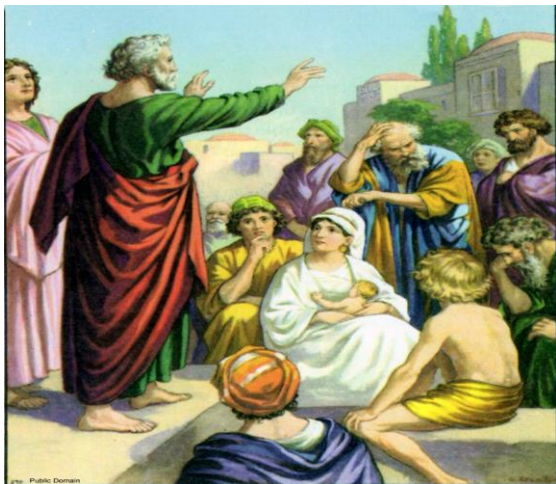


April 19, 2020
2nd Sunday of Easter



Peter's First Sermon

REJOICE IN GOD!
SERVICE PRAYERS FOR THE SECOND SUNDAY
OF EASTER

CALL TO WORSHIP:

Sing a new song! **A springtime shout-out to life!**

Sing praise to our joyful Easter God

Whose power brings new life out of death!

Immerse doubt and despair in the fountain of new birth

Find refreshment and strength for a future of hope!

For God has taken ordinary things

And made them extraordinary: Sing a New Song!

OPENING PRAYER: Holy God, nothing is beyond your power to transform! In a gray dawn, you coax songs of Alleluia! From the tombs of despair we take refuge in, you call us to

wake up and work.

We praise you for this amazing day! Come, Risen Christ, in newness and hope on this Eastertide morning. **Amen.**

MESSAGE: The Gospel message for today (John 20:19-31) describes the first time the Risen Christ is seen by the Disciples. However, I would suggest we explore what happens a short time after the Ascension of Jesus, when the Disciples receive the Holy Spirit.

This Spirit gave them the power and confidence to take their place as Ministers and Evangelists in a world Jesus made new and alive in the love from God. Peter addresses the crowd and gives his first sermon (Acts 2:14a, 22-32). Peter reminds the crowd of the words of King David in Psalm 16:8-11.

For David says concerning God, *“I saw the Lord always before me, for he is at my right hand so that I will not be shaken; therefore, my heart was glad, and my tongue rejoiced; moreover, my flesh will live in hope. For you will not abandon my soul to Hades, or let your Holy One experience corruption. You have made known to me the ways of life; you will make me full of gladness with your presence.”* (NRSV)

Reading these words, I am encouraged to keep God before me, no matter what. And, because of the support and kind words from all of you, I will not feel defeated by this “bump in the road” for our church. Thank you, God. Thank you, St. John UCC.

CALL FOR OFFERING:

Easter teaches us that generous love is at the heart of God's work. Joyfully we are able to give knowing that our gifts will help others to see the blessed miracle of God's creative joy.

PLEASE DON'T FORGET TO SEND IN YOUR OFFERINGS.

OFFERTORY PRAYER:

Loving God, can a generous prayer be lifted up to you this Eastertide? Can these gifts, given with love, be further transformed like echoes of grace, delighting all who receive their blessings? May it be so, through the surprising power of your Holy Spirit, and may our lives speak of a loving God, full of Easter surprises. **Amen.**

BENEDICTION:

Follow God's lead into new life!

Recognize Jesus in unexpected places. Easter!
Christ is Risen! May you dance an alleluia dance,
and sing a resurrection song.

Laugh with God and let joy reside in your hearts always.

Amen.

Rejoice in God was written by the Rev. Susan A. Blain, Minister for Worship and Gospel Arts, Faith INFO Ministry Team. Copyright 2020 Justice and Local Church Ministries, Faith INFO Ministry Team, United Church of Christ, 700 Prospect Avenue, Cleveland, OH 44115-1100.



HYMN: "Great Is Thy Faithfulness" Public Domain

Great is Thy faithfulness, O God my Father,
There is no shadow of turning with thee;
Thou changest not, thy compassions they fail not;
As thou has been thou forever wilt be.

REFRAIN Great is Thy faithfulness! Great is Thy faithfulness!
Morning by morning new mercies I see;
All I have needed thy hand hath provided –
Great is Thy faithfulness, Lord, unto me!

Summer and winter, and springtime and harvest,
Sun, moon and stars in their courses above
Join with all nature in manifold witness
To Thy great faithfulness, mercy and love.

REFRAIN

Pardon for sin and a peace that endureth,
Thy own dear presence to cheer and to guide;
Strength for today and bright hope for tomorrow,
Blessings all mine, with ten thousand beside!

REFRAIN

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If you are on the internet, in the search section type in youtube and "Great Is Thy Faithfulness" and you can sing along with Chris Rice. The words are on the screen.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0k1WhFtVp0o>

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Whether gathered or scattered, God is with us.

Amen.

Peace and Blessings, Pastor Rosemary