



FIRST UNITED CHURCH

*...is an inclusive community
of Christian faith, living out
the good news of God's love
revealed in Jesus Christ.*

Eastertide Weekday Service – Wednesday, April 14, 2021

WELCOME

One: Alleluia! Christ is risen!

All: Christ is risen indeed! Alleluia!

GATHERING *(sung)*

by Phil Porter

Gathered here in the mystery of this hour,
gathered here in one strong body,
Gathered here in the struggle and the power,
Spirit draw near.

RESPONSIVE PSALM

Psalm 133

One: See how good, how pleasant it is for God's people to live together as one!

**All: It is like precious oil on Aaron's head running down on his beard,
running down to the collar of his robes.**

One: It is like the dew of Mount Hermon, falling on the hills of Zion.

All: For that is where God bestows the blessing—life that never ends.

PRAYER OF BEGINNING

One: Great Creator, Source and Ground of all that is and ever will be,
open us to your presence in this place,
that we may experience an increase in faith and courage this Eastertide
as we celebrate the truth of life eternal in the joy of the Risen Christ.

**All: Grant us greater clarity of purpose and action
as we commit ourselves to pursuing full implementation of the Jesus story,
in whose name we pray. Amen.**

OPENING OUR HEARTS *(sung)*

by Joe Rowley

Open our hearts to the word of your love;
Strengthen our minds to understand your truth.

READING FROM THE GOSPELS

John 20:19-29 (Inclusive Bible)

In the evening on that same day, the first day of the week, the doors were locked in the room where the disciples were, for fear of the Temple authorities. Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." Having said this, the savior showed them the marks of crucifixion. The disciples were filled with joy when they saw Jesus, who said to them again, "Peace be with you. As Abba God sent me, so I'm sending you." After saying this, Jesus breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive anyone's sins, they are forgiven. If you retain anyone's sins, they are retained."

It happened that one of the Twelve, Thomas—nicknamed Didymus, or “Twin”—was absent when Jesus came. The other disciples kept telling him, “We’ve seen Jesus!” Thomas’s answer was, “I’ll never believe it without putting my finger in the nail marks and my hand into the spear wound.”

On the eighth day, the disciples were once more in the room, and this time Thomas was with them. Despite the locked doors, Jesus came and stood before them, saying, “Peace be with you.” Then, to Thomas, Jesus said, “Take your finger and examine my hands. Put your hand into my side. Don’t persist in your unbelief, but believe!” Thomas said in response, “My Savior and My God!” Jesus then said, “You’ve become a believer because you saw me. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.”

PRAYER OF OUR SAVIOR (unison)

slightly adapted from *The New Zealand Prayer Book*

**Eternal Spirit, Earth-maker, Pain-bearer, Life-giver,
Source of all that is and that shall be,
Father, Mother, Parent of us all, Loving God, in whom is heaven:
The hallowing of your name echo through the universe!
The way of your justice be followed by the peoples of the world!
Your heavenly will be done by all created beings!
Your commonwealth of peace and freedom sustain our hope and come on earth.
With the bread we need for today, feed us.
In the hurts we absorb from one another, forgive us.
In times of temptation and testing, strengthen us.
From trials too great to endure, spare us.
From the grip of all that is evil, free us.
For you reign in the glory of the power that is love, now and forever. Amen.**

CLOSING HYMN

O God, In Raising Jesus

Aurelia

by Carolyn Winfrey Gillette “The Church’s One Foundation”

1. O God, in raising Jesus that Resurrection Day,
You showed us you are with us and will not go away.
You give us bright tomorrows and free us from our sin;
You’re with us in our sorrows and show us love will win.
2. You give us hope of heaven and life to live in you.
The promise you have given is wonderful and true!
Yet resurrection glory is more than hope you give.
For this amazing story can change the way we live.
3. Through Jesus’ resurrection, we find our courage grow
To risk and serve your kin-dom, to go where some won’t go.
Through Jesus’ resurrection, we find we’re called to be
A new and hopeful people who help set others free.
4. So send us to the places where troubles still abound,
Where people face injustice, where grief and pain are found.
We pray we’ll go with courage for we have peace to share;
Now help us live your message of new life everywhere.

BENEDICTION