



SUNDAY WORSHIP

Second Sunday of Easter

April 11, 2021

9:00am

“Peace be with you!” –John 20:19

Prior to the service you are invited to prepare yourself for worship.

Some people prefer to meditate or pray,

while others may speak softly with their fellow-worshippers.

As the prelude begins we invite you to open your ears and still your voices.

Prelude

He Shall Feed His Flock
George Frideric Handel

*We are called to worship,
drawing our attention forward and upward.*

Welcome

*Call to Worship

Psalm 133:1-3

How very good and pleasant it is when kindred live together in unity!

**It is like the precious oil on the head, running down upon the beard,
on the beard of Aaron, running down over the collar of his robes.**

It is like the dew of Hermon, which falls on the mountains of Zion.

For there the Lord ordained his blessing, life forevermore.

*We focus our attention on God's Glory
and offer our praise in word and song.*

*Opening Prayer

Mighty Lord Jesus, in your resurrection you not only defeated death and triumphed over evil, you also returned to us.

You breathed your Holy Spirit upon us and empowered us to follow you all the days of our lives. Continue to return to us and strengthen us in our weakness. Continue to empower us. Continue to call us and to raise us from our deadly enslavement to sin and death. Amen!

*Hymn # 245 (You are invited to hum the melody)

Christ the Lord Is Risen Today!

*Reflecting on God's Glory makes us aware of our common sinfulness
and need for forgiveness.*

*This honesty before God and each other opens our hearts
to receive God's forgiveness, which we celebrate with word and song.*

Prayer of Confession and Assurance of Forgiveness

Easter continues, dear God. As we re-experience your presence,
we are reminded of our own doubts, fears and unbelief.

Often we did not intentionally choose to reject you, but we are easily distracted.

Our lives are busy; we move on to the next thing before the last thing sinks in.

Sometimes you appear and we miss the significance of the moment.

Forgive us for the many times we are distracted and miss your presence.

Thank you for coming back for us time and time again. Amen.

The appearance of Jesus assures one and all that the Living Christ
will not allow anything to separate us from his infinite grace.

**The Easter story continues in our lives every time we seek forgiveness
and experience God's grace anew.**

The Risen Christ keeps coming back to his people, keeps sending us forth,
keeps giving us what we need to be faithful.

Let us shout: In Jesus Christ, we all are forgiven! Alleluia! Amen!

Response

Lasst Uns Erfeuen

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow.

Praise God, all creatures high and low. Alleluia, alleluia!

Praise God, in Jesus fully known:

Creator, Word, and Spirit one. Alleluia, alleluia!

*Forgiven and restored, we give of what God has given us in time, talents, and treasure,
and we pray together as an active part of our worship and witness.*

Ministry Updates

Receiving of our Tithes and Offerings

(may be placed in offering basket in narthex before or after service)

Prayers of the People and the Lord's Prayer

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.

*We ask God to inspire both the reading and the hearing of the Scriptures,
and listen for what God may reveal in them.*

*The music and messages are designed to help interpret the Scriptures
and help us to apply them to our daily living.*

Prayer for Illumination

Risen Lord Jesus, we gather today still unsure about what your resurrection may mean for us. As we open your word, please open our hearts to your wondrous peace given so freely in love. Amen.

Scripture Reading

John 20:19-31

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." After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw 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. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained." But Thomas (who was called the Twin), one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. So the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord." But he said to them, "Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands, and put my finger in the mark of the nails and my hand in his side, I will not believe."

A week later his disciples were again in the house, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were shut, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here and see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it in my side. Do not doubt but believe." Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God!" Jesus said to him, "Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe." Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book. But these are written so that you may come to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through believing you may have life in his name.

Children's Message

Anthem

Recorded on Easter Sunday 2019

Worthy is the Lamb
George Frideric Handel

Sermon

"Believing When It Doesn't Make Sense"

Bob Sheldon

*Once we hear God's Word we desire to respond in word and in deed
so we say and sing what we believe.*

Affirmation of Faith

Colossians 1:15-20

Christ is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation; for in him all things in heaven and on earth were created, things visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or powers—all things have been created through Christ and for Christ. Christ himself is before all things, and in him all things hold together. Christ is the head of the body, the church; Christ is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that he might come to have first place in everything. For in Christ all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through Christ God was pleased to reconcile all things, whether on earth or in heaven, by making peace through the blood of the cross.

Hymn # 248 (You are invited to hum the melody)

Christ Is Risen! Shout Hosanna!

*We are sent into the world to bear witness to God's glory and love,
knowing that God has gone ahead of us to prepare the way
and to prepare the people we will encounter.
Worship ends on this hopeful note and continues in all we do and become.*

Blessing

Response

Seven-Fold Amen

Postlude

Now the Green Blade Riseth
arr. Kavin McChesney

*You are invited to stand as you wish.

WHAT'S HAPPENING AT FIRST PRES

Leading us in worship today are Rev. Bob Sheldon, Interim Pastor; Rev. Caroline Cupp, Executive Pastor; Sandor Kadar, Director of Music; Kira Boros, Choir Accompanist; The Chancel Ringers; The Chancel Choir.

In Memoriam – Nadia S. Rosengarten, member of First Presbyterian Church from May 4, 2008 to April 3, 2021.

Our sympathy and prayers are with Gene, Gail, Samantha and John Rader and family in the death of Gail's mother and Samantha and John's grandmother, and Dick, Linda, Andy and Julie Seiwel and family in the death of Linda's sister and Andy and Julie's aunt.

Spring Bridge Study – The Bridge adult study group has resumed meeting on Wednesdays from 6:30 – 7:30 pm over Zoom. Conversations this spring are focused on *Love is the Way: Holding on to Hope in Troubling Times* by Bishop Michael Curry. Participants are encouraged (but not required) to purchase their own copy of the book and read in preparation for conversation each week. Contact Sara Pantazes if you need assistance ordering the book or want to be on the email list for this study.

April Anti-Racism Study – All members of the First Pres community are invited to gather on Zoom next Sunday, April 18, from noon – 1 pm for our monthly anti-racism conversation. This month we will listen and learn from the YouTube video series, "Uncomfortable Conversations with a Black Man." Contact Director of Christian Education Sara Pantazes (spantazes@firstpreswc.com) with any questions.

Service Project with the Melton Center - As we emerge from the Covid pandemic, the Melton Center is re-imagining its summer programs for elementary and middle school age students and is looking for some helping minds and hands. We are looking for assistance in creating a STEM-themed program (work that will be done from home this spring) as well as people willing to go to the Melton Center and assist with in-person camp this summer. If you are interested in helping or want more information, please contact Sara Pantazes at spantazes@firstpreswc.com.

Service Opportunity - If you'd like to see some familiar faces, enjoy time outside, and help clean up a bit of our corner of the borough, then please plan to join us on Saturday, April 17 for an Everhart Park clean-up. We'll partner with Friends of Everhart Park from 9:00-12:00 that morning to tidy up the park. Please plan to wear a mask and use social distancing during the event. We are going to work on raking leaves in designated areas and removing silt and grass from the stone gutters along the walkways - please bring a rake if you have one. To sign up, please email Elizabeth Hess (ehess@firstpreswc.com).

2021 Contributions: Current contributions as of 4/7/21 are \$295,180 out of \$1,047,133 budgeted.