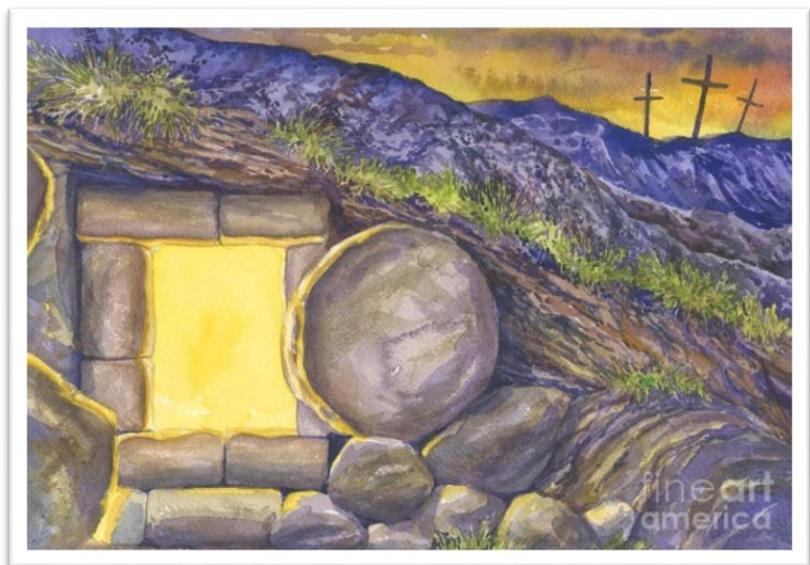


Easter Sunrise Service



April 21, 2019, 6:00am
Walnut Hill Cemetery

"Easter was when Hope in person surprised the whole world by coming forward from the future into the present."

— N.T. Wright

Easter Sunrise Service

Welcome

Christ is risen! **Christ is risen indeed!**

Opening Words

*Pastor Marianne Cotter
First United Methodist Church*

Call to Worship

*Rev. Doug Fauth
First Congregational United Church of Christ*

Morning is breaking but this morning is different.

The birds are singing tunes of joy in the trees surrounding the graves. The flower buds are bursting in colors vibrant around each stone.

We come to visit the grave of a friend, but “he is not here.”

The Sun is rising in the East; the showed grays turn bright!

The Son is risen in our Hearts; darkness and death end in defeat.

Now we understand what Christ said, what God did.

Now we proclaim, **Christ is Risen! Hallelujah!**

Responsive Reading (Selected verses from Psalm 118)

O give thanks to the LORD, for he is good; his steadfast love endures forever! **Let Israel say, “His steadfast love endures forever.”**

The LORD is my strength and my might; he has become my salvation.

Open to me the gates of righteousness that I may enter through them and give thanks to the LORD.

I thank you that you have answered me and have become my salvation.

The stone that the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone. This is the LORD’s doing; it is marvelous in our eyes. This is the day that the LORD has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it.

†Hymn

“This is the Day”

Opening Unison Prayer

O risen Christ, open us to the power of your resurrection as we hear it proclaimed anew this day, that we too might rise to new life in you. Amen.

Reading from the Gospels

John 20:1-18

The Word of God for all the people! **Thanks be to God!**

†Hymn

“In the Garden”

Homily

Rev. Doug Fauth

Celebration of Holy Communion

Christ is Risen! **He is Risen Indeed!**

We should give thanks! **Thanks and praise to the One who brings life!**

Gracious God, we raise voices hoarse from shouting alleluias, we sing praises for the wonder of an empty tomb, we give thanks for the gifts of life, of life that breaks the bonds of death.

We sing songs of praise for the world you have given us, for the beauty of the earth, for the glory of the skies.

As the spring deepens and the earth thaws, as green breaks through the brown of winter,

we sing songs of hope for new life springing from dead soil, for the promise held in every seed that is sown.

As people of faith we remember all those who have gone before.

People like Moses and Miriam, leading their people to freedom; like Sarah and Abraham, seeking a new life in a strange land; like Peter and Mary, proclaiming an empty tomb and life beyond the cross.

We remember these and many others, named and unnamed, who have embraced Your life, Your hope, and moved into a new age.

And we trust that in remembering and retelling their stories, we too can take the leap into New Life.

Deep among all those memories we remember the life of a Special One.

Jesus, Child of Mary.

Born of a woman, he grew to adulthood among people who struggled daily for life.

Baptized by John, he embraced the life to which You called him.

He taught and preached a vision of a world where all divisions were broken down, where all had what they needed for abundant life, where the Reign of God was as real on earth as in heaven.

And though the powerful in his world fought back, he stood strong.

When offered a chance to take the easy way he overcame his own fear and instead prayed "yet Thy will be done."

Even though they put him to death you raised him to life, vindicating his vision and bringing hope and healing to the world.

As inheritors of that hope we join together in the cries the welcomed him into Jerusalem, the cries of hope for the world:

Hosanna! Hosanna! Holy One! Blessed is the One who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!

Remembering - As we gather at this table we remember a story told mere days ago ... **and yet also an age ago.**

We remember that Jesus gathered with his closest friends in an Upper Room to share the feast of liberation ... **And while sharing the**

ancient story of freedom, he called them to remember the promised freedom of God's Kingdom.

We remember that at that table he took the bread, gave thanks for it, blessed it, broke it and passed it among them saying:

This is my body, broken by and for the world. Whenever you eat it remember me.

Then later he took the cup of wine, blessed it and passed it among them saying ... **This is the cup of the New Covenant, sealed in my blood. Whenever you drink it remember me, and look toward the fulfillment of God's Kingdom.**

And so we break the bread and pour the cup and we remember with hope ... **On this Easter Day we share in the Banquet of Freedom to celebrate Life Victorious!**

Transforming - God of Life, in the beginning your Spirit hovered over the water, **Calling forth life, creating and inspiring.**

Send Your Spirit upon we who gather to share this meal, infuse this bread and this juice with the Spirit's power,

As we eat and drink my we feel the power of Life Triumphant pulse in our veins, the fire of hope blaze in our hearts, and the joy of the Empty tomb dance in our souls.

Christ who died is now alive! **Alleluia! Amen.**

And so, as children of a loving Parent, we pray together the words that Jesus, the Risen Christ, taught his friends

Our Father, who art in heaven...

Breaking and Pouring - Here at this table we break the Bread of Life. On this Day of Celebration we pour the Cup of Promise. These are Gifts from God for the People of God. **Thanks be to God.** Come and eat, for all is now ready.

Sharing of the Bread and the Cup

“Alleluia”

Closing Prayer

We have eaten, we have drunk, we have embraced the beginning of the new age. Grant, O God, that we who have gathered together on this Day of Resurrection, will move on as people of hope, people of life, people of the Kingdom. May the meal we have shared today revive us in body and soul and energize us to share the Good News. Christ is Risen! Death is Defeated! Life Wins! Alleluia and Amen!

†Hymn for Going Forth

“Christ is Alive”

†Benediction (spoken by worship leader)