

First Parish Congregational Church
United Church of Christ

April 16, 2017 Easter Sunday



ALL ARE WELCOME

*“Friend, you enter this church not as a stranger, but as a guest of God.
Come, then, with joy in your heart and thanks upon your lips,
and offer God today your love and your service.”*

(Adapted from a 12th Century Church in Hampshire, England)

April 16, 2017

Easter Sunday

First Parish Congregational Church, United Church of Christ, is a community of faith built upon a firm foundation of worship, prayer and education. In affirming diversity, we are dedicated to welcoming all people who seek the Word of God, Christian fellowship and service to others. In partnership with Christ and led by the Holy Spirit, we reach out to the ever-widening community through active and loving ministry.

WE GATHER INTO THE PRESENCE OF GOD

*PROCESSIONAL HYMN NO. 233

“Christ the Lord is Risen Today”

WELCOME AND SHARING OF JOYS AND CONCERNS

*CALL TO WORSHIP

One: God promises: I will be your God and will give you peace.

All: The rejected one has become the chief cornerstone.

One: We are precious to God, who loves us.

All: God has chosen us to witness to good news.

*PRAYER OF INVOCATION (in unison)

Through earthquake and terror, appear to us, holy God, and roll away the stones that separate us from you. Turn our fear to faith, our doubts to delight, as Jesus, who was crucified, becomes for us an abiding presence. Raise us with Christ to seek the things that are from above. We raise our glad songs, giving thanks that you have opened for us the gates of righteousness. Amen. (Please be seated.)

CALL TO CONFESSION

We are called away from our frantic distractions to recognize the Creator of all things. God, who shows no partiality, invites us to be witnesses to the good news of Jesus Christ among all whom we meet.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

God, we lose our awe of you in the busyness of our days. We forget to look for Christ in the people around us. We ignore your mandate to live as Christ in relation to our neighbors. On this day of resurrection, may we die to all that is selfish in order that Christ may live in us. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

God answers our prayers and offers us salvation. In following Christ, we find wholeness and joy.

*SONG OF PRAISE NO. 236

“Halleluja”

Hal-le, hal-le, hal-le-lu-ja. Hal-le, hal-le, hal-le-lu-ja.

Hal-le, hal-le, hal-le-lu-ja. Hal-le-lu-ja, hal-le-lu-ja.

WE INVITE FORWARD GOD'S LITTLE CHILDREN

CHILDREN'S OFFERING

Jesus Loves Me

PRAYER OF DEDICATION (in unison)

**In our thanks, these gifts we bring. For You give us everything.
Teach us how to follow You ~ in all we say, and all we do. Amen.**

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

Sarah Keller

THE LORD'S PRAYER (debts)

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. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil; for Thine is the Kingdom, and the Power, and the Glory forever. Amen.

WE HEAR GOD'S WORD FOR US

*HYMN NO. 245

"The Day of Resurrection"

HEBREW SCRIPTURES

Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24

(O.T. p. 625 - 626)

GOSPEL LESSON

John 20:1-18

(N.T. p. 119)

SERMON

Infinite Possibilities

The Rev. Dr. Deborah Roof

CHOIR ANTHEM

"Run to the Tomb"

Words and Music by Pepper Choplin

WE RESPOND WITH OUR PRAYERS AND STEWARDSHIP

PASTORAL PRAYER

CHORAL RESPONSE

WE RESPOND WITH OUR FINANCIAL GIFTS

OFFERTORY INVITATION

The message for us, on this day of celebration, is that Jesus goes ahead of us into all the challenges we face. In the midst of every difficulty, Christ meets us with a presence that gives strength and confidence. In that trust, we give ourselves as disciples, learning and serving in Christ's name. Our tithes and offerings, given today, are one part of that service.

OFFERTORY MUSIC

*DOXOLOGY #780,

Praise God from whom all blessings flow, Praise God, all creatures here below, Praise God above, you heavenly host. Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION (in unison)

Thank you, God, for accepting us in ways that we had not even accepted ourselves. Receive our time and effort as well as our money, that your message of peace might be spread throughout our community and country, and into the whole world. Inspire all of us to seek, above all else, to do your will and accomplish your purposes. Amen.

WE ARE SENT OUT TO LOVE AND SERVE GOD

*HYMN NO. 230

“Come, You Faithful, Raise the Strain”

BENEDICTION

THE CHRIST LIGHT LEADS US INTO THE WORLD

BENEDICTION RESPONSE

“The Hallelujah Chorus”

Chime Choir

*All that are able may stand

MINISTERS OF THE CHURCH

DEACONS OF THE MONTH

LAY READER

USHERS

GREETER(s)

SENIOR PASTOR AND TEACHER

MUSIC DIRECTOR

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION DIRECTOR

ACCOMPANIST/ORGANIST

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

Members of the Congregation

Cyndi Gray and Diane Breeden

Diane Breeden

John Bartel and Michael Bryan

The Rev. Dr. Deborah Roof

Susan Handy

Christine Lehoullier

Chris Ferrin

Hannah Collier



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