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THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHESTER

An Open & Affirming Congregation of
The United Church of Christ
April 12, 2026, 10:00 a.m.
Second Sunday of Easter

WELCOME — Daphne Stitt, Deacon

PRELUDE — *Trumpet Voluntary* — J. Stanley

INTROIT — *Heaven and Earth, And Sea and Air* — J. Neander

CALL TO WORSHIP

Rejoice, heavenly powers; sing, choirs of angels!
Jesus Christ, our light, is risen; sound the trumpet of salvation!
Rejoice, O earth, in shining splendor, radiant in the brightness of your Lord!
Christ has conquered, we are filled with glory, and night has vanished forever!
Rejoice, O servant church, exult in glory - the risen Savior shines upon you!
Let this house resound with joy, echoing the mighty song of all God's people! Amen.

*HYMN — *Come You Faithful, Raise the Strain* — 204

Come, you faithful, raise the strain of triumphant gladness God has brought forth Israel into joy from sadness; loosed from Pharoah's bitter yoke Jacob's sons and daughters; led them with unmoistened foot through the Red Sea waters.

'Tis the spring of souls today; Christ has burst his prison, and from three days' sleep in death as a sun has risen; all the winter of our sins, long and dark, is flying from the Light, to whom we give laud and praise undying.

Now the joyous season, bright with the day of splendor, with the royal feast of feasts, comes its joys to render; comes to glad Jerusalem who with true affection welcomes in unwearied strains Jesus' resurrection.

Neither might the gates of death, nor the tomb's dark portal, nor the watchers, nor the seal hold him as a mortal; but today amid the twelve Christ now stands, bestowing peace and joy which evermore pass all human knowing.

PRAYER OF INVOCATION

God of the risen Christ, you love us so much as to raise Christ from the tomb. In you we find life and grace in abundance. You grant us peace in Christ; you grant us forgiveness of sin; you welcome us back when we have been faithless. Bring us your peace and lead us to forgive others; carry us through our times of disbelief. May we know that Jesus is the Christ, and in that knowledge may we have life in Christ's name. We pray this in the name of the Risen One, Amen.

PROCLAMATION OF THE WORD

OLD TESTAMENT LESSON Psalm 29

Ascribe to the Lord, O heavenly beings, ascribe to the Lord glory and strength. Ascribe to the Lord's name glory; worship the Lord in holy splendor. The voice of the Lord is over the waters; the God of glory thunders, the Lord, over mighty waters. The voice of the Lord is powerful; the voice of the Lord is full of majesty. The voice of the Lord breaks the cedars;

the Lord breaks the cedars of Lebanon. It makes Lebanon skip like a calf, and Sirion like a young wild ox. The voice of the Lord flashes forth flames of fire. The voice of the Lord shakes the wilderness; the Lord shakes the wilderness of Kadesh. The voice of the Lord causes the oaks to whirl, and strips the forest bare; and in his temple all say, "Glory!" The Lord sits enthroned over the flood; the Lord sits enthroned as ruler forever. May the Lord give strength to the people! May the Lord bless the people with peace!

ANTHEM *Shout Hallelujah to the Risen Lamb* V. Johnson

NEW TESTAMENT LESSON Romans 8.9-17, 26-27

SERMON *"Surviving the Subpar Sermon"* Rev. W. Alan Froggatt

"Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness; for… that very Spirit intercedes with sighs too deep for human words. And God, who searches the heart, knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God."
(Romans 8.26-27)

RESPONSE TO THE WORD

OFFERTORY *The Pure In Heart* P. Hawes

*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 AND LORD'S PRAYER *("trespasses")*

POEM *Easter Wings* George Herbert (1593-1633)

*HYMN *We Limit Not the Truth of God* 1

We limit not the truth of God to our poor reach of mind, by notions of our day and sect, crude, partial, and confined. No, let a new and better hope within our hearts be stirred: The Lord hath yet more light and truth to break forth from the Word.

Darkling those faithful pilgrims went the first steps of the way; 'twas but the dawning yet to grow into the perfect day. And grow it shall, our glorious sun more fervid rays afford: The Lord hath yet more light and truth to break forth from the Word.

The valleys passed, ascending still, our souls would higher climb, and look down from supernal heights on all the bygone time. Upward we press, the air is clear, and the sphere-music heard: The Lord hath yet more light and truth to break forth from the Word.

O God, we pray that thou wilt send us increase from above; enlarge, expand all Christian souls to comprehend thy love, and make us to go on, to know with nobler powers conferred: The Lord hath yet more light and truth to break forth from the Word.

*BENEDICTION

BENEDICTION RESPONSE *Old Irish Blessing* D. Agay

(* those who are able may stand)

LOOKING AHEAD

April 12	**10:00 am** **11:00 am** 5:00 pm	**Worship** **Council Meeting** No Soup Kitchen	April 16	8:30 am **7:00 pm**	Yoga **Choir Rehearsal**
April 13	5:30 pm	Irish Dance	April 17	**8:15 am**	**Coffice Hours at Simon's Marketplace**
April 14	8:30 am	Yoga	April 18	**9:00 am**	**Rummage Sale**
			April 19	**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 **Daphne Stitt.** You were greeted this morning by **Norma Stearns**. Flowers in the chancel are provided by **Norma Stearns**. Coffee Hour is being hosted by **Diane Lindsay**.

Rummage and Bake Sale – Saturday April 18th

Our Rummage and Bake Sale returns on Saturday, April 18th 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, work the day of the sale, cleaning up after the sale and for baking items for the Bake Sale. Any questions please contact Marie Ready at 860-526-1487 or Judy Schondorf at 860-399-7772.

ALAN'S OFFICE HOURS: Wednesday 8:30 am – 12:30 pm. Alan will be away until Friday, April 24th.

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