

## WORSHIP GUIDE FOR APRIL 4, 2021

*[PLEASE NOTE: Today we will be celebrating Holy Communion. We would like to invite our Facebook Live worshippers to gather what elements you desire to serve as your bread and fruit of the vine, knowing that prevenient grace will justify your choices in the sight of God.]*

### GATHERING MUSIC

- Dana Moody

### THE MORNING WELCOME

- Dr. Tim Hazlett

### CENTERING PRAYER (in unison)

Gracious God, you have walked patiently with us throughout our Lenten journey. You have celebrated our successes and our growing understanding of your love; and you have mourned our failures and rejections of your healing mercies. This day, as we have gathered to celebrate the joy of Easter, let us remember that we are to become “Easter People”, people of the Resurrection; people who know that what was thought to be impossible has been conquered. Forgive our stubbornness and fears. Fill us with your healing love and help us to become the disciples that you need to serve in this world. Amen.

### SPECIAL MUSIC

“All My Tears”

- Don Moody & Monica Whitehurst

### PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE: EASTER

- Arte Jones

**L:** Lord God, our loving heavenly Father, we thank and praise you for the glorious resurrection of our Saviour, Jesus Christ. Your Son, our Passover Lamb, has taken away the sin of the world. Forgive us and all people. Lord, in your mercy:

**P: Hear our prayer.**

**L:** Your Son said, 'Peace be with you'. Bring your peace to the world and to our own country. Lord, in your mercy:

**P: Hear our prayer.**

**L:** Your Son appeared to Mary Magdalene when she was weeping. Comfort those who are sad, lonely, or grieving. Lord, in your mercy:

**P: Hear our prayer.**

**L:** Your Son met the women and asked them to tell the disciples about his resurrection. Guide Christians everywhere to witness to the resurrection in their lives. Lord, in your mercy:

**P: Hear our prayer.**

**L:** Your Son proclaimed himself to the two disciples from the Scriptures and made himself known to them in the breaking of the bread. Reveal him to us and all people through the teaching of your word and the celebration of your holy meal. Lord, in your mercy:

**P: Hear our prayer.**

**L:** Your Son strengthened the faith of Thomas by telling him to touch his hands and side. Reassure those who are troubled by doubts, and strengthen their faith in your goodness. Lord, in your mercy:

**P: Hear our prayer.**

**L:** Your Son conquered death by his death and won the victory by his resurrection. Be with those who are dying, and lead them to life with you forever. Lord, in your mercy:

**P:** Hear our prayer.

**ALL:** Heavenly Father, grant that all who now celebrate these joyful holy days here on earth may finally praise you forever, with all the angels and saints in heaven. We ask this through your risen Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

## SCRIPTURE READING

Matthew 28:1-10

Early on Sunday morning, as the new day was dawning, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went out to the tomb.

Suddenly there was a great earthquake; for an angel of the Lord came down from heaven and rolled aside the stone and sat on it. His face shone like lightning and his clothing was a brilliant white. The guards shook with fear when they saw him, and fell into a dead faint.

Then the angel spoke to the women. “Don’t be frightened!” he said. “I know you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified, but he isn’t here! For he has come back to life again, just as he said he would. Come in and see where his body was lying. . . . And now, go quickly and tell his disciples that he has risen from the dead, and that he is going to Galilee to meet them there. That is my message to them.”

The women ran from the tomb, badly frightened, but also filled with joy, and rushed to find the disciples to give them the angel’s message. And as they were running, suddenly Jesus was there in front of them!

“Good morning!” he said. And they fell to the ground before him, holding his feet and worshiping him.

Then Jesus said to them, “Don’t be frightened! Go tell my brothers to leave at once for Galilee, to meet me there.”

## SERMON SERIES: PLACES OF THE PASSION “The Garden Tomb” – Dr. Tim Hazlett

### MEDITATIVE HYMN

### “Crown Him with Many Crowns”

1. Crown him with many crowns, the Lamb upon his throne.  
Hark! how the heavenly anthem drowns all music but its own.  
Awake, my soul, and sing of him who died for thee,  
and hail him as thy matchless king through all eternity.
2. Crown him the Lord of life, who triumphed o’er the grave,  
and rose victorious in the strife for those he came to save.  
His glories now we sing, who died, and rose on high,  
who died, eternal life to bring, and lives that death may die.
4. Crown him the Lord of love; behold his hands and side,  
those wounds, yet visible above, in beauty glorified.

All hail, Redeemer, hail! For thou hast died for me;  
thy praise and glory shall not fail throughout eternity.

### **A LITURGY FOR HOLY COMMUNION (responsively)**

**L:** The Resurrection has begun! The Day of Celebration is here!

**P:** Alleluia!

**L:** We gather at the table to share in the Banquet of Life!

**P:** Here we meet all who share with us the hope for a brighter future!

**L:** All who wish to follow The Way of Life are welcome to eat and drink at God's table.

**P:** We have come to the table ready to share in this meal together.

**L:** Gracious God, we raise voices hoarse from shouting alleluias, we sing praises for the wonder of an empty tomb, we give thanks for the gifts of life, of life that breaks the bonds of death.

**P:** We sing songs of praise for the world you have given us, for the beauty of the earth, for the glory of the skies.

**L:** As the spring deepens and the earth thaws, as green breaks through the brown of winter,

**P:** We sing songs of hope for new life springing from dead soil, for the promise held in every seed that is sown.

**L:** As people of faith, we remember all those who have gone before.

**P:** People like Moses and Miriam, leading their people to freedom; like Sarah and Abraham, seeking a new life in a strange land; like Peter and Mary, proclaiming an empty tomb and life beyond the cross.

**L:** We remember these and many others, named and unnamed, who have embraced Your life and Your hope, and moved into a new age.

**P:** And we trust that in remembering and retelling their stories, we too can take the leap into New Life.

**L:** Deep among all those memories we remember the life of a Special One.

**P:** Jesus, Child of Mary.

**L:** Born of a woman, he grew to adulthood among people who struggled daily for life.

**P:** Baptized by John, he embraced the life to which You called him.

**L:** He taught and preached a vision of a world where all divisions were broken down, where all had what they needed for abundant life, where the Reign of God was as real on earth as in heaven.

**P:** And though the powerful in his world fought back, he stood strong.

**L:** When offered a chance to take the easy way he overcame his own fear and instead prayed "yet Thy will be done".

**P:** Even though they put him to death you raised him to life, vindicating his vision and bringing hope and healing to the world.

**L:** As inheritors of that hope, we join together in the cries that welcomed him into Jerusalem, the cries of hope for the world:

**P: Hosanna! Hosanna! Holy One! Blessed is the One who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!**

**L:** As we gather at this table, we remember a story told mere days ago and yet also an age ago. We remember that Jesus gathered with his closest friends in an Upper Room to share the feast of liberation. And while sharing the ancient story of freedom, he called them to remember the promised freedom of God's Kingdom. We remember that at that table he took the bread, gave thanks for it, blessed it, broke it and passed it among them saying: This is my body, broken by and for the world. Whenever you eat it remember me. Then later he took the cup of wine, blessed it and passed it among them saying: This is the cup of the New Covenant, sealed in my blood. Whenever you drink it remember me, and look toward the fulfilment of God's Kingdom. And so we break the bread and pour the cup and we remember with hope.

**P: On this Easter Day we share in the Banquet of Freedom to celebrate Life Victorious!**

**L:** God of Life, in the beginning your Spirit hovered over the water, calling forth life, creating and inspiring. Send Your Spirit upon we who gather to share this meal, infuse this bread and this juice with the Spirit's power. As we eat and drink may we feel the power of Life Triumphant pulse in our veins, the fire of hope blaze in our hearts, and the joy of the Empty tomb dance in our souls. Christ who died is now alive!

**P: Alleluia! Amen.**

**L:** And so, as children of a loving Parent, we pray together the words that Jesus, the Risen Christ, taught his friends:

**P: 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 that trespass 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.**

**[PLEASE NOTE:** If you are worshipping with us in-person this morning you are invited to come forward (socially-distanced) to receive the elements. Please return to your seats and wait until all have received the elements and returned to their seats. Once all have returned to their seats you will be invited to remove your masks for 60-seconds to partake of the elements. If you are uncomfortable partaking of the elements while in the sanctuary you may choose to take your elements with you to your car where you will partake of them there.]

### *The Breaking and Giving of the Cup*

**L:** Here at this table, we break the Bread of Life.  
On this Day of Celebration, we pour the Cup of Promise.  
These are Gifts from God for the People of God.

**P: Thanks be to God.**

**L:** Come and eat, for all is now ready.

**CLOSING PRAYER (in unison)**

**- Arte Jones**

**We have eaten, we have drunk, we have embraced the beginning of the new age. Grant, O God, that we who have gathered together on this Day of Resurrection, will move on as people of hope, people of life, people of the Kingdom. May the meal we have shared today revive us in body and soul and energize us as we go out to share the Good News. Christ is Risen! Death is Defeated! Life Wins! Alleluia and Amen!**

**[PLEASE NOTE:** If you are worshipping with us in-person this morning, following the conclusion of the closing prayer you are invited to follow Dr. Tim outdoors where we will gather around the cross outdoors in front of the church and close with singing the first verse of “Christ the Lord Is Risen Today.” Masks must remain on and 6-foot social-distancing must be practiced.]

**Christ the Lord is risen today, Alleluia!  
Earth and heaven in chorus say, Alleluia!  
Raise your joys and triumphs high, Alleluia!  
Sing, ye heavens, and earth reply, Alleluia!**