

▲Rise in body or in spirit/Responses in bold

The Story So Far...

▲We Sing  
Jesus Christ Is Risen Today # 155

Welcome

Introductions

Theme Conversation

Acknowledging the Territory

Lighting the Candles

Call to Worship (Responsive)

My dear friends,  
we have known grief.  
We have known loss.  
We have known the long road,  
tired and winding.  
We have whispered prayers  
on bended knees.  
We have stared at the sky,  
empty of stars.  
But today—  
**today we know hope.**

Today we know life.

**Today we know the sound of Alleluias.**

Today we know that death  
does not have the last word.

**Today we know that nothing  
can separate us from the love of God.**

It is Easter.

May hope find you.  
And may you know,  
deep in your bones,  
that today is a new day.

**Alleluia! Amen.**

▲We Sing  
Joy Comes with the Dawn # 166

Words of Grace (Responsive)

My friends,  
At first, the disciples didn't believe  
that Jesus had risen.  
They stayed locked in an upper  
room, shaking and afraid.  
Peter was the only exception.  
Fortunately, Jesus loves us on our  
best days and our worst days.  
**God's grace exists for us when we are  
hopeful and when we're grieving,  
when we're shouting  
and when we're silent,  
when we're full of faith  
and when we're full of fear.**  
**God's grace exists for us on the best  
days, the worst days,  
and every day in between.**  
**Thanks be to God for this good news!**  
**Alleluia! Amen.**

Prayer of Confession (Responsive)

The Gospel of Luke says: "It was Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and the other women with them who told the apostles of the resurrection. But these words seemed to the disciples an idle tale, and they did not believe them. But Peter got up and ran to the tomb.  
**Forgive us, God,**  
**when good news lands in our lap  
and we refuse to believe it.**  
**Forgive us, God,**  
**when grief and fear crowd out  
any room in our hearts for hope.**  
**Forgive us, God, when we dismiss  
the stories of others and  
minimize the voices of our neighbors.**  
**In a world that teeters between grief and  
hope, show us how to be like Peter.**  
**Show us how to hold onto hope.**  
**Show us how to run toward you.**  
**Amen.**

**LISTENING FOR GOD'S WORD**

A Time of Wondering

Ancient Words – Luke 24:1-12

Reflection

Reflective Music

Ministry of Music  
Sing to the Lord With a Joyful Sound

**RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD**

The Sacrament of Communion

The Invitation

▲Passing the Peace

▲We Sing – In the Bulb # 703

In the bulb there is a flower;  
in the seed, an apple tree;  
in cocoons, a hidden promise:  
butterflies will soon be free!  
In the cold and snow of winter  
there's a spring that waits to be,  
unrevealed until its season,  
something God alone can see.

There's a song in every silence,  
seeking word and melody;  
there's a dawn in every darkness  
bringing hope to you and me.  
From the past will come the future;  
what it holds, a mystery,  
unrevealed until its season,  
something God alone can see.

In the bread, food for the hungry,  
in the wine, new life proclaimed,  
In the blessing of our sharing,  
we have touched our Christ again.

In the simple meal we offer,  
love breaks forth and sets us free,  
unrevealed until its season,  
something God alone can see.

In our end is our beginning;  
in our time, infinity;  
in our doubt there is believing;  
in our life, eternity.

In our death, a resurrection;  
at the last, a victory,  
unrevealed until its season,  
something God alone can see.

Great Prayer of Thanksgiving

The Lord be with you.  
**And also with you.**  
Lift up your hearts.

**We lift them up to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.  
**It is right to give  
our thanks and praise.**

God of yesterday, tomorrow, and right now,  
God of the sun, the moon,  
and the pink before dawn,  
God of our head, our heart, and our gut,  
we are full of Alleluias.

**Holy God, we are full of Alleluias,  
because this morning  
the sun rose once again.**

**This morning, the birds sang for you.**  
**This morning children laughed,  
flowers bloomed,  
and hope was shared.**

This morning, we heard  
how the stone was rolled away.  
This morning we dare to believe that life is  
stronger than death  
and love is stronger than evil.  
**So today, we are full of Alleluias.  
Today we are full of hope.**

And so, with your people on earth  
and all the company of heaven  
we praise your name  
and join their unending hymn:  
**Holy, holy, holy Lord,**  
**God of power and might,**  
**heaven and earth**  
**are full of your glory.**  
**Hosanna in the highest.**  
**Blessed is he who comes**  
**in the name of the Lord.**  
**Hosanna in the highest.**

However, we know that not every day  
feels like today.  
**Just two days ago,**  
**we walked the path to the cross.**

Just two days ago, we remembered the  
violence humanity is capable of.  
**Just two days ago, we remembered the**  
**cruelty that this world knows all too well.**

So on this hopeful day,  
as well as on those grief-filled days,  
we ask that you would meet us here.  
**Meet us in this sanctuary.**  
**Meet us in this community.**  
**Meet us at this Table.**

Telling the Story

Pour out your Spirit on this bread and cup.  
Roll back the stone, again and again,  
as many times as it takes for us to see you.  
Call us by name, again and again,  
as many times as it takes  
for us to hear you.  
Pull us from the trenches of our grief,  
and give us reason to hope.  
**As you do,**  
**we will keep singing your praises,**  
**we will come back to this Table,**  
**we will continue to bring you our hope,**  
**our grief, and everything in between.**

**With a mouth full of Alleluias,**  
**we join our voices once more to pray the**  
**prayer you taught us,**

**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 trespasses**  
**As we forgive those**  
**who trespass against us.**  
**And lead us not into temptation**  
**But deliver us from evil:**  
**for thine is the kingdom,**  
**the power and the glory,**  
**for ever and ever.**  
**Amen**

*Communion will be served in the pews,  
please wait till everyone is served  
before eating and drinking.  
Our bread is gluten free.*

*As we share in the gifts of bread and wine,  
We will sing Eat This Bread # 466*

*Eat this bread; drink this cup;  
come to me and never be hungry.  
Eat this bread; drink this cup;  
trust in me and you will not thirst.*

Prayer following Communion (Together)

**God of the mountain,**  
**the valley,**  
**and every step in between,**  
**may this meal be a fresh start.**  
**May this moment, where all are fed**  
**and all are welcomed,**  
**be the start of something new.**  
**Show us how to carry**  
**the love we experience here**  
**from the walls of this church**

**into the world we encounter**  
**in the days ahead.**

**Show us how to leave breadcrumbs**  
**of good news along our path**  
**and everywhere in between.**  
**With deep hope we pray,**  
**amen.**

#### THRESHOLD INTO GOD'S WORLD

Life and Ministry

▲ We Sing – The Day of Resurrection # 164

▲ Commissioning & Blessing

▲ Song of Dismissal  
Onward Easter People

**Onward Easter people,**  
**risen with our Lord.**  
**Loving, caring, sharing,**  
**spread his living Word.**  
**Death no longer holds him,**  
**we can plainly see.**  
**Christ is resurrected,**  
**we have been set free.**  
**Onward Easter people,**  
**risen with our Lord.**  
**Loving, caring, sharing,**  
**spread his living Word.**

Liturgy – A Sanctified Art  
Onward Easter People –  
Rev. Catherine MacDonald

Weaving our Prayers

*At any time, before, during, or after the  
service, you are invited to come forward  
and weave a ribbon in and out of the frame.  
Bring to God whatever is on your heart and  
mind. One ribbon on its own is easily  
broken, but woven together with others  
creates a strong fabric of belonging.*

St. James United Church

United in Faith  
Strengthened by Friendship  
Building a Community  
of Love and Justice



April 20, 2025 @ 10:00 AM

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