

# *The First Congregational Church in Worcester*

Sunday, April 20, 2025

10:00A.M.

## *Easter Sunday*

*The service of worship begins with the music of the prelude. Through its power and brilliance, may you feel the majesty and glory of God; in its quietness, God's peace.*

### Prelude

*Prelude in Classic Style ~ Young  
Fanfare & Processional ~ Trapp*

### Ringling of the Chimes

#### \*Call to Worship

Sing the glad songs of victory;

God is creating a day of newness and joy.

**God is our strength and our song;  
this is the day of our salvation.**

Christ has been raised from the dead,  
the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep.

**The one who was rejected assures us:  
we are accepted and beloved by God.**

We are chosen by God as witnesses to good news.

We will live and recount the deeds of our God.

**God reigns; let all nations and peoples rejoice.  
In Christ, all shall be made alive.**

#### \*Opening Hymn #182

*Christ the Lord is Risen Today*

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!

Lives again our glorious King, Alleluia! Where, O death, is now thy sting? Alleluia!  
Once he died our souls to save, Alleluia! Where's thy victory, boasting grave? Alleluia!

Love's redeeming work is done, Alleluia! Fought the fight, the battle won, Alleluia!  
Death in vain forbids him rise, Alleluia! Christ has opened paradise, Alleluia!

Soar we now where Christ has led, Alleluia! Following our exalted Head, Alleluia!  
Made like him, like him we rise, Alleluia! Ours the cross, the grave, the skies, Alleluia!

Hail the Lord of earth and heaven, Alleluia! Praise to thee by both be given, Alleluia!  
Thee we greet triumphant now, Alleluia! Hail the Resurrection, thou, Alleluia!

#### \*Invocation

**With thanksgiving, praise, and joy, we worship you, marvelous God. How amazing is all your creation! How glorious is this day of new life! Come among us now, we pray, to raise us up from our fears and doubts and perplexity. We want to believe. We want to trust. We want to dare. We**

want to live. Touch us today with a spirit of hope, that our discipleship may honor Christ, in whose name we pray. Amen.

### **Call to Transformation**

Doubters, believers, disciples, deceivers: come to the one who makes all things new. The gates of righteousness are open to us, and a welcome awaits all who truly enter the presence of God, seeking forgiveness. The God whom we have rejected offers acceptance and healing.

### **Prayer of Transformation**

Dazzling God, we are blinded to your majesty. We have taken for granted the amazing wonder of life, without seeing you as the source of all things. We shrink from the chastening judgment we deserve. We resist the changes we know we must make to receive new life. Save us from the calamity of our selfish ways. Rescue us from all hurtful and destructive habits. Forgive our broken promises, heal our broken relationships, lift our broken spirits, so we may share in the resurrection of Christ. Amen.

### **Words of Grace**

Everyone who lives by trust in Jesus Christ has already received forgiveness of sins. Accept this gift God offers. You are chosen by God to receive it. Your prayers are answered, and your salvation is assured. Christ reigns over death, filling you with newness of life. Rise up! Rejoice! Witness to the good news!

### **Sharing of Announcements, Celebrations and Concerns**

### **Pastoral Prayer**

#### **The 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 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, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

### **Prayer Response**

*Into My Heart*

Into my heart, into my heart, come into my heart, Lord Jesus;  
Come in today, come in to stay; come into my heart, Lord Jesus.

### **Hebrew Scripture Reading**

*Isaiah 65:17-25*

### **New Testament Reading**

*I Corinthians 15:19-26*

### **Gospel Reading**

*John 20:1-18*

### **Sermon Title**

*"The Empty Tomb, The Cradle of Hope"*

*Rev. Noelle Dattilo*

### **\*Hymn Insert**

*Christ is Alive*

Christ is alive! Let Christians sing. the cross stands empty to the sky.  
Let streets and homes with praises ring. Love, drowned in death, shall never die.

Christ is alive! No longer bound to distant years in Palestine,  
but saving, healing, here and now, and touching ev'ry place and time.

Not throned afar, remotely high untouched, unmoved by human pains,  
but daily, in the midst of life, our Savior in the Godhead reigns.

In ev'ry insult, rift, and war, where color, scorn, or wealth divide,  
Christ suffers still, yet loves the more, and lives, where even hope has died.

Christ is alive, and comes to bring good news to this and ev'ry age,  
till earth and sky and ocean ring with joy, with justice, love, and praise.

### **Invitation to Generosity**

We who enjoy the work of our hands do not labor in vain. We who invest the fruits of our effort in the sharing of good news are doubly blessed. May our gifts represent our commitment, even as they bear witness and offer healing. Let us give thanks through our offerings.

### **Offertory**

*Easter Chant ~ Young*

### **\*Doxology**

*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!**

### **\*Prayer of Dedication**

Thank you, God, for resurrection. We rejoice in Christ as the first fruits of all that you make available to us. As you offered Christ to the world, so we would offer ourselves. May we, along with our gifts, testify to good news of your forgiving love and empowering acceptance. Amen.

### **\*Sending Hymn #193**

*Thine Is the Glory*

Thine is the glory, risen, conqu'ring Son; endless is the vict'ry Thou o'er death hast won.  
Angels in bright raiment rolled the stone away, kept the folded grave-clothes where Thy body lay.  
Thine be the glory, risen, conqu'ring Son; endless is the vict'ry Thou o'er death hast won.

Lo! Jesus meets us, risen from the tomb. Lovingly He greets us, scatters fear and gloom;  
let His church with gladness hymns of triumph sing, for the Lord now liveth; death hath lost its sting.  
Thine be the glory, risen, conqu'ring Son; endless is the vict'ry Thou o'er death hast won.

No more we doubt Thee, glorious Prince of life!! Life is nought without Thee; aid us in our strife;  
make us more than conquerors, through Thy deathless love;  
bring us safe through Jordan to Thy home above.  
Thine be the glory, risen, conqu'ring Son; endless is the vict'ry Thou o'er death hast won.

### **\*Commission & Blessing**

Spread the message: Christ is alive!  
Live the good news: our lives are renewed!

**We have seen and heard the good news.**

**We have been touched by the presence of Christ.**

Share the Word: God's peace is offered to all.

Communicate the power of love: be transformed.

**We are saved and reconciled and empowered.**

**God has chosen us to make all things new.**

Announce and proclaim: God is our strength.

Rejoice in the promise: we shall triumph over death.

**We will tell friends of our discoveries.**

**We will witness to God's surprising activity.**

Amen. Amen.

**\*Benediction Response**

*Hymn to Joy*

Joyful, joyful, we adore You, God of glory, Lord of love;  
Hearts unfold like flow'rs before You, Op'ning to the sun above.  
Melt the clouds of sin and sadness; Drive the dark of doubt away;  
Giver of immortal gladness, Hymn to Fill us with the light of day!

**Ring of the Chimes**

**\*Postlude**

*Rigaudon ~ Campra/arr. Bish*

**\* - Please stand in body or spirit**

*There is no coffee hour today. **HAPPY EASTER!***

Let us extend a warm welcome to **Rev. Noelle Dattilo**, who is officiating at our service today. **Thank you, Noelle!**