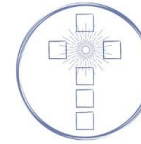




RESURRECTION STORIES:
Unlock Yours
The Season of Easter



Serve & Enrich
**Zion United Church
of Christ**

The 4th Sunday of Easter: Found

Prelude

Repose

Gathering—What is it like to literally not have a home, a place to lay your head at night? “Homeless” can also mean a sense of not feeling “at home,” lacking a feeling of belonging, feeling alone even in the midst of others. So many in this world are isolated. How can we find, and offer each other, “home” with the assurance of the presence of God and a beloved community?

Easter Centering Song: “Because He Lives,” 447

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| God sent his Son, they called him Jesus; he came to love, heal, and forgive; he lived and died to buy my pardon, an empty grave is there to prove my Savior lives. | Because he lives I can face tomorrow; because he lives, all fear is gone; because I know he holds the future, and life is worth the living just because he lives. |
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Prayer—Almighty God, your power makes...the dead rise to new life. We give you thanks for the love poured into our world through Christ Jesus, who opened our minds to understand what you have made, whose appearance among his followers brings peace, and who creates faith through touch and taste. Show us Jesus, even now, through the mystery of your threefold presence, one God, abiding now and forever. Amen.=

The Lord's Prayer (unison)—Our Father, 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 debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

Hymn

Sweet, Sweet Spirit, 134

Exploring God's Word for All Ages

An Ancient Story of Resurrection

Question: What does “community” mean to you?

Story of Resurrection *based on Luke 24:36-43*

Reader: Jesus appeared among the disciples again. He stood among them and said: “Peace be with you.” Yet, the disciples were terrified. They thought they were seeing a ghost.

Pastor: Centering our hearts and minds in peace is a way to feel calm within. We learn to still ourselves to be open to unimaginable possibilities.

Reader: Jesus asked: “Why are you frightened and why do doubts arise in your hearts?”

Pastor: Doubts play an important role in our faith journey. Facing our uncertainties allows room for our hearts and minds to be filled with healing narratives.

Reader: “Touch me and see,” Jesus invited, as he offered his pierced hands and feet. Yet, the disciples — even in the midst of their joy — felt disbelief.

Pastor: Sometimes we are presented with signs of hope long before we realize we are not abandoned. Our hearts rejoice, yet our minds still wonder at what we have seen.

Reader: Jesus asked if they had anything to eat, and the disciples shared a piece of fish, which Jesus ate while in their presence.

Pastor: Jesus frequently shows us how to create community in the midst of feeling lost. We can form communities of sustenance and belonging. We are not alone – we are found – when we share Christ’s call to peace.

Reader: This is a Word of Hope for the people who long for it.

Pastor: Thanks be to the Living Word.

We Hear God’s Word—*John 14:18-28 (NRSV)*

Paula Prange

18 ‘I will not leave you orphaned; I am coming to you. ¹⁹In a little while the world will no longer see me, but you will see me; because I live, you also will live. ²⁰On that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you. ²¹They who have my commandments and keep them are those who love me; and those who love me will be loved by my Father, and I will love them and reveal myself to them.’ ²²Judas (not Iscariot) said to him, ‘Lord, how is it that you will reveal yourself to us, and not to the world?’ ²³Jesus answered him, ‘Those who love

me will keep my word, and my Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them. ²⁴Whoever does not love me does not keep my words; and the word that you hear is not mine, but is from the Father who sent me.

²⁵ ‘I have said these things to you while I am still with you. ²⁶But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything, and remind you of all that I have said to you. ²⁷Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid. ²⁸You heard me say to you, “I am going away, and I am coming to you.” If you loved me, you would rejoice that I am going to the Father, because the Father is greater than I.

Meditation

Found

Hymn

What a Friend We Have in Jesus, 473

We Respond to God's Word with Our Giving

Invitation—As we have been loved, we are invited to love. As God has given generously to us, we are invited to give generously to God and to God’s church. May our hearts brim with love and generosity for all as we enter this time of offering.~

Opportunities to Live Resurrected

- Package Crayons for Riley Hospital for Children
- Blood Drive – donate, volunteer, spread the word

April Benevolence—God’s Bounty and the Meijer Simply Give Program

****Offering Song:** “I Love to Tell the Story” (pew card)

**The Savior of our stories
has brought his peace to you;
now go and tell the story,
for others need it too.
To ev'ry one who's hurting
ring out the gospel call;**

**proclaim that Christ is risen
and grants his peace to all.**

**I love to tell the story;
'twill be my theme in glory
to tell the old, old story
of Jesus and his love.**

We Give Thanks—Generous God of love and grace, bless these gifts with your abundant love and your life-giving grace. Bless us as we bear witness to

your love and grace in all that we say, all that we give, and all that we do.
Amen.~

Hymn

Blessed Assurance, 426

Benediction—Whatever binds you, whatever locks you up, whatever causes you to feel unsettled or unbalanced, whatever keeps you up at night or keeps you from feeling a sense of belonging, can be wiped clean...for we believe our stories can be rewritten each and every day. We know it isn't this easy or quick, but let this be a vision of your life resurrected.

And now, may you go into the world, finding your home in love in all the ways you discover you can, for yourself, for others, for the world. And may the God who created you to live in harmony with yourself and others, the Christ who showed you what acceptance and serenity looks like, and the Spirit who is transforming your life even now, be with you now and evermore. **Amen.**

Postlude

Festive March