



## Easter Theme: Resurrection Stories

April 14, 2024

Third Sunday in Easter

Prelude

Offertoire in E

Dubois

*Please respect those who wish to sit in silence.*

Welcome and Announcements

Rev. Dr. Scott Jones

**Happy Birthday this week: Matt Jones, Liz Patterson, Charlene Wozny, Neva Burroughs, Chase Day, Cheryl Stanford, & Mark Winn!**

**Fair Trade Coffee:** Thank you to **Mary Solberg, Jim Ogden, Jennifer Forbes-Baily, & Greg & Dena Higginbotham** for sponsoring coffee for the month of April.

**Church Tour:** There will be a church tour following worship today

**Eves:** Eves will meet on Monday, April 15th at 7pm at Sally Lewis's house.

**Life Line Screening:** Life Line Screening, the nation's leading provider of preventive health screenings, will offer affordable, non-invasive and painless health screenings at First Central Congregational on Tuesday, April 16, 2024. A package of four screenings to identify risk for stroke, heart disease and other chronic conditions will be offered for \$149. Contact Life Line at 877-792-8479 to make an appointment or visit <https://LLSA.SOCIAL/HC>

**Omaha Central High School & University of Iowa Choirs:** The University of Iowa Choir will join the Omaha Central High School Choir for a free concert in the Sanctuary at 7:30pm on Friday, April 19<sup>th</sup>!

**Outdoor Cleaning Day:** Join us on Saturday, April 20<sup>th</sup> to clean up our outdoor spaces!

**Stone Soup Lunch:** Women's Fellowship is hosting a stone soup lunch in honor of Val Himes on April 21<sup>st</sup> following worship. If you would like to donate vegetables for the stone soup, please drop them off in the kitchen anytime between Sunday, April 14<sup>th</sup> and Friday, April 19<sup>th</sup>. Contact Susan Dolezal if you have any questions.

## Activities for the Coming Week

April 15-20

<b>Monday:</b>	Eves, 7pm
<b>Tuesday:</b>	Life Line Screenings Staff Meeting, 1:30pm
<b>Wednesday:</b>	Evergreen Thrift Shop, 10am – 2pm Family Night, 5:30pm Choir Practice, 7pm
<b>Thursday:</b>	Evergreen Thrift Shop, 10am – 2pm
<b>Friday:</b>	Evergreen Thrift Shop, 10am – 2pm University of Iowa & Central High School Choir Concert, 7:30pm
<b>Saturday:</b>	Outdoor Spring Cleaning, 10am – 12pm Evergreen Thrift Shop, 10am – 2pm Writing Group, 10:30am – 1:30pm

## Sunday, April 21

**Lectionary Readings:** Acts 4:5-12; Psalm 23; 1 John 3:16-24; John 10:11-18

**Worship:** How can we find, and offer each other, "home" with the assurance of the presence of God and a beloved community? We continue Resurrection Stories with "Found."

**FIRSTForum:** Adult Ed planning - we'll meet at our usual 9:15 am time in the third floor parlor to share ideas on what future Adult Ed sessions will entail. We want to know what YOU want to see more of! If you have kiddos, feel free to bring them to the nursery or let them hang out in the back of the third floor parlor to play! Pastries and fruit will be provided.

**FIRSTKids:** There will be Sunday School & Children's Choir

**Outreach Ministry:** Outreach Ministry will be meeting following worship in the work room.

### \*Greeting and Passing of the Peace

**"The Peace of God be with you."**

In Unison: **Blest be the tie that binds our hearts in Christian love;  
the fellowship of kindred minds is like to that above.**

\*Let us rise in body or spirit.

### Call to Worship

Rise up in us and we will rise  
From death into a newfound life:  
**From bondage freed, from harm released,  
From illness healed as one in peace.**  
When all is lost our hearts are warmed,  
Our hope restored, our lives transformed.  
**Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!**

Lou Lamberty

### \*Processional Hymn

Come, You Faithful, Raise the Strain

*Black Hymnal*, No. 230

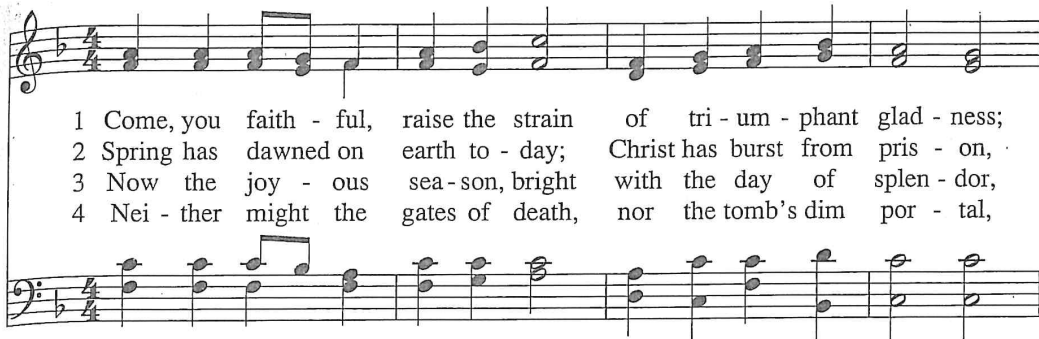
ST. KEVIN

# Come, You Faithful, Raise the Strain

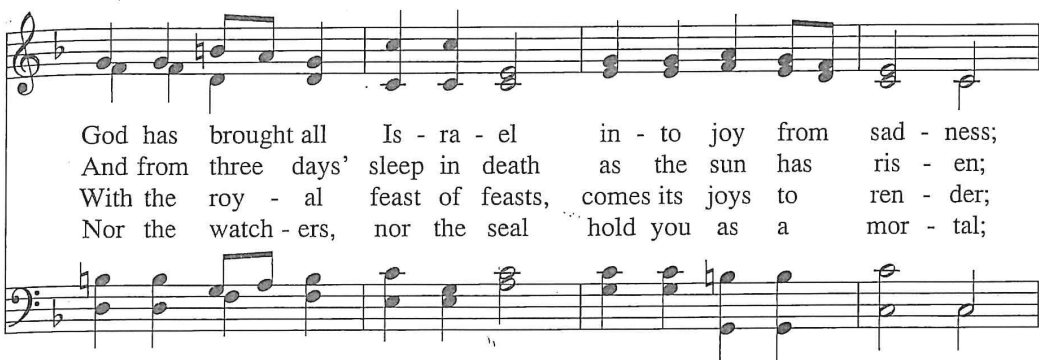
230

Attrib. to John of Damascus (c. 696–c. 754 C.E.)  
Transl. John Mason Neale, 1872; alt.

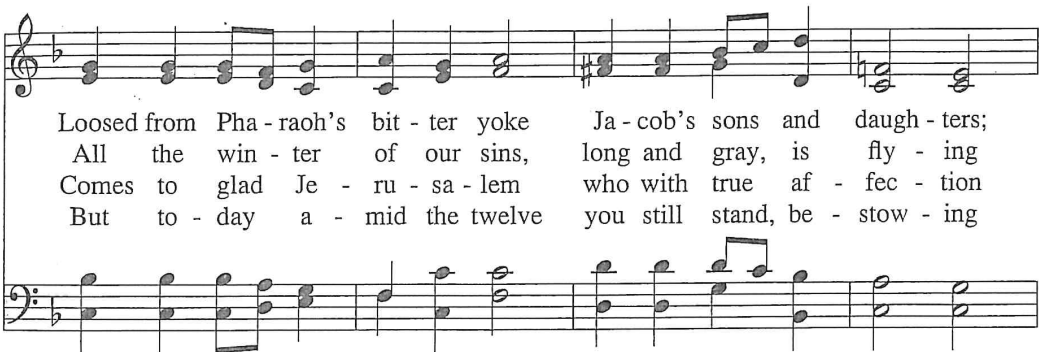
Exod. 15; Luke 24



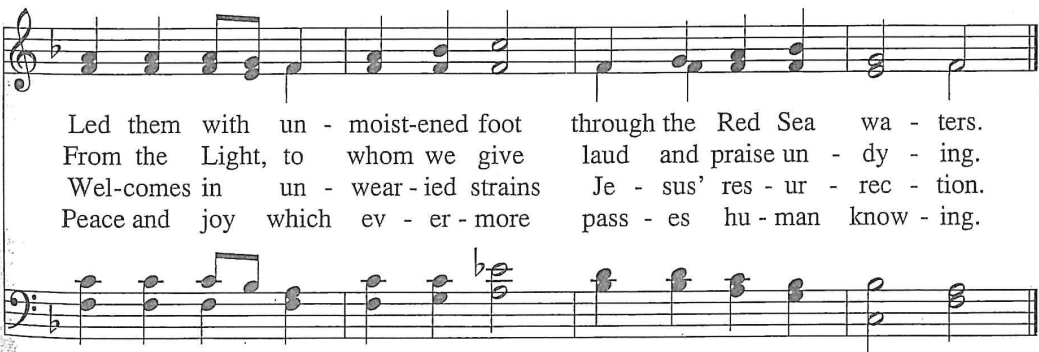
1 Come, you faith - ful, raise the strain of tri - um - phant glad - ness;  
2 Spring has dawned on earth to - day; Christ has burst from pris - on,  
3 Now the joy - ous sea - son, bright with the day of splen - dor,  
4 Nei - ther might the gates of death, nor the tomb's dim por - tal,



God has brought all Is - ra - el in - to joy from sad - ness;  
And from three days' sleep in death as the sun has ris - en;  
With the roy - al feast of feasts, comes its joys to ren - der;  
Nor the watch - ers, nor the seal hold you as a mor - tal;



Loosed from Pha - raoh's bit - ter yoke Ja - cob's sons and daugh - ters;  
All the win - ter of our sins, long and gray, is fly - ing  
Comes to glad Je - ru - sa - lem who with true af - fec - tion  
But to - day a - mid the twelve you still stand, be - stow - ing



Led them with un - moist - ened foot through the Red Sea wa - ters.  
From the Light, to whom we give laud and praise un - dy - ing.  
Wel - comes in un - wear - ied strains Je - sus' res - ur - rec - tion.  
Peace and joy which ev - er - more pass - es hu - man know - ing.

### **\*Invocation**

Risen Christ, create in us a clean heart so that we can meditate in your peace; abide in your mercy; be filled with your justice; and be made new by your love. In your name, we pray. Amen.

### **\*Gloria**

*Black Hymnal, No. 759*

Glory to the Creator, the Christ, the Holy Spirit, Three in One;  
as it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end.  
Amen. Amen.

### **Conversation with the Children**

Lizzie Patterson

### **Responsive Reading of the Gospel Lesson**

based on John 20:19-23

They trembled in fear behind locked doors as the sun set on that first Easter...

**We often do not perceive the most transformative possibilities of our lives because we are afraid – of change, of loss, afraid even of healing.**

Jesus broke through the barrier of their hiding place and stood among them...

**Even when we long for our burdens to be lifted, we become so accustomed to carrying them we cannot imagine being released from them.**

Jesus greeted them with the words: "Peace be with you."

**We sometimes find it difficult to embrace peace – when our lives are in upheaval, when our hearts grieve, when our world aches.**

Knowing with they needed, Jesus extended his pierced palms and his stabbed side...

**What evidence do we require to believe our lives can experience resurrection from a power higher than our own? What helps us trust and believe?**

They rejoiced as they recognized their friend, their leader, their Solace and Redeemer...

**When we search for help and hope, do we rejoice when we see the first possibility of transformation? Do we rejoice along the way to healing?**

Again, Jesus offered his peace and said, as he was sent by God, he now sends them...

**Even in the mist of our own turmoil, can we find the courage to go where we are sent for healing for ourselves? To go where others are in need of our witness?**

Jesus breathed on them and said: "Receive the Holy Spirit."

**The gift of Holy Spirit power is always with us and within us to lead and guide and sometimes cajole and awaken us to all the possibilities for renewed life.**

Jesus assured them: forgive the sins of anyone, and they are forgiven, retain the sins of any and they are retained.

**We see in the example of Christ how to forgive others and how to release our own woundedness.**

**We open ourselves to the freedom, release, and peace that comes through forgiveness. We forgive ourselves and we forgive others.**

This is a Word of Hope for the people who long for it.

**Thanks be to the Living Word.**

### **Anthem**

Bless the Lord

Nygaard

### **First Testament Lesson**

Nehemiah 9:9-15

*Pew Bible, page 417*

For the Word of God in scripture,

For the Word of God within us,

For the Word of God among us,

**Thanks be to God.**

\*Hymn

How Deep the Silence of the Soul

Black Hymnal, No. 509

TALLIS' THIRD TUNE

# How Deep the Silence of the Soul

# 509

Sylvia G. Dunstan, 1989

1 How deep the si - lence of the soul that lives with-in your grace.  
2 Like un - seen chimes on mov-ing air, like warm and morn-ing sun,

How full the grat - i - tude of heart in your a - bid - ing place.  
Like glad-dening, green - ing, grow-ing things, like trees with blooms be - gun.

What rich se - ren - i - ty is found, what cour - age and re - lease  
Such is your pres - ence in our lives, you touch with-out a trace,

when wis - dom teach - es us to seek the gen - tle path to peace.  
un - til we turn and find our - selves held fast in your em - brace.

*This hymn by Sylvia Dunstan, entitled "Morning Meditation," recounts the Canadian writer's experience one February when she left cold, snowy Toronto to visit her mother in California. There she enjoyed meditating in the garden that was abloom with camellias.*

Tune: TALLIS' THIRD TUNE C.M.D.  
Thomas Tallis, c. 1557  
For another key, see 178

## \*Confession

Rev. Dr. Jim Harmon

Loving God, in your infinite wisdom, we are glad that you make all things new. Where there is hate, show your love. Where there is war, bring your peace. Where there is despair, bring your hope. Where there is fear, bring your understanding. Where there is scarcity, bring your abundance. Where there is addiction, bring your release. Where there is systemic oppression, bring equal justice for all. By your perfect grace and mercy, make us new. May it be so. Amen.

## \*Assurance

Loving God, thank you for the assurance of your grace. You grant us all your peace. Help us to trust in that peace, especially in times of conflict. Guide us, so that all may come to know Jesus Christ, who is our Prince of Peace.

## Prayers

Pastoral Prayer

Lord's Prayer

Our Father 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 debts as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever. Amen.

## Offertory

The Day of Resurrection

arr. Kelly Beaman

## \*Hymn of Dedication

LASST UNS ERFREUEN

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; Praise God, all creatures here below: Alleluia! Alleluia! Praise God, the source of all our gifts! Praise Jesus Christ, whose power uplifts! Praise the Spirit, Holy Spirit! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

## \*Offertory Prayer

Let us remember that weeping may endure for a night, but joy comes early in the morning. May these gifts of blessing be a sign of the love, light, and glory of our redeeming God who has created a world of abundance with all that we need. May we remain thankful witnesses to your generosity, O God, as we dedicate these offerings to you and your beloved creation. Amen.

## \*Recessional Hymn

Thine Be the Glory

*Red Hymnal*, No. 327

MACCABAEUS

## \*Benediction

Whatever binds you, whatever locks you up and makes you feel powerless, whatever gets in the way of you living life with vitality, integrity, and joy, can be wiped clean. For we believe our stories can be rewritten each and every day. We know it isn't this easy or quick, but let this be a vision of your life resurrected.

And now, may you go into the world, finding release for yourself and for others. And may the God who created you as an unbound soul, the Christ who showed you what letting go looks like, and the Spirit who is transforming your life even now, be with you now and evermore.

## \*Benediction Response

Bouma

3-30-97

# Thine Be the Glory

327

*A toi la gloire*, by Edmond Budry, 1884; tr. R. Birch Hoyle, 1923

MACCABAEUS, 5.5.6.5.6.5.6.5 with refrain

Air from *Judas Maccabaeus*, by G. F. Handel, 1747

1. Thine be the glo - ry, ris - en, con-qu'ring Son; end - less is the vic - t'ry  
 2. Lo! Je - sus meets us, ris - en from the tomb; lov - ing - ly he greets us,  
 3. No more we doubt thee, glo - rious Prince of life! Life is nought with - out thee;

1. thou o'er death hast won. An - gels in bright rai - ment rolled the stone a - way,  
 2. scat - ters fear and gloom. Let his church with glad - ness hymns of tri - umph sing,  
 3. aid us in our strife. Make us more than conqu' - rors thro' thy death - less love;

Refrain

1. kept the fold - ed grave clothes where thy bod - y lay.  
 2. for the Lord now liv - eth; death has lost its sting. } Thine be the glo - ry,  
 3. bring us safe thro' Jor - dan to thy home a - bove. }

ris - en, con-qu'ring Son: end - less is the vic - t'ry thou o'er death hast won.