



**NEWTON
CONGREGATIONAL
UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST**
God is still speaking,

An Open and Affirming Congregation

*No matter who you are, or where you are on life's journey,
you are welcome here!*

Virtual Worship • April 12, 2020 • 10:00am • Easter Sunday

Digital Bulletin

This document is prepared so you can join our Sunday morning live-stream worship via our Facebook page (facebook.com/NewtonUCC) or call in via Zoom (Dial 312-626-6799, when prompted enter Meeting ID: 624 681 423 followed by #) or worship on your own at a time convenient for you (visit our Facebook page or website—uccnewton.org).

We are new to online and streaming worship at Congregational UCC and still working on smoothing out a few “hiccups” and technical difficulties. Of course, there is nothing that compares to being physically present with one another in worship, and yet this is what we need to do to “love our neighbors” during the current national emergency.

We apologize in advance for any problems that you may encounter in connecting to the service and welcome your feedback on how to improve the virtual worship experience over the coming weeks when we will not be able to worship in our sanctuary.

PREPARING FOR VIRTUAL WORSHIP

As you prepare to join in online worship with us, in addition to making whatever technical preparations you need to make, consider how to prepare your personal space for worship:

- Silence your phone and eliminate distractions
- Light a candle or some incense
- Open your Bible or browser to Matthew 28:1-10
- Position your body in a posture of worship and prayer

*"Don't be afraid. I know you are looking for Jesus the crucified, who is no longer here.
Jesus has been raised, exactly as it was foretold."
Matthew 28:5b-6a*

PRELUDE

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

REMEMBERING WHO WE ARE

One: As we prepare ourselves to join together in worship,
let us remind ourselves who we are
as members and friends of Congregational United Church of Christ.

**All: We are a community of God's beloved
dedicated to following the teachings of Jesus as we live our faith
by loving and serving all of God's creation
and striving for justice and peace
throughout our community, our nation, and the world.**

THE BREATH OF GOD

CALL TO WORSHIP

One: On Friday, Jesus was nailed to a cross,
raised high by those who were threatened by the way he proclaimed.

**All: But, on Sunday, Jesus was found missing from the tomb,
raised to new life by the one whose way he proclaimed.**

One: On Friday, the system of domination and exploitation displayed its power
as it crucified the so-called King of the Jews.

**All: But, on Sunday, the realm of God displayed its ultimate power
as Jesus could not be found among the dead because he was alive.**

One: On Friday, oppression, exploitation, arrogance,
greed, violence, and fear claimed their final victory.

**All: But, on Sunday, freedom, justice, humility,
generosity, compassion, and love revealed that victory to be an illusion.**

One: On Friday, the empire crucified a nonviolent, Jewish rebel.

All: And, on Sunday, God resurrected the Christ, the Messiah, the Son of God!

One: Alleluia! Christ is risen!

All: Christ is risen indeed! Alleluia!

OPENING HYMN 216

Christ the Lord Is Risen Today

Easter Hymn

***Christ the Lord is risen to-day, Al-le-lu-ia!
All cre-a-tion, join to say, Al-le-lu-ia!
Raise your joys and tri-umphs high, Al-le-lu-ia!
Sing, O heavens, and earth re-ply, Al-le-lu-ia!***

***Lives a-gain our glo-rious King, Al-le-lu-ia!
Where, O death, is now your sting? Al-le-lu-ia!
Je-sus died, our souls to save, Al-le-lu-ia!
Where your vic-to-ry, O grave? Al-le-lu-ia!***

*Love's re-deem-ing work is done, Al-le-lu-ia!
Fought the fight, the bat-tle won, Al-le-lu-ia!
Death in vain for-bids him rise, Al-le-lu-ia!
Christ has op-ened par-a-dise. Al-le-lu-ia!*

*Soar we now where Christ has led, Al-le-lu-ia!
Fol-lowing our ex-alt-ed Head, Al-le-lu-ia!
Made like him, like him we rise, Al-le-lu-ia!
Ours the cross, the grave, the skies, Al-le-lu-ia!*

CALL TO PRAYER

PRAYER FOR TRANSFORMATION AND RECONCILIATION

One: We come to the tomb puzzled by what we find:
the stone rolled away, the tomb empty.
"Jesus has been raised," your messenger proclaims, a difficult pill to swallow.
But, how many times have you told us, Most Loving One,
that you alone are God and your justice reigns supreme?
How many times have you shown us, Creator of the world,
that you bring life even from death?

When we don't trust the power of your love
but believe fear to be the most powerful force in the world,
All: roll back the stone, and remind us who you are!

One: When we accept domination and exploitation
simply as the way things are and the way they have to be
rather than trusting in your unconditional, boundless love,
All: roll back the stone, and remind us who you are!

One: When we are centered only on our own perceived interests
and neglect or deny the needs of the rest of your beloved,
All: roll back the stone, and remind us whose we are!

One: When we sit silently by as creation is destroyed
and your people are beaten down and thrown away
thinking ourselves too small to make a difference,
All: roll back the stone, and remind us whose we are!

One: Stone-rolling God, empower us to journey with Jesus
through death and resurrection,
All: dying to a life of fear, violence, and oppression

**that we might rise to live in the true life you offer –
the life of freedom, peace, and love.**

We pray in the name of our crucified and risen Savior. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF GRACE

SHARING OF GOD'S PEACE

One: The peace of God be with you.

All: And also with you.

HYMN

Lead Us from Death to Life
**Lead us from death to life, from false-hood to truth,
from de-spair to hope, from fear to trust.
Lead us from hate to love, from war to peace;
let peace fill our hearts, let peace fill our world,
let peace fill our u-ni-verse.**

World Peace Prayer

A TIME WITH CHILDREN

SCRIPTURE

Matthew 28:1-10

GLORIA PATRI

Greatorex

***Glo-ry to the Cre-a-tor, the Christ, the Ho-ly Spir-it, Three-in-One;
as it was in the be-gin-ning, is now and ever shall be,
world with-out end. A-men. A-men.***

SERMON

Resurrection People

Rev. Jessica Petersen

PAUSE

(What did you hear yourself saying as you were listening to the presentation of the scripture and the sermon? How is God speaking to you today?)

HYMN

Rise Up

original words and music by
Charon Hribar and Jose Vasquez
(first two verses by Jessica Petersen for Easter)

Rise up; come on and rise up. (repeat)
Rise up; come on and rise up. (repeat)
The Empire of Rome nailed him to a tree. (repeat)
But our God lifted him up to set all people free. (repeat)

Rise up; come on and rise up. (repeat)
Rise up; come on and rise up. (repeat)
As people of faith we're called to follow his lead. (repeat)
And put an end to all violence, oppression, and greed. (repeat)

Rise up; come on and rise up. (repeat)
Rise up; come on and rise up. (repeat)
The power's that be can't keep us down. (repeat)
We're gon-na rise up and turn the world a-round. (repeat)

Rise up; come on and rise up. (repeat)
Rise up; come on and rise up. (repeat)
Rise up! (repeat)
Rise up! (repeat)
RISE UP!

LIVING PSALM 118—EASTER

by Rev. Michelle Torigian

Do you see it on the horizon as the sun rises in the opening sky?
God is present. Give overflowing thanks for God's goodness.
God's love is steadfast and will endure forever.
In the shadows of this pandemic, God is my strength and my energy;
in these long days at home, God has become my salvation.
In our houses and apartments, glad songs of victory and dances of hope continue.
God is determined to help us through this!

I still wonder: What if I die? What if I live?
On that side of heaven, our stories become alive.
On this side of heaven, we share the presence of God.
Yes, it feels like God is punishing us severely, but this is not so.
God will not give our souls over to death.
God will not forsake us in this life; Holy Comfort fills our souls.

Until the day comes when physical doors are open, we remain home.
Before I cross the threshold to the outside world, I give thanks to God.

As gates and doors reopen, may we proclaim them open for everyone.
For God is our salvation and our answer in times of trouble.
Through love, God's gate opens for all.
Such liberation is marvelous in our eyes.

From cellars and rooftops, from kitchens and bathrooms, let us proclaim:
This is the day that our Creator has made!
Let us seek joy and hope! Let us rejoice and be glad in it!

PRAYER OF OUR SAVIOR

(Please pray the Prayer of our Savior in the language familiar to you or the words found below.)

**Other options for "Father" include "Mother," "Creator," "Parent."*

**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.
Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.**

INVITATION TO OFFERING

OFFERTORY

DOXOLOGY

Lasst Uns Erfreuen

***Praise God from whom all bles-sings flow,
praise God all crea-tures here be-low. Al-le-lu-ia! Al-le-lu-ia!
Praise God for all that love has done,
Cre-a-tor, Christ, and Spir-it, One. Al-le-lu-ia! Al-le-lu-ia!
Al-le-lu-ia! Al-le-lu-ia! Al-le-lu-ia!***

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

HYMN 222

Christ Is Risen! Shout Hosanna!

W Zlobie Lezy

***Christ is ris-en! Shout ho-san-na! Cel-e-brate this day of days.
Christ is ris-en! Hush in won-der; all cre-a-tion is a-mazed.
In the des-ert all-sur-round-ing, see, a spread-ing tree has grown.
Heal-ing leaves of grace a-bound-ing bring a taste of love un-known.***

***Christ is ris-en! Raise your spir-its from the cav-erns of des-pair.
Walk with glad-ness in the morn-ing. See what love can do and dare.
Drink the wine of res-ur-rec-tion, not a ser-vant, but a friend;
Je-sus is our strong com-pan-ion. Joy and peace shall nev-er end.***

***Christ is ris-en! Earth and heav-en nev-er-more shall be the same.
Break the bread of new cre-a-tion where the world is still in pain.
Tell its grim, de-mon-ic cho-rus: "Christ is ris-en! Get you gone!"
God the first and last is with us. Sing Ho-san-na ev-ery-one!***

BENEDICTION

If He'd Stayed in the Grave

by Jessica Petersen

If he'd stayed in the grave, we could simply give up the fight.

If he'd stayed in the grave, we could resign with no hope in sight.

If he'd stayed in the grave, we could take Caesar's lead.

If he'd stayed in the grave, we could turn to violence to meet our greed.

If he'd stayed in the grave, we could simply let the poor die.

If he'd stayed in the grave, we wouldn't even have to bat an eye.

If he'd stayed in the grave, we could mine the earth for all she's worth.

If he'd stayed in the grave, we could continue to pollute Mother Earth.

If he'd stayed in the grave, we could let racial inequity stand.

If he'd stayed in the grave, we could allow Jim Crow to rule the land.

If he'd stayed in the grave, we could build up that wall.

If he'd stayed in the grave, we could cage immigrant children

even before they learn to crawl.

If he'd stayed in the grave, we could just accept this is how it was meant to be.

If he'd stayed in the grave, we could accept injustice as normalcy.

If he'd stayed in the grave, we could allow the powers that be
to continue to dominate and oppress.

If he'd stayed in the grave, we could laugh and sneer at those subjected to duress.

If he'd stayed in the grave, we wouldn't have learned what true life is.

If he'd stayed in the grave, we wouldn't know the joy freedom gives.

But he didn't stay in the grave, and so we too must now arise.

He didn't stay in the grave, so we must keep our eyes keenly on the justice prize.

He didn't stay in the grave, but rather he arose.
He didn't stay in the grave, so we must now go wherever he goes.

To proclaim the justice and the peace for which he died.
To establish the justice and the peace for which we must now rise.

POSTLUDE

Resource:

"Living Psalm 118 for Easter Sunday" was written by the Rev. Michelle Torigian, Senior Pastor, St Paul UCC in Belleville, IL and is included in the *Living Psalms Book*. *Living Psalms Book* is created by UCC Witness & Worship Artists' Group, a Network of UCC connected artists, activists and ministers bridging the worship and liturgy of the local church with witness and action in the community. © Copyright 2020 Faith INFO Team, United Church of Christ, 700 Prospect Avenue, Cleveland, OH 44115-1100. Permission granted to reproduce or adapt this material for use in services of worship or church education. All publishing rights reserved.)

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