

**Sunday April 20, 2025  
Easter Sunday**

**We Gather In God's Presence**

**Prelude:** "Christ The Lord Is Risen Today: Traditional. Arr.: Victor Labenske.

**Birthdays, Celebrations, and Life and Work of the Congregation**

**In Memory of Jesus**

**Hymn VU 157** "Christ the Lord Is Risen Today" Words: Charles Wesley, 1739. Music: Lyra Davidica, 1708.  
Words and Music in the Public Domain.

Christ the Lord is risen today, hallelujah!  
all creation join to say; hallelujah!  
raise your joys and triumphs high; hallelujah!  
sing, O heavens, and earth reply: hallelujah!

Love's redeeming work is done, hallelujah!  
fought the fight, the battle won. Hallelujah!  
Lo, our sun's eclipse is o'er! Hallelujah!  
Lo, he dwells in death no more! Hallelujah!

Lives again our glorious King: hallelujah!  
where, O death, is now your sting? Hallelujah!  
Once he died, our souls to save: hallelujah!  
where your victory, O grave? Hallelujah!

Hail, the Lord of earth and heaven, hallelujah!  
praise to you by both be given! Hallelujah!  
Every knee to you shall bow, hallelujah!  
risen Christ, triumphant now. Hallelujah!

**Call to Worship:**

Have you heard the news?  
The stone has been rolled away!

**The tomb is empty!**

Christ is risen!

**He is risen indeed!**

**Hallelujah! Thanks be to God!**

**Lighting the Christ Candle:**

Jesus Christ! The Light of the world.

**Opening Prayer** (*unison*)

God of resurrection, you have rolled the stone away and the tomb of our world has been opened wide.  
With the dawn has come a new creation. Let our celebration today empty our tombs, renew our lives, and  
release your power; through the risen Christ we pray. Amen.

**Ministry of Music:** "Joy Comes in the Morning" Words & music: David Tanner. Arr.: Mary McDonald.

**Apostles' Creed** VU 918

I believe in God, the Father almighty,  
creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,  
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,  
born of the Virgin Mary,  
suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died, and was buried;  
he descended to the dead.  
On the third day he rose again;  
he ascended into heaven,  
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,  
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body,  
and the life everlasting. Amen.

**Hymn MV 28** "God of the Bible" Words: Shirley Erena Murray, 1995. Music: Tony E. Alonso, 2001.  
Words © 1996 Hope Publishing Co. Music © 2001 GIA Publications, Inc.  
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God of the Bible, God in the Gospel,  
hope seen in Jesus, hope yet to come,  
you are our centre, daylight or darkness,  
freedom or prison, you are our home.  
Fresh as the morning, sure as the sunrise,  
God always faithful, you do not change.  
Fresh as the morning, sure as the sunrise,  
God always faithful, you do not change.

God in our struggles, God in our hunger,  
suffering with us, taking our part,  
still you empow'r us, mothering Spirit,  
feeding, sustaining, from your own heart.  
Fresh as the morning, sure as the sunrise,  
God always faithful, you do not change.  
Fresh as the morning, sure as the sunrise,  
God always faithful, you do not change.

Those without status, those who are nothing,  
you have made royal, gifted with rights,  
chosen as partners, midwives of justice,  
birthing new systems, lighting new lights.

Fresh as the morning, sure as the sunrise,  
God always faithful, you do not change.

Fresh as the morning, sure as the sunrise,  
God always faithful, you do not change.

Not by your finger, not by your anger,  
will our world order change in a day,  
but by your people, fearless and faithful,  
small paper lanterns, lighting the way.

Fresh as the morning, sure as the sunrise,  
God always faithful, you do not change.

Fresh as the morning, sure as the sunrise,  
God always faithful, you do not change.

Hope we must carry, shining and certain  
through all our turmoil, terror and loss,  
bonding us gladly one to the other,  
till our world changes facing the Cross.

Fresh as the morning, sure as the sunrise,  
God always faithful, you do not change.

Fresh as the morning, sure as the sunrise,  
God always faithful, you do not change.

### **We Open Ourselves to Receive God's Blessings**

**Responsive Reading:** Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29 VU 837 *parts one, two, and three*

**Hallelujah! Hallelujah!**

Let Israel now say:

**"God's love endures forever."**

Let the house of Aaron say:

**"God's love endures forever."**

Let those who fear God say:

**"God's love endures forever."**

**Hallelujah! Hallelujah!**

God is my strength and my song;

God has become my salvation.

**There are shouts of joy and deliverance  
in the tents of the righteous.**

The right hand of God does mighty things;  
the right hand of God raises up.

**The right hand of God does mighty things.**

I shall not die, but live;

and I shall proclaim what God has done.

**God indeed punished me,**

**but did not give me over to death.**

**Hallelujah! Hallelujah!**

Open to me the gates of the temple,  
that I may enter and give thanks to God.

**This is the gate of God,  
through it the righteous shall enter.**

I thank you for you have answered me;  
you have become my salvation.

**The stone which the builders rejected  
has become the chief cornerstone.**

This is God's doing, marvellous in our eyes.

**This is the day that God has made,  
let us rejoice and be glad in it.**

**Hallelujah! Hallelujah!****Scripture: John 20:1-18 The Resurrection of Jesus, Jesus Appears to Mary Magdalene**

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.

*The other readings for this week are: **Acts 10:34-43 OR Isaiah 65:17-25; 1 Corinthians 15:19-26;  
Luke 24:1-12***

**Meditation:** "Whom are you looking for?"

**Hymn VU 477** “I Come with Joy” Words: Brian Wren, 1968, rev. 1993.

Music: American folk tune from William Walker’s Southern Harmony, 1835; arr. Austin C. Lovelace, 1977

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I come with joy, a child of God, forgiven, loved and free,  
the life of Jesus to recall in love laid down for me,  
in love laid down for me.

I come with Christians far and near to find, as all are fed,  
the new community of love in Christ’s communion bread,  
in Christ’s communion bread.

As Christ breaks bread, and bids us share, each proud division ends.  
The love that made us, makes us one, and strangers now are friends,  
and strangers now are friends.

The Spirit of the risen Christ, unseen, but ever near,  
is in such friendship better known, alive among us here,  
alive among us here.

Together met, together bound by all that God has done,  
we’ll go with joy, to give the world the love that makes us one,  
the love that makes us one.

### **Prayer of Great Thanksgiving**

Adapted from a prayer by Thom M. Shuman © 2025, and used by permission

It is the Risen Lord, who welcomes us to this Meal.

### **We come to feast on life and peace.**

Here, the Gardener of life plants seeds of hope and wonders.

### **We nourish them to produce bouquets of grace for others.**

Here, the Singer of lyrics of goodness teaches us new songs.

### **Songs of how death has no more power over us.**

There was only chaos, when there was no time, but you breathed your Spirit, God of wonder, and watched waters flow, and life emerge. You whispered through your Word and clapped as mountains grew tall, grass rippled across meadows, cattle and other creatures roamed, and creation's beauty shown in wonder. The breath, the words, the created were brought forth for all made in your image, but temptation infected us with the virus of arrogance and rebellious natures. You would not give up on us, but sent those women and men who kept calling to us, encouraging us to turn away and come back to you, but the soft seductive songs of sin knew our names all too well. You called your Child's name who immediately stepped forward to become one of us, for our sakes. With all who hope in Christ, with all who continue to question, we sing songs of praise to you:

**Holy, holy, holy are you, Love which never ends.**

**All creation sings Easter cantatas.**

**Christ is risen! Alleluia!**

**Blessed is the One who has destroyed death.**

**Christ is risen! Alleluia!**

In the chaotic times and place long ago, you listened to your people, God of all lives, and choosing to forget all our pasts you sent your Beloved Child to become one of us. Into shattered lives, he came rebuilding your people; seeing those who wandered alone, he took us by the hand to lead us home; noticing those terrified of hate and fear, he went to their hearts to care for them; realizing how many had been forgotten, he called us by name; when everyone forgot who we were, he remembered our names; when it seemed that the enemy called death would have its way, he became your grace, proving that resurrection love was the life which would protect us from the very power of death itself. As we proclaim his death, as we hope in the promise of resurrection, as we join in glad alleluias on this day, we proclaim that faith which is a mystery:

**The One thought dead, lives;  
the One thought to be lost, finds us;  
the One we think we will never see  
will call us by name to bring us home.**

On this Easter morning, we pray you would pour out your Spirit upon this bread that it might give us strength, and on that cup overflowing with grace. Pour out your Spirit, we pray as well, on your family gathered in these moments: people with great faith, yet who struggled not to lose it these past years; people who lived through loneliness, and hungered for community; people who have tried to be compassionate yet who were wearied by worry and fear; people around the world, in far off places like Belarus, Moldova, Russia, and Ukraine; people who mourn the death of a loved one, like the family and friends of Glen Bennett and Gary Fluttert; people who are ill or dying, like Jack and Kurt, and their loved ones and caregivers. As we eat this broken bread, transform us into those who will welcome the stranger, for we have known loneliness, listen to the ignored, for we have lived in silence, care for the forgotten, for we have struggled to be remembered. As we drink of the cup of grace, we pray you would nourish us so we may learn from those whose lives were not noticed, whose fears were not alleviated, whose needs were not met and when that morning comes when we finish this pilgrimage of life, being welcomed by the Gardener of grace, along with our sisters and brothers of every time and place, we will sing of our love for you, forever and ever, God in Community, Holy in One. Until that time, we pray the words you taught us:

**Our Father, 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 trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us;  
and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.  
For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, forever and ever.  
Amen.**

### **Prayer Following Communion**

Life-giving God, may we, who share Christ's body, live his risen life; we, who drink his cup, bring new life to others; we, whom the Spirit lights, give light to the world. Keep us firm in the hope you have set before us, that we and all your children shall live your love, and all creation will live to praise your name. Amen.

## **We Respond To God's Grace**

### **Invitation to Invest in God's Mission**

The depths of God's love and grace have been made known in the resurrection of the Christ. Let us make the depths of our gratitude known in our tithes and offerings. Our tithes and other offerings will be received.

**Offertory Hymn MV 50** "Alleluia" Words: traditional liturgical text. Music: Norah Duncan IV.  
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Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

### **Prayer of Dedication**

You, O God, are the Easter One. You are the holy source of resurrection.  
You are the dancing spirit of life. We offer these gifts in gratitude for hope restored,  
for the mystery of your grace, and for the promise of resurrection. Amen.

**Hymn VU 164** "The Day of Resurrection" Words: John of Damascus, ca. 750, trans. John Mason Neale, 1862.  
Music: Gesangbuch der Herzogl. Wirtembergischen Katholischen Hofkapelle, 1784, alt. 1868.  
Words and Music in the Public Domain.

The day of resurrection! Earth, tell it out abroad;  
the Passover of gladness, the Passover of God!  
From death to life eternal, from earth unto the sky,  
our Christ has brought us over with hymns of victory.

Our hearts be free of evil, that we may see aright  
the Christ in rays eternal of resurrection light,  
and, listening to the accents, may hear so calm and plain  
Christ's own "All hail!" and, hearing, may raise the victor strain.

Now let the heavens be joyful, let earth its song begin,  
the round world kept high triumph, and all that is therein,  
let all things seen and unseen their notes of gladness blend,  
for Christ indeed is risen, our Joy that has no end.

**Commissioning** A Franciscan blessing

May God bless us with discomfort –

**discomfort at easy answers, half-truths, and superficial relationships,  
so that we may live deep within our hearts.**

May God bless us with anger –

**anger at injustice, oppression, and exploitation of people,  
so that we may work for justice, freedom, and peace.**

May God bless us with tears –

**tears to shed for those who suffer from pain, rejection, hunger and war,  
so that we may reach out our hands to comfort them and turn their pain into joy.**

And may God bless us with foolishness –

**enough foolishness to believe that we can make a difference in this world,  
so that we can do what others claim cannot be done.**

**Response:** *to the tune VU 81 (DIX)*. Words: Unknown.

Music: Conrad Kocher, 1838; adapt. William H. Monk, 1861. Music in the Public Domain

We will meet the risen Christ  
as we live in love each day  
so to God we give all praise  
every day is Easter Day!  
Alleluia! Death has died.  
Christ arisen! Christ alive!

**Postlude:** "Christ Arose" Robert Lowery. Arr.: Victor Lebenske

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**A Congregational Meeting** will be held after worship on Sunday, April 27 to update our Living Faith Story and review our Demographic and Financial profiles. If time permits, we may then examine which path forward is most appropriate, or we will schedule another congregational meeting to discuss, and hopefully decide.

**Ham and Oyster Supper** on Friday, April 25th, 2025. Doors open at 5:30 p.m. Dinner served at 6:00 p.m. Homemade Oyster Soup, ham, scalloped potatoes, baked beans, cabbage salad, rolls and dessert. Take out available. Adults \$25.00, Children 6-12 \$10.00, 5 and under free. For tickets, call Marion Woods 519-461-1136 or Jane Busche 519-268-3360.

**Thorndale United Church Annual Strawberry and Ham Supper** on Tuesday, May 20 at the Lions Community Centre, 4:30-7:00 p.m. Adults: \$25; 6-14: \$10; under 6: Free. Tickets are available until May 11 from Bob or Darlene Graham at 519-461-0463.

**Lectionary Readings for next week:** (April 27, Second of Easter)

Acts 5:27-32; Psalm 118:14-29 OR Psalm 150; Revelation 1:4-8; John 20:19-31