

St. James United Church

A Community of Friends in Faith
330 Elizabeth Avenue, St. John's, NL A1B 1T9
April 16, 2017, 9:00am
Easter Sunday morning Communion



Minister:
Minister of Youth/Christian Education:
Acting Minister of Visitation:
Choir:
Choir Director:
Organist:
Soloist:

Rev. Pamela Jones-Fitzgerald
Susan Sheppard, DLM
Rev. Ettie Gordon-Murray
Senior
Emma Clark
Bob Rose
Sophie Fitzgerald



Please remain seated comfortably until invited to stand.
Please turn off your cell phone during the Service.

Musical Prelude

Welcome and Life and Work of St. James



Lighting of the Christ Candle for Easter:

One: They went to the tomb, just as the sun was beginning to rise - eyes downcast, hearts heavy. But what they found there shone in their lives forever- not the shadow of death, but new life!

All: As Easter people we follow the light of Christ!

Hymn:

Morning Has Broken

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Call to Worship: (responsive)

One: It is early in the day, and we have discovered a great truth.

All: Jesus is risen. He is risen indeed!

One: It is early in the day, and we have gathered to give thanks.

All: Jesus is risen. He is risen indeed!

One: As spring brings forth new life, as the egg hatches a new bird, as bulbs bring forth new flowers, so God brings forth new promise, new life, new love.

All: Jesus is risen, He is risen indeed!

One: Thanks be to God.

Opening Prayer: (together) Within moments our mood has changed, O God, from sorrow to bewilderment and then to joy. We come in praise and thanksgiving. We don't understand it all yet. We know this much, though: You are the God of life; Your love conquers sin and death; You give life to the world. Hallelujah! Hallelujah! Hallelujah! Amen.

Responsive Psalm:

Psalm 118, parts 1-3

837

Gospel:

Matthew 28 : 1-10, 16-20

Solo :

He turned the water into wine

Sophie Fitzgerald

Prayer of Confession and Assurance of Pardon

Invitation to the Offering

Offertory Hymn: *This Is the Day That God Has Made, chorus x2*

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Offertory Prayer: (together) Loving God, we present these gifts, pleased to be part of Your mission, and excited to share with those around us. May they speak of Your love to the world. In Jesus' name, Amen.



Sacrament of Holy Communion

One: What are we to make of this day? When graves are opened... when the dead awaken...when life refuses to be contained.

All: Then nothing is impossible! Hope is never extinguished and love is never conquered.

One: We celebrate You today, Jesus, because You have made it clear that death does not have the last word; because You have filled us again with hope and faith; because You have given us a vision of new possibilities, new realities, and new ways of being.

All: Open our minds to believe what we cannot explain; open our hearts to hope for what we cannot see; open our lives to live and to love in the midst of death and despair; let resurrection happen again in us today. Amen.

One: God, resurrection is not what we expect in our world. On the face of things, life seems to be under threat... our earth is grieving, our families are fracturing, our nations are at war, and the light of our hope is growing dim.

All: We need the stone to be rolled away again.

One: Forgive us and all who have failed to honour and preserve life in all its diversity and glory. Forgive us and all who have allowed relationships to become less important than riches or recognition. Forgive us and all who continue to exalt our needs and desires over those of others, and who are prepared to kill to prove it. Forgive us and all who have grown blind to all the signs of resurrection that beckon us still.

All: We need the stone to be rolled away again. We need life to break out within us again. We need love to consume us again. Resurrect us today, O Lord, and make us agents of Your life wherever dying and grief hold sway. Silence...(Community prayers).....Our Father.....

One: Christ is risen!

All: He is risen indeed!

One: Let's celebrate this irrepressible life; let's open our hearts to the joy and wonder of infinite possibility, of unquenched hope, of eternal resurrection.

All: We celebrate; we raise our voices and our hearts in worship and thanksgiving to the God who lives.

One: Resurrection happened because Christ was first prepared to die. Defying death, He refused to release His hold on life and love. So now, as He encouraged us, we choose to remember so that we too can truly live. At supper on the night before He died, Jesus took bread and blessed it. Then He broke it and gave it to His disciples saying:

All: "This is My body, broken so that you may know life. Eat it and remember Me."

One: After the meal Jesus took wine and blessed it. Then He gave it to His disciples saying:

All: "This is My blood, shed so that you may know life. Drink it and remember Me."

One: So, now, Lord of Life, we share in this meal, we celebrate together, and we remember You. And we will continue to do this until resurrection has flooded the whole creation. May this bread and this wine become for us in this moment Your life-giving body and blood,

All: And may we who share this meal, be joined with You, and with one another, as one body united in resurrection life, and sharing with all of creation in Your eternal salvation. As we break this bread, we receive Christ's life in all our diversity, in all our individuality, as we share this one loaf, we are one.

Breaking of Bread & Pouring of the Cup

Prayer after Communion (responsive):

One: We thank You, O God, for Your life, pulsing in creation, revealed in Jesus, renewed in resurrection and available to us now. Thank You for touching us again with Your life through bread and wine; for joining our lives with Yours through Jesus; and for renewing resurrection in our hearts through Your Holy Spirit.

All: Filled with life, we now offer ourselves to be life-bringers in the world. Touched by resurrection we will resist death wherever we find it. Filled with hope we embrace the promise of eternity, and the call to make it known at every opportunity.

One: Through us, graves continue to be opened,

All: And may the dead continue to be awakened to new life. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

Closing Hymn: *Jesus Christ Is Risen Today*

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Blessing & Sending Forth

Musical Postlude

Ushering this week is provided by:

Usher in Charge: Jean Thompson

Ushers: Bruce Hunt, Linda Babstock, Vern Whalen