



CENTRAL
PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH

ORDER OF WORSHIP

PREPARATION

April 4, 2021

Holy Week · Easter Sunday

WORDS FOR REFLECTION

“If Easter means Jesus Christ is only raised in a spiritual sense [then] it is only about me, about finding a new dimension in my personal spiritual life. But if Jesus Christ is truly risen from the dead, Christianity becomes good news for the whole world—news which warms our hearts precisely because it isn’t just about warming hearts. Easter means that in a world where injustice, violence and degradation are endemic, God is not prepared to tolerate such things—and that we will work and plan, with all the energy of God, to implement the victory of Jesus over them all. Take away Easter and Karl Marx was probably right to accuse Christianity of ignoring the problems of the material world. Take it away and Freud was probably right to say Christianity is wish-fulfillment. Take it away and Nietzsche probably was right to say it was for wimps.”

— N. T. WRIGHT

COLLECT OF THE DAY

Almighty God, you have conquered death through your dearly beloved Son Jesus Christ and opened to us the gate of everlasting life: Grant us by your grace to set our mind on things above, so that by your continual help our whole life may be transformed; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit in everlasting glory. Amen.

THE COMMON LECTIONARY READINGS

FIRST READING: Isaiah 50:4-9a

PSALM: Psalm 70

SECOND READING: Hebrews 12:1-3

GOSPEL: John 13:21-32

ORDER OF WORSHIP

PRELUDE

Crown Him with Many Crowns

Matthew Bridges · Godfrey Thring

Crown Him with many crowns, the Lamb upon His throne.
Hark! How the Heav'nly anthem drowns all music but its own.
Awake, my soul, and sing of Him Who died for thee,
And hail Him as thy matchless King through all eternity.

Crown Him the Lord of life, Who triumphed over the grave,
And rose victorious in the strife for those He came to save.
His glories now we sing, Who died, and rose on high,
Who died eternal life to bring, and lives that death may die.

Crown Him the Lord of Heaven, one with the Father known,
One with the Spirit, thro' Him giv'n from yonder glorious throne.
To Thee be endless praise, for Thou for us hast died,
Be Thou, oh Lord, thro' endless days, adored and magnified.

Christ the Lord Is Risen Today

Central Youth Orchestra

WELCOME AND CALL TO WORSHIP

In Scripture, the Call to Worship comes from God. We need to be called because it is not our natural response to come to God. God takes the initiative, moves towards us with grace, and invites us to worship him.

1 Corinthians 15

LEADER Christ has been raised from the dead,

PEOPLE **The first fruits of those who have died.**

LEADER For since death came through a man,

PEOPLE **The resurrection of the dead has also come through a man.**

LEADER For as all die in Adam,

PEOPLE **So all will be made alive in Christ.**

EASTER AFFIRMATION

LEADER Christ is risen!

PEOPLE **He is risen indeed!**

HYMN

Christ the Lord is Risen Today

Charles Wesley · Don Marsh · Lyra Davidica

Christ the Lord is ris'n today! Alleluia!
Sons of men and angels say: Alleluia!
Raise your voice and triumphs high! Alleluia!
Sing ye heav'ns and earth reply: Alleluia!

Vain the stone, the watch, the seal! Alleluia!
Christ hath burst the gates of hell! Alleluia!
Death in vain forbids Him rise! Alleluia!
Christ has opened paradise! Alleluia!

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

Soar we now where Christ has led! Alleluia!
Foll'wing our exalted Head! Alleluia!
Made like Him, like Him we rise! Alleluia!
Ours the cross, the grave, the skies! Alleluia!

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Aware of God's holiness and our sinfulness, the Prayer of Confession invites us to honestly confess our sins. We are free to confess even our most grievous faults because no matter how deep our sin may be, God's grace in Jesus Christ is deeper still. Confession both acknowledges our need for grace and celebrates its abundant provision in Christ.

Gracious Father, you sent your Son to die and rise to new life in order that death might be brought to an end and that we might live a new life in Him. Yet we confess that we too often have chosen to remain captive to doubt and fear and bound by ways that lead to death. By our thoughts, words, and actions, we have scorned your love, diminished the lives of others, and defaced your image in us. Father, forgive us for Jesus' sake, and enable us by His resurrection power to live no longer for ourselves but for Him who died and rose again for us. Amen.

SILENT CONFESSION

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

The Words of Assurance should be received with gratitude and joy because these words of Scripture assure us that God has promised to forgive and restore those who confess their sins through the finished work of Jesus Christ on our behalf.

Romans 6:9-11

For we know that since Christ was raised from the dead, he cannot die again; death no longer has mastery over him. The death he died, he died to sin, once for all; but the life he lives, he lives to God. In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus.

LEADER Hear and receive the good news of the gospel:
in Jesus Christ, we are forgiven.

ALL **Thanks be to God!**

HYMN

I Will Rise

Chris Tomlin

There's a peace I've come to know,
Though my heart and flesh may fail.
There's an anchor for my soul;
I can say, "It is well!"
Jesus has overcome,
And the grave is overwhelmed.
The victory is won,
He is risen from the dead.

*And I will rise when He calls my name,
No more sorrow, no more pain.
I will rise on eagles' wings
Before my God, fall on my knees
And rise. I will rise!*

There's a day that's drawing near,
When this darkness breaks to light,
And the shadows disappear,
And my faith shall be my eyes.
Jesus has overcome,
And the grave is overwhelmed.
The victory is won,
He is risen from the dead. *Chorus*

And I hear the voice of many angels sing,
"Worthy is the Lamb!"
And I hear the cry of ev'ry longing heart,
"Worthy is the Lamb!" *Chorus*

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

*We regularly pray for needs in our congregation, our neighborhood and city, and the world.
Please let the prayer ministry know of your prayer requests by visiting centralchurchnyc.org/prayerrequest.*

OFFERING

Please text centralchurchnyc to 77977 or visit our website in order to give electronically.

OFFERTORY

My Redeemer Lives

Nicole C. Mullen

Who taught the sun where to stand in the morning?
Who told the ocean you can only come this far?
Who showed the moon where to hide 'til evening?
Whose words alone can catch a falling star?

*Well I know my Redeemer lives!
I know my Redeemer lives!
All of creation testify, this life within me cries,
"I know my Redeemer lives!"*

The very same God that spins things in orbit,
He runs to the weary, the worn and the weak.
And the same gentle hands that hold me when I'm broken,
They conquered death to bring me victory. *Chorus*

He lives
To take away my shame,
And He lives!
Forever, I'll proclaim
That the payment for my sin
Was the precious life He gave.
But now He's alive
And there's an empty grave! *Chorus*

THE DOXOLOGY

Old Hundredth LM

Praise God, from Whom all blessings flow;
Praise Him, all creatures here below;
Praise Him above, ye Heav'nly host;
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

SCRIPTURE READING

The Word of God is the primary means by which God speaks to us and the ultimate authority for what we believe and how we live. All Scripture passages are taken from the English Standard Version (ESV) unless otherwise noted.

John 20:1-18

¹Now on the first day of the week Mary Magdalene came to the tomb early, while it was still dark, and saw that the stone had been taken away from the tomb. ²So she ran and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved, and said to them, “They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him.” ³So Peter went out with the other disciple, and they were going toward the tomb. ⁴Both of them were running together, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. ⁵And stooping to look in, he saw the linen cloths lying there, but he did not go in. ⁶Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb. He saw the linen cloths lying there, ⁷and the face cloth, which had been on Jesus’ head, not lying with the linen cloths but folded up in a place by itself. ⁸Then the other disciple, who had reached the tomb first, also went in, and he saw and believed; ⁹for as yet they did not understand the Scripture, that he must rise from the dead. ¹⁰Then the disciples went back to their homes.

¹¹But Mary stood weeping outside the tomb, and as she wept she stooped to look into the tomb. ¹²And she saw two angels in white, sitting where the body of Jesus had lain, one at the head and one at the feet. ¹³They said to her, “Woman, why are you weeping?” She said to them, “They have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid him.” ¹⁴Having said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing, but she did not know that it was Jesus. ¹⁵Jesus said to her, “Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you seeking?” Supposing him to be the gardener, she said to him, “Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away.” ¹⁶Jesus said to her, “Mary.” She turned and said to him in Aramaic, “Rabboni!” (which means Teacher). ¹⁷Jesus said to her, “Do not cling to me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father; but go to my brothers and say to them, ‘I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.’” ¹⁸Mary Magdalene went and announced to the disciples, “I have seen the Lord”—and that he had said these things to her.

SERMON

The Spirit makes the reading and preaching of God’s Word a powerful means of challenging, comforting, and strengthening God’s people and awakening people to new faith.

Easter Sunday | A Preview of Coming Attractions

Rev. Jason Harris

THE THANKSGIVING

From the earliest days of the church a prayer of Thanksgiving preceded Holy Communion. The Thanksgiving includes the "Sursum Corda" which means "Lift up your hearts" or literally, "Hearts lifted," in Latin. The Thanksgiving bids us to acknowledge our absolute dependence on the God who desires to commune with us.

LEADER Lift up your hearts.

PEOPLE **We lift them up to the Lord.**

LEADER Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

PEOPLE **It is right to give him thanks and praise.**

LEADER It is indeed right, our duty and joy, that we should
at all times and in all places give thanks to you,
Lord, holy Father, Almighty and Everlasting God.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

CELEBRATION OF HOLY COMMUNION

Holy Communion (also called the Lord's Supper or the Eucharist) is the family meal of baptized Christians. We invite all to partake of this sacrament who trust in Jesus Christ alone for salvation, who are at peace with God and with their neighbor, and who seek strength to live more faithfully for Christ. If you are not a Christian, or if you are not prepared to share in this meal, we encourage you to use the prayers printed below and spend this time in reflection or prayer. We hope that this time is helpful to you as you consider your relationship with Jesus Christ and with his people, the church. For health reasons, an individually packaged wafer and cup can be found in the pew for those who wish to participate in the Lord's Supper. Once consumed, please place empty cups in the back of the pew.

We take it as a sign of a healthy congregation to have regular attenders who love our community but who do not profess faith in Christ and so refrain from receiving the elements. If you are a Christian and have not yet been baptized, please talk with our pastors. We would be honored to baptize you.

Children are welcome to partake of communion. To receive the Lord's Supper, a child must have been baptized and been formally received as a communing member by the Session of this church or the governing body of the church to which you belong.

Prayer for Those Searching for Truth

Lord Jesus Christ, you claim to be the way, the truth, and the life. Grant that I might be undaunted by the cost of following you as I consider the reasons for doing so. If what you claim is true, please guide me, teach me, and open to me the reality of who you are. Give me an understanding of you that is coherent, convincing, and that leads to the life that you promise. Amen.

Prayer of Belief

Lord Jesus Christ, I acknowledge that you are so holy and I am so sinful that you had to die for me. Yet you are so merciful and I am so loved that you were willing to die for me. I confess that I have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed by what I have done and by what I have failed to do. I thank you for paying my debt, bearing my punishment on the cross, and offering forgiveness and new life. Knowing that you have been raised from the dead, I turn from my sins and receive you as Savior and Lord. Amen.

Prayer of Commitment

Lord Jesus, I know that if I do not love you with all my heart, with all my mind, with all my soul, and with all my strength, I shall love something else with all my heart and mind and soul and strength. Grant that by loving you first I may be liberated from all lesser loves and loyalties and have you as my first love, my chief good, and my final joy. Amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

We sing the prayer that Jesus taught us to pray to our Heavenly Father.

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

Worthy is the Lamb

Darlene Zschech · Arr. Dan Galbraith

Thank You for the cross, Lord.
Thank You for the price You paid.
Bearing all my sin and shame, in love You came
And gave amazing grace.

Thank You for this love, Lord.
Thank You for the nail-pierced hands.
Wash me in Your cleansing flow, now all I know
Your forgiveness and embrace.

*Worthy is the Lamb seated on the throne.
Crown You now with many crowns
You reign victorious!
High and lifted up, Jesus, Son of God.
The darling of Heaven, crucified;
Worthy is the Lamb!*

BENEDICTION

We begin our worship with God's gracious invitation, and we conclude with God's blessing, his good word. It is appropriate to look up and open our palms as we receive the Benediction to symbolize how Jesus Christ lifts our heads and to demonstrate our eagerness to receive God's blessing.

DISMISSAL

God never draws us into relationship with himself without also sending us out into the world to be his representatives and ambassadors.

LEADER Let us go forth to serve the world as those who
 love our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

ALL **Thanks be to God!**

POSTLUDE

Thine Be the Glory

Central Church Chamber Ensemble

