

Christ United Methodist Sunrise Service Worship Booklet

April 12, 2020



GREETINGS:

No matter what is going on in the world – the sun still comes up. No matter what is going on in the world, Jesus Christ could not be contained by the grave. Death couldn't hold him down. Welcome to worship! Welcome to our sunrise service 2020!

I invite you to connect with us through the online connect card on our website.

CALL TO WORSHIP:

Voice 1: Christ has risen!

All Voices: Christ has risen indeed!

Voice 1: Faith, hope, joy – they are all alive!

All Voices: Darkness and death have been overcome!

Voice 1: Jesus is risen from the dead. Alleluia!

All Voices: God has given us new life. Alleluia! Amen.

322 Up from the Grave He Arose

C F/C F/C C G⁷ F/C C

1. Low in the grave he lay, Je - sus my Sav - ior,
 2. Vain - ly they watch his bed, Je - sus my Sav - ior;
 3. Death can - not keep its prey, Je - sus my Sav - ior;

5 F C/E C Am/C G/D D⁷ G

wait - ing the com - ing day, Je - sus my Lord!
 vain - ly they seal the dead, Je - sus my Lord!
 he tore the bars a - way, Je - sus my Lord!

Refrain

9 C C C F

Up from the grave he arose, with a mighty triumph o'er his
 (he a-rose)

12 C G⁷ Am F C
foes; he a-rose a vic-tor from the dark domain, and he
(o'er his foes)

15 F D⁷ G Am G⁷ C
lives for - ev - er, with his saints to reign. He arose! He a-
(he arose)

18 F C/G G⁷ C
rose! (he a-rose) Hal - le - lu - jah! Christ a - rose!

Opening Prayer:

Risen Lord, Conqueror of death, Giver of Light and Life – come and make your presence known in our homes. The first church gathered all that time ago, certain that all was lost. They gathered in fear, sure that death had one. And then the women came with the good news from the tomb: He is Risen! He is Risen! HE IS RISEN! Come to our homes where we have sheltered in place. Come where we have let fear win too many days. Come where it feels the darkness has won. And just as the sun rises this morning, rise

in our hearts today. Restore your light and life and may our hearts and lips repeat the refrain – Christ the Lord is Risen today! Amen.

Scripture Reading: John 20:1-18

Early in the morning of the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb and saw that the stone had been taken away from the tomb. ² She ran to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved, and said, "They have taken the Lord from the tomb, and we don't know where they've put him." ³ Peter and the other disciple left to go to the tomb. ⁴ They were running together, but the other disciple ran faster than Peter and was the first to arrive at the tomb. ⁵ Bending down to take a look, he saw the linen cloths lying there, but he didn't go in. ⁶ Following him, Simon Peter entered the tomb and saw the linen cloths lying there. ⁷ He also saw the face cloth that had been on Jesus' head. It wasn't with the other clothes but was folded up in its own place. ⁸ Then the other disciple, the one who arrived at the tomb first, also went inside. He saw and believed. ⁹ They didn't yet understand the scripture that Jesus must rise from the dead. ¹⁰ Then the disciples returned to the place where they were staying.

¹¹ Mary stood outside near the tomb, crying. As she cried, she bent down to look into the tomb. ¹² She saw two angels dressed in white, seated where the body of Jesus had been, one at the head and one at the foot. ¹³ The angels asked her, "Woman, why are you crying?"

She replied, "They have taken away my Lord, and I don't know where they've put him." ¹⁴ As soon as she had said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but she didn't know it was Jesus.

15 Jesus said to her, "Woman, why are you crying? Who are you looking for?"

Thinking he was the gardener, she replied, "Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have put him and I will get him."

16 Jesus said to her, "Mary."

She turned and said to him in Aramaic, "Rabbouni" (which means *Teacher*).

17 Jesus said to her, "Don't hold on to me, for I haven't yet gone up to my Father. Go to my brothers and sisters and tell them, 'I'm going up to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.'"

18 Mary Magdalene left and announced to the disciples, "I've seen the Lord." Then she told them what he said to her.

Reflection:

Most folks who know me know this to be true: The Thornton Household could also be called the Plant Hospice. It's not for lack of trying. I just have only ever been able to keep one thing alive for multiple years – a Christmas cactus given to me back in 2012. That's it. Any other plant that enters our house is gently (I believe) guided into the next life with prayer (usually prayers of desperation for it not to die). For a long time I just assumed I could do nothing with gardening. And then at our last parsonage I found one of the greatest stress relievers ever – spending time out in the garden. Ok. You got me, it was spending time out in the weeds. But there was this vine that grew from the back of the property and was slowly taking over the lot. I don't know what its scientific name is, but I called it the Vermicious Knid, convinced if I dug too far into the jungle in the back, I'd come across Snozzwangers. Alas, the stress relief came in the silliness of

renaming this vine and trying to dig it out and kill it bit by bit – plant hospice turned plant assassin.

And yet, when we open the Bible and brush past the first few pages to the actual start of the Bible – Genesis we see that God’s relationship with humanity began in a garden. God set humanity to be caretakers of the garden. It didn’t go according to plan. Part of the unraveling of plan meant that we would now have weeds and thistles and have to work more to care for the fertile ground. Now because what happened – because of the separation that happened between humanity and God and between the humans sin entered the picture. With sin came death – or as Genesis says – from soil you came and from soil you will now return (Genesis 3:19).

Here we are again in a garden with God. It’s not Eden. It’s near Golgotha. When Mary gets there the stone is rolled away so she runs and gets Peter & John to find out what’s going on. When John gets there he bends down and looks in. When Peter gets there he goes in. They both notice the grave cloths lying there. My favorite part is that they are folded – Jesus makes his bed! I made the mistake of reading this to children at VBS one year – that wasn’t the mistake. The mistake was answering the question, “What was he wearing if he took off these clothes?” I guess he rose naked but then put clothes on. I lost the kids as they chanted “naked Jesus!”

I might have just lost you too! Come back to me. Listen to verse 10 – the disciples after they saw the empty tomb – they weren’t filled with hope- they were filled with fear. “Then the disciples returned to the place where they were staying.” Let me decode that for you – it means the upper room. Later in the Bible we’ll see it was a locked door. They were afraid that what had happened to Jesus would happen to them!

Not Mary! Mary stayed at the tomb, in the pain of the moment, crying. She has a conversation with angels who ask her why she's crying. Suddenly Jesus is behind her but she doesn't recognize him. SHE THINKS HE'S A GARDENER! The God who walked in the cool of the day with Adam and Eve is now mistaken for a gardener! He too asks why she's crying. She accuses the "gardener" of stealing Jesus. Then Jesus calls her by name and she answers him with a name she's always called him, "My Teacher." He sets her to be the first evangelist to go tell others this good news and she leaves – not afraid. "I've seen the Lord."

It started in a garden. Sin entered in a garden. Because of sin death entered in a garden. And because of Jesus – death was vanquished in a garden. God who walked with humanity in the Garden in the beginning returned and was mistaken for a gardener. And guess what – in Revelation – heaven is described in part as a garden with the tree of life. That is GOOD NEWS! That is RESURRECTION! And it should cause us to shout hallelujah! But the reality is we can be disciples and not see it – like Peter and John. We can go back to, or in our case, stay in our homes, and be afraid of what is out there.

Jesus is ready – ready for us to not just look in the empty tomb. Ready for us not just to see the left overs of resurrection – folded grave clothes. He's ready for us to stay in that moment like Mary. He's wanting us to be present to the reality that though one garden brought us our death – he brought us our life in another garden. He stands there – ready to call our names. Ready for us to answer back. The call is there – not just to see, but to enter in, to be reached, to relate to Jesus, to grow in him – to let him be our teacher, and then to go out and share all of this with others.

Pastoral Prayer:

Let us pray:

We have looked, God and have seen. We have seen you in the garden. We have heard you in the morning. We know that the grave is empty. Help us to connect to that moment and from that moment help us grow in our love of you. Help us hear you call our name as an invitation to come forward, to come and connect with you, to come and learn from you and follow you. May we leave here not to hide, afraid in our homes, but instead to look to the rising of the sun and be reminded of that amazing day when you declared victory over sin and death. Help us find hope, healing, victory, and faith in a time when it is tempting hide them away. Rise anew in us. Rise us to new life in you. Amen.

Offering:

Every year our Sunrise Service offering goes to support families and individuals in need in the beaches area. All donations received and noted as "Sunrise Service Offering" will continue to be used for this purpose. Help us continue to bless our mission partners and be a blessing to those in need right here in our area. Especially this year when so many are feeling the economic losses associated with social distancing efforts. We give 100% of this offering to missions in the beaches area.

You can do so through the "DONATE" button on the website, or by mailing your offering to the church.

Church website is: www.christumcnb.org:

Mailing address is: 400 Penman Rd. Neptune Beach, FL 32266.



The banner features the church's logo on the left, which includes a lighthouse and the text "Christ United Methodist Church" and "Being and Making Disciples of Jesus Christ". To the right of the logo, the service schedule is listed: "Sunday School: 9am", "Worship Time: 10:15", and "Fellowship: 11:30". Below this is a search bar labeled "Search Site". On the far right, there are three buttons: "Donate" (circled in red), "Weekly Bulletin", and "Sermon Video".

Praise Song this week: "In Christ Alone"

In Christ alone my hope is found
He is my light, my strength, my song

This Cornerstone, this solid ground
Firm through the fiercest drought and storm

What heights of love, what depths of peace
When fears are stilled, when strivings cease

My Comforter,
my All in All
Here in the love of Christ I stand

In Christ alone, who took on flesh
Fullness of God in helpless babe

This gift of love and righteousness
Scorned by the ones He came to save

'Til on that cross as Jesus died
The wrath of God was satisfied

For every sin on Him was laid
Here in the death of Christ I live

There in the ground His body lay
Light of the world by darkness slain

Then bursting forth in glorious Day
Up from the grave He rose again

And as He stands in victory
Sin's curse has lost its grip on me

For I am His and He is mine
Bought with the precious blood of Christ

No guilt in life, no fear in death

Prayer of Thanksgiving:

Thank you, God, for the gift of this amazing day of resurrection! Our hearts are overflowing with the joy and excitement of Easter. We pray that you will take our exuberance and use it to bring light and hope to those trapped in darkness and despair. Use these gifts and offerings to make an impact in the lives of those here at the beach, for your glory, for your kingdom. We offer our very selves as well. Use the gift of our very lives to empower our calling to carry your Incarnate Love into the world. We pray this with the boldness of those who have encountered the living Christ. Amen.

Closing Hymn: #364 Because He Lives

1. God sent his Son, they called him Je - sus;
2. How sweet to hold a new-born ba - by,
3. And then one day I'll cross the riv - er;

he came to love, heal, and for - give;
and feel the pride and joy he* gives;
I'll fight life's fi - nal war with pain;

he lived and died to buy my par - don,
but great - er still the calm as - sur - ance,
and then as death gives way to vic - tory,

an emp - ty grave is there to prove my Sav - ior lives.
this child can face un - cer - tain days be - cause he lives.
I'll see the lights of glo - ry and I'll know he reigns.

*Jesus

WORDS: Gloria and William J. Gaither, 1971
MUSIC: William J. Gaither, 1971

RESURRECTION
98.9 11 with Refrain

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Closing Hymn: #364 Because He Lives, refrain

Refrain

Be-cause he lives, I can face to - mor - row;

be-cause he lives, all fear is gone;

be-cause I know he holds the fu - ture,

and life is worth the liv-ing just be-cause he lives.

Benediction: Two gardens. Sin and death born in one. Life and victory birthed in the other. Go unafraid for LIFE has won. The good gardener, God, has made a way, through Jesus the Son. Go in the power of the Spirit to tell others the Good News – He Lives and life is worth living because he lives!