

Welcome to First Congregational Church United Church of Christ
Third Sunday of Easter
April 19, 2026

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

OPENING BELL

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

PRELUDE

Leaving Lismore and Hyfrydol, Thomas Keesecker

Martha Jones

ANNOUNCEMENTS/MOMENT FOR MINISTRY

Rev. Paul Ashby

INVITATION TO WORSHIP

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

OPENING REFLECTION

CALL TO WORSHIP

Betsy McLoughlin

Most of us have known the loving hands of a parent who welcomed us into this world with a loving touch.

Many of us have been blessed by grandparents whose hands embraced us, lifted us up, provided for us and adored us.

Many of us have known the hands of friends to play games and sports, to lift us when we fail or fall, to be a help on this road of life.

Many of us have used our own hands to feed the hungry, help the needy, defend the targets of hate, and share love with family and friends.

Each time we share food with another it is an expression of caring and connection

We are grateful for the compassion in action each time our hands open to share.

**HYMN

Christ Has Risen While Earth Slumbers (Hyfrydol)

All

Christ has risen while earth slumbers, Christ has risen where hope died,
as he said and as he promised, as we doubted and denied.

Let the moon embrace the blessing; let the sun sustain the cheer;
let the world confirm the rumor: Christ is risen, God is here!

Christ has risen to companion former friends who fear the night,
sensing loss and limitation where their faith had once burned bright.

They bemoan what is no longer, they expect no hopeful sign
til Christ ends their conversation, breaking bread and sharing wine.

Christ has risen and forever lives to challenge and to change
all whose lives are messed or mangled, all who find religion strange.

Christ is risen, Christ is present making us what he has been:
evidence of transformation in which God is known and seen.

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

Paul

MOMENT FOR MISSION

Mona Highline, The Joseph Center

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

Betsy

OFFERTORY *I Know That My Redeemer Liveth*, G.F. Handel Rainy Stokley-Graves, soprano

****DOXOLOGY **Hal-le, hal-le hal-le-lu-ja.** All

****PRAYER OF DEDICATION Betsy

God of new visions, open our eyes to see you in the immigrant, the poor, the homeless, the scorned of our society. Open our eyes to see the humanity of those targeted by the politics of race and distorted nationalism. Open our eyes to see and celebrate the diversity within the splendor of creation. Amen

**HYMN (see insert) *On the Journey to Emmaus*

SCRIPTURE Luke 24:13-35 Betsy

Now on that same day two of them were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem, and talking with each other about all these things that had happened. While they were talking and discussing, Jesus himself came near and went with them, but their eyes were kept from recognizing him. And he said to them, "What are you discussing with each other while you walk along?" They stood still, looking sad. Then one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answered him, "Are you the only stranger in Jerusalem who does not know the things that have taken place there in these days?" He asked them, "What things?" They replied, "The things about Jesus of Nazareth, who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, and how our chief priests and leaders handed him over to be condemned to death and crucified him. But we had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel. Yes, and besides all this, it is now the third day since these things took place. Moreover, some women of our group astounded us. They were at the tomb early this morning, and when they did not find his body there they came back and told us that they had indeed seen a vision of angels who said that he was alive. Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said, but they did not see him." Then he said to them, "Oh, how foolish you are and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have declared! Was it not necessary that the Messiah should suffer these things and then enter into his glory?" Then beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them the things about himself in all the scriptures.

As they came near the village to which they were going, he walked ahead as if he were going on. But they urged him strongly, saying, "Stay with us, because it is almost evening and the day is now nearly over." So he went in to stay with them. When he was at the table with them, he took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. Then their eyes were opened, and they recognized him, and he vanished from their sight. They said to each other, "Were not our hearts burning within us while he was talking to us on the road, while he was opening the scriptures to us?" That same hour they got up and returned to Jerusalem, and they found the eleven and their companions gathered together. They were saying, "The Lord has risen indeed, and he has appeared to Simon!" Then they told what had happened on the road and how he had been made known to them in the breaking of the bread.

MESSAGE *"Revelation in a Gentle Breaking of the Bread"* Paul

****HYMN *We Are a Rainbow* All

We're the light of all the world, we are a city on a hill,
We're a candle on a stand proclaiming light,
We will not hide our lamp beneath a bushel any more,
We will shine a ray of hope that's burning bright.

**We are a rainbow, sign of covenant and peace,
For the flood of tears will finally cease to be,
Come shine your rainbow, splash your hues across the sky,
Paint the world in colors proud and bold and free.**

We're a coat of many colors, sewn from many different threads,
Covering all in warmth, in welcome and in grace,
God said "Let there be light", created every varied shade,
In the rainbow each of us can find a place. *refrain*

We are hope to still believe in tomorrow's better day,
We are peace in a world that's torn apart,
We are joy that will last in all the struggles that we face,
We are love that blooms and grows in every heart. *refrain*

When we face the storms of life, we will never be alone,
For our God will be with us on the way,
Hand in hand, side by side, we won't be frightened any more,
As the mourning night of tears breaks into day. *refrain*

****BENEDICTION

Paul

**** SONG 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

Reprise: *We Are a Rainbow*

Martha

Today's Worship Leaders

preacher
liturgist
musicians

Rev. Dr. Paul Ashby
Betsy McLoughlin
Martha Jones

Acknowledgements

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Thanks to Rainy Stokley-Graves for singing for and with us this morning.