

Easter Sunday Worship Service

April 12, 2020



Illinois South Conference of the United Church of Christ

GREETING

Rev. Stacy Tate, pastor of Friedens UCC, Irvington

OUR CENTERING WORD

Rev. Shana Johnson, ISC Conference Minister

When it was evening on that day
and the doors of the house
where the disciples had met
were locked for they were afraid...
Jesus came and stood among them
and said, "Peace be with you."
Then Jesus showed them his hands
and his side.

The disciples rejoiced when they truly saw
and recognized the Lord.
Jesus said to them again,
"Peace be with you.
As the Father has sent me, so I send you."
When he had said this, he breathed on them
and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit.

CALL TO WORSHIP

Rev. Shana Johnson, ISC Conference Minister and
Rev. Todd Bean, pastor of St. John's UCC, Weldon Spring, MO

On this day,
No matter where we are physically,
we come as one spirit,
we come from the north,
and from the south,
from the east
and from the west,

To receive the blessings of our God,
To receive the peace of Christ,
To receive the stirrings of the Spirit...

For Christ is Risen!
Christ is Risen Indeed!
Darkness fades to light!
Christ is Risen Indeed!
The stone has been rolled away!
Christ is Risen Indeed!
The tomb is found empty!
Christ is Risen Indeed!
Morning has broken!
Christ is Risen Indeed!

RAISING OUR VOICES IN SONG

“Christ the Lord is Risen Today”

led my our ISC Virtual Choir featuring:

Alexandra Billhartz, member of Zion UCC, New Baden, IL

Mark Beckmeyer, member of Zion UCC, Hoyleton, IL

Lisa Cleveland, choir director of Evangelical UCC, Highland, IL

Rev. Christy Eckert, pastor of St. John UCC, Trenton, IL

Carlos Edwards, praise and worship team director of Good Shepherd of Faith, East St. Louis, IL

Heather Netemeyer, choir director of St. John UCC, Trenton, IL

Gary Humphrey, music director of St. Paul UCC, Waterloo, IL

Gracelynn Norgaard, member of O'Fallon UCC, O'Fallon, IL

Rev. P. Jerry Bennett, pastor of St Peter UCC, Hookdale, IL and St Paul UCC, Jamestown, IL

Tarra Vaupel, student pastor of St. John's UCC, New Athens, IL

Rev. Dr. Donald C. Wagner, pastor of St. Paul UCC, Lebanon, IL

Rodney Washburn, member of Zion UCC, New Baden, IL

piano accompaniment by:

Janet Beckmeyer, member and music leader of Friedens UCC, Irvington, IL

trumpet and flugelhorn parts by:

David Eckstrand, music director of Trinity UCC, Belleville, IL

SCRIPTURE READING John 20: 1-22

Karen Gaines, member of St. John UCC, Granite City

The Resurrection of Jesus

¹ Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the tomb. ² So she ran and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved, and said to them, "They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him." ³ Then Peter and the other disciple set out and went toward the tomb. ⁴ The two were running together, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. ⁵ He bent down to look in and saw the linen wrappings lying there, but he did not go in. ⁶ Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb. He saw the linen wrappings lying there, ⁷ and the cloth that had been on Jesus' head, not lying with the linen wrappings but rolled up in a place by itself. ⁸ Then the other disciple, who reached the tomb first, also went in, and he saw and believed; ⁹ for as yet they did not understand the scripture, that he must rise from the dead. ¹⁰ Then the disciples returned to their homes.

Jesus Appears to Mary Magdalene

¹¹ But Mary stood weeping outside the tomb. As she wept, she bent over to look into the tomb; ¹² and she saw two angels in white, sitting where the body of Jesus had been lying, one at the head and the other at the feet. ¹³ They said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping?" She said to them, "They have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid him." ¹⁴ When she had said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not know that it was Jesus. ¹⁵ Jesus said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you looking for?" Supposing him to be the gardener, she said to him, "Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away." ¹⁶ Jesus said to her, "Mary!" She turned and said to him in Hebrew, "Rabbouni!" (which means Teacher).

¹⁷ Jesus said to her, “Do not hold on to me, because I have not yet ascended to the Father. But go to my brothers and say to them, ‘I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.’” ¹⁸ Mary Magdalene went and announced to the disciples, “I have seen the Lord”; and she told them that he had said these things to her.

Jesus Appears to the Disciples

¹⁹ When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors of the house where the disciples had met were locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, “Peace be with you.” ²⁰ After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. ²¹ Jesus said to them again, “Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you.” ²² When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, “Receive the Holy Spirit.”

SERMON

“But we KNOW the rest of the story”

Rev. Shana Johnson, ISC Conference Minister

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND THE LORD’S PRAYER

Rev. Lori Schafer, pastor of St. John’s UCC, Midway, IL

OFFERING INVITATION

Rev. Shana Johnson, ISC Conference Minister

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Rev. Shana Johnson, ISC Conference Minister

Risen Lord,
we are committed to continuing the work
you started in your earthly journey among us.

We have called us to be your Church
whether gathered in the same physical place

or scattered yet unified by Your Spirit.

Even in times of uncertainty and change,
we promise to continue to give our gifts and offerings
so that the work of Your Church may continue.

May you receive our offerings--
gifts given by checks sent in the mails
or gifts given online

as an affirmation of our commitment
to be your faithful disciples
and as an affirmation that we, Your Church,
will continue to rise with you.

We pray in your name,
the Resurrected One,
Jesus Christ,
our Messiah. Amen.

SPECIAL MUSIC “Now the Green Blade Rises”

Woodwind Quartet: Brian Lotter, Pastor Brett Palmer, pastor of
Friedens UCC, Marissa, and Carolyn Palmer (playing 2 parts)

BENEDICTION

Rev. Shana Johnson, ISC Conference Minister

May the Risen Lord stir in your heart an Easter faith.
May the Risen Lord open your eyes to the power of the
Resurrection.

May the Risen Lord inspire you to sing today and in the
days to come with an Easter joy.

And may the Risen Lord bless you today and in the days
ahead with an Easter love.

This worship service was especially created by our Conference Minister and our Local Church Ministries team in the Illinois South Conference of the United Church of Christ with YOU in mind.

We want to extend our deep gratitude to all who participated and shared their gifts of voice and time in putting this worship experience together.

A special thanks to Nick Luer, a member of Friedens UCC in Irvington, who so generously and graciously shared his creative, technical and production skills to put together our “virtual choir” and the worship video in its final form.

To all who are worshipping with us...

Today may you celebrate the good news of Easter which reminds us that hope must never be lost for as dark as the road may seem, there always lies light at the end of it. Easter blessings to you!

