

Easter Sunrise



PARKWAY
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
Sunday, April 17, 2022

Welcome to



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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.

Easter Sunrise Service

April 17, 2022 | 6:15am | In-person and Facebook Live
Elm Lawn Cemetery behind our Historic Sanctuary

Welcome to Parkway UCC on this morning of *Alleluias!*
Easter is a time of great joy! Early in the morning, however, the story begins in dark, cold, quiet. Gathering in the darkness like the women did so long ago, we are warmed and encouraged by prayers, songs, community and the ‘new fire’. The Day of Resurrection dawns on us as we begin to see things more clearly like Mary did that early morning. She and the others believed that all was lost, that Jesus and his mighty mission were over...tears flowed...but this sunrise moment reminds us that there is always a split second when there is suddenly more of one thing than the other...this story is all dark and dread and grief...then comes light and love and resurrection...and the tears flow again. We know who Jesus is! We know who we are again too! Alleluia!

Hymn *Were You There?*

Were you there when they crucified my Lord?

Were you there when they crucified my Lord?

Oh! Sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble

Were you there when they crucified my Lord?

v.2 **Were you there when God wept at Mary’s cry?...**

Lighting the New Fire

Call to Worship

One: We have walked a rough path these last few days. We wondered if any of this was real. We weren’t sure if we even knew who we were amidst all the turmoil.

Many: We have watched the disciples lose focus—as they became distressed, dismayed, separated and isolated. We’ve wondered about how Jesus felt through it all. We ached for him—brokenhearted. What did he do with his deep disappointment and all of the denials? Was he afraid of who he was becoming?

One: And now light is pushing out the darkness and dread. Things are not the way they had seemed. Jesus was right. There is a way out of ‘no way’. Things are becoming clear. This is resurrection. This is restoration. This is real.

Many: Christ is risen from the tomb! God’s steadfast love endures forever!

All: This is the day the Lord has made. Let us rejoice and be glad in it! Christ is risen indeed! The Spirit is pouring out upon us. Alleluia!

Opening Prayer

Holy One, we made this Lenten journey with Jesus, watching him and listening to him the whole way. We saw who Jesus is – so that we can be more like him. We can. We sense his power and we can exercise our own agency and make choices. We feel his empathy and we can bring more love into the world. We see him spend time apart from everything else and we can take time to step away and be still. We listen to his stories and can weave our stories together with people near and far. We watch him touch people and we can release our reassurance to others. We hear him speak up and we can be bold for ourselves and others. We sense his struggles and we can find our own courage and stamina. We receive his peace and we can become calm amid storms of every kind. Amen.

Hebrew Scripture Lesson Psalms 118, selected verses

O give thanks to God—for God is good. God’s steadfast love endures forever! Let Israel say, “God’s steadfast love endures forever.”

Open to me the gates of righteousness, that I may enter through them and give thanks to God. I thank you that you have answered me and have become my salvation.

The stone that the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone. This is God’s doing; it is marvelous in our eyes. This is the day that God has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it. Save us, we beseech you, O God! We beseech you, give us success!

Blessed is the one who comes in God’s name. We bless you from the house of God. God has given us light. Bind the festal procession with branches, up to the horns of the altar.

You are my God, and I will give thanks to you; you are my God, I will extol you. O give thanks to God, for God is good. God’s steadfast love endures forever!

Response *Were You There?*

Were you there when He rose up from the tomb?...

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.

Sermon

Praise Song *This is the Day*

**This is the day, this is the day
That our God has made, that our God has made;
We will rejoice, we will rejoice
And be glad in it, and be glad in it.
This is the day that our God has made,
We will rejoice and be glad in it;
This is the day, this is the day that our God has made.**

**This is the day, this is the day
Jesus rose again, Jesus rose again;
We will rejoice, we will rejoice
And be glad in it, and be glad in it.
This is the day Jesus rose again,
We will rejoice and be glad in it;
This is the day, this is the day Jesus rose again.**

Easter Prayers & Prayers of the People

The 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.]

The Sacrament of Communion at our Open Table

Prayer of Thanksgiving

Holy One, we give You thanks for this simple and sacred meal. It informs, nurtures and inspires us now. We become more Christ-like as we receive from his life and love. We feel Your Spirit shaping and guiding us. Heighten our senses so that we are more and more available to You and to one another. We want to be all about Your love with all we have been given. Amen.

Hymn *Christ the Lord Is Risen Today*

Christ the Lord is risen today, Alleluia!
Mortal tongues and angels say: Alleluia!
Raise your joys and triumphs high, Alleluia!
Sing, glad heavens, and earth reply: Alleluia!
Love's redeeming work is done, Alleluia!
Fought the fight the battle won, Alleluia!
Death in vain forbids Christ rise, Alleluia!
God has opened paradise, Alleluia!
Soar we now where Christ has led, Alleluia!
Following our exalted Head, Alleluia!
Made like Christ, like Christ we rise, Alleluia!
Ours the cross, the grave, the skies, Alleluia!

Benediction

Seven Stanzas at Easter

John Updike

Make no mistake: if he rose at all
It was as His body;
If the cell's dissolution did not reverse, the molecule reknit,
The amino acids rekindle,
The Church will fall.

It was not as the flowers,
Each soft spring recurrent;
It was not as His Spirit in the mouths and fuddled eyes of the
Eleven apostles;
It was as His flesh; ours.

The same hinged thumbs and toes
The same valved heart
That—pierced—died, withered, paused, and then regathered
Out of enduring Might
New strength to enclose.

Let us not mock God with metaphor,
Analogy, sidestepping, transcendence,
Making of the event a parable, a sign painted in the faded
Credulity of earlier ages:
Let us walk through the door.

The stone is rolled back, not papier-mache,
Not a stone in a story,
But the vast rock of materiality that in the slow grinding of
Time will eclipse for each of us
The wide light of day.

And if we have an angel at the tomb,
Make it a real angel,
Weighty with Max Planck's quanta, vivid with hair, opaque in
The dawn light, robed in real linen
Spun on a definite loom.

Let us not seek to make it less monstrous,
For our own convenience, our own sense of beauty,
Lest, awakened in one unthinkable hour, we are embarrassed
By the miracle,
And crushed by remonstrance.

Christ Has No Body—Teresa of Avila (1515–1582)

Christ has no body but yours,
No hands, no feet on earth but yours,
Yours are the eyes with which he looks
Compassion on this world,
Yours are the feet with which he walks to do good,
Yours are the hands, with which he blesses all the world.
Yours are the hands, yours are the feet,
Yours are the eyes, you are his body.
Christ has no body now but yours,
No hands, no feet on earth but yours,
Yours are the eyes with which he looks
compassion on this world.

Christ has no body now on earth but yours.