



Rockville United Church

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

2nd Sunday of Easter

April 12, 2026 ~ Hybrid Worship

## PREPARATION FOR WORSHIP

### PRELUDE

### CELEBRATING OUR LIFE TOGETHER

#### GATHERING MUSIC

*A Voice Is Heard*

Watts/O'Brien

#### \*CALL TO WORSHIP

Alleluia! Christ is risen!

***The whole creation rejoices: the birds sing from every tree.***

Alleluia! Christ is in our midst!

***Babies babble with sounds of joy; words cannot express our overflowing hearts.***

Alleluia! Christ is our light forever!

***Breathing peace on us in these moments; surrounding us with grace and hope.***

#### \*HYMN

***Come Ye Faithful Raise the Strain***

Chalice Hymnal, No. 215

Come, ye faithful, raise the strain of triumphant gladness;  
God hath brought forth Israel into joy from sadness;  
loosed from Pharaoh's bitter yoke Jacob's sons and daughters,  
led them with unmoistened foot through the Red Sea waters.

Tis the spring of souls today; Christ hath burst his prison,  
and from three days' sleep in death as a sun hath risen;  
all the winter of our sins, long and bleak, is flying  
from his light, to whom we give laud and praise undying.

Now the brightest season dawns with the day of splendor,  
now the royal feast of feasts, comes its joy to render;  
comes to glad Jerusalem, who with true affection  
welcomes in unwearied strains Jesus' resurrection.

#### PRAYER OF INVOCATION

Living God, You appeared to your disciples in their hour of fear,  
and offered them your peace to still their hearts.

May we open our arms  
to be living hope in the world today,  
bringing peace to those living in fear.

Give us courage to be bold in what we believe;  
may we hold firm to your promise of life and hope,  
and strive for a new world, free from poverty, injustice and conflict.

## CALL TO PRAYER

Jesus is risen but it sometimes takes us longer to shrug off our burial cloths. In order to truly embrace the good news of this Easter season, let us first put down our burdens, find the strength to be honest before God, and receive the new life that forgiveness brings. Let us begin with a moment of silence to quiet our minds.

## MOMENT OF SILENCE

### PRAYER OF TRANSFORMATION (unison)

*Holy God, we confess our doubts.  
When our childhood understandings fall away, we feel naked.  
When our long-held beliefs seem to crumble, we feel lost.  
When our convictions are questioned, we feel ashamed.  
Guide us into right paths, O God.  
Guide our feet into the way of peace;  
guide our hands to care for others;  
guide our hearts to love our neighbors.  
Call us back to you, O Christ, and renew our faith.  
When the ground is unsteady,  
loving God, put us back on right paths  
by doing justice, loving kindness,  
and walking humbly with You. Amen.*

## WORDS OF ASSURANCE

God loves you. You hear this again and again but you need to hear it again and again. God loves you. There is no border you can cross, no boundary that can be made, that will limit God's love for you. Live with the fullness of God's love, forgiveness, and peace. Amen.

## CHORAL RESPONSE

*Bind Us Together*

Gillman

## SCRIPTURE

**Psalm 104:1-30**

The Inclusive Bible

Bless Yahweh, my soul! Yahweh, my God, how great you are! Clothed in majesty and glory, wrapped in a robe of light, you stretch the heavens out like a tent. You lay the beams for your palace on the waters above; you use the clouds as your chariot and ride on the wings of the wind; you use the winds as messengers and fiery flames as attendants. You fixed the earth on its foundations so it can never totter, and wrapped it with the Deep as with a robe, the waters overtopping the mountains. At your rebuke the waters bolted, fleeing at the sound of your thunder, cascading over the mountains,

into the valleys, down to the reservoir you made for them; you imposed boundaries they must never cross so they would never again flood the land. You set springs gushing in ravines, running down between the mountains, supplying water for wild animals and attracting the thirsty wild donkeys; the birds of the air make their nests by these waters and sing among the branches. From your palace you water the highlands until the ground is sated by the fruit of your work; you make fresh grass grow for cattle and plants for us to cultivate to get food from the soil— wine to cheer our hearts, oil to make our faces shine, and bread to sustain our life. The trees of Yahweh drink their fill—those cedars of Lebanon, where birds build their nests and, on the highest branches, the stork makes its home. For the wild goats there are the high mountains, and in the crags the rock badgers hide. You made the moon to tell the seasons, and the sun knows when to set: you bring darkness on, night falls, and all the forest animals come out— savage lions roaring for their prey, claiming their food from God. The sun rises, they retire, going back to lie down in their lairs, and people go out to work, to labor again until evening. Yahweh, what variety you have created, arranging everything so wisely! The earth is filled with your creativity! There's the vast expanse of the sea, teeming with countless creatures, living things large and small, with the ships going to and fro and Leviathan whom you made to frolic there. All creatures depend on you to feed them at the proper time. Give it to them—they gather it up. Open your hand—they are well satisfied. Hide your face—they are terrified. Take away their breath—they die and return to dust. Send back your breath—fresh life begins and you renew the face of the earth.

One: Listen to what the Spirit is teaching.

All: ***Thanks be to God.***

## **WORD FOR CHILDREN**

Little White Rabbit

Pastor Jennifer

by Kevin Henkes

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 Marian Coger.

**ANTHEM**

***Alleluia***

Creed

**SCRIPTURE****John 20:19-31**

The Inclusive Bible

In the evening of that same day, the first day of the week, the doors were locked in the room where the disciples were, for fear of the Temple authorities. Jesus came and stood among them and said, “Peace be with you.” Having said this, the savior showed them the marks of crucifixion. The disciples were filled with joy when they saw Jesus, who said to them again, “Peace be with you. As Abba God sent me, so I’m sending you.” After saying this, Jesus breathed on them and said, “Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive anyone’s sins, they are forgiven. If you retain anyone’s sins, they are retained.” It happened that one of the Twelve, Thomas—nicknamed Didymus, or “Twin”—was absent when Jesus came. The other disciples kept telling him, “We’ve seen Jesus!” Thomas’ answer was, “I’ll never believe it without putting my finger in the nail marks and my hand into the spear wound.” On the eighth day, the disciples were once more in the room, and this time Thomas was with them. Despite the locked doors, Jesus came and stood before them, saying, “Peace be with you.” Then, to Thomas, Jesus said, “Take your finger and examine my hands. Put your hand into my side. Don’t persist in your unbelief, but believe!” Thomas said in response, “My Savior and my God!” Jesus then said, “You’ve become a believer because you saw me. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.” Jesus performed many other signs as well—signs not recorded here—in the presence of the disciples. But these have been recorded to help you believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Only Begotten, so that by believing you may have life in Jesus’ Name.

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

All: ***Thanks be to God.***

**CHORAL PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION** *Seven-fold Amen*

Reid

**SERMON**

“Putting Our Fingers in Creation’s Wounds”

Rev. Holly R. Jackson

**\*HYMN*****Christ is Risen! Shout Hosanna!***

Chalice Hymnal, No. 222

Christ is risen! Shout hosanna! Celebrate this day of days.

Christ is risen! Hush in wonder, all creation is amazed.

In the desert all surrounding, see, a spreading tree has grown.

Healing leaves of grace abounding bring a taste of love unknown.

Christ is risen! Raise your spirits from the caverns of despair.

Walk with gladness in the morning. See what love can do and dare.

Drink the wine of resurrection, not a servant, but a friend;

Jesus is our strong companion. Joy and peace shall never end.

Christ is risen! Earth and heaven nevermore shall be the same.  
Break the bread of new creation where the world is still in pain.  
Tell its grim, demonic chorus: "Christ is risen! Get you gone!"  
God the first and last is with us. Sing Hosanna, everyone!

## 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

Easter teaches us that laughter and love are at the heart of God's work. Joyfully we are able to give knowing that our gifts will help others to see the blessed miracle of God's creative joy.

#### **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)

*Generous and surprising God, when we thought that death had claimed your only Son, you amazed us with the resurrection. Surprise us again with your ability to turn these humble offerings into gifts that will transform the world through our witness to your love. We lay our very lives at your feet, O God, knowing that you will use us to proclaim and embody the gospel. Amen.*

**\*HYMN**

***Thine is the Glory***

Chalice Hymnal, No. 218

Thine is the glory, risen, conquering Son;  
endless is the victory thou o'er death hast won.  
Angels in bright raiment rolled the stone away,  
kept the folded grave-clothes where thy body lay.

Refrain:

*Thine be the glory, risen, conquering Son;  
endless is the victory thou o'er death hast won.*

Lo! Jesus meets us, risen from the tomb;  
lovingly he greets us, scatters fear and gloom;  
let the church with gladness hymns of triumph sing,  
for our Lord now liveth; death hath lost its sting. [Refrain]

No more we doubt thee, glorious Prince of life!  
Life is nought without thee; aid us in our strife;  
make us more than conquerors, through thy deathless love.  
Bring us safe through Jordan to thy home above. [Refrain]

**\*BENEDICTION**

**BENEDICTION RESPONSE**

**POSTLUDE**

**Thanks to our worship helpers today!**

Liturgist: Elizabeth Cooper-Martin

Digital Host: Dan Hockensmith

Welcome Table: Frances Hockensmith

Greeter: Karl Knutsen

## **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