

United Church of Christ, First Congregational  
Norwich, New York  
April 19, 2020

**A TIME OF GATHERING AS WE PREPARE TO WORSHIP GOD**

**PRELUDE** *Beautiful Savior*

Hand Bell Choir (recorded March 10, 2019)

**WELCOME**

(Pastor John)

**PRAYER OF THE DAY**

(Gary Gray)

God of signs and wonders, you have revealed to us that Jesus Christ is your son and our Savior. Strengthen our faith, that we may have life in Christ's name. **Amen.**

**CALL TO WORSHIP**

(Gary Gray, Jason Handy, Brad Morrison )

ONE: Blessed be the God of our Savior, Jesus Christ!

**ALL: God has given us a new birth in the living hope of the resurrection.**

ONE: God has given us an inheritance that is imperishable and unfading.

**ALL: In this we rejoice, even when we suffer trials.**

ONE: For although we have not seen Jesus, we love him; and although we have not seen him, we believe in him.

**ALL: For the outcome of our faith is the salvation of our souls.**

**HYMN**

*Yours is the Glory, Resurrected One!*

(Tune: JUDAS MACCABEUS)

Meena Conant, Mary Williams, voice

Bob Oehme, organ

**CHILDREN'S TIME**

(Linda Oehme)

The Lord's Prayer

**CONGREGATIONAL GREETING OF PEACE**

ONE: May the peace of Christ be with you.

**ALL: And also with you.**

## **WE LISTEN FOR GOD'S WORD**

**SCRIPTURE** 1 Peter 1:3-9  
(Jason Handy)

<sup>3</sup> Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, <sup>4</sup> and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade. This inheritance is kept in heaven for you, <sup>5</sup> who through faith are shielded by God's power until the coming of the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time. <sup>6</sup> In all this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. <sup>7</sup> These have come so that the proven genuineness of your faith—of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire—may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed. <sup>8</sup> Though you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy, <sup>9</sup> for you are receiving the end result of your faith, the salvation of your souls.

**ANTHEM** *The Risen Christ* Schönster Herr Jesu  
arr. James L. Klein  
(UCC Choir, recorded Easter 2019)

**SCRIPTURE** John 20:19-31

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

<sup>24</sup> But Thomas (who was called the Twin), one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. <sup>25</sup> 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."

<sup>26</sup> 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." <sup>27</sup> 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." <sup>28</sup> Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God!" <sup>29</sup> 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."

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

**SERMON**

**ORGAN INTERLUDE**  
(Bob Oehme)

## **PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

(Pastor John)

*[A time of silence follows each petition.]*

ONE: Resurrecting God, in a doubting world, keep us in faith that we may have life.

We pray for the church universal. Breathe on us your Holy Spirit, that we may honor and pass on the great inheritance we have received.

**ALL: Keep us in faith that we may have life.**

ONE: We pray for Mother Earth, that we may touch her wounds with healing care and love.

**ALL: Keep us in faith that we may have life.**

ONE: We pray for the whole world, its nations, its leaders, and its people, that your wisdom and peace may prevail.

**ALL: Keep us in faith that we may have life.**

ONE: We pray for all those in need, the suffering, the oppressed, the ill, the dying, and all those who care for them.

**ALL: Keep us in faith that we may have life.**

ONE: We pray for ourselves, our families, and those we love.

**ALL: Keep us in faith that we may have life.**

ONE: Blessed are you, O God, who through Jesus Christ, crucified and risen, and in the community of the Holy Spirit, gives us an inheritance that is imperishable and unfading, now and forever.

**ALL: Amen.**

## **PASTORAL PRAYER**

**CLOSING HYMN** *Now the Green Blade Rises*  
(NOËL NOUVELET)

Meena Conant, Mary Williams, voice

Bob Oehme, organist

## **BLESSING**

(Pastor John)

May the God who loves and resurrects us  
give you a goodly portion of the Holy Spirit  
and new birth into a living hope.

**POSTLUDE** *Be Still My Soul*

Mary Williams, voice

Bob Oehme, piano