

**+ The Season of Easter + We Celebrate Resurrection & New Life +
Every time we meet!**



+ The People of Mount Zion-Finksburg , Maryland +

Wm. Louis Piel Pastor + Leslie Gabler, Director of Music
Ushers Shirley Loveless & Judy Piel

The Second Sunday after Easter Day + April 23, 2023 + Worship 9:55 a.m. +

Musical Prelude + The Message of New Life in Christ Jesus 1

“But he said to them, Do not be afraid, you are looking for Jesus of Nazareth – he has been raised!”

Celebrating Resurrection, New Life, Easter!

(Unison) “If Christ has not been raised your faith is futile and you are still in your sins. But in fact he has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who have died. For since death came through a human being, the resurrection of the dead has also come through a human, Christ Jesus our Lord.”

Hymn Verse of Resurrection Verse One (1) & Three (3) + Hymnal #304

“Easter people raise your voices...”

Call to Worship (Unison)

We are not eye-witnesses to an event,
as were Mary and the disciples;
we have not journeyed
through a dangerous city
to seek answers or consolation;
we have not seen angels
gathering at the rim of this day,
or wept in the garden this morning
because we could not find Him.

But we gather this day because we are here to attest to a story
A life-saving story that has not lost its power
during twenty centuries
of change and conflict.

A living story of new life and hope
The Lord is Risen + Our Lord is Risen + Alleluia!

Hymn of Faith “I Love to Tell the Story” UM Hymnal #156

Opening Prayer

Anthem “He Looked Beyond My Fault” + The Faithful Few

“Amazing grace, shall always be my song of praise for it was grace that bought my liberty. I do not know just why He came to love me so, He looked beyond my fault and saw my need.”

A Biblical Look at Paul’s Letter to the Christians in Corinth+

Scripture Lesson + I Corinthians 15.12-22 NRSV

Paul visited Corinth about 50/51, written about 52-53 CE

Now if Christ is proclaimed as raised from the dead, how can some of you say there is no resurrection of the dead? **If there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ has not been raised, and if Christ has not been raised, then our proclamation is in vain and your faith is in vain.**

We are even found to be misrepresenting God, because we testified of God that he raised Christ—whom he did not raise if it is true that the dead are not raised. For if the dead are not raised, then Christ has not been raised. If Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile, and you are still in your sins. Then those also who have died in Christ have perished. If for this life only we have hoped in Christ, we are of all people most to be pitied.

But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who have died.¹ For since death came through a human, the resurrection of the dead has also come through a human, for as all die in Adam, so all will be made alive in Christ.

Morning Prayer

Our Prayer Song (Hymnal 314)

“I come to the garden alone, while the dew is still on the roses, and the voice I hear,
Falling on my ear, the Son of God discloses. And he walks with me, and he talks
With me, and he tells me I am his own, and the joy we share as we tarry there,
None other, has ever, known”

We praise you, living God, for you have created and are creating,
bringing life and hope and love.

You come to us in Jesus, your Word made flesh,
to reconcile and make new.

We are not sure we believe as fully as we think we should.
We are not sure we trust as deeply as we think you require.
But this morning into your presence,
we bring who we are and what we have become
longing to know your grace and your love.

Forgive in us what has gone wrong.
Repair in us what is broken.
Reveal in us what is good and turn us toward it.
(Over)
So may we follow wherever your Spirit may lead.
In Christ Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

(Unison-Congregation)

(Let us pray the “Our Father” together)

Our Father, which 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, The power, and the glory, For ever and ever. Amen.

Easter Video “Up From The Grave He Arose” UM Hymnal #322

We Welcome our Children

Even if we do not have children in congregational worship we remember all God's children.
“Jesus loves me, This I know, for the Bible tells me so, Little ones to him belong, they are weak
But He is strong. Yes, Jesus loves me! Yes, Jesus loves me! Yes! Jesus loves me. The Bible tells me so

Informal Moments + Reception of our Tithes & Offerings

Offering Response (Hymnal #94) “Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow”

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A Biblical Look at Paul's Second Letter to the Christians in Corinth+

In Paul's second letter to the Corinthians his message encourages them to live in a new way, embracing the cruciform life of Jesus. Through the cross and resurrection, Jesus' followers can live differently and model generosity, humility, and weakness.

2 Corinthians 4.8-10 We are afflicted in every way, **but** not crushed; perplexed, **but** not driven to despair; persecuted, **but** not forsaken; struck down, **but** not destroyed; **10**always carrying in the body the death of Jesus, so that **the life of Jesus may also be made visible in our bodies.**

2 Corinthians 5.17-20 So if anyone is in Christ, there (he/she) is **a new creation**: everything old has passed away; look, new things have come into being! All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ **and has given us the ministry of reconciliation**; that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, **and entrusting the message of reconciliation to us**. So we are **ambassadors for Christ, since God is making his appeal through us**; we entreat you on behalf of Christ: be reconciled to God.

Video of Easter Celebration Easter Morning Worship in the Duke University Chapel
"Christ the Lord is Risen Today," and "Thine Be the Glory"

Closing Blessing (Pastor)

Go now as God's chosen witnesses

Go now to testify that Christ has been raised and that we are raised with him.
Do not look for Jesus among the dead, but be glad and rejoice in his salvation.

And may God raise you from all that would entomb you;
May Christ Jesus call you by name and go ahead of you;
And may the Holy Spirit empower you for all that is good.

Congregation Unison Closing Prayer (Congregation)

As we prepare to leave this place and go back into the world
We affirm that the "Alleluias" of Easter are not just words
They are a way of life and living

We share the "alleluias"

When our bread is divided among the hungry,
When our table is set, and all God's people can eat together
When the hungry in spirit are fed with God's love
When peace is celebrated even among those we disagree with
When diverse and divided communities are brought together
When neighbors love each other, regardless.

We leave this place bubbling over with God's love!

We promise to share that love!

So let it be! Amen and Amen!

Musical Postlude

Who is “Paul” And Why is He Important for Christians?



Paul wrote more letters & epistles (13) in the Christian scriptures (New Testament) than anyone else. Before the gospels were written he was communicating with congregations that he had established. A member of a Hellenistic Jewish family he could trace his roots back to the tribe of Benjamin. As a “Jews-Jew” he was strongly opposed to Christianity because he felt followers of Jesus were destroying the Jewish faith that he loved. His life took a radical change when he encountered the “risen Jesus” on his trip to Damascus to imprison Jesus followers. He discovered that Jesus was no longer dead but alive and he was converted to follow him. He also felt that the “Jewish Law” was not paramount but the life, message and teachings of Jesus were. Even though he was not one of the original “Apostles” chosen by Jesus he felt that having encountered the “risen Lord” gave him the authority he needed surprisingly not to fellow Jews but to “Gentiles.” The “age to come” was not locked up in the future - it had burst into the present through the death, resurrection of Jesus and the coming of the “Holy Spirit.” Strongly devoted to his Jewish heritage he firmly believed that Christian believers were spiritual heirs to ancient Israel. Paul was certain that the gospel transcended the barriers of race, sex, and class and insisted on the equality of all believers. This morning we look at passages from his letters to the Corinthians.