

April 21, 2024

St. John's United Church of Christ

As believers in Jesus Christ, we strive with unconditional love and selflessness – using our God given gifts – to provide a nurturing shelter for those seeking a Christian home. We offer opportunities for spiritual growth through worship, education, fellowship, prayer and Christian action throughout our community and the world.

**Called by God
Sharing with the World**

April 21, 2024
Fourth Sunday of Easter

Meditation

“We become what we love. What we put first in our lives is what we receive from life.” Guy Finley

Prelude

Chris Bayne, Organ

Welcome and Announcements

✠ Opening Hymn #544 *The Church's One Foundation*

The Church's one foundation is Jesus Christ her Lord;
She is his new creation, by water and the word;
From heaven he came and sought her to be his holy bride;
With his own blood he bought her, and for her life he died.

Elect from every nation, yet one o'er all the earth,
Her charter of salvation: one Lord, one faith, one birth;
One holy name she blesses, partakes one holy food,
And to one hope she presses with every grace endued.

Though with a scornful wonder we see her sore oppressed,
By schisms rent asunder, by heresies distressed;
Yet saints their watch are keeping, their cry goes up, “How long?”
And soon the night of weeping shall be the morn of song.

‘Mid toil and tribulation, and tumult of her war,
she waits the consummation of peace forevermore,
Till with the vision glorious her longing eyes are blest,
And the great Church victorious shall be the Church at rest.

Yet she on earth hath union with God, the Three in One,
And mystic sweet communion with those whose rest is won;
O happy ones and holy! Lord, give us grace that we,
Like them, the meek and lowly, on high may dwell with thee.

Lifting up our Joys

Passing of the Peace

✠ **Call to Worship** (Congregation reads **bold** print)

What a joy it is to welcome you this day!

We are grateful and happy to be here.

Christ, the Good Shepherd, invites you to walk with him.

We accept that invitation, confident in his guidance.

Be ready to serve the Lord in all that you do, for his love has been poured upon you.

Open our hearts and spirits this day, Lord, to receive your holy words and to be challenged in our service to you.

✠ **Opening Prayer**

Pastor Jeff

✠ **Prayer of Confession** (*unison*)

God of life and death, we confess that sometimes we are not alive to the possibilities you offer. In the midst of pain, unfairness, and fear, we find little reason for hope. We feel despair or blame others, but we do not turn to you for help. Forgive us and show us how to share the new life you offer, through Jesus Christ.

Silent pause for reflection **Amen.**

✠ **Assurance of Forgiveness**

For all who have come believing in Christ as the Way, there is rest from your fruitless labors, forgiveness of your sins, and the guarantee of eternal life.

Let us then continue our journey of faith and obedience, through the grace of Jesus Christ. Amen.

Children's Message

Stephen Goodale

Bible Readings

Psalms 118:14-24; Acts 4:5-12

Eileen Rump

Psalm 118:14-24

14 The LORD is my strength and my might; he has become my salvation.

15 There are glad songs of victory in the tents of the righteous: “The right hand of the LORD does valiantly; 16 the right hand of the LORD is exalted; the right hand of the LORD does valiantly.”

17 I shall not die, but I shall live, and recount the deeds of the LORD.

18 The LORD has punished me severely, but he did not give me over to death.

19 Open to me the gates of righteousness, that I may enter through them and give thanks to the LORD.

20 This is the gate of the LORD; the righteous shall enter through it.

21 I thank you that you have answered me and have become my salvation.

22 The stone that the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone.

23 This is the Lord’s doing; it is marvelous in our eyes.

24 This is the day that the LORD has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it.

Acts 4:5-12

5 The next day their rulers, elders, and scribes assembled in Jerusalem, 6 with Annas the high priest, Caiaphas, John, and Alexander, and all who were of the high-priestly family.

7 When they had made the prisoners stand in their midst, they inquired, “By what power or by what name did you do this?”

8 Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, “Rulers of the people and elders, 9 if we are questioned today because of a good deed done to someone who was sick and are asked how this man has been healed, 10 let it be known to all of you, and to all the people of Israel, that this man is standing before you in good health by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead.

11 This Jesus is ‘the stone that was rejected by you, the builders; it has become the cornerstone.’ 12 There is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name

under heaven given among mortals by which we must be saved.”

Choir Anthem

Rock of Ages - arr. Steven Strite

Pastor's Message

“When You Reach the Rejection Hotline”

Pastor Jeff

✠The Apostle's Creed

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth. I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come again to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen. *(From the UCC Book of Worship)*

Giving our Gifts to God

Offertory

✠Doxology

Praise God from whom all blessings flow.

Praise God all creatures here below.

Praise God above ye heavenly hosts.

Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen.

Prayers of the People

Pastor Jeff

The Lord's Prayer *(unison)*

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

✠ Closing Hymn #411 *How Firm a Foundation*

How firm a foundation, you saints of the Lord,
Is laid for your faith in his excellent Word!
What more can he say than to you he has said,
To you who for refuge to Jesus have fled?

“Fear not, I am with you, O be not dismayed,
For I am your God, and will still give you aid;
I’ll strengthen you, help you, and cause you to stand,
Upheld by my righteous, omnipotent hand.

“When through the deep waters I call you to go,
The rivers of sorrow shall not over flow;
For I will be with you in trouble to bless,
And sanctify to you your deepest distress.

“When through fiery trials your pathway shall lie,
My grace, all sufficient, shall be your supply;
The flame shall not hurt you, I only design
Your dross to consume, and your gold to refine.

“The soul that on Jesus still leans for repose,
I will not, I will not desert to its foes;
that soul, though all hell should endeavor to shake,
I’ll never, no, never, no, never forsake!”

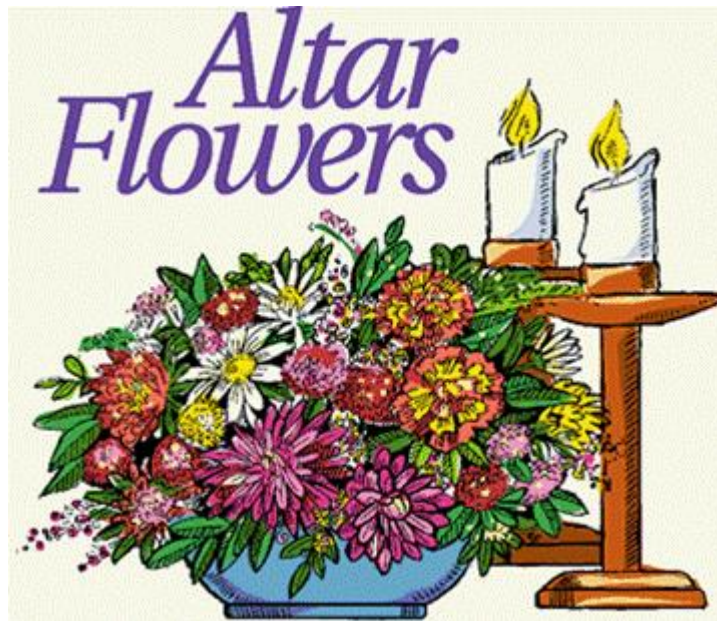
✠ Sending Forth and Final Blessing

✠ Three-fold Amen

✠ Chimes/Meditation

Postlude

Chris Bayne, Organ



*The Altar Flowers are given to the Glory of God,
In Memory of Our Parents.
Presented by Chris & David Moore*