



# First Central Congregational

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

## Easter Theme: Resurrection Stories

April 21, 2024

Fourth Sunday in Easter

### Prelude

Bevan

arr. Willan

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

### Welcome and Announcements

Rev. Dr. Scott Jones

**Prayers:** We pray for **Melanie Naughtin**, who is having surgery soon; **Pam Beranek**, who is having surgery soon; and **Tara Obner**, who is having complications related to her transplant.

**Happy Birthday this week:** **Gene Spence, Kate Valla, Joannis Obner, Mary Solberg, Daryl Malena, Ericka Obner, Sally Lewis, Nikki Zimmerman, Stephanie Cameron, & Norma Le Clerc!**

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

**Stone Soup Lunch:** Women's Fellowship is hosting a stone soup lunch in honor of Val Himes following worship today! Join us in the parlor for soup and hymns!

**Spring Movie Night:** We'll have a movie night at church on Sunday, May 5<sup>th</sup> at 5:30pm!

**Super Sale:** The annual spring Super Sale is happening May 11. As always, there will be plants, books, thrift and art. Plants are in Memorial Hall; art is in the parlor, and thrift and books will be downstairs in the Evergreen shop. The plant sale is again featuring beautiful tomatoes, peppers, herbs, and any other seedlings that find their way to the sale. There will also be houseplants, and lots of perennials! Art features art by members of the congregation. A couple of plant-related requests for you:

1. Be the wind. If you walk by the seedlings in the hallway by the choir room, feel free to gently pet the seedlings. Wind makes them stronger.
2. Bring in plants: If you have perennials that have outgrown their home, we have many pots to temporarily house them.
3. If your gardening mom, neighbor, or friend are thinning perennials, send plants our way because there are new homes waiting for them.

Stay tuned for info about where to pick up empty pots, volunteering to help, and the deadline for dropping off plants. Or talk to Barb or Cherie. Questions? Call Cherie Ferber or Barb Switzer about plants. Call Sara Sharpe about art.

## Activities for the Coming Week

April 22-27

- Monday:** Staff Meeting, 1:30pm
- Tuesday:**
- Wednesday:** Evergreen Thrift Shop, 10am – 2pm  
Family Night, 5:30pm  
Choir Practice, 7pm
- Thursday:** Evergreen Thrift Shop, 10am – 2pm
- Friday:** Evergreen Thrift Shop, 10am – 2pm
- Saturday:** Evergreen Thrift Shop, 10am – 2pm

## Sunday, April 28

**Lectionary Readings:** Acts 8:26-40; Psalm 22:25-1; 1 John 4:7-21; John 15:1-8

**FIRSTForum:** Molly Phinney Baskette will present a webinar titled Divine Intervention: What Clergy and Congregations Need to Know About the Emerging Psychedelic Movement

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

**FIRSTYouth:** Youth Group will meet at the Riverfront by the Luminarium at 6pm – bring a picnic dinner!

**Outreach Ministry:** Outreach Ministry will meet following worship in the conference room.

**Education Ministry:** Education Ministry will meet following worship on the third floor.

### \*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

Cathy Roller

When we are scattered, Jesus our Good Shepherd gathers us in.

**When we are lost and lonely, we can depend on Christ's love.**

When we despair, Jesus our Good Shepherd cares for us.

**When we are threatened because of who we are, we can depend on Christ's protection.**

Let us worship our Good Shepherd, who cares for all of us with fierce love.

**Let us give thanks for Christ's presence with us.**

### \*Processional Hymn

O God, Our Help in Ages Past

*Black Hymnal*, No. 25  
ST. ANNE

# O God, Our Help in Ages Past

25

Isaac Watts, 1719; alt.

Ps. 90:1-2, 4-5

1 O God, our help in a - ges past, our hope for years to come,  
2 Un - der the shad-ow of your throne your saints have dwelt se - cure;  
3 Be - fore the hills in or - der stood or earth re - ceived its frame,  
4 A thou - sand a - ges in your sight are like an eve - ning gone,

Our shel - ter from the storm - y blast, and our e - ter - nal home:  
Suf - fi - cient is your arm a - lone, and our de - fense is sure.  
From ev - er - last - ing you are God, to end - less years the same.  
Short as the watch that ends the night be - fore the ris - ing sun.

5 Time, like an ev - er - roll - ing stream,  
soon bears us all away;  
We fly for - got - ten, as a dream  
fades at the o - pening day.

6 O God, our help in a - ges past,  
our hope for years to come,  
Still be our God while trou - bles last,  
and our e - ter - nal home!

*Watts, minister of a Congregational church in London, wrote theological and philosophical works and hundreds of "hymns of human composure" (everyday language). He augmented the congregational singing of psalms with a new style of hymnody.*

Tune: ST. ANNE C.M.  
William Croft, 1708

## \*Invocation

We know that Christ offers a peace that passes understanding. You became flesh and dwelt among us, showing us how to live in beloved community. Because of this, we can be honest about our lives, our struggles, and the things that keep us locked up. Today, give us the key to peace. May our desire for belonging be known, so that your Divine Love will begin the process of resurrecting our life. In the name of Jesus Christ, the lost is found. Amen.

## \*Gloria

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.

*Black Hymnal, No. 759*

**Responsive Reading of the Gospel Lesson**

based on Luke 24:36-43

Jesus appeared among the disciples again. He stood among them and said: "Peace be with you." Yet, the disciples were terrified. They thought they were seeing a ghost.

**Centering our hearts and minds in peace is a way to feel calm within. We learn to still ourselves to be open to unimaginable possibilities.**

Jesus asked: "Why are you frightened and why do doubts arise in your hearts?"

**Doubts play an important role in our faith journey. Facing our uncertainties allows room for our hearts and minds to be filled with healing narratives.**

"Touch me and see," Jesus invited, as he offered his pierced hands and feet. Yet, the disciples – even in the midst of their joy – felt disbelief.

**Sometimes we are presented with signs of hope long before we realize we are not abandoned. Our hearts rejoice, yet our minds still wonder at what we have seen.**

Jesus asked if they had anything to eat, and the disciples shared a piece of fish, which Jesus ate while in their presence.

**Jesus frequently shows us how to create community in the midst of feeling lost. We can form communities of sustenance and belonging. We are not alone – we are found – when we share Christ's call to peace.**

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

**Thanks be to the Living Word.**

**Anthem**

Sing Praise to Christ

J.S. Bach

**Psalm Lesson**

Psalm 84

*Pew Bible*, page 513

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.**

**Sermon**

Found

Rev. Dr. Scott Jones

**\*Hymn**

I Come to the Garden Alone

*Black Hymnal*, No. 237  
GARDEN

# I Come to the Garden Alone

(In the Garden)

John 20:14-18

C. Austin Miles, 1912

1 I come to the gar-den a-lone, while the dew is still on the  
 2 He speaks, and the sound of his voice is so sweet the birds hush their  
 3 I'd stay in the gar-den with him, though the night a-round me be

ros-es; And the voice I hear, fall-ing on my ear, the  
 sing-ing; And the mel-o-dy that he gave to me with-  
 fall-ing; But he bids me go; through the voice of woe his

*Refrain*  
 Son of God dis-clos-es.  
 in my heart is ring-ing. And he walks with me, and he  
 voice to me is call-ing.

talks with me, and he tells me I am his own, And the

joy we share as we tar-ry there, none oth-er has ev-er known.

## **\*Confession**

Rev. Dr. Jim Harmon

**Shepherding Christ, even as you lay down your life for us, we confess that too often, we may be more like the one who runs away in times of trouble. We aren't always bold enough to protect the powerless; following your example is rarely easy or comfortable. Forgive us. Help us lay down our apathy and follow your example. Remind us that we belong to one another, and to you. Amen.**

## **\*Assurance**

Beloved of God, receive this comfort. It is impossible to respond to every need in this complicated world. A full life of faith gives us the grace to lay down our work, take the rest we need, then refocus our energy toward the cause of the oppressed. Rest in the shelter of your Good Shepherd, knowing you can take up the cause again with restored souls.

## **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**

Chorale

Uehlein

## **\*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**

**Gracious God, thank you for your gift of Jesus Christ, who cares for us and protects us. With these gifts we return to you, help us care for others in our communities and around the world. Amen.**

## **\*Recessional Hymn**

I Look to You in Every Need

*Black Hymnal*, No. 463

O JESU

## **\*Benediction**

## **\*Benediction Response**

Bouma

## **Postlude**

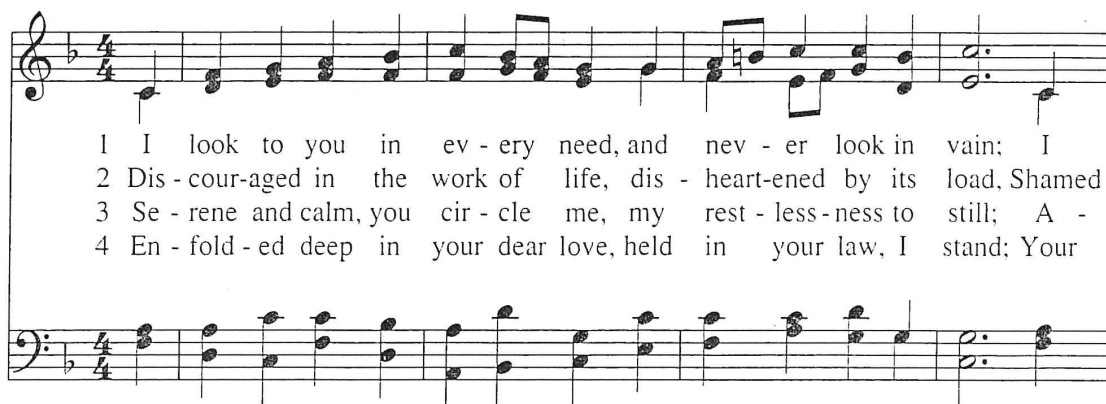
Cristo Triofante

Yon

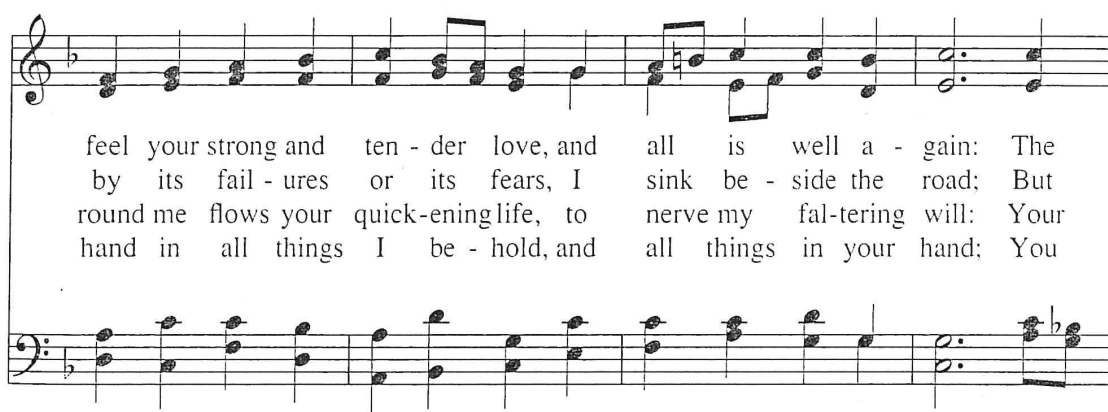
# I Look to You in Every Need

463

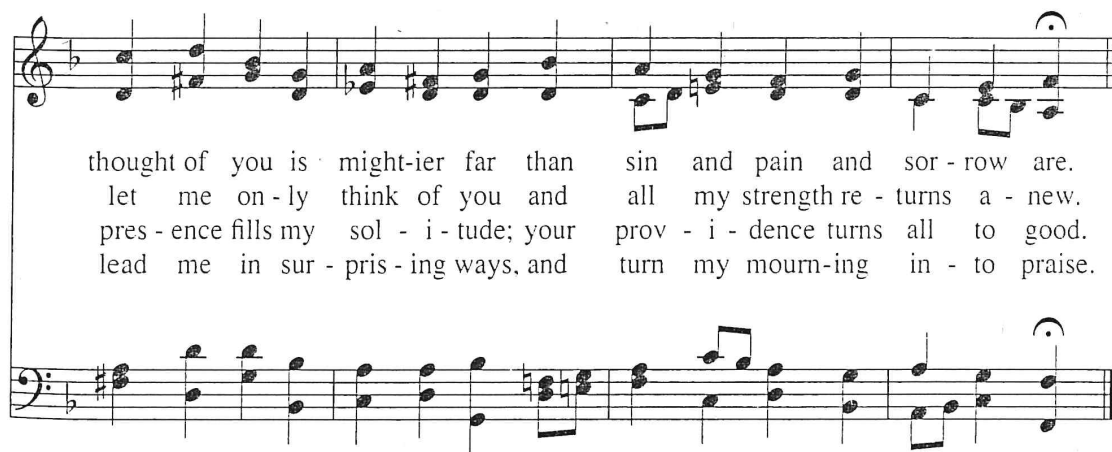
*Samuel Longfellow, 1864; alt.*



1 I look to you in ev - ery need, and nev - er look in vain; I  
2 Dis - cour - aged in the work of life, dis - heart - ened by its load, Shamed  
3 Se - rene and calm, you cir - cle me, my rest - less - ness to still; A -  
4 En - fold - ed deep in your dear love, held in your law, I stand; Your



feel your strong and ten - der love, and all is well a - gain: The  
by its fail - ures or its fears, I sink be - side the road; But  
round me flows your quick - ening life, to nerve my fal - tering will: Your  
hand in all things I be - hold, and all things in your hand; You



thought of you is might - ier far than sin and pain and sor - row are.  
let me on - ly think of you and all my strength re - turns a - new.  
pres - ence fills my sol - i - tude; your prov - i - dence turns all to good.  
lead me in sur - pris - ing ways, and turn my mourn - ing in - to praise.

*Samuel Longfellow—poet, hymnwriter, and Unitarian  
minister—was the brother of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow*

Tune: O JESU 8.6.8.6.8.8.  
*Bachmann's Sammlung Alter und Neuer*