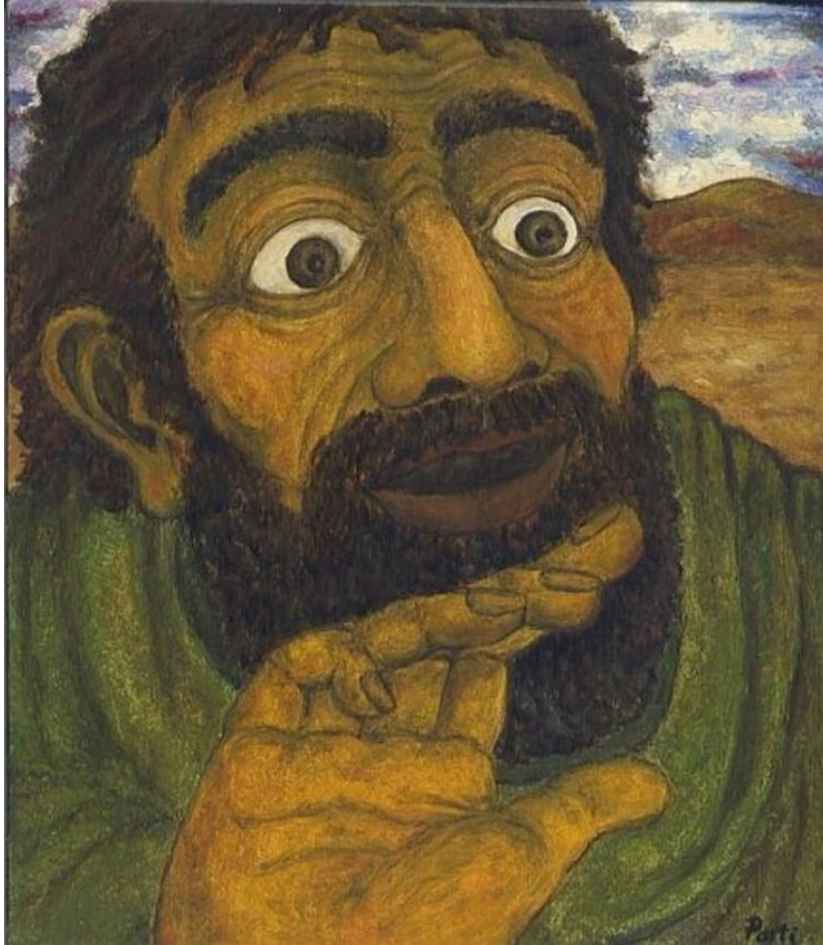


First Congregational United Church of Christ

April 16, 2023



Painting by Zoltan Joo

2nd Sunday of Easter

Ministers: All who are a part of this church

Pastor: Rev. Rolf Morck

Musician: Ben Nichols

Choir Director: Ann Russ

Peace Candle Lighter: Ranna LeVoir

Liturgist: Sandy Stover

Gathering Music

Words of Welcome

Prelude

Words to Enter Worship (Based on Psalm 16)

People who have doubts: Protect me, O God, for in you I take refuges. I say to the LORD, "You are my Light, in you I find good."

People who have questions: As for the holy ones in the land, they are the noble, in whom is all my delight. Those who choose an idol multiply their sorrows. Their offerings I will not partake or take their names upon my lips.

People who have fears: The LORD is my chosen portion and my cup; you hold my lot. The boundary lines have fallen for me in pleasant places; I have a good heritage.

People who have joy: I bless the LORD who gives me counsel; in the night also, my heart instructs me. I keep the LORD always before me; because they is at my right hand, I shall not be moved.

Opening Hymn #240 Jesus Christ is Risen Today

- 1 Jesus Christ is risen today, Alleluia!
our triumphant holy day, Alleluia!
who did once upon the cross, Alleluia!
suffer to redeem our loss. Alleluia!
2. To the tomb the women bring, Alleluia!
Spices rich, and offering, Alleluia!
Asking where might Jesus be, Alleluia!
Savior come to set us free, Alleluia!
3. There the angel clothed in white, Alleluia!
Tells the news with great delight, Alleluia!
This the news the angel gives, Alleluia!
That the sovereign glorious lives, Alleluia!
4. Hasten now to Galilee, Alleluia!
ell the others what you see!, Alleluia!
With excitement trembling, Alleluia!
Off they run, good news to bring, Alleluia!
5. Christ appears in full array, Alleluia!
Sing with joy this Paschal day, Alleluia!
Christ now from the dead is raised, Alleluia!
Holy Trinity be praised, Alleluia!

Words and Music - ©1953 H W Gray

Contributors: Charles Wesley, David H Williams

Words of Lament

Merciful God, we have doubts about you, the world, and ourselves. It is hard to have the joy of resurrection when all we hear that everything is falling apart. It's hard to believe in resurrection when we seem to be on the wrong side of it. Amazing God of light and love, open our hearts to the news that Jesus has risen. In our doubts and fears, call us to go deeper, in our faith and in our love, propelling us to love with all our hearts, minds, souls, and strength: You, our neighbors, and ourselves. Amen.

Time of Silence

Words for Blessing the Earth- Canticle of the Creatures

Attributed to St. Francis of Assisi

One: All praise be yours, My Lord
through all that you have made.

Many: And first my lord Brother Sun, who brings the day...

How beautiful is he, how radiant in all his splendor!

Of you, Most High, he bears the likeness.

All: All praise be yours, my Lord, through Sister Moon and Stars;
In the heavens you have made them, bright and precious and fair.

One: All praise be yours, my Lord, through Brothers Wind and Air...

All praise be yours, my Lord, through Sister Water,
So useful, lowly, precious and pure.

Many: All praise be yours, my Lord, through Brother Fire,
through whom you brighten up the night...

All praise be yours, my Lord, through Sister Earth, our mother,

All: Who feeds us...and produces various fruits

With colored flowers and herbs...

Praise and bless my Lord, and give him thanks,
And serve him with great humility.

Words of Poetry & Lighting the Candle of Peace

It is a custom in our congregation to light our Peace Candle during worship, as a witness to the Prince of Peace and our communal intention to be peace-makers as a Just Peace Church.

Doubt

*I'm tired of these tears Can I stoke the flame once more
Falling from my eyes Or will I waste my breath?
Wrestling with my thoughts Trying to invigorate
Which are truths or lies? Something close to death*

*Am I happy where I am I'm full of doubt
Or afraid to change my life? But more so afraid*

*Have I settled far too much Of unraveling what is
Or can't be satisfied? For a life unattained*

*Listen to your gut they say And maybe the truth
But I don't like what I hear Is I wrestle with these thoughts
My friends tell me it's obvious Cuz it distracts me from acting
But it's not crystal clear If I keep myself lost*

*I'm clouded by my motives
For passion and stability
Can they both come from one
Or only separately?*

Passing of the Peace

Hymn #254 These Things Did Thomas Count

- 1 These things did Thomas count as real:
The warmth of blood, the chill of steel,
The grain of wood, the heft of stone,
The last frail twitch of flesh and bone.
- 2 The vision of his skeptic mind
Was keen enough to make him blind
To any unexpected act
Too large for his small world of fact.
- 3 His reasoned certainties denied
That one could live when one had died,
Until his fingers read like Braille
The marking of the spear and nail.
- 4 May we, O God, by grace believe
And thus the risen Christ receive,
Whose raw, imprinted palms reached out
And beckoned Thomas from his doubt."

Words - ©1984 Oxford University Press

Contributors: Thomas H. Troeger

Scripture Readings

1st Scripture 1 Peter 1:3-9 (The Message)³⁻⁵ What a God we have! And how fortunate we are to have him, this Father of our Master Jesus! Because Jesus was raised from the dead, we've been given a brand-new life and have everything to live for, including a future in heaven—and the future starts now! God is keeping careful watch over us and the future. The Day is coming when you'll have it all—life healed and whole.

⁶⁻⁷ I know how great this makes you feel, even though you have to put up with every kind of aggravation in the meantime. Pure gold put in the fire comes out of it *proved pure*; *genuine faith put through this suffering comes out proved genuine*. When Jesus wraps this all up, it's your faith, not your gold, that God will have on display as evidence of his victory.

⁸⁻⁹ You never saw him, yet you love him. You still don't see him, yet you trust him—with laughter and singing. Because you kept on believing, you'll get what you're looking forward to: total salvation

2nd Scripture John 20:19-31

¹⁹ When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors were locked where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." ²⁰ After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. ²¹ Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you." ²² When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. ²³ If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained."

²⁴ But Thomas (who was called the Twin), one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. ²⁵ So the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord." But he said to them, "Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands and put my finger in the mark of the nails and my hand in his side, I will not believe."

²⁶ A week later his disciples were again in the house, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were shut, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." ²⁷ Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here and see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it in my side. Do not doubt but believe." ²⁸ Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God!" ²⁹ Jesus said to him, "Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe."

³⁰ Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples that are not written in this book. ³¹ But these are written so that you may continue to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through believing you may have life in his name.

Choir Anthem

Message *Easter Never Quits*

Musical Reflections

Joys and Concerns, Pastoral Prayer and the Lord's Prayer

Our Father, Mother God, 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

News of God at Work in our Congregation & Community

Our Time of Giving

Doxology

*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.*

Closing Hymn # 249 Peace I Leave with You, My Friends

Refrain:

Peace I leave with you, my friends:
Shalom my peace, in all you do.
Peace I leave with you, my friends,
I give to you, so you can give to others, too.

1. To share God's love is why I came,
To show God's kindness without end
Go now my friends and do the same,
Until I come again...
(Refrain)

2. Take my hand and be at peace,
The spirit of our love I send;
And with this love you will be free,
Until I come again...
(Refrain)

3. With this love you all will know,
That loneliness is at an end,
Rejoice my people though I go
For I will come again...
(Refrain)

Words and Music - ©1967, 1994 OCP
Contributors: Ray Repp

Benediction

Sending Music