



www.parkwayucc.org

Sunday, April 12, 2020

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Limitless Love | Courageous Action | Spirited Inquiry

Purpose Statement

Parkway United Church of Christ strives to be an inclusive community embracing: spiritual nourishment, open—minded inquiry, courageous action, and interfaith partnerships to fulfill God's calling to create a just world for all.

Congregational Statement

Parkway United Church of Christ, with God's grace, seeks to be a congregation that includes all persons, regardless of race, ethnic, or socio—economic background while respecting differences of gender, marital status, age, sexual orientation, and mental and physical ability. We aspire to act justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with our God. We invite all to share in the life and leadership, ministry, fellowship, worship, sacraments, responsibilities and blessings of participation in our open and affirming congregation.

PARKWAY UNITED CHURCH of CHRIST

2841 North Ballas Road | \$t. Louis, MO 63131 | 314-872-9330 [p] | 314-872-9014 [f] parkwayucc.org | contact@parkwayucc.org Office Hours: Mon - Thu 8:30am-3:00pm; Fri 8:30am-12:30pm

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Welcome

Thank you for joining us this morning. Please let us know you are here by signing a friendship card in your pew. If you are looking for a church home, please speak with us today.

Welcome Children. We invite children to full participation in worship. There are "creation bags" [with paper, crayons, colored pencils, etc.] available in the Gathering Space for the children to use. Infant/toddler care is available in Room 1. Ask an usher for directions.

Bell Rung During Lord's Prayer, a tradition begun when farmers working in surrounding fields would stop their work and join in prayer.

A Wheelchair & **Walker** [and crutches!] are located in the foyer and storage closet for Sunday use. To borrow them at other times, contact the office.

Hearing Assist Units available for use during worship. Ask an usher.

Please Recycle. If you are not taking your bulletin home or sharing it with a friend, please recycle it in the labeled basket in the sanctuary or in the blue container in the Gathering Space.

Photo and Personal Privacy Policy: Photos should generally not be taken of children in church except as part of organized activities and programs, and any requests of children or their parents or guardians should be respected. Please be respectful of privacy and mindful that this is a safe and sacred space for all who enter.

Subscribe to our email lists: Text your email address to 22828 or sign up at www.parkwayucc.org

Need a clip-on name tag? Sign the clipboard in the Gathering Space.

Guest WiFi: username: parkway-guest | password: parkway2841

Communications Requests: Please use the form at

www.parkwayucc.org/communications for all announcements for the bulletin/eNews/website/social media/etc. Bulletin and eNews communications request deadline is noon Tuesday. Bulletin announcements will generally be run for three weeks prior to the event. However, all announcements will be posted via our various publications as fits in our communications strategy and as resources permit.

A Thank You Gift for Visitors: Please pick up a PUCC mug today or the next time you are here. They are located on the Welcome Table just inside the front doors.

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EASTER Sunday

*Please stand if it is comfortable to do so.

Meditation

You always have time for the things you put first. ~Kushandwizdom

Preservice Interludes Improvisations on seasonal hymn tunes

Welcome and Announcements

*Passing the Peace of Christ

"May the peace of Christ be with you." (We are intentional about bringing more peace into the world.)

Prelude Jesus Christ Is Risen Today – Setting by Healey Willan Based on the tune Easter Hymn from Lyra Davidica, London, 1708

Lighting of the Candles & Ringing of the Bell

Choral Introit: Dramatic Call to Worship Offered by today's song leaders

Welcome Song Jesus Christ is Risen Today | Tune #123 (Red Hymnal) Jesus Christ is ris'n today, alleluia! Our triumphant holy day, alleluia! Who did once, upon the Cross, alleluia! Suffer to redeem our loss, alleluia!

To the tomb the women bring, alleluia! Spices rich, an offering, alleluia! Asking where might Jesus be, alleluia! Savior come to set us free, alleluia!

There the angel clothed in white, alleluia! Tells the news with great delight, alleluia! This the news the angel gives, alleluia! That the Sovereign glorious lives, alleluia!

Hasten now to Galilee, alleluia! Tell the others what you see, alleluia! With excitement trembling, alleluia! Off they run, good news to bring, alleluia!

Christ appears in full array, alleluia! Sing with joy this paschal day, alleluia! Christ now from the dead is raised, alleluia! Holy Trinity be praised, alleluia!

Scripture Lesson Psalm 118, selected verses (The Message)

Thank God because God is good, because God's love never quits. Tell the world, Israel, "God's love never quits." And you, clan of Aaron, tell the world, "God's love never quits." And you who are in awe of God, join in, "God's love never quits."

Pushed to the wall, I called to God; from the wide open spaces, God answered. God is now at my side and I'm not afraid; who would dare lay a hand on me? God is my strong champion; I flick off my enemies like flies.

Far better to take refuge in God than trust in people; Far better to take refuge in God than trust in celebrities.

Hemmed in by barbarians, in God's name I rubbed their faces in the dirt; Hemmed in and with no way out, in God's name I rubbed their faces in the dirt; Like swarming bees, like wild prairie fire, they hemmed me in; in God's name I rubbed their faces in the dirt.

I was right on the cliff-edge, ready to fall, when God grabbed and held me.

God is my strength and also my song, and now God is my salvation. Hear the shouts, hear the triumph songs in the camp of the saved?

"The hand of God has turned the tide! The hand of God is raised in victory! The hand of God has turned the tide!"

I didn't die. I *lived!* And now I'm telling the world what God did. I was tested, I was pushed hard, but I wasn't handed over to Death.

Swing wide the city gates—the righteous gates! I'll walk right through and thank God! This Temple Gate belongs to God, so the victors can enter and praise.

Thank you for responding to me; you've truly become my salvation! The stone the masons discarded as flawed is now the capstone!

This is God's work. We rub our eyes—we can hardly believe it! This is the very day God acted—let's celebrate and be festive! Salvation now, God. Salvation now! Oh yes, God—a free and full life!

*Call to Worship

One:	We had a festive parade last Sunday. We were waving palms, shedding our cloaks, shouting and singing and dancing.
Many:	And then day by day—it began to get dim, detangled, dark. We have experienced despair, desertion, dread.
One:	We have been hunkered down—waiting, watching, wondering where Jesus has been these last couple of days.
Many:	We locked ourselves away. Real fear took hold and it was hard to shake. We were frozen, numb.
One:	Then this morning things began to look and feel different. We are awakening to a new reality. Can it be?
Many:	We are being swept up in this fresh piece of the story, this breaking news. Death is not the final answer. For sure it

still stings, but it is not our undoing.

- One: We are humbled and holy. We are resurrection people. We can carry this burst of life and love forward with our words and our actions.
- Many: God comes to us as the stone has been rolled away—again. Jesus is alive. This is the moment. We knew it was coming—and yet our belief faltered from time to time.
 - One: So let's gather our compassion, calm and creativity. Let's put into practice our limitless love, set out for courageous action and stretch our understanding and wisdom with spirited inquiry.
 - All: Let us worship our God together—Creator, Christ and Spirit.



Lenten Candles IAm!

We lit seven candles on Ash Wednesday as we began our Lenten journey. We wanted the light to illumine our path as we sought to become the words and ways of Jesus. We committed to being more infused by the Spirit as we traveled. Even as we knew this was good and important work, we recognized that it isn't always easy—and we came upon the shadow side of humanity and some of our own unique darkness... so we extinguished one of these candles each time we worshipped—acknowledging that this can be exhausting work.

By the time we arrived at the desertion, denial and depletion of Good Friday, all of the candles had already been snuffed out. In the darkness we began to feel the stirrings of dawn and the brilliance of this Easter morning... the light and love of God that never goes out.

Prayer at the Candles

Holy One, we made it! We have been on this Lenten journey with Jesus because we wanted to watch him and listen to him—so that we might become more like him. Jesus has a solid sense of who he is. He tells us that he is the bread, door, vine, life, light, way, shepherd. He interacts with people in expected and unexpected ways—and they all learn and grow with the interaction. You have sent Your Spirit over and over again to lead us, guide us and light the way to ourselves, one another and You. Now send us to be bread, door, vine, life, light, way, shepherd to others. Amen.



Children's Time Children and Teens can switch over to ZOOM now for their age specific Sunday School. Parents may want to accompany their younger kids. All can come back to the recording of this worship service later.

Blessing the Children Jesus Loves the Little Children Jesus loves the little children, All the children of the world. Every child in every land, Jesus holds them by the hand. Jesus loves the little children of the world.

Mission Moment 2nd Mile Lent

Heifer International | Lydia's House | Unleashing Potential | Eden Seminary

Offering Our Gifts to God

Thank you for sending your gifts in the mail, via *bill* pay with your bank or by using PayPal at https://parkwayucc.org/giving/

Offertory Anthem Offered by today's song leaders

Response

Praise God for visions great and small, Praise God who calls us one and all, Praise God whose Spirit gives new sight, Praise God who fills our lives with light. Amen.

Prayer of Dedication

God of great gifts, with resurrection reverberating in our hearts and minds, we present these gifts to You, a tangible chorus of thanksgiving, a harmony of hope for your kingdom come. We pray that this gesture of generosity will germinate and lead us further into lives of lavish loving in all shapes and sizes. Amen.

Easter Gospel Lesson John 20:1-18 (CEB – Common English Bible) Early in the morning 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 taken away from the tomb. She ran to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved, and said, "They have taken the Lord from the tomb, and we don't know where they've put him."

Peter and the other disciple left to go to the tomb. They were running together, but the other disciple ran faster than Peter and was the first to arrive at the tomb. Bending down to take a look, he saw the linen cloths lying there, but he didn't go in. Following him, Simon Peter entered the tomb and saw the linen cloths lying there. He also saw the face cloth that had been on Jesus' head. It wasn't with the other clothes but was folded up in its own place. Then the other disciple, the one who arrived at the tomb first, also went inside. He saw and believed. They didn't yet understand the scripture that Jesus must rise from the dead. Then the disciples returned to the place where they were staying.

Mary stood outside near the tomb, crying. As she cried, she bent down to look into the tomb. She saw two angels dressed in white, seated where the body of Jesus had been, one at the head and one at the foot. The angels asked her, "Woman, why are you crying?"

She replied, "They have taken away my Lord, and I don't know where they've put him." As soon as she had said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but she didn't know it was Jesus.

Jesus said to her, "Woman, why are you crying? Who are you looking for?"

Thinking he was the gardener, she replied, "Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have put him and I will get him."

Jesus said to her, "Mary."

She turned and said to him in Aramaic, "Rabbouni" (which means Teacher).

Jesus said to her, "Don't hold on to me, for I haven't yet gone up to God. Go to my brothers and sisters and tell them, 'I'm going up to God, to my God and your God."

Mary Magdalene left and announced to the disciples, "I've seen the Lord." Then she told them what he said to her.

Moment of Silent Reflection

Sermon Still Waiting for the Day I've Been Waiting For

Song #118— <i>The Day of Resurrection</i> (red hymnal)
 The day of res - ur - rec - tion! Earth, tell it out a - broad; Our hearts be pure from e - vil, That we may see a - right Now let the heavens be joy - ful, Let earth the song be - gin,
The Pass - o - ver of glad - ness, The Pass - o - ver of God. The Lord in rays e - ter - nal Of res - ur - rec - tion light; Let the round world keep tri - umph, And all that is there - in;
From death to life e - ter - nal, From this world to the sky, And, lis-tening to His ac - cents, May hear, so calm and plain, Let all things seen and un - seen Their notes of glad-ness blend,
Our Christ hath brought us o - ver With hymns of vic - to - ry. His own "All hail!" and, hear - ing, May raise the vic - tor strain. For Christ the Lord is ris - en, Our joy that hath no end.

Pastoral Prayer & Prayers of the People

Lord's Prayer

Our [Creator/Mother/Father/Holy One] 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.

[A variety of names for God are welcome here - including in the Lord's Prayer.]



A New Ritual

Please have a blanket nearby.

*Song of Parting #2051—*I* Was There to Hear Your Borning Cry I was there to hear your borning cry, I'll be there when you are old. I rejoiced the day you were baptized, to see your life unfold. I was there when you were but a child, with a faith to suit you well; I'll be there in case you wander off and find where demons dwell.

When you found the wonder of the Word, I was there to cheer you on; You were raised to praise the Living God, to whom you now belong. Should you find someone to share your time and you join your hearts as one, I'll be there to make your verses rhyme from dusk till rising sun.

In the middle ages of your life not too old, no longer young, I'll be there to guide you through the night, complete what I've begun. When the evening gently closes in and you shut your weary eyes, I'll be there as I have always been with just one more surprise.

I was there to hear your borning cry, I'll be there when you are old. I rejoiced the day you were baptized, to see your life unfold.

***Benediction**

*God's Light Goes Forth

*Postlude

Psalm 19: Heavens Declare the Glory of God—Benedetto Marcello (1636-1739)

2nd Mile Lent & Easter 2020

Go the 2nd Mile with us!

We are pleased to announce that Parkway is again supporting four worthy organizations with its Second Mile Giving for Lent and Easter. We believe this blend of support will help Parkway create a local, national and international impact with its gifts. Please remember that Second Mile Giving is over and beyond the Operational Budget and donations will be divided evenly among the organizations listed below. Please be generous as these organizations need on our gifts in order to be more faithful and effective.

Lydia's House

Lydia's House works in faith to end domestic violence in St Louis by being a place of healing and a voice of hope for abused women and their children. The agency provides safe, confidentially-located furnished apartments for up to two years, assists women in creating and implementing goal plans that will help them live independently, and increases community awareness of domestic violence. For more information, please visit lydiashouse.org

UP—Unleashing Potential [formerly Neighborhood Houses]

For more than 100 years, Neighborhood Houses has loved children in St Louis. Currently, there are three main facets to their mission:

Early Childhood Education—Caroline Mission is a licensed and accredited Early Childhood facility operated by Neighborhood Houses. Our Mission is to provide quality affordable childcare for children from 6 weeks to 5 years of age. Caroline Mission is a "home away from home."

Girls' Night Out: Neighborhood Houses and Parents as Teachers collaborated together in the design and execution of a program dedicated to supporting and assisting young mothers, ages 13–22. *Girls Night Out* is designed to promote healthy individuals and families.

After School Programs: Neighborhood Houses is the #1 provider of after school programming with the St Louis Public Schools ... fun & creative activities, homework assistance, character education, cultural awareness, health & fitness focus, arts & crafts, supervised recreation, and much more! For more information, please visit neighborhoodhouses.org

Heifer International

Heifer International does so much more than put food in the mouths of hungry people. Heifer helps people to feed themselves. The goal of every Heifer project is sustainability—project partners achieving self—reliance. And year after year, as partner families "pass on the gift" of knowledge and one or more of their animals' offspring to others in need, they become links in a network of hope, dignity and self—reliance that helps hundreds of others care for themselves. For more information, please visit heifer.org

Eden Seminary

Eden Theological Seminary is a graduate school preparing women and men for ordained Christian ministry. One of the six seminaries of the United Church of Christ, Eden is a community that seeks God's justice and peace in the world. Eden is welcoming, inclusive and ecumenically diverse.

Eden was established in 1850 at Marthasville, Missouri. It was established because a European education was not adequate to prepare pastors for Evangelical churches on the North American frontier. From its beginning, Eden has embodied an ecumenical spirit. Its first graduating class included six Evangelicals as well as a Methodist and a Mennonite.

Eden admitted its first African American student in 1933. In 1965, the late Joseph Cardinal Ritter of the Saint Louis Archdiocese became the first Roman Catholic Cardinal to address a graduating class in a Protestant seminary.

Today, students from many different denominations are engaged in theological education here. Eden remains committed to educating faithful and effective leaders for church and society. The seminary counts among its distinguished graduates Reinhold and H. Richard Niebuhr and Walter Brueggemann.

Eden Theological Seminary is committed to the study of theology in the context of the ecumenical Christian community and the contemporary interfaith world. For more information, please visit eden.edu.

Please be sure to clearly mark your 2nd Mile gifts throughout the season of Lent.

Announcements

Express your Love of Creation by participating in the Three Great Loves *Tree Planting Campaign*!

Over the course of 50 days in 2013, the United Church of Christ planted over 141,000 trees as part of Mission 4/1 Earth. In celebration of the 50th anniversary of Earth Day on April 22nd, this year we are seeking to **plant over 50,000 trees in ten days from April 17th to 26th.**

Trees, one of God's precious gifts, provide us not only with beauty, but we depend on them for the air we breathe and the stable climate we inhabit. Through your campaign donation, more of these beautiful gifts of creation will be planted and nurtured.

In expanding the scope of our collaborative efforts in 2020, the Ministry of Environmental Justice for the United Church of Christ has partnered with Interfaith Power and Light to make this tree planting campaign part of their Faith Climate Action Week. Many of the following tree-planting options come through Global Ministries, a shared ministry of the United Church of Christ and the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

The United Church of Christ, Interfaith Power and Light and The Arbor Day Foundation are teaming up this Earth Day/Arbor Day 2020. See below to participate: Plant a Tree

For \$1 a tree, the Arbor Day Foundation will plant numerous trees on your behalf in a national park. Fires, diseases, and insects have taken their toll on natural settings. Your donation will help to rebuild these areas.

https://shop.arborday.org/content.aspx?page=commemorative

Plant your own tree or work with an organization of your choosing to plant trees. Report how many trees you planted in this manner to our partners at Interfaith Power and Light. Report a Tree

Alzheimer's News There is much new research to report. One such study is looking at the Glia cells in our brain which can remove amyloid-beta and tau tangles, but sometimes cause damage and inflammation. In Australia, ultra sound has been used to clear amyloid plaque. There has also been auditory/visual stimulation in MIT research to clear amyloid. Some drugs improve symptoms. Cholinesterase Inhibitors known as Exelon and Razadyne can help with symptoms for people with mild to moderate Alzheimer's. Aricept can help with all stage symptoms. Namenda can help with moderate to severe stage symptoms, as can Namzaric which is a combination of Aricept and Namenda. The large U.S. Pointer 2-year clinical trial currently underway is evaluating whether lifestyle interventions (eating a nutritionally balanced diet, not smoking, getting regular exercise and cognitive stimulation) can protect cognitive function. And, a new study is evaluating how amyloid beta is regulated by our sleep cycle and the circadian rhythm.

Fern Donations

Linda Tossing Marilyn McDougall Florence Simonson Kris McKenzie Carol Cobb Marsha Peek Amy Yakel Sue Moellering Lana Biondo Lara Reed

Lily Donations

Marilyn McDougall Betty Scherrer Kris McKenzie Donna Fauss Jackie Eiffert Jean Mueller

Prayer List as of April 8, 2020

Celebrations

Holy Week and Easter! Happy Passover to our Jewish family and friends! Emma Landowski - CPE Residency for next year in the SSM System! All the acts of kindness that are happening near and far!

Concerns

Donna Carey - pacemaker replacement surgery today. **Dick Wegner** and family - as he nears the end of his life (McKenzie). **Pam Chastain** - hospitalized with Covid-19 (Mary Akers). **Roger Doyle** - life-long friend who passed away last week (McKenzie). **Bill McMahon** - cancer; removal of lung late this month (Svenson). **Healthcare workers** and many others at risk as they care for people. **Social Distancing...** if anyone needs groceries, medicine and/or other support, please reach out to kevin@parkwayucc.org; 314-330-0629 [If you'd like to be on the **Spring Care Team 2020**, please say so.]

Continuing

Andy and Kris Impastato - grieving/giving thanks for his mother. Dwight and Charlotte Smith - rehab ctr after his days in the hospital. Mike Mohl - several broken ribs after fall; multiple myeloma struggles. Paul/Sue Stohr - healing after his stroke; making progress at home. Randal Barnes - radiation for cancer has started (Steve's brother). Cherie Stolze - ongoing health issues; navigating medications/fatigue. Lori Connors - for strength, stamina through some health challenges. Ruth Peace, Mary Whitney, Pinky Wilcoxen - health challenges. Bill Darland - ongoing health issues.

Sister Mary Kay McKenzie - for health/wholeness (Tom's sister). Nelson Spencer - began chemo treatments on March 30 (Svenson). Pat Purdy - healing of unknown illness... not COVID-19 (Connors). Chuck Miller and family - as he lives with cancer (William Tharp). Alan Nichols - chemo for cancer of spine; pain management (Pleis). Tina - undergoing tests for cancer; crafting a treatment plan (Scharf). Anthony - multiple challenges as he lives his post-incarceration life. Martha - receiving treatment for leukemia (sister of Mary Lynn Dario). Gary - risky behaviors; seeking balance and stability (McKenzie). Grateful Tran - in prison; struggles w/schizophrenia (Evelyn Buretta) Bob - still struggling with Parkinson's (McKenzie).

Christopher, Gail & Bill Haack - chronic health challenges. The extended Eggebrecht Family - healing and wholeness. More Anti-LGBTQIA legislation being considered/debated in MO. The United Methodist Church and our LGBTQIA siblings there.

Pregnancy

Rosanna & Kevin Hogarty will be first time grandparents mid-May.

Home/Care Facility/Rehab Center

Millicent Guerri - living with cancer... 14300 Conway Meadows Ct E, Chesterfield, MO 63017 [birthdate: December 5]
Georgia Herpel - Cedarhurst: 12826 Daylight Cir, St. Louis, MO 63131
Marv Herpel - Brookdale West County; 785 Henry Ave, #217; Ballwin, MO 63021; 636-227-5838 [birthdate: March 3]
Ruth Murray - Villages of St Peters Memory Care: 5300 Executive Centre Pkwy, #107; St. Peters, MO 63376; 636-477-6955. [birthdate: September 11] Best times to visit – before 11am or after 2pm.
Pearl Sellenriek - Friendship Village Care Center; #725-2
15201 Olive Blvd, Chesterfield, MO 63017 [birthdate: March 31]
Ellen Surber - Delmar Gardens: 14855 N Outer 40 Road, #508; Chesterfield, MO 63017 (Lisa Davidson's mom) [birthdate: November 3]
Sue Houser - Bethany Ctr for Rehab & Healing; 421 Ocala Dr - #209B; Nashville, TN 37211; 615-577-2049. [birthdate: July 8]

Other

Dan Connors - completed writing a novel... taking next steps. **President Trump**, **Congress**, all local, national, world leaders. **The "me too" Movement** - shining a light on sexual abuse. **Healing of relationships between police and the public. All people who live with mental illness.**

PUCC Family (and others) struggling with healthcare costs and limits. **Our Missouri Mid-South Conference and St Louis Assn UCC Variety of Parkway members/friends** - employment issues. **Victims of Natural and Created Disasters** around the world. **Peace and Justice** near and far. **US Military** around the globe.

St Louis Assn UCC Covenant Partner

Week ending Apr 12 - **First Congregational UCC**, Webster Groves; firstchurchwg.org Week ending Apr 19 - **First Congregational UCC**, Memphis; firstcongo.com

Anniversaries

4/12 HASLER, Rick & Cathy (23)

Birthdays

- 4/14 COMENS, Michael
- 4/14 OSBORNE, Andrew
- 4/14 SCHERRER, Betty
- 4/15 HOCH, Richard
- 4/15 KRPAN, Paige
- 4/15 NOLTE, Karen

- 4/15 REED, Vivienne
- 4/16 DOTY, Alexander
- 4/16 TALLYN, April
- 4/16 WADDELL, Sheila
- 4/16 YESS, Kari

EASTER SUNDAY

April 12, 2020

John 20:1-18

It's a day to tell stories – stories about miracles and about new life, stories worth retelling. It's a day to tell this story. Before dawn, Mary, a grieving friend of Jesus went to the place where they had laid his body. She did not find the body there. She called for the others. They came and also saw the empty tomb. Some of them went away, distressed, suspecting vandals, but Mary stayed behind. Then and there she encountered the living Christ.

There's a lot of miracle to uncover in this story. There's the miracle of a woman in grief going to a tomb, only to find it empty. The miracle of the strength she found to continue to search. The miracle of Jesus' appearance, so changed that he was, at first, unrecognizable. The miracle that it was her word (the word of a woman, whose testimony was not even at the time admissible in a court of law) that was heard and believed by the other disciples. The miracle that, in spite of all the ways throughout history in which women's voices have been silenced, that it was Mary's words that ring down through the years, "I have seen the Lord!"

But all those miracles can overshadow the very first miracle of the story, which is contained in one small phrase. It's so very small, in fact, that you might have missed it. "Early on the first day of the week and *while it was still dark*, Mary Magdalene went to the tomb..."

Did you catch it?

While it was still dark. Mary left her home before the sun was up. A dangerous time. A cold time. And in that cold, dangerous time, that time when there was only confusion, no hope at all, the resurrection of Jesus had already happened! A miracle.

It is a cold and dangerous time for many of us – in our own lives, in our communities, in our nation and in our world. And yet, while it is still dark, miracles are already beginning, already starting to stir, just about to burst from the tomb. So, do not be discouraged or afraid. Instead, get ready to join the shouts.

Alleluia! Christ is risen! Christ is risen indeed!

