



*The First Congregational Church  
of the United Church of Christ  
Stockbridge, Massachusetts*

THIRD SUNDAY OF EASTER — WITNESS SUNDAY

*April 14, 2024 – 10:00 a.m.*

Each week in worship we welcome people to share their prayers. If you would like for a worship leader to read your prayer, fill out a prayer slip. Nursery care is available during the worship service; please ask an usher.

## PREPARING FOR WORSHIP

### GATHERING MUSIC

PRELUDE

*Intermezzo* by Brahms

Hui-Mei Lin, *piano*

WELCOME

The Rev. Dr. Richard Floyd

FRAMING WORDS *Witness* by Denise Levertov

Rev. Floyd

Sometimes the mountain  
is hidden from me in veils  
of cloud, sometimes  
I am hidden from the mountain  
in veils of inattention, apathy, fatigue,  
when I forget or refuse to go  
down to the shore or a few yards  
up the road, on a clear day,  
to reconfirm  
that witnessing presence.

## GATHERING FOR WORSHIP

\*GATHERING SONG      *I Love to Tell the Story*

I love to tell the story  
of unseen things above,  
Of Jesus' radiant glory,  
of Jesus' endless love.  
I love to tell the story,  
because I know it's true;  
it satisfies my longings  
as nothing else can do.

**Refrain:**  
I love to tell the story;  
and when I am in glory  
I'll tell the old, old story  
of Jesus' endless love.

\*CALL TO WORSHIP      (from Psalm 47)      Michael Deegan

One:      Clap your hands, all you peoples; shout to God with loud songs of joy.

**Many:      For the LORD, the Most High, is awesome, a great king over all the earth.**

One:      He chose our heritage for us, the pride of Jacob whom he loves.

**Many:      God has gone up with a shout, the LORD with the sound of a trumpet.**

One:      Sing praises to God, sing praises; sing praises to our King, sing praises.

**Many:      For God is the king of all the earth; sing praises with a psalm.**

**All:      God is king over the nations; God sits on his holy throne.**

\*PASSING OF THE PEACE      Rev. Floyd

TIME WITH CHILDREN      Elisabeth Bellows

The Lord's Prayer

**Our God, 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. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.**

Children may go to music / story time.

READING      *Letter from Birmingham Jail*, the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.  
Jo Ann Levitt

There was a time when the church was very powerful—in the time when the early Christians rejoiced at being deemed worthy to suffer for what they believed. In those days the church was not merely a thermometer that recorded the ideas and principles of popular opinion; it was a thermostat that transformed the mores of society. Whenever the early Christians entered a town, the people in power became disturbed and immediately sought to convict the Christians for being “disturbers of the peace” and “outside agitators.” But the Christians pressed on, in the conviction that they were “a colony of heaven,” called to obey God rather than man. Small in number, they were big in commitment. They were too God-intoxicated to be “astronomically intimidated.” By their effort and example they brought an end to such ancient evils as infanticide and gladiatorial contests. Things are different now. So often the contemporary church is a weak, ineffectual voice with an uncertain sound. So often it is an archdefender of the status quo. Far from being disturbed by the presence of the church, the power structure of the average community is consoled by the church’s silent—and often even vocal—sanction of things as they are.

\*HYMN                      *All Hail the Power of Jesus’ Name*                      See page 5

## THE GIFT OF THE WORD

SCRIPTURE READING              Acts 1:1-14                      David Anderegg

SERMON                      *You Will Be My Witnesses*                      Rev. Floyd

\*HYMN                      *Alleluia! Sing to Jesus!*                      See page 6

## OFFERING OURSELVES AND OUR GIFTS

CALL TO THE OFFERING    Rev. Floyd

For today, if you wish to lift a prayer, you must write it on a slip.

They will be read as written.

OFFERTORY SOLO      Sonata K330 (Allegro), Mozart                      Hui-Mei Lin, *piano*

\*DOXOLOGY

*Lasst Uns Erfreuen*

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow;  
Praise Christ the Word in flesh born low; Alleluia, Alleluia.  
Praise Holy Spirit evermore; One God, Triune, whom we adore.  
Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.**

\*BLESSING OF THE GIFTS

Rev. Floyd

BRINGING OUR PRAYERS

PASTORAL PRAYER

Rev. Floyd

PRAYER RESPONSE

*At the Name of Jesus, Noel/Vaughan Williams*

## **GOING FORTH INTO THE WORLD**

INVITATIONS

\*HYMN

*Rejoice, Ye Pure in Heart!*

See page 7

\*BENEDICTION

Rev. Floyd



POSTLUDE

*Majestic Postlude* by Mark L. Williams

### **Music Notes ~ Peter Frost**

Though Mozart, (composer of the Offertory today, lived only 35 years, (1756-1791), he wrote over 800 works. The Allegro (1st movement) is composed in the typical Sonata-Allegro form, exposition, development, recapitulation, and contains two distinctive themes. Each of these themes have been decorated by the use of ornamentation. This Sonata is one of his most popular piano works and was written when he was 27 years old. His Sonata in a minor was written just after his mother's death. This Sonata is very dark in nature. Just three months later he was able to write today's Sonata K330 which is in C major, and is much brighter and joyful in color.

# 142 All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name!

CORONATION 8.6.8.6.8.6

12 mel.

Stanzas 1-3, Edward Perronet, 1779, 1780

Stanzas 2-3, alt. John Rippon, 1787

Stanza 4, John Rippon, 1787

Oliver Holden, 1793

Desc. Michael E. Young, 1979

*Descant*

4. O that with yon-der sa-cred throng We at His feet may fall!

1. All hail the power of Je-sus' name! Let an-gels pros-trate fall;  
 2. Ye cho-sen seed of Is-rael's race, Ye ran-somed from the fall,  
 3. Let ev-ery kin-dred, ev-ery tribe, On this ter-res-trial ball,  
 4. O that with yon-der sa-cred throng We at His feet may fall!

We'll join the song and crown Him Lord of all!

Bring forth the roy-al di-a-dem, And crown Him Lord of all!  
 Hail Him who saves you by His grace, And crown Him Lord of all!  
 To Him all maj-es-ty as-cribe, And crown Him Lord of all!  
 We'll join the ev-er-last-ing song, And crown Him Lord of all!

We'll join the song and crown Him Lord of all!

Bring forth the roy-al di-a-dem, And crown Him Lord of all!  
 Hail Him who saves you by His grace, And crown Him Lord of all!  
 To Him all maj-es-ty as-cribe, And crown Him Lord of all!  
 We'll join the ev-er-last-ing song, And crown Him Lord of all!

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## Alleluia! Sing to Jesus!

HYFRYDOL 8.7.8.7 D

William Chatterton Dix, 1866

Rowland Hugh Prichard, 1831

1. Al - le - lu - ia! Sing to Je - sus! His the scep - ter,  
 2. Al - le - lu - ia! Not as or - phans Are we left in  
 3. Al - le - lu - ia! Bread of an - gels, Thou on earth our  
 4. Al - le - lu - ia! King e - ter - nal, Thee the Lord of

His the throne! Al - le - lu - ia! His the tri - umph,  
 sor - row now. Al - le - lu - ia! He is near us;  
 food, our stay. Al - le - lu - ia! Here the sin - ful  
 lords we own; Al - le - lu - ia! Born of Ma - ry,

His the vic - to - ry a - lone! Hark! the songs of peace - ful  
 Faith be - lieves nor ques - tions how. Though the cloud from sight re -  
 Flee to Thee from day to day. In - ter - ces - sor, friend of  
 Earth Thy foot - stool, heaven Thy throne. Thou with - in the veil hast

Zi - on Thun - der like a might - y flood; Je - sus out of  
 ceived Him, When the for - ty days were o'er, Shall our hearts for -  
 sin - ners, Earth's Re - deem - er, plead for me, Where the songs of  
 en - tered, Robed in flesh, our great High Priest; Thou on earth both

ev - ery na - tion Hath re - deemed us by His blood.  
 get His prom - ise, "I am with you ev - er - more"?  
 all the sin - less Sweep a - cross the crys - tal sea.  
 Priest and Vic - tim In the eu - cha - ris - tic feast.

## Rejoice, Ye Pure in Heart!

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MARION SM with refrain

Edward Hayes Plumtre, 1865

Arthur Henry Messiter, 1883

1. Re - joi - ce, ye pure in heart! Re - joi - ce, give thanks, and sing!  
 2. Yes, on through life's long path, Still chant - ing as ye go;  
 3. At last the march shall end; The wea - ried ones shall rest;  
 4. Then on, ye pure in heart! Re - joi - ce, give thanks, and sing!

Your fes - tal ban - ner wave on high, The cross of Christ your King.  
 From youth to age, by night and day, In glad - ness and in woe.  
 The pil - grims find their home at last, Je - ru - sa - lem the blest.  
 Your fes - tal ban - ner wave on high, The cross of Christ your King.

*Refrain*

Re - joi - ce! re - joi - ce! Re - joi - ce, give thanks, and sing!

Re - joi - ce! re - joi - ce!

# News and Announcements

## **April 21- Care for Creation Sunday**

While the texts might change, the Genesis text contains a word in Hebrew (radah) which is not the traditional word for “rule” rather it connotes as one Hebrew scholar notes, “to actively partner with God in taking the world forward.” We will look at our role to partner with God for the good of all creation.

**Cathedral of the Beloved** We need volunteers to sign up to help cook together in the church kitchen on Saturday, April 27, and/or set up and serve the meal on Sunday, April 28. We will partner with the West Stockbridge Village Congregational Church. Please see the sign-up sheet on the JE Room bulletin board. Cathedral of the Beloved

is an ecumenical ministry that holds a worship service and offers a free meal each Sunday afternoon in Pittsfield. This meal will be held indoors at the Methodist Church on Fenn St. This ministry serves the marginalized and homeless, serving about 100 people each week. Churches volunteer to cook and serve a meal.

## **All Church Birthday Party**

Celebrate our birthdays after church on May 5! Potluck signup in the JE room, on Breeze, or by calling the church office. Last initial A-G please bring main dish, H-P side dish, Q-Z salad. Our theme is The Four Seasons – sit with your friends born in your season! Join the seasonal song competition! Eat Cake! Seasonal attire encouraged.

*Welcome! We are Open and Affirming, which means that we invite persons of every sexual orientation, gender identification and expression, racial and cultural identity, age, physical ability, economic circumstance, faith background and family structure to share fully in the ministry, leadership and fellowship of this congregation's life in Christ.*

*As followers of Christ and committed to Isaiah's charge to "maintain justice and do what is right," we acknowledge with gratitude and humility that we are learning, speaking, gathering, and worshiping on the ancestral homelands of the Mohican people, who are the indigenous peoples of this land. Despite tremendous hardship in being forced from here, today their community resides in Wisconsin and is known as the Stockbridge-Munsee Community. We pay honor and respect to their ancestors past and present as we commit to building a more inclusive and equitable space for all.*

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