

The First Congregational Church of the United Church of Christ Stockbridge, Massachusetts
SECOND SUNDAY OF EASTER
April 27, 2025 10:00 a.m.

Children are invited to Sunday School at 10:00 a.m. returning to worship for Children's Time. Nursery care is available during worship. **Today prayer** requests can be shared verbally during worship. Alternatively, you may place a prayer slip in the offering plate or give to a Deacon.

PREPARING FOR WORSHIP

PRELUDE Praeambulum in d (WV 33), Heinrich Scheidemann

Edwin Lawrence, organ

FRAMING WORDS / WELCOME

Rev. Brent Damrow

GATHERING IN WORSHIP

PRAYER OF INVOCATION

INTROIT Auf, auf, mein Herz, mit Freuden (Awake, My Heart, with Gladness) by Ernst Pepping

*CALL TO WORSHIP

Hannah Fries

Adapted from Craig Mitchell and Carol Penner

One: Easter is not an event that has occurred

All: it's an adventure that has begun

One: not a place that we have visited

All: but a road on which we travel

One: We need your presence on the long road, Lord.

All: The road between fear and hope,

One: the road between the place where all is lost and the place of resurrection.

All: Like the disciples walking the road to Emmaus, we are in need of your company!

One: Jesus, stand among us, in your risen power, let this time of worship, be a hallowed hour.

*HYMN The Day of Resurrection

Pew hymnal #118

THE GIFT OF THE WORD

READING from *With Burning Hearts*, Henry Nouwen Hannah Fries The word that best expresses this mystery of God's total self-giving love is "communion." It is the word that contains the truth that, in and through Jesus, God wants, not only to teach us, instruct us, or inspire us, but to become one with us. God desires to be fully united with us so that all of God and all of us can be bound together in a lasting love. The whole long history of God's relationship with us human beings is a history of ever-deepening communion. It is not simply a history of unities, separations, and restored unities, but a history in which God searches for ever-new ways to commune intimately with those created in God's own image.

Communion creates community. Christ, living in them, brought them together in a new way. The Spirit of the risen Christ, which entered them through the eating of the bread and the drinking of the cup, not only made them recognize Christ himself but also each other as members of a new community of faith. Communion makes us look at each other and speak to each other, not about the latest news, but about him who walked with us. We discover each other as people who belong together because each of us now belongs to him. We are alone, because he disappeared from our sight, but we are together because each of us is in communion with him and so has become one body through him.

HYMN Now to Your Table Spread (verse 1, seated) Pew hymnal #515

SCRIPTURE READING Luke 24:13-35 (p. 69) Ronnie Cunningham

SERMON Movement...Bread...Communion Pastor Brent

*HYMN Now to Your Table Spread (verses 2-3) Pew hymnal #515

OFFERING OURSELVES AND OUR GIFTS

CALL TO THE OFFERING

OFFERTORY Awake, My Heart, with Gladness, Wilbur Held Ed Lawrence

*DOXOLOGY Lasst Uns Erfreuen

Praise God from whom all blessings flow;

Praise Christ the Word in flesh born low;

Alleluia, Alleluia.

Praise Holy Spirit evermore;

One God, Triune, whom we adore.

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.

*BLESSING OF THE GIFTS

BRINGING OUR PRAYERS

The Lord's Prayer

Our God, 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 trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.

PRAYER RESPONSE The Danish Amen

TIME WITH CHILDREN

*SHARING OF THE PEACE

GOING FORTH INTO THE WORLD

INVITATIONS

*HYMN Thine Is The Glory Pew hymnal #122

*BENEDICTION Pastor Brent

POSTLUDE Canzona on Victory (The Strife is O'er), Richard Proulx

Music Notes ~ Edwin Lawrence

Heinrich Scheidemann, composer of this morning's organ prelude, was organist of Hamburg's St. Catharine's Church through the middle of the 17th century. His mastery of the organ points the way to Dietrich Buxtehude and J. S. Bach. In this morning's music, after an opening that establishes the full sound of the organ, you will hear an antiphonal section. Here, a musical idea presented in one division of the organ is answered by contrasting sounding pipes from another division. This technique echoes music from Scheidemann's teacher, the Amsterdam organist, Jan Pieterszoon Sweelinck.

The German Easter carol, "Awake, My Heart, with Gladness," ("Auf, auf mein Herz") heard as the introit and offertory in 20th century versions, also dates from the mid-17th century. Poet, Paul Gerhardt and composer, Johann Crüger created an important body of hymns for the Lutheran church. Among Crüger's contributions in our hymnal, note "Ah, Holy Jesus," "Jesus, Priceless Treasure," and "Now Thank We All Our God."

American composer, Richard Proulx, created his "Canzona" on the well-known hymn tune "The Strife is O'er," attributed to Palestrina. The music suggests the imitative style of earlier Italian organ music, changing the meter of the hymn we know, but reinforcing the exuberant spirit of the hymn.

Thank you to all who helped with today's service, including Deacons Gary Cilley, Helen McCormick, and Drea Pecor; readers Ronnie Cunningham and Hannah Fries; fellowship Donna Jacobs; greeter Don Rodgers; storytellers Rich Geiler and Cathy Clark. Will Curtiss is running the Livestream and Scarlett Ritcher and Rae Geddes are in the nursery.

Welcome! We are an Open and Affirming Church which means that we invite persons of every sexual orientation, gender identification and expression, racial and cultural identity, age, physical ability, economic circumstance, faith background and family structure to share fully in the ministry, leadership and fellowship of this congregation's life in Christ.

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