

Welcome to First Congregational Church United Church of Christ
Easter Sunday
April 5, 2026

**** *Some rise to their feet, some rise in their hearts—please rise as you are able.*

OPENING FANFARE

At the sound of the trumpet, please silence yourselves and prepare for worship.

PRELUDE

Allegretto, Franceschini/arr. Wolff

Ellen & Ron Bradley

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Rev. Paul Ashby

INVITATION TO WORSHIP

**Whoever you are...and wherever you are on
life's journey... you are welcome here!**

Paul

OPENING REFLECTION

CALL TO WORSHIP

Kim Sutherland

All across the earth, people seek the light of the Holy

**With different faiths expressed through different cultures, we seek the light that has
many names.**

As Christians we see the light of the Holy in Jesus of Nazareth.

As Christians we proclaim the light of the Holy, revealed in Jesus, is still with us.

We sing the songs of Easter and share in the light of God's love.

We lift our hearts with the good news that light of love is eternal.

****HYMN NCH 233

Christ the Lord is Risen Today

All

Christ the Lord is risen today, Alleluia!
Mortal tongues and angels say: Alleluia!
Raise your joys and triumphs high, Alleluia!
Sing, glad heavens, and earth reply: Alleluia!

Love's redeeming work is done, Alleluia!
Fought the fight, the battle won, Alleluia!
Death in vain forbids Christ rise, Alleluia!
God has opened paradise, Alleluia!

Soar we now where Christ has led, Alleluia!
Following our exalted Head, Alleluia!
Made like Christ, like Christ we rise, Alleluia!
Ours the cross, the grave, the skies, Alleluia!

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

Paul

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Respond to each shared prayer request with "Peace, Shalom, Salaam."

PASTORAL PRAYER AND LORD'S PRAYER

**Our Creator, who art in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come, your 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
yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever. Amen.**

SIXTY SECONDS FOR PERSONAL PRAYERS/SILENT CONTEMPLATION

INVITATION TO OFFERING

Kim

OFFERTORY

Sound the Trumpet, Wesley/Peterson

Choir

****DOXOLOGY (tune: *Lasst uns erfreuen*)

All

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise God, all creatures here below. Alleluia! Alleluia!
Praise God for all that love has done;
Creator, Christ, and Spirit, One.
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!**

****PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Julie

Source of life, You are the God of new life and eternal love. Help us to roll away the stones that lock us in tombs of prejudice, limited vision and fear. We see Your Eternal Presence in acts of justice, the sharing of compassion, and in the open-hearted love from those who have glimpsed the light of Easter. We offer our gratitude for the love that never dies. Amen

SCRIPTURE

John 20:1-18

Julie

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. 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." Then Peter and the other disciple set out and went toward the tomb. The two were running together, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. He bent down to look in and saw the linen wrappings lying there, but he did not go in. Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb. He saw the linen wrappings lying there, and the cloth that had been on Jesus's head, not lying with the linen wrappings but rolled up in a place by itself. Then the other disciple, who reached the tomb first, also went in, and he saw and believed, for as yet they did not understand the scripture, that he must rise from the dead. Then the disciples returned to their homes.

But Mary stood weeping outside the tomb. As she wept, she bent over to look into the tomb, 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. 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." When she had said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not know that it was Jesus. 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." Jesus said to her, "Mary!" She turned and said to him in Hebrew, "Rabbouni!" (which means Teacher). Jesus said to her, "Do not touch 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.'" 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.

MESSAGE

"The Gifts of Easter"

Paul

****HYMN NCH 241

Joy Dawned Again on Easter Day

All

Joy dawned again on Easter Day, the sun shone out with bright array;
for when th'Apostles hid in fear, the Ris'n Christ to them appeared.

O Jesus, Savior, Gentle One come take our hearts to be your own,
that we may give you all our days the willing tribute of our praise.

O Sovereign One, with us abide in this our joyful Eastertide;
from every weapon death an wield, your own redeemed forever shield.

CELEBRATION OF COMMUNION (Gluten free options are available.)

Paul

All are welcome who practice the way of compassion.

***HYMN NCH 231

Because You Live, O Christ

All

Because you live, O Christ the garden of the world has come to flower,
the shadows of the tomb are flooded with your resurrection power.
The stone has rolled away and death cannot imprison!
O sing this Easter Day, for Jesus Christ has risen,
has risen, has risen, has ri - - - sen!

Because you live, O Christ the spirit bird of hope is freed for flying,
our cages of despair no longer keep us closed and life denying.
The stone has rolled away and death cannot imprison!
O sing this Easter Day, for Jesus Christ has risen,
has risen, has risen, has ri - - - sen!

Because you live, O Christ the rainbow of your peace will span creation,
the colors of your love will draw all humankind to adoration.
The stone has rolled away and death cannot imprison!
O sing this Easter Day, for Jesus Christ has risen,
has risen, has risen, has ri - - - sen!

***BENEDICTION

Paul

*** SUNG BENEDICTION

World Peace Prayer

All

Lead us from death to life, from falsehood to truth,
From despair 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 universe!

GREETING ONE ANOTHER IN THE SPIRIT OF LOVE

RECESSIONAL

The Strife is O'er, arr. Hopson

Ellen Bradley

Today's Worship Leaders

preacher
liturgist
musicians

Rev. Dr. Paul Ashby
Kim Sutherland
Ron & Ellen Bradley

Acknowledgements

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A HUGE THANKS to Ron Bradley for playing the trumpet for us today!