

The Presque Isle Congregational Church
United Church of Christ
April 9th, 2023 - Easter Sunday

Prelude

Barbara Merryman

Words of Welcome

Jennifer Gillis-White

Introit

Now the Green Blade Rises

PIUCC Choir

Call to Worship

One: Give thanks to our Good God whose unfailing love lasts forever!

Many: Give thanks to our Risen God whose unfailing love lives forever!

One: We gather together in the dawn of a new day. We look toward the tomb to seek the Enfleshed Word.

Many: The stone has been rolled away. The tomb is empty! Alleluia!

One: We find God alive in the searching, in the garden, in our hope-filled spaces.

Many: Alleluia. Christ lives and finds us with unfailing love!

Opening Prayer (In Unison)

Resurrected God, you are the God of new beginnings, of new dawns and new mercies. Enter into our presence again. When we move toward the tomb, remind us that you come with life. When we despair at the world unfolding around us, assure us of your redemptive power. When we long for your voice, speak a word of hope, encouragement, and peace. May we reflect your image as resurrection people in covenant with you. Amen.

Opening Hymn

“Jesus Christ is Risen Today”

Prayer of Confession: (unison)

Amazing God, we know there is nothing you cannot overcome. We confess to our profound need for your love, strength, and mercy. Too often, we come toward the tomb resigned to the status quo. We anticipate the worst even when you are the provider of every good and perfect thing. We allow despair over the condition of our world to overwhelm us when you call us to follow you. Fortify us to live abundantly in your kingdom on earth. Transform us and breathe new life into us.

Assurance of Pardon

The One who transformed death can and will certainly transform our lives. Jesus welcomes us on the journey to new life. No matter how many times our steps stray, we hide from hard things, or we betray the good news, God's grace meets us with an unfailing love to guide us on the path of life abundant and everlasting. Receive the resurrection power of the One who was and is and is to come.

Two-Minute Message

Jennifer Gillis-White

Children's Hymn

“Hey Now, Singing Hallelujah”

Scripture Readings

John 20:1-18

Common English Bible

Early in the morning of the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb and saw that the stone had been taken away from the tomb. She ran to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved, and said, "They have taken the Lord from the tomb, and we don't know where they've put him." Peter and the other disciple left to go to the tomb. They were running together, but the other disciple ran faster than Peter and was the first to arrive at the tomb. Bending down to take a look, he saw the linen cloths lying there, but he didn't go in. Following him, Simon Peter entered the tomb and saw the linen cloths lying there. He also saw the face cloth that had been on Jesus' head. It wasn't with the other clothes but was folded up in its own place. Then the other disciple, the one who arrived at the tomb first, also went inside. He saw and believed. They didn't yet understand the scripture that Jesus must rise from the dead. Then the disciples returned to the place where they were staying.

Mary stood outside near the tomb, crying. As she cried, she bent down to look into the tomb. She saw two angels dressed in white, seated where the body of Jesus had been, one at the head and one at the foot. The angels asked her, "Woman, why are you crying?" She replied, "They have taken away my Lord, and I don't know where they've put him." As soon as she had said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but she didn't know it was Jesus.

Jesus said to her, "Woman, why are you crying? Who are you looking for?" Thinking he was the gardener, she replied, "Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have put him and I will get him." Jesus said to her, "Mary." She turned and said to him in Aramaic, "Rabbouni" (which means *Teacher*).

Jesus said to her, "Don't hold on to me, for I haven't yet gone up to my Father. Go to my brothers and sisters and tell them, 'I'm going up to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.'" Mary Magdalene left and announced to the disciples, "I've seen the Lord." Then she told them what he said to her.

Acts 10:34-43

Common English Bible

Peter said, "I really am learning that God doesn't show partiality to one group of people over another. Rather, in every nation, whoever worships him and does what is right is acceptable to him. This is the message of peace he sent to the Israelites by proclaiming the good news through Jesus Christ: He is Lord of all! You know what happened throughout Judea, beginning in Galilee after the baptism John preached. You know about Jesus of Nazareth, whom God anointed with the Holy Spirit and endowed with power. Jesus traveled around doing good and healing everyone oppressed by the devil because God was with him. We are witnesses of everything he did, both in Judea and in Jerusalem. They killed him by hanging him on a tree, but God raised him up on the third day and allowed him to be seen, not by everyone but by us. We are witnesses whom God chose beforehand, who ate and drank with him after God raised him from the dead. He commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one whom God appointed as judge of the living and the dead. All the prophets testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name."

Reflection

Meg Hegemann

Choral Anthem

"Because You Live, O Christ"

PIUCC Choir

Prayers of the People and the Lord's Prayer

Our **Creator***, 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 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, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen

**Please use whatever name is most familiar/comfortable when you pray to God.*

Reception of New Members

Allen and Susan Morrill

Calvin Hall

UCC Statement of Faith (in unison)

Closing Hymn

"Thine is the Glory"

Benediction

Postlude

Barbara Merryman

Music Citations

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Now the Green Blade Rises #95512

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Christ the Lord Is Risen Today #63397

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Because You Live, O Christ #105836

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United Church of Christ Statement of Faith

In the form of a Doxology

We believe in you, O God, Eternal Spirit, God of our Savior Jesus Christ and our God, and to your deeds we testify:

You call the worlds into being, create persons in your own image, and set before each one the ways of life and death.

You seek in holy love to save all people from aimlessness and sin.

You judge people and nations by your righteous will declared through prophets and apostles.

In Jesus Christ, the man of Nazareth, our crucified and risen Savior, you have come to us and shared our common lot, conquering sin and death and reconciling the world to yourself.

You bestow upon us your Holy Spirit, creating and renewing the church of Jesus Christ, binding in covenant faithful people of all ages, tongues, and races.

You call us into your church to accept the cost and joy of discipleship, to be your servants in the service of others, to proclaim the gospel to all the world and resist the powers of evil, to share in Christ's baptism and eat at his table, to join him in his passion and victory.

You promise to all who trust you forgiveness of sins and fullness of grace, courage in the struggle for justice and peace, your presence in trial and rejoicing, and eternal life in your realm which has no end.

Blessing and honor, glory and power be unto you.

Amen.