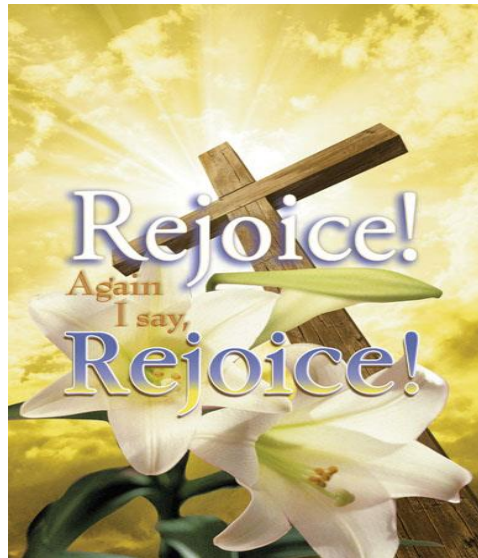

As we unite in worship today, we extend a warm welcome to each one present.

May we together experience the presence of God.

** - You are invited to stand at these times.... if you are able*

We Gather to Prepare Our Hearts to Meet Our Lord

Prelude



Easter Sunday Greeting

Leader: Christ is risen!

People: Christ is risen indeed!

Leader: Death has been swallowed in victory.

People: The grave has lost its sting.

Leader: Christ is risen.

People: Christ is risen indeed!

And we are alive in Christ! Glory to God! Alleluia!

We Are Invited Into God's Presence and Offer Our Praise

***Praise Hymn UMH #302 "Christ the Lord Is Risen Today" (verses 1-4)**

Author: Charles Wesley (1739)

Publication Date: 1989

**1. Christ the Lord is risen today, Alleluia!
Earth and heaven in chorus say, Alleluia!
Raise your joys and triumphs high, Alleluia!
Sing, ye heavens, and earth reply, Alleluia!**

**2. Love's redeeming work is done, Alleluia!
Fought the fight, the battle won, Alleluia!
Death in vain forbids him rise, Alleluia!
Christ has opened paradise, Alleluia!**

**3. Lives again our glorious King, Alleluia!
Where, O death, is now thy sting? Alleluia!
Once he died our souls to save, Alleluia!
Where's thy victory, boasting grave? Alleluia!**

**4. Soar we now where Christ has led, Alleluia!
Following our exalted Head, Alleluia!
Made like him, like him we rise, Alleluia!
Ours the cross, the grave, the skies, Alleluia!**

***Morning Has Broken: Easter Call to Worship**

Morning has broken, but this morning is different.

The birds are singing tunes of joy in the trees surrounding the graves.

The flower buds are bursting in colors vibrant around each stone.

We've come to visit the grave of a friend, but "he is not here."

The Sun is rising in the East; the shadowed grays turn bright!

The Son is risen in our Hearts; darkness and death end in defeat.

Now we understand what Christ said, what God did.

Now we can proclaim, CHRIST IS RISEN! HALLELUJAH!

*** Opening Prayer**

Everlasting God, because of your tender mercy toward all people, you sent your Son, our Savior Jesus Christ, to take upon himself our flesh, and to suffer death upon the cross, that all should follow the example of his great humility. Mercifully grant that we may follow the example of his patience and also be made partakers of his resurrection; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

***Hymn UMH #322**

"Up from the Grave He Arose"

Author: Robert Lowry (1874)

Publication Date: 1989

**1 Low in the grave he lay, Jesus my Savior,
waiting the coming day, Jesus my Lord!**

Refrain:

**Up from the grave he arose,
with a mighty triumph o'er his foes;
he arose a victor from the dark domain,
and he lives forever, with his saints to reign.
He arose! He arose! Hallelujah! Christ arose!**

**2 Vainly they watch his bed, Jesus my Savior;
vainly they seal the dead, Jesus my Lord! [Refrain]**

**3 Death cannot keep its prey, Jesus my Savior;
he tore the bars away, Jesus my Lord! [Refrain]**

We Hear God's Word

Gospel Lesson.....John 20:1-18

New Revised Standard Version

The Resurrection of Jesus

20 Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the tomb. 2 So 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." 3 Then Peter and the other disciple set out and went toward the tomb. 4 The two were running together, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. 5 He bent down to look in and saw the linen wrappings lying there, but he did not go in. 6 Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb. He saw the linen wrappings lying there, 7 and the cloth that had been on Jesus' head, not lying with the linen wrappings but rolled up in a place by itself. 8 Then the other disciple, who reached the tomb first, also went in, and he saw and believed; 9 for as yet they did not understand the scripture, that he must rise from the dead. 10 Then the disciples returned to their homes.

Jesus Appears to Mary Magdalene

11 But Mary stood weeping outside the tomb. As she wept, she bent over to look[a] into the tomb; 12 and she saw two angels in white, sitting where the body of Jesus had been lying, one at the head and the other at the feet. 13 They 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." 14 When she had said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not know that it was Jesus. 15 Jesus said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you looking for?" 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." 16 Jesus said to her, "Mary!" She turned and said to him in Hebrew,[b] "Rabbouni!" (which means Teacher). 17 Jesus said to her, "Do not hold on to me, because 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.'" 18 Mary Magdalene went and announced to the disciples, "I have seen the Lord"; and she told them that he had said these things to her.

Word of God for the People of God! **Thanks be to God!**

Faith Hymn UMH #314 "In The Garden"

Author: C. Austin Miles (1913)

Publication Date: 1989

Tune Information

Composer: C. Austin Miles (1913)

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**1. 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.**

Refrain:

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.

2. He speaks, and the sound of his voice,
is so sweet the birds hush their singing,
and the melody that he gave to me
within my heart is ringing. (Refrain)

3. I'd stay in the garden with him
though the night around me be falling,
but he bids me go; thru the voice of woe
his voice to me is calling. (Refrain)

****Meditation****

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Gracious and Patient God, we come before you with so many things which weigh us down. We would like an "easy" faith, one that doesn't cause us to look within ourselves, to identify those many ways in which we have forsaken you. But faith is never easy. It requires our very souls. Forgive us, God, for all those things which we have neglected to do that would have helped someone else to be closer to you. Heal our hearts from the wounds which have been inflicted upon us by the anger and misunderstandings which occur in relationships. Prepare our lives to be of service to you. In silence, we wait. We long for your presence and your healing touch. AMEN.

Words of Assurance

God is merciful. God is slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love. Feel the healing, loving power of God in your lives, for it is given to you through Jesus Christ. Amen.

The Great Thanksgiving for Easter (UMH #15-16)

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

It is right, and a good and joyful thing,
always and everywhere to give thanks to you,
Father Almighty (almighty God), creator of heaven and earth.
You formed us in your image and breathed into us the breath of life.
When we turned away, and our love failed, your love remained steadfast.
You delivered us from captivity, made covenant to be our sovereign God,
brought us to a land flowing with milk and honey,
and set before us the way of life.

And so, with your people on earth and all the company of heaven
we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.**

Holy are you, and blessed is your Son Jesus Christ.
By the baptism of his suffering, death, and resurrection
you gave birth to your Church,
delivered us from slavery to sin and death,
and made with us a new covenant by water and the Spirit.
By your great mercy we have been born anew
to a living hope through the resurrection of your Son from the dead
and to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading.
Once we were no people, but now we are your people,
declaring your wonderful deeds in Christ,
who called us out of darkness into his marvelous light.
When the Lord Jesus ascended, he promised to be with us always,
in the power of your Word and Holy Spirit.

On the night in which he gave himself up for us, he took bread,
gave thanks to you, broke the bread, gave it to his disciples, and said:
"Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you.
Do this in remembrance of me."

When the supper was over he took the cup,
gave thanks to you, gave it to his disciples, and said:
"Drink from this, all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant,
poured out for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins.
Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me."

On the day you raised him from the dead
he was recognized by his disciples in the breaking of the bread,
and in the power of your Holy Spirit your Church has continued
in the breaking of the bread and the sharing of the cup.

And so, in remembrance of these your mighty acts in Jesus Christ,
we offer ourselves in praise and thanksgiving
as a holy and living sacrifice, in union with Christ's offering for us,
as we proclaim the mystery of faith.

Christ has died; Christ is risen; Christ will come again.

Pour out your Holy Spirit on us gathered here,
and on these gifts of bread and wine.
Make them be for us the body and blood of Christ,
that we may be for the world the body of Christ, redeemed by his blood.

By your Spirit make us one with Christ,
one with each other, and one in ministry to all the world,
until Christ comes in final victory, and we feast at his heavenly banquet.

Through your Son Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit in your holy Church,
all honor and glory is yours, almighty Father (God), now and for ever. Amen.

Sharing of the Elements

Joys/Concerns shared by congregation

EASTER PRAYER

Almighty and wondrous God, on this day of new beginnings, we offer our songs to proclaim your victory over death. All that you have done is marvelous in our eyes, and so we offer our praise to your holy and powerful Name. Receive the joyful thanksgiving which we offer to you and bless it as a declaration of your worthiness to be worshipped.

Your message of redemption is given to all the world. Anoint us to preach to the people in every place that death is conquered and Jesus Christ is Lord of all.

Enter into the tombs of our lives and empty them out. Touch by your grace everyone who suffers affliction of the body and raise them up. Visit the people whose minds are in disarray and bring them a clear perception of the world which you have redeemed. Walk with those who travel the road of death from this life and carry them over the threshold into the eternal life won for us. Proclaim joy to those who mourn and be present to those who are alone.

This is the day that you have made; we rejoice in it and are glad to be yours. Receive what we ask and grant it in your mercy for the sake of him who is the first fruit, Jesus Christ our Lord, who taught us to pray...

Offertory/Doxology/(UM Hymnal 95)

Mighty God of Resurrection and Redemption, we offer our gifts alongside our alleluias! We long for Easter to fill us and soak into our bones like those who were confronted in a graveyard by angels announcing, "He is not here, he is risen!" May we run from here, not walk, because we and every corner of the world so desperately need to hear the news the angels share! Before we speak a word, may others see in our faces that the world has been turned upside down. You win; death loses. In the name of the risen Christ, we pray. Amen. (Matthew 28:1-10)

***Departing Hymn UMH #310 "He Lives"**

Author: Alfred H. Ackley (1933)

Publication Date: 1989

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**I serve a risen Saviour, He's in the world today
I know that He is living, whatever men may say
I see His hand of mercy, I hear His voice of cheer
And just the time I need Him He's always near
He lives (He lives), He lives (He lives), Christ Jesus lives today
He walks with me and talks with me**

**Along life's narrow way
He lives (He lives), He lives (He lives), Salvation to impart
You ask me how I know He lives?
He lives within my heart**

**In all the world around me I see His loving care
And though my heart grows weary I never will despair
I know that He is leading, through all the stormy blast
The day of His appearing will come at last
He lives (He lives), He lives (He lives), Christ Jesus lives today
He walks with me and talks with me**

**Along life's narrow way
He lives (He lives), He lives (He lives), Salvation to impart
You ask me how I know He lives?
He lives within my heart**

**Rejoice, rejoice, O Christian Lift up your voice and sing
Eternal hallelujahs to Jesus Christ, the King
The Hope of all who seek Him, the Help of all who find
None other is so loving, so good and kind
He lives (He lives), He lives (He lives), Christ Jesus lives today
He walks with me and talks with me**

**Along life's narrow way
He lives (He lives), He lives (He lives), Salvation to impart
You ask me how I know He lives?
He lives within my heart**

***Sending Forth**

God of resurrection. We confess too often we fail to see where you are at work in the world. Give us Easter eyes of belief that know you continue creating abundance when all we see is scarcity. Discipline us to be the Easter the people you call us to be. Amen.

*** Postlude***