Easter



APRIL 17, 2022
11:00 AM

PREPARATION FOR WORSHIP

**There have been times
when, after long on my knees
in a cold chancel, a stone has rolled
from my mind, and I have looked
in and seen the old questions lie
folded and in a place
by themselves, like the piled
graveclothes of love's risen body.**

R.S. Thomas

CHURCH LIFE UPDATE Margaret LaMotte Torrence

PRELUDE *Incantation* Moses Sumney / arr. Landers

This piece, orchestrated for strings and piano by Hazel Landers, is based on a Hebrew text that invokes God and the angels to bless Israel, concluding with the words: "above my head is the Spirit of God."

***CALL TO WORSHIP** John 1:1-5
Michael Fingerle

In the beginning was the Word,
and the Word was with God,
and the Word was God.
He was in the beginning with God.

All things came into being through him,
and without him not one thing came into being.
What has come into being in him was life,
and the life was the light of all people.
**The light shines in the darkness,
and the darkness did not overcome it.**

Easter has come
and we will celebrate!

Christ is risen!
Christ is risen, indeed!

***HYMN 232** *Jesus Christ Is Risen Today* Easter Hymn

Jesus Christ is risen today, Alleluia!
Our triumphant holy day, Alleluia!
Who did once upon the cross, Alleluia!
Suffer to redeem our loss. Alleluia!

Hymns of praise then let us sing, Alleluia!
Unto Christ, our heavenly King, Alleluia!
Who endured the cross and grave, Alleluia!
Sinners to redeem and save. Alleluia!

But the pains which he endured, Alleluia!
Our salvation have procured. Alleluia!
Now above the sky he's King, Alleluia!
Where the angels ever sing. Alleluia!

Sing we to our God above, Alleluia!
Praise eternal as God's love. Alleluia!
Praise our God, ye heavenly host, Alleluia!
Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Alleluia!

**Those who are able will please stand.*
Thank you for silencing your cell phone.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION Margaret LaMotte Torrence

Endlessly merciful God,
Forgive us for telling the Easter story
as though the miracle were finished and gone,
something that happened long ago.

Startle us, too, on the way to the grave.
Renew in us the claim of our baptism,
the joy of your call, the transforming gift of Easter.
Send us, fearlessly, into the world,
to love without measure.

(silent prayer)

ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

*** SONG OF JOY (v. 1, 3, 5)** *O For a Thousand Tongues to Sing*

O for a thousand tongues to sing my dear Redeemer's praise,
The glories of my God and King, the triumphs of God's grace!

Christ speaks and listening to his voice new life the dead receive,
The mournful waken to rejoice, the poor in heart believe.

To God all glory, praise, and love be now and ever given
By saints above and saints below, the church in earth and heaven.

*** THE PEACE OF CHRIST**

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

FIRST SCRIPTURE READING *Isaiah 25: 6-10a*

ANTHEM *Day of Delight and Beauty Unbounded* In Dir Ist Freude / arr. Paul Weber
(Chancel Choir and Orchestra)

Refrain:
Day of delight and beauty unbounded,
Tell the news, the gospel spread!
Day of all wonder, day of all splendor,
Praise Christ risen from the dead!

Sing of the sun from darkness appearing;
Sing of the seed from barren earth greening;
Sing of creation, alleluia!
Sing of the stream from Jesus' side flowing;
Sing of the saints in water made holy;
Sing of salvation, alleluia! **(Refrain)**

Sing now of mourning turned into dancing;
Sing now the mystery, hope of our glory;
Sing with thanksgiving, alleluia!
Sing now of fasting turned into feasting;
Sing the Lord's favor lasting forever;
Sing, all things living, alleluia! **(Refrain)**

SECOND SCRIPTURE READING *John 20:1-18*

SERMON *While It Was Still Dark* Margaret LaMotte Torrence

ANTHEM *Set Me as a Seal* Words from Song of Solomon 8:6
Music by John Michael Trotta

This ancient love poem from the Hebrew scriptures was embraced by the early church as an expression of the Easter message—the power of love to transcend all things, even death. The seal mentioned in the poem functioned as a signature, a sign of authenticity and approval.

The choir and string ensemble are joined by dancer and FPC member James Jordan, who has created original choreography inspired by the music and poetry.

Set me as a seal upon your heart,
Set me as a seal upon your arm;
For love is as strong as death.

Many waters cannot quench love,
Neither can floods drown it.

Set me as a seal upon your heart,
Set me as a seal upon your arm;
For love is as strong as death.
Stronger than death.
Love.

***AFFIRMATION OF FAITH** From A Declaration of Faith, PCUS 1977
Michael Fingerle

We declare that Jesus is Lord.
His resurrection is a decisive victory
over the powers that deform and destroy human life.
His lordship is hidden.
The world appears to be dominated by people and systems,
that do not acknowledge his rule.
But his lordship is real.
It demands our loyalty and sets us free
from the fear of all lesser lords who threaten us.
We maintain that ultimate sovereignty
now belongs to Jesus Christ
in every sphere of life.

Jesus is Lord!
He has been Lord from the beginning.
He will be Lord at the end.
Even now he is Lord.

THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND THE LORD'S PRAYER Margaret LaMotte Torrence

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 debts
as we forgive our debtors;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom and the power
and the glory, forever. Amen.

***HYMN 248** *Christ Is Risen! Shout Hosanna!* Hymn to Joy

Christ is risen! Shout Hosanna! Celebrate this day of days!
Christ is risen! Hush in wonder: All creation is amazed.
In the desert all-surrounding, see, a spreading tree has grown.
Healing leaves of grace abounding, bring a taste of love unknown.

Christ is risen! Raise your spirits from the caverns of despair.
Walk with gladness in the morning; see what love can do and dare.
Drink the wine of resurrection; not a servant, but a friend.
Jesus is our strong companion. Joy and peace shall never end.

Christ is risen! Earth and heaven nevermore shall be the same.
Break the bread of new creation where the world is still in pain.
Tell its grim, demonic chorus: "Christ is risen! Get you gone!"'
God the First and Last is with us. Sing Hosanna everyone!

***BENEDICTION** Margaret LaMotte Torrence

POSTLUDE *Fanfare-Rondeau* Jean Joseph Mouret
(Orchestra with Steven Phillips, organist)

We are grateful today for the talents of our musical team. Our guest musicians include:

Marcus Ratzenboeck – violin I
Kat Baloff-Tenev – violin II
Yordan Tenev – viola
Michael Amos – cello
Isaac Mingus – contrebass
Mark DeRose – timpani and percussion

The artwork on the cover of the bulletin is from Ecumenicus, St. John's Bible.

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