



The United Church of Bethel

An Open, Affirming Congregation of the UCC/UUA

April 4th, Easter Sunday, 2021

Tom Harty – Pastor

Becky Kondi- Keyboard & Vocals, Larry Noble – Guitar & Vocals,

Seth Stoddard Technical Director

♠= Please Stand If you Are Able

All Prayers and Service Music are Found in the Folders in the Music Racks

Centering & Prelude

Welcome and Announcements

Introit

Greeting and Responsive Call to Worship

L The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God,
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

P And also with you.

L 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 him thanks and praise

Christ is Risen!

Christ is risen, indeed!

Hope is alive!

Hope is alive, indeed!

God's love is eternal!

Hallelujah!

Let us give thanks for what God has done.

Invocation and Lord's Prayer

♠ Hymn NCH 233 Christ the Lord is Risen Today

Prayer of Confession

God of resurrection grace,
Help us in our pain, despair and fear
so that we are not prone to follow
the path of hopelessness.
Help us, to instead, be like the Risen Christ,
and rise up, as a brave and holy people,
living beyond our pain, despair and fear
by remaining hopeful in your steadfast love.

Help us, we pray. Amen.

Words of Assurance

God hears our prayers of grace and mercy,
and raises our countenance from despair,
into resurrection joy!

God meets us in our human suffering,
comforts us in our tears,
and offers to us new hope,
Hallelujah!

Passing of the Peace

First Reading: Isaiah 25:6-9

Psalm 118: 1-2, 14-24

Refrain: The Righteous Shall Enter the Gates of God

✦ **Gloria Patri**

Epistle: 1 Corinthians 15:1-11

Choral Anthem

✦ **Gospel John 20:1-18**

✦ **Hymn 223 NCH What Wondrous Love is This**

Sermon

Joys and Concerns

Pastoral Prayer

Choral Response: Hear Our Prayer O Lord.

Offering

✦ **Doxology & Prayer of Dedication**

Communion

✦ **Hymn NCH 230 Come You Faithful Raise the Strain**

✦ **Choral Benediction**

Postlude

(Please remain seated for a period of quiet meditation and appreciation for the music our worship team provides.)

Whoever you are, Wherever you are on life's journey, You are welcome here.

Our Faith is 2000 Years Old; Our Thinking is Not.

First Reading

Isaiah 25:6–9

On this mountain the LORD of hosts will make for all peoples
a feast of rich food, a feast of well-aged wines,
of rich food filled with marrow, of well-aged wines strained clear.

7 And he will destroy on this mountain
the shroud that is cast over all peoples,
the sheet that is spread over all nations;

8 he will swallow up death forever.

Then the Lord GOD will wipe away the tears from all faces,
and the disgrace of his people he will take away from all the earth,
for the LORD has spoken.

9 It will be said on that day,

Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, so that he might save us.

This is the LORD for whom we have waited;

let us be glad and rejoice in his salvation.

PSALM

118:1–2, 14–24

R: The Righteous Shall Enter the Gate of God

1 O give thanks to the LORD, for he is good;
his steadfast love endures forever!

2 Let Israel say,

“His steadfast love endures forever.”

14 The LORD is my strength and my might;
he has become my salvation.

15 There are glad songs of victory in the tents of the righteous:

“The right hand of the LORD does valiantly;

16 the right hand of the LORD is exalted;
the right hand of the LORD does valiantly.”

R: The Righteous Shall Enter the Gate of God

17 I shall not die, but I shall live,
and recount the deeds of the LORD.

18 The LORD has punished me severely,
but he did not give me over to death.

19 Open to me the gates of righteousness,
that I may enter through them
and give thanks to the LORD.

20 This is the gate of the LORD;
the righteous shall enter through it.

R: The Righteous Shall Enter the Gate of God

21 I thank you that you have answered me
and have become my salvation.

22 The stone that the builders rejected
has become the chief cornerstone.

23 This is the LORD's doing;
it is marvelous in our eyes.

24 This is the day that the LORD has made;
let us rejoice and be glad in it.

R: The Righteous Shall Enter the Gate of God

Epistle Reading

1 Corinthians 15:1–11

15 Now I would remind you, brothers and sisters, of the good news that I proclaimed to you, which you in turn received, in which also you stand, 2 through which also you are being saved, if you hold firmly to the message that I proclaimed to you—unless you have come to believe in vain.

3 For I handed on to you as of first importance what I in turn had received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the scriptures, 4 and that he was buried, and that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the scriptures, 5 and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. 6 Then he appeared to more than five hundred brothers and sisters at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have died. 7 Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles. 8 Last of all, as to one untimely born, he appeared also to me. 9 For I am the least of the apostles, unfit to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. 10 But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace toward me has not been in vain. On the contrary, I worked harder than any of them—though it was not I, but the grace of God that is with me. 11 Whether then it was I or they, so we proclaim and so you have come to believe.

Gospel Reading

John 20:1–18

20 Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the tomb. 2 So she ran and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved, and said to

them, "They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him." 3 Then Peter and the other disciple set out and went toward the tomb. 4 The two were running together, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. 5 He bent down to look in and saw the linen wrappings lying there, but he did not go in. 6 Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb. He saw the linen wrappings lying there, 7 and the cloth that had been on Jesus' head, not lying with the linen wrappings but rolled up in a place by itself. 8 Then the other disciple, who reached the tomb first, also went in, and he saw and believed; 9 for as yet they did not understand the scripture, that he must rise from the dead. 10 Then the disciples returned to their homes.

11 But Mary stood weeping outside the tomb. As she wept, she bent over to look into the tomb; 12 and she saw two angels in white, sitting where the body of Jesus had been lying, one at the head and the other at the feet. 13 They said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping?" She said to them, "They have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid him." 14 When she had said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not know that it was Jesus. 15 Jesus said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you looking for?" Supposing him to be the gardener, she said to him, "Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away." 16 Jesus said to her, "Mary!" She turned and said to him in Hebrew, "Rabbouni!" (which means Teacher). 17 Jesus said to her, "Do not hold on to me, because I have not yet ascended to the Father. But go to my brothers and say to them, 'I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.'" 18 Mary Magdalene went and announced to the disciples, "I have seen the Lord"; and she told them that he had said these things to her

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