



**Easter Sunday**  
**April 9, 2023, 11:15 am**  
*+Stand as you are able*



## Gathering

**Welcome and Announcements**  
**Lighting of the Christ Candle**  
**Centering Music**

### Call to Worship

L: What are you looking for?

**P: The light before dawn.**

L: What are you looking for?

**P: A reason to hope.**

L: What are you looking for?

**P: Joy after grief and flowers after winter.**

L: What are you looking for?

**P: A place to belong.**

L: What are you looking for?

**P: We are looking for the Messiah.**

L: Good news! Come in. Love is alive!

**P: Surely God is in this place.\***

**+Hymn** *Jesus Christ is Risen Today #232*

### Call to Confession

When my kids lived at home, they always came to me asking where their “thing” was. You know, like, homework, or shoes, or a specific toy they wanted or needed.

I would usually say, have you looked in your room/ on the dining room table/ your shelf? And of course, they would say I’ve looked *everywhere*, Mom.

Then I’d go to that place and there it would be, the “thing” that they needed. They just couldn’t see them.

Friends, sometimes our relationship with God can feel a little bit like that. We seek after God. We swear that we’re looking, and yet so often we miss when the Divine is right under our noses.

So let us pray together, knowing that our seeking has its limits, but God’s love does not. Let us pray:\*

### Prayer of Confession

God of resurrection,

**We confess, like a dog with a bone, we run aimlessly. We chase our tails, looking for things that provide answers to the suffering of the world, looking for comfort to our longest nights.**

**You meet us in the darkness before dawn, but we mistake you for the gardener. Forgive us for seeking after worldly things. Forgive us for forgetting to seek you. Speak to us. Call us by name, that we might recognize you in our midst. With hope and gratitude we pray, amen.\***

## Assurance of Pardon

Family of faith,

No matter how many times we lose sight of God, God never loses sight of us.

We might spend our whole days seeking, but we are always found.

So hear and believe the good news of the gospel, the good news proclaimed in resurrection:

**What once was lost is found. We are held in God's loving embrace: forgiven, claimed, and sent to serve. Alleluia! Amen.\***

**Response of Praise**     *Alleluia, Alleluia, Give Thanks (refrain only) #241*

*Alleluia, alleluia, give thanks to the risen Lord, alleluia, alleluia, give praise to his name! (3x)*

## Anthem

### Hearing the Word

## Prayer for Illumination

Rabbouni, Teacher,

**We have spent the past six weeks asking questions. We have turned over every rock.**

**We have shined a light in every dusty corner. We have opened the blinds. We have wrestled with truth. We have sought after you.**

**So on this Easter morning, bring wisdom to our seeking. Move through this room until the walls echo with the sound of alleluias. Roll back the stones that might prevent us from drawing closer to you.**

**Calm our hearts. Say our names. Awaken us to your presence in our midst.**

**We are here.**

**We are listening.**

**We are seeking after you.**

**Alleluia. Amen.\***

**Epistle Reading Colossians 3:1-4** So if you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. <sup>2</sup>Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth, <sup>3</sup>for you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. <sup>4</sup>When Christ who is your life is revealed, then you also will be revealed with him in glory.

**Hymn**     *The Day of Resurrection! #233*

**Gospel Reading Matthew 28:1-10** After the sabbath, as the first day of the week was dawning, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to see the tomb. <sup>2</sup>And suddenly there was a great earthquake; for an angel of the Lord, descending from heaven, came and rolled back the stone and sat on it. <sup>3</sup>His appearance was like lightning, and his clothing white as snow. <sup>4</sup>For fear of him the guards shook and became like dead men. <sup>5</sup>But the angel said to the women, "Do not be afraid; I know that you are looking for Jesus who was crucified. <sup>6</sup>He is not here; for he has been raised, as he said. Come, see the place where he lay. <sup>7</sup>Then go quickly and tell his disciples, 'He has been raised from the dead, and indeed he is going ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see him.' This is my message for you." <sup>8</sup>So they left the tomb quickly with fear and great joy, and ran to tell his disciples. <sup>9</sup>Suddenly Jesus met them and said, "Greetings!" And they came to him, took hold of his feet, and worshiped him. <sup>10</sup>Then Jesus said to them, "Do not be afraid; go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee; there they will see me."

## Sermon

### Responding to the Word

#### Affirmation of Faith

We believe in resurrection—

**mysterious, beyond our understanding, and yet, like tulips after the snow: real.**

We believe in Easter morning—

**in the promise of a God who would roll back every stone to return to us.**

We believe in Jesus—

**who calls us by name and asks, “Who are you looking for?”**

So we look—

**for justice, for mercy, for God in our midst.**

And as we look, we sing, “Alleluia!”

Amen.\*

#### Offering Prayer

Giver of all good gifts, accept our offerings of money, time and talents that we give in response to your generosity to us. Guide us in the way we share our resources and in the way we use the offerings, for the benefit of our community and the world. Amen.\*\*

#### Celebration of Holy Communion

##### Joys and Concerns

##### Invitation to the Table

Friends, it would have been easy on that Easter morning for Jesus to roll away the stone, walk to the city center, and declare that death had not won. Instead, Jesus waited in the garden.

He waited for the people who needed him most.

He waited for Mary.

He called her by name.

He stopped her crying.

He gave her a reason to hope.

So if you have ever doubted that God’s love for you is personal and specific, may the truth of this day remind you otherwise. The God you seek will meet you in the garden on your hardest days.

And that same God has a seat saved at this Table, specifically for you.

So, come.

Come, whether you are dancing for joy, or like Mary, still feeling a little lost.

Come with your questions. Come with your hunger. Come, whether this is your first time or your hundredth. Come, because this feast is a reminder that God’s Table is big enough for all of us. Jesus

Christ is risen today and he rose for you.

So, come. All are welcome. Let us pray:

Voice A: Resurrecting God,

Mary went to the garden looking for you. Two thousand years later, we follow in her footsteps.

We seek after you, hungry for a garden moment where we might hear you say our name or feel you in our midst.

**Voice B: So before the hallelujahs begin, we empty our pockets of our prayers and remember where we’ve been.**

*Voice C: With gratitude, we recall Maundy Thursday. We are grateful for the tables we gather around, for the friends that feel like family, and for this church—which acts as our band of disciples. We hold*

onto the reminder of you washing the disciples' feet that night, and trust that that same love extends to us.

Voice A: With sorrow, we recall Good Friday. We grieve the depths of cruelty woven into that day— a cruelty so many in this hurting world know. So, for those who are still caught in grief and loss, for those whose days have turned to night, relieve them of their suffering. Find them in the crowd. Wipe their tears. Hold their grief for them and point them toward peace.

**Voice B: Now, with hope we enter into this Easter morning, to find ourselves face-to-face with your good news. Thank you for giving us reason to hope. Thank you for the sunrise after a long night, for the healing of bones and hearts, for laughter that is contagious, and for the joy felt in community. Tether every gratitude and joy in our life back to you.**

Voice C: *God of resurrection, Mary went to the garden looking for you. Two thousand years later, we follow in her footsteps. We seek after you, hungry to hear you say our name. So hold all of our prayers in your hearts, and continue to reveal yourself in this broken world. Until God's promised day, we will sing, "Alleluia!" We will hold onto hope. We will seek you all of our days, And we will pray the words your Son taught us to pray\*, saying, **Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread.***

***Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial, and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.***

### **Words of Institution**

### **Communion of the People**

### **Prayer After Communion**

Where don't we seek after you, God? We look for you in the mirror, in strangers, in sunrises, on mountain tops, in the laughter of children, and in meals shared together. We look for you on the city streets, in hospital rooms, in jail cells, in poetry, and hymn melodies. We look for you everywhere! Sometimes the seeking is hard, but then at other times, we come to this Table and all are fed, and all are welcomed, and there is room for everyone, and no one is turned away, or made to feel unworthy. And in those moments, we see you clearly. So thank you for meeting us in our seeking. Please don't stop seeking us. Gratefully we pray, amen.\*

## **Taking the Word into the World**

**+Song**    *Christ Be Beside Me #702*

### **+Charge and Benediction**

As you leave this place, may God bless you with seeking.

Seek out the hungry.

Seek the weary.

Seek the good in every person you pass.

Seek out the hopeful

Seek the faithful.

Seek God in each of us.

As you seek and as you wonder, may you find what you are looking for.

In the name of our loving God, who is always seeking us, go now in peace. Amen.\*

*\*Prayers by Rev. Bruce Reyes Chow | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org.*

*\*\*Prayers from the Book of Common Worship, PCUSA, Kindle Edition.*

**Worship will be connected through Facebook Live and the toll free conference call number (844-855-4444, access code 654132#).**

# COMMUNITY OF FAITH PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

## EASTER SUNDAY - APRIL 9, 2023

### Contact

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### Scriptures for

#### Sunday, April 16

Acts 2:14a, 22–32  
Psalm 16  
1 Peter 1:3–9  
John 20:19–31

### In Our Thoughts & Prayers

Betty Murphy  
Ruth Roeber  
The McDermott family  
Johanna Willis  
The Kleier family  
Jean Jennings' family  
Emilee Walden  
Kelly Montana  
Lynda Jaeger  
Ron Carlin  
Ella Grace Marksberry

### Worship Services

Join us for in-person services at 710 Western Reserve Rd., Crescent Springs, KY. You can also worship with us online via Facebook Live, or by joining the conference call. Worship services begin at 11:15 am.

### Liturgists Needed

Liturgists are needed to help lead worship. Please sign up on the sheet on the welcome table. Thank you!

### "One Great Hour of Sharing" Special Offering

The "One Great Hour of Sharing" special offering will be collected until Sunday, April 9. This offering supports the Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, the Presbyterian Hunger Program, and Self-Development of People.

### Save the Date: CLASP Carrabba's Spring FUNd- Raisier

On Tuesday and Wednesday, April 25-26, Carrabba's restaurant at the Crestview Hills Town Center will sponsor a FUNd-raiser on behalf of CLASP. For every person who brings a CLASP coupon to the restaurant that day, Carrabba's will donate 20% of the purchase price to CLASP. Both dine-in and carryout meals will qualify for a donation. Coupons will be available shortly in the bulletin, and on the Community of Faith website and Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/cofnky>).