

WORSHIP FOR SUNDAY, MARCH 31, 2024

First Presbyterian Church of Union, Missouri

EASTER SUNDAY

GATHERING

PRELUDE

CHORAL INTROIT “An Easter Carol”

Words and Music by Michael Bedford.

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CALL TO WORSHIP *(from Psalm 118)*

One: Rejoice! He is risen!
All: **He is risen indeed!**
One: We gather for worship in awe and wonder.
All: **The tomb is empty; death is not the last word.**
One: “The stone that the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone.”
All: **“This is the Lord’s doing; it is marvelous in our eyes.”**
One: Open your hearts and minds to the risen Christ.
All: **Jesus Christ is alive and we, too, shall live.**
One: “This is the day that the Lord has made.”
All: **“Let us rejoice and be glad in it.”**
One: For Jesus Christ is risen!
All: **He is risen indeed!**

***OPENING HYMN** “Christ the Lord Is Risen Today!” GtG 245

1. **"Christ the Lord is risen today!"**
Alleluia!
All creation, join to say:
Alleluia!
Raise your joys and triumphs high,
Alleluia!
Sing, O heavens, and earth reply,
Alleluia!

(continued...)

2. Love's redeeming work is done,
Alleluia!
Fought the fight, the battle won,
Alleluia!
Death in vain forbids him rise,
Alleluia!
Christ has opened paradise.
Alleluia!
3. Lives again our glorious King,
Alleluia!
Where, O death, is now your sting?
Alleluia!
Jesus died, our souls to save,
Alleluia!
Where your victory, O grave?
Alleluia!
4. Hail, the Lord of earth and heaven!
Alleluia!
Praise to you by both be given,
Alleluia!
Every knee to you shall bow,
Alleluia!
Risen Christ, triumphant now.
Alleluia!

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Music Harm. David Evans, 1927 © 1927 Oxford University Press; *used by permission through CCLI License #11178434 / #2457662.*

UNISON PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Amazing God: we have heard the news before, yet still we can hardly believe it. We fail to trust the power of your grace and love. We know death too well, but life too little. Forgive our hardheartedness. Forgive our lack of faith in you. Forgive our resisting the life you offer. By the power of the resurrection, transform us. With the light of the Easter dawn, dispel the darkness of our despair and doubt. Through the gift of your Spirit, grant us the fullness of new life in Christ, our Resurrected Lord. Amen.

SILENT CONFESSION

ASSURANCE OF PARDON *(from Acts 10)*

- One: Christ is risen! He is risen indeed!
All: **The One who came to embody love among people “is ordained by God as judge of the living and the dead.”**
One: “Everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name.”
All: **In Jesus Christ we are forgiven. For he is risen! He is risen indeed!**

THE PEACE

- One: The peace of Christ be with you.
All: **And also with you.**
(From your seat, a brief sign of peace may be shared: a wave of the hand, a nod of the head, etc.)

THE WORD

SCRIPTURE READING Mark 16:1-8

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

SERMON “Scared to Death! Scared to Life?” by Pastor Bill Vincent

*HYMN “Crown Him with Many Crowns” GtG 268 *(Verses 1, 2, & 4)*

1. **Crown him with many crowns,
the Lamb upon his throne;
hark, how the heavenly anthem drowns
all music but its own!
Awake, my soul, and sing
of him who died for thee,
and hail him as thy matchless King
through all eternity.**
2. **Crown him the Lord of love;
behold his hands and side,
rich wounds, yet visible above,
in beauty glorified:
no angel in the sky
can fully bear that sight,
but downward bends his burning eye
at mysteries so bright.**

(continued...)

4. **Crown him the Lord of years,
the potentate of time;
creator of the rolling spheres,
ineffably sublime.
All hail, Redeemer, hail!
For thou hast died for me;
thy praise shall never, never fail
throughout eternity.**

Words: Matthew Bridges, 1851
Music: DIADEMATA, George Job Elvey, 1868
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***AFFIRMATION OF FAITH** (from “*A Declaration of Faith*”)

**Jesus was dead and buried,
but God raised him from the dead.
We are certain that Jesus lives.
We declare that Jesus is Lord.
His resurrection is a decisive victory
over the powers that deform and destroy human life.
His lordship is hidden.
The world appears to be dominated by people and systems
that do not acknowledge his rule.
But his lordship is real.
It demands our loyalty and sets us free
from the fear of all lesser lords who threaten us.
We maintain that ultimate sovereignty
now belongs to Jesus Christ
in every sphere of life.
Jesus is Lord!
He has been Lord from the beginning.
He will be Lord at the end.
Even now he is Lord.**

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PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

One: Hear the prayers we lift up to you...
All: ...**God of resurrection power and love.**

THE EUCHARIST

OFFERING

Invitation

Reflection Choir: “In the Garden”

Words and Music: C. Austin Miles, 1912
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**Unison Prayer of Dedication*

God of the empty tomb, your grace astounds us, your generosity fills us to overflowing. Accept our offerings as signs of our gratitude and bless our work on Christ’s behalf. May we love as Christ loved. May we serve as Christ served. Call us forth into your world, guided by Christ’s spirit. Amen.

SACRAMENT OF THE LORD’S SUPPER

Invitation to the Lord’s Table

Prayer of Thanksgiving

Leader: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

Leader: Lift up your hearts.

People: We lift them to the Lord.

Leader: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People: It is right to give our thanks and praise.

(The prayer continues...)

The Lord’s Prayer (Traditional)

**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 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.**

Breaking of the Bread

Communion of the People

(As you are served, go ahead and partake of each of the elements, as a reminder – for each of us and all of us – of our individual participation in this sacrament and our personal commitment to our Lord.)

Prayer

SENDING

*CLOSING HYMN “The Day of Resurrection!” GtG 233

1. **The day of resurrection!
Earth, tell it out abroad,
the Passover of gladness,
the Passover of God.
From death to life eternal,
from sin’s dominion free,
our Christ has brought us over
with hymns of victory.**

2. **Let hearts be purged of evil
that we may see aright
the Lord in rays eternal
of resurrection light,
and listening to his accents,
may hear, so calm and plain,
his own "All hail!" and hearing,
may raise the victor strain.**

3. **Now let the heavens be joyful;
let earth its song begin;
the round world keep high triumph
and all that is therein.
Let all things seen and unseen
their notes of gladness blend,
for Christ the Lord has risen,
our joy that has no end.**

Words: John of Damascus, 8th cent.; trans. John Mason Neale, 1862, alt.
Music: LANCASHIRE, Henry Thomas Smart, ca. 1835
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***CHARGE AND BLESSING**

One: ...And let the gathered people of God say...
All: ...Amen.
One: For Jesus Christ is risen!
All: He is risen indeed!

***RESPONSE “Jesus Christ Is Risen Today” GtG 232**

**Jesus Christ is risen today,
Alleluia!
our triumphant holy day.
Alleluia!
Sing we to our God above,
Alleluia!
praise eternal as God's love.
Alleluia!**

Words: Stanzas 1-3, *Lyra Davidica*, 1708; stanza 4, Charles Wesley, 1740
Music: EASTER HYMN, *Lyra Davidica*, 1708; adapt. from *The Compleat Psalmodist*, 1749
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POSTLUDE

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