

*First Congregational United Church of Christ*  
*Faster Sunrise Service*

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Reading from Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24

Call to Worship: He Is Risen!

Pastor: The dark night is behind us; the morning light erased all darkness and doubt.

**All: All that remains is the empty tomb and the wrappings of pain and death.**

Pastor: The Lord has risen; he's no longer among the dead.

**All: He lives. The Lord has risen!**

Pastor: Yes, the Lord lives! The new morning fills our hearts with joy and hope.

**All: Let us then worship together, extinguishing all doubt and fear with joyful songs and an unbreakable faith in our Redeemer.**

Opening Prayer:

How awesome are your ways, O God! With thanksgiving, we offer praise for the work you brought in Christ. In gladness, we thank you for hiding us deeply into his sacred life. We bless you for raising us in and with Jesus Christ, giving us the power to proclaim with Mary Magdalene, the Risen One, not only with our voices, but with our lives. In Jesus' name, we pray, **Amen.**

Reading from the Gospel of John 20:1-18 (From *The Message*)

Devotional Moment – Pastor Jon Gougeon

**Hymn: Christ the Lord is Risen Today! Verses 1-2**

**Christ the Lord is risen today, Alleluia!  
Mortal tongues and angels say: Alleluia!  
Raise your joys and triumphs high, Alleluia!  
Sing, glad heavens, and earth reply: Alleluia!**

**Let the Victor's people sing, Alleluia!  
Where, O death, is now your sting? Alleluia!  
Dying once, Christ lives to save, Alleluia!  
Where your victory, O grave? Alleluia!**

Prayer of Confession:

Pastor: Christ, we come to the empty tomb, we meet our own death, we meet our own tomb, we meet our own emptiness. And we remember how we have treated other people — members of our family, friends, and neighbors.

**All: Lord, we come to your tomb, we meet a hungry world before us, the pain of starving children, the guilt of war on our hands, and we know that collectively, we share in those injustices.**

Pastor: Lord, we come to the empty tomb, we search within ourselves, and we cannot escape what we are, people caught up in the pain of our own wrongdoing, for some a deep sense of loneliness and frustration of what we would be but are not.

**All: Lord, when we come to the empty tomb, we lay before you our pain, our emptiness and look to you for hope.**

Pastor: People of God, why do you seek the living among the dead in an empty tomb? Are you afraid, are you uncertain, and are you uncomfortable here?

**All: Our wounds are deep, we have turned away from that man, we have broken with him and seek his fellowship.**

Pastor: Do not dwell on your wounds any longer for he has risen to heal you, he has risen to forgive you; he has risen to change us all and bind us together now. Christ has risen to forgive us.

**All: Thanks be to God. Amen.**

**Hymn: Christ the Lord is Risen Today! Verses 3-4**

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

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

Benediction:

Go gladly into this world, raised with Christ, hearts lifted by his love. Live as though dead to all that keeps us from a life hidden with Christ in God. **Amen.**