memory of Husband and Son*
- ~Bruce, Michelle, Mark, & Ben Keeler in memory of Paul and Miriam Keeler*
- ~Bruce, Michelle, Mark, & Ben Keeler in memory of Harold and Armeda Parrish*
- ~Bruce, Michelle, Mark, & Ben Keeler in memory of Vernon and Dottie Keeler*
- ~Sue, Jill, & Travis in loving memory of Henry Roberts*
- ~Sue, Jill, & Travis in loving memory of Jimmy Roberts*
- ~His Family in memory of Ken Ritter*
- ~Kim Ritter & Rachel Zehnder in honor of Pat Siwert*
- ~Artie & Susan in loving memory of Betty O'Sullivan*
- ~Artie & Susan in loving memory of Kim Smith*
- ~Gail Clark in memory of Frances and Harry Moyer*
- ~Jean Hanville in memory of husband, Harry Hanville*
- ~Doris & Ray Horwath in memory of Parents*
- ~Faye Tirpak in memory of mother and father, Harold and Eve Carl*
- ~The Adams Family in memory of Joe and Jennie Talaber*
- ~The Adams Family in honor of Lily Mae Adams*
- ~Darin & Kristen Jellison in memory of Russell and Lona Jellison, and Norman and Norma Cavanaugh*
- ~Darin & Kristen Jellison in memory of Alfred and Margaret DiNorscia, and Delbert and Juanita Fletcher*
- ~The Dill Family in memory of our loved ones watching over us from Heaven*

Pastor Bruce will be on vacation tomorrow, April 1st through Monday, April 8th. If you find yourself in need of pastoral care during this time, please call Pastor Teresa Martin at 717-654-4044.

Sandy David will be out of the office tomorrow (Easter Holiday) and Tuesday (personal day).

Next Sunday we will welcome Rev. Ernest Diefenderfer to lead us in worship.

CALENDAR

Office Hours: Mon. – Thurs. 9 am to 4 pm; Friday Closed

Pastor Bruce is on vacation this week.

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| Today | - Easter Sunday
- 10:15 am Worship/Sunday School |
| Monday | - Office Closed |
| Tuesday | - Office Closed
- 2:00 pm Faith in Stitches |
| Friday | - Office Closed |
| Sunday | - 10:15 am Worship |

Thanks to our volunteers:

	March 31	April 7
Head Usher:	Kim Ritter	Bruce Torrence
Ushers:	Tim & Sara Hovis Brett & Sonya Dill	Tom Hovis Cindy Talaber
Lay Reader:	Barb Maursky	Joan Hassler
Sunday School:	No Sunday School	Sonya & Brett Dill
Financial Sec:	Tony DiSanto	Bruce Torrence
Altar Flowers:	Easter Flowers	Faye Tirpak

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Organist/Music Director: 215-361-8641; ddduda@verizon.net