



Rockville United Church  
Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)/United Church of Christ  
3rd Sunday of Easter  
April 19, 2026 ~ Hybrid Worship

## PREPARATION FOR WORSHIP

### PRELUDE

*The Strife Is O'er*

## CELEBRATING OUR LIFE TOGETHER

### GATHERING MUSIC

*Morning Has Broken*

Chalice Hymnal, No. 53

### \*CALL TO WORSHIP

All of Creation surrounds us, the great Circle of Life.

***We are a part of the circle.***

The land holds us.

***Sky breathes in us.***

Trees stand around us like our ancestors.

***Birds sing to us like friends.***

Rivers flow with tears of joy.

***Living beings feed us and walk with us.***

In the end the earth receives us.

***We give thanks to you, O God our Creator!***

All Creation is God's love poured out;

***we receive it with joy, care for it with gratitude.***

In unity with all Creation, we give glory to God,

***in our worship now and in all our lives. Alleluia!***

### \*HYMN

*Many and Great, O God*

Chalice Hymnal, No. 58

Many and great, O God, are thy things, Maker of earth and sky.

Thy hands have set the heavens with stars; thy fingers spread the mountains and plains.

Lo, at thy word the waters were formed; Deep seas obey thy voice.

Grant unto us communion with thee, Thou star-abiding one;  
come unto us and dwell with us; with thee are found the gifts of life.

Bless us with life that has no end, eternal life with thee.

### OPENING PRAYER (unison)

***O God, we thank you for this earth, our home;***

***For the wide sky and the blessed sun,***

***For the salt sea and the running water,***

***For the everlasting hills***

***And the never-resting winds,***

***For trees and the common grass underfoot.***

*We thank you for our senses by which we hear the songs of birds,  
And see the splendor of the summer fields,  
And taste of the autumn fruits,  
And rejoice in the feel of the snow and smell the breath of the spring.  
Grant us a heart wide open to all this beauty;  
And save our souls from being so closed  
That we pass unseeing  
When even the common thorn bush is aflame with your glory,  
O God our creator, who lives and reigns forever and ever. Amen.*

– Walter Rauschenbusch

## WORDS OF GRACE

“Even a wounded world is feeding us. Even a wounded world holds us, giving us moments of wonder and joy. I choose joy over despair. Not because I have my head in the sand, but because joy is what the earth gives me daily and I must return the gift.”

— Robin Wall Kimmerer, excerpt from *Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge and the Teachings of Plants*

## CHORAL RESPONSE

*Now I Walk In Beauty*

Navajo

## SCRIPTURE

### Genesis 1

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters.

***And it was so.***

And God said, “Let there be light,” and there was light. God saw that the light was good, and they separated the light from the darkness. God called the light “day,” and the darkness they called “night.” And there was evening, and there was morning—the first day.

***And it was so.***

And God said, “Let there be a vault between the waters to separate water from water.” So God made the vault and separated the water under the vault from the water above it. And it was so. God called the vault “sky.” And there was evening, and there was morning—the second day.

***And it was so.***

And God said, “Let the water under the sky be gathered to one place, and let dry ground appear.” And it was so. God called the dry ground “land,” and the gathered waters they called “seas.” And God saw that it was good.

**And it was so.**

Then God said, “Let the land produce vegetation: seed-bearing plants and trees on the land that bear fruit with seed in it, according to their various kinds. And God saw that it was good. And there was evening, and there was morning—the third day. Thus the heavens and the earth were completed in their vast array. By the seventh day God had finished the work and rested.

**And it was so. Thanks be to God -- our creator and source of life.**

One: Listen to what the Spirit is teaching.

All: **Thanks be to God.**

## GUIDED MEDITATION

Martine Palmiter

## WORD FOR CHILDREN

We Are Water Protectors

Pastor Jennifer

by Carole Lindstrom, illustrated by Michaela Goade

Following the “Word for Children,” we invite children (ages 3 years—5th grade) to attend a Sunday School class, dismissing to the classroom on the lower level through the front side door of the sanctuary. Parents/guardians are welcome to accompany your child(ren) if you choose; please pick up children in their classroom following the worship service. Visitors are welcome.

Nursery care for infants through age 3 is available in the nursery on the lower level. Our nursery caregiver is Caitlin Vredenburg. Our nursery helper is Cindy Livingston.

## ANTHEM

*Teach Me*

## SCRIPTURE

John 4:7-15

The Inclusive Bible

A Samaritan woman came to draw water, and Jesus said to her, “Give me a drink.” (His disciples had gone to the city to buy food.) The Samaritan woman said to him, “How is it that you, a Jew, ask a drink of me, a woman of Samaria?” (Jews do not share things in common with Samaritans.) Jesus answered her, “If you knew the gift of God and who it is that is saying to you, ‘Give me a drink,’ you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water.” The woman said to him, “Sir, you have no bucket, and the well is deep. Where do you get that living water? Are you greater than our ancestor Jacob, who gave us the well and with his sons and his flocks drank from it?” Jesus said to her, “Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again, but those who drink of the water that I will give them will never be thirsty. The water that

I will give will become in them a spring of water gushing up to eternal life.”  
The woman said to him, “Sir, give me this water, so that I may never be thirsty or have to keep coming here to draw water.”

One: This is the word of God for the people of God.

**All: Thanks be to God.**

## CHORAL PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION

SERMON

“The Well is Deep”

Martine Palmiter

\*HYMN

**Mountain Brook with Rushing Waters** Chalice Hymnal, No. 690  
(verses 1-3)

Mountain brook with rushing waters, eagle perched in lofty tree,  
flowering hillside in the springtime, white-tailed deer alert and free!  
Beauty, beauty all around us! Jubilate! Sing for joy!  
Help us, God, preserve earth’s splendor for tomorrow’s world to see.

Pure the water freshly flowing toward its ocean destiny,  
clean the air of God’s creation, rich the soil, the mine, the sea.  
“Earth is good!” God’s word proclaimed it. Jubilate! Sing for joy!  
Save us, God, from wasteful living, from pollution’s tragedy.

Waving fields of wheat and barley, giant apples juicy red,  
cattle grazing in the pasture; by God’s bounty we are fed!  
Well supplied the world around us! Jubilate! Sing for joy!  
May no greed or warring madness scorch the earth or rob our bread.

## MORNING PRAYER

### PRAYERS OF THE CONGREGATION

Refrain: One: Holy One, in your mercy,

**All: Receive our prayers.**

### THE PRAYER THAT JESUS TEACHES (unison)

**Our Loving 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 sins**

**as we forgive those who sin against us.**

**And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil**

**for thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.**

## OFFERING OUR GIFTS

**Offertory**

**Doxology**

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;  
Praise God, all creatures here below  
Praise God above, ye heavenly host;  
Creator, Christ, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

**PRAYER OF DEDICATION** (unison)

Jack Kornfield (modified)

*I offer my gratitude for the people, animals, plants, insects, creatures of the sky and sea, air and water, fire and earth, and for all whose joyful exertion blesses my life every day.*

*I offer my gratitude for the blessings of this earth I have been given.*

*I offer my gratitude for the family, friends, and community I have been given. Amen.*

**\*HYMN**

***Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee***

Chalice Hymnal, No. 2

(verses 1-3)

Joyful, joyful, we adore thee, God of glory, Lord of love;  
hearts unfold like flowers before thee, opening to the sun above.  
Melt the clouds of sin and sadness, drive our fear and doubt away;  
giver of immortal gladness, fill us with the light of day.

All thy works with joy surround thee, earth and heaven reflect thy rays,  
stars and angels sing around thee, center of unbroken praise.  
Field and forest, vale and mountain, flowery meadow, flashing sea,  
chanting bird and flowing fountain, call us to rejoice in thee.

Thou art giving and forgiving, ever blessing, ever blest,  
well-spring of the joy of living, ocean depth of happy rest!  
Thou our Creator, Christ our Brother, all who live in love are thine;  
teach us how to love each other, lift us to the joy divine.

**\*BENEDICTION**

May God bless and keep in the ground – the roots of old forests,  
the bulbs of next year's flowers, and fossil fuels —  
hallowed resting places of trees that clapped their hands  
and creatures of the sea that sported in the morning of the shining face of God.  
And may God lift up the light of a loving countenance  
upon you who care for this earth —  
from this time forth and the children's forevermore.

(scriptures used Numbers 6:22-24; Isaiah 55:12 and Psalm 104:26)

**BENEDICTION RESPONSE**

*Blessing*

Moran Bart

**POSTLUDE**

*Ride on King Jesus*

**Thanks to our worship helpers today!**

Liturgists: Beth Marshwood and Stephanie Wright

Digital Host: Lori Merrill

Welcome Table: Tida Strey

Greeter: Ann Seltz

*Special thanks to Marc Donnelly for sharing his musical talents this morning.*

*Cover photo by Markus Spiske on [unsplash.com](https://unsplash.com).*

**Welcome to Rockville United Church!**

*We are glad you have joined us for worship this morning. We trust that you will find RUC to be a welcoming and engaging place to explore the life of faith within a community that honors each person's spiritual journey. We encourage you to ask questions, visit our website, and share your contact information at the welcome table near the front doors.*

*I hope to greet you personally following worship, and invite you to contact me.*

*Blessings,*

*Rev. Jennifer Knutsen*

*[jennifer@rockvilleunitedchurch.org](mailto:jennifer@rockvilleunitedchurch.org)*

Our complimentary Wi-Fi network is **RUC Mesh**. The password is **heavenly**.

## **RUC Staff**

*Rev. Jennifer R. Knutsen, Senior Pastor*

*Rev. Guy S. Johnson, Associate Pastor*

*Jim Levy, Director of Music*

*Dalia Marciano, Administrative Coordinator*

*Lynne Brady, Communications Coordinator*

*Caitlin Vrendenburg, Nursery Coordinator*

*Juan Mendez, Sexton*



Please Scan Me To Give To RUC.



## **Rockville United Church**

Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)/United Church of Christ

355 Linthicum Street, Rockville, Maryland 20851

301-424-6733 ~ [www.RockvilleUnitedChurch.org](http://www.RockvilleUnitedChurch.org)

(Office Hours: Wed, Fri—10am to 3pm or by appointment)

Ecumenical † Just Peace † Open & Affirming † More Light