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THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHESTER

An Open & Affirming Congregation of
The United Church of Christ
April 7, 2024 10:00 a.m.
Second Sunday of Easter

PREPARATION FOR THE WORD

WELCOME — Pat Holloway, Deacon

PRELUDE

INTROIT — *Come and Fill Our Hearts* — Taize

CALL TO WORSHIP

We confess what we believe: we believe in Jesus the risen Christ.

Now Easter has come and gone; the lilies have faded and fallen, the crowds have drifted away.

We believe that Jesus died, was raised and is ascended into heaven.

And sometimes it feels as though we have been left behind to fend for ourselves: We go to our jobs, raise our families, pay the bills, and let worry slide into the portal of our hearts.

Yet Jesus left us with a promise: a promise of God's presence, a promise of God's spirit, a promise to build the church into a beacon of hope and grace and salvation.

We believe that Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again. Alleluia and Amen!

*HYMN — *Thine is the Glory* — 214

Thine is the glory risen, conquering Son; endless is the victory thou oe'r death hast won. Angels in bright raiment rolled the stone away, kept the folded graveclothes where thy body lay.

Refrain: Thine is the glory risen, conquering Son; endless is the victory thou o'er death hast won.

Lo! Jesus meets us, risen from the tomb; lovingly he greets us, scatters fear and gloom; let the church with gladness hymns of triumph sing, for our Christ now liveth; death hath lost its sting.

Refrain

No more we doubt thee, glorious Prince of life! Life is nought with out thee; aid us in our strife; make us more than conquerors, through the deathless love; bring us safe through Jordan to thy home above.

Refrain

INVOCATION

God, as we find ourselves now in the grasp of Eastertide, may we continue to live as resurrection people. May we bring new life to old realities, new hope to broken promises, new truth to lingering falsehood, new ways of living to old habits and assumptions. You who rise up in the freshness of every new day, may we continue to rise up and proclaim by our thoughts, words and deeds, the transformative power of your resurrection light; may the life of humanity be graced and blessed by every good work done in your name; Amen.

PROCLAMATION OF THE WORD

OLD TESTAMENT LESSON Exodus 2.1-10 (p. 48)

ANTHEM *Christ We Do All Adore Thee* T. Dubois

NEW TESTAMENT LESSON Matthew 13, selected verses

Jesus said, 'The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that someone took and sowed in his field; it is the smallest of all the seeds, but when it has grown it is the greatest of shrubs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches.' He told them another parable: 'The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed in with three measures of flour until all of it was leavened.' 'Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net that was thrown into the sea and caught fish of every kind; when it was full, they drew it ashore, sat down, and put the good into baskets but threw out the bad.'

SERMON *"Serendipity? Or Providence?"* Rev. W. Alan Froggatt

"Now, by coincidence, a priest was going down that road;
and when he saw the man, he passed by on the other side."
(Luke 10.31)

RESPONSE TO THE WORD

OFFERTORY *Draw Us In The Spirit's Tether* H. Friedell

*DOXOLOGY

Praise God from whom all blessings flow / Praise God all creatures here below
Praise God for all that love has done / Creator, Christ and Spirit, One. Amen

JOYS AND CONCERNS

PASTORAL PRAYER & LORD'S PRAYER *("trespasses")*

THE SACRAMENT OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

INVITATION

PRAYER OF CONSECRATION

SHARING THE BREAD AND CUP

POEM *Coincidence Or Fate?* Mihaela Pirjol (1974 -)

*HYMN *Joy Dawned Again on Easter Day* 215

Joy dawned again on Easter Day, the sun shone out with fair array, when to their longing eyes restored, the apostles saw their risen Lord.

O Jesus, source of gentleness, come now yourself our hearts possess that we may give you all our days the willing tribute of our praise.

O Savior, now with us abide in this our joyful Eastertide; from every weapon death can wield your own redeemed forever shield.

*BLESSING & BENEDICTION

BENEDICTION RESPONSE *My Peace I Leave You* Taize

LOOKING AHEAD

April 7	**10:00 am** 5:00 pm	**Worship** Soup Kitchen	April 11	8:30 am 5:30 pm 6:30 pm **7:00 pm**	Yoga Scouts – Wolf Den Scouts – Bear Den **Choir Rehearsal**
April 8	6:30 pm **7:00 pm**	Irish Dance **Trustees Meeting**	April 12	**8:15 am**	**Coffice Hours at The Villager**
April 9	8:30 am 6:30 pm 7:00 pm	Yoga Scouts – L&T Chester Garden Club	April13	**9:00 am**	**Rummage Sale**
April 10	6:30 pm	Scouts - Webelos	April 14	**10:00 am** 5:00 pm	**Worship** Soup Kitchen

NOTES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Welcome! No matter who you are, or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here at the United Church of Chester, an Open and Affirming Church and a member of the United Church of Christ. **The United Church of Chester is centered in Christ's love, embracing, nurturing, serving all, and committed to justice and peace**.

The deacon for the month of April is **Pat Holloway.** The greeter this morning is **Diane Lindsay.** Flowers on the altar were provided by **Diane Lindsay** in celebration of Spring! Coffee hour is being hosted by someone special.

Rummage and Bake Sale – Saturday April 13th
Our Rummage and Bake Sale returns on Saturday, April 13th from 9 am to 1 pm. Sign-up sheets are in Fellowship Hall for helping to set-up the week prior to the Rummage Sale and for baking items for the Bake Sale. Any questions please contact Judy Schondorf at 860-399-7772.

ALAN'S OFFICE HOURS: Wednesday – Friday 8:30 am – 12:30 pm, or by appointment.

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS: Tuesday - Friday 9am-1pm.