



Community UCC

We're worth our words

Welcoming Progressive Community

Vibrant Messengers of Hope



Champaign, Illinois

Easter Resurrection, Year A

April 5, 2026

Thoughts before worship: *"Birdsong"* by Rev. Sarah Are Speed

Every morning the sun rises,
majestic and steady.

She is greeted

in all her strength

with the joyous cacophony of birdsong.

I like to believe

this holy chorus

is the birds telling each other—

I'm here.

We made it through the night.

You're not alone.

What good, good news.

I think the resurrection is a bit like that.

God is here.

We made it through the night.

We are not alone.

What good, good news.

Prelude

Hornpipe from Water Music

***Easter Acclamation**

Alleluia! Christ is Risen!

Alleluia! Christ is Risen!

***Call to Worship**

On Friday, we thought the good news had been silenced.

On Friday, we thought the good news had taken its last breath.

On Friday, we thought the good news had been buried.

But today, we know the good news is alive and well.

The good news is dancing!

The good news is on the loose!

The good news is out in the world, calling your name!

We welcome you to our service this morning. Celebrating the diversity of creation, Community United Church welcomes persons of any age, ability, race, gender identity, sexual orientation or life condition. May the Divine Presence become real to you through this time of worship. We hope you come back!

Note: *Our worship services are live streamed. If you prefer not to have the back of your head seen on the live stream worship please do not sit in the first seven pews on the left side (organ/piano) of the sanctuary.*

Note 2: *The congregation responds to the liturgy parts in **BOLD***

**Everyone is invited to stand in body or in spirit.*

Alleluia! Even death has lost its sting.

Let us worship our good-news Christ.

***Hymn**

Christ the Lord is Risen Today

NCH 233

*Christ the Lord is risen to-day, Al-le-lu-ia! Mor-tal tongues and an-gels say: Al-le-lu-ia!
Raise your joys and tri-umphs high, Al-le-lu-ia! Sing, glad heavens, and earth re-ply: Al-le-lu-ia!*

*Let the Vic-tor's peo-ple sing, Al-le-lu-ia! Where, O death, is now your sting? Al-le-lu-ia!
Dy-ing once, Christ lives to save, Al-le-lu-ia! Where your vic-to-ry, O grave? Al-le-lu-ia!*

*Love's re-deem-ing work is done, Al-le-lu-ia! Fought the fight, the bat-tle won, Al-le-lu-ia!
Death in vain for-bids Christ rise, Al-le-lu-ia! God has o-pened par-a-dise, Al-le-lu-ia!*

*Soar we now where Christ has led, Al-le-lu-ia! Fol-lowing our ex-alt-ed Head, Al-le-lu-ia!
Made like Christ, like Christ we rise, Al-le-lu-ia! Ours the cross, the grave, the skies, Al-le-lu-ia!*

Welcome, a Word About Worship, and an Invitation to Check-In

Today's theme is, "The good news is...alive in the world." The question of the day is this — where is the good news of God alive in the world? Find the pennant flags in your pew and write your answer, place in the offering plate

Commissioning of the Community

Introit

This Joyful Eastertide

CUCC Choir

*This joyful Eastertide, away with sin and sorrow!
My love, the Crucified, has sprung to life this morrow.
Had Christ, who once was slain, not burst his three day prison,
Our faith had been in vain, but now has Christ arisen!*

***Invocation**

Let us pray,

Holy One, all over the world, people are gathering to hear the same story. All over the world, people are gathering to hear how death lost its sting. All over the world, people are gathering together, praying for a glimpse of you. So like our neighbors all over the world, we pray, be here. Speak to us today. Soften the calloused parts of our hearts until we can sense your Holy Spirit in our midst once more. With eagerness and hope, we run to the tomb. We sing alleluia. We bow our heads. We listen for you. Amen.

Call to Confession

On Easter Sunday we remember that the world did its worst to God. The world battered and bruised, betrayed and abandoned, crucified and buried our living God. And despite it all, Jesus *still* chose to return. Jesus rose again and immediately went to work spreading God's love to the very people who had hurt him. So hear me when I say, there is *nothing* you can do that could keep God's love at bay. With that good news in mind, let us go to God in prayer, trusting that Jesus Christ loves, claims, and seeks us.

Prayer of Confession

Gracious God, we want to be Easter people. We want to shout your good news from the rooftop. We want to follow the disciples, who ran to look for you. We want to follow the angels, who said, "Be not afraid," but we are afraid. And we don't know where to look. And we are worried we'll say the wrong thing. Forgive us, for we are imperfect Easter people. We are best intentions and best laid plans. We are an out-of-tune chorus of "alleluias." We are on our way, but we are not there yet. Show us how to embody your good news in this world. Show us how to be your Easter people. With hope for tomorrow, we pray, amen.

Words of for Forgiveness

Beloved, even when we are an out-of-tune chorus of "alleluias," we belong to God. Jesus died and rose for you. And

there is nothing that could keep God's love at bay. Join me in this good news declaration:

Through Jesus Christ we are seen, saved, loved, and claimed. This is the good news of the gospel! Thanks be to God. Amen.

***Passing of the Peace**

Children's Message

Anthem

Christ the Lord is Risen Today

CUCC Choir

*Christ the Lord is ris'n today, alleluia! Sons of men and angels say, alleluia!
Raise your joys and triumphs high, alleluia! Sing, ye heav'ns, and earth, reply, alleluia!
Love's redeeming work is done, alleluia! Fought the fight, the battle won, alleluia!
Death in vain forbids Him rise, alleluia! Christ hath opened Paradise, alleluia!
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!*

Call to Prayer

community-ucc.org/pray



Prelude to Scripture

Whether we take what is written in the Bible as fact, metaphor, myth, or story, let us listen now for the meaning it might hold for us on this day.

Sacred Reading from the Gospels

Matthew 28:1-10

¹ After the Sabbath, at dawn on the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to look at the tomb.

² There was a violent earthquake, for an angel of the Lord came down from heaven and, going to the tomb, rolled back the stone and sat on it. ³ His appearance was like lightning, and his clothes were white as snow. ⁴ The guards were so afraid of him that they shook and became like dead men.

⁵ The angel said to the women, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. ⁶ He is not here; he has risen, just as he said. Come and see the place where he lay. ⁷ Then go quickly and tell his disciples: 'He has risen from the dead and is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see him.' Now I have told you."

⁸ So the women hurried away from the tomb, afraid yet filled with joy, and ran to tell his disciples. ⁹ Suddenly Jesus met them. "Greetings," he said. They came to him, clasped his feet and worshiped him. ¹⁰ Then Jesus said to them, "Do not be afraid. Go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee; there they will see me."

Postlude to Scripture

Together, let us say:

May the Spirit bless us with wisdom and wonder as we ponder the meaning of these words for our lives.

***Hymn**

In the Bulb There is a Flower

NCH 433

*In the bulb there is a flow-er; in the seed, an ap-ple tree;
in co-coons, a hid-den p om-ise: but-ter-flies will soon be free!
In the cold and snow of win-ter there's a spring that waits to be,
un-re-vealed un-til its sea-son, some-thing God a-lone can see.

There's a song in ev-ery si-lence, seek-ing word and mel-o-dy;
there's a dawn for ev-ery dark-ness, bring-ing hope to you and me.
From the past will come the fu-ture; what it holds, a mys-ter-y,
un-re-vealed un-til its sea-son, some-thing God a-lone can see.

In our end is our be-gin-ning; in our time, in-fin-i-ty;*

*in our doubt there is be-liev-ing; in our life, e-ter-ni-ty.
In our death, a res-ur-rec-tion; at the last, a vic-to-ry,
un-re-vealed un-til its sea-son, some-thing God a-lone can see.*

Message *The Good News is Alive in the World* Rev. Leah Robberts-Mosser

Silent Meditation

Joys and Concerns

Morning Prayer

Response *Hold On* CUCC Choir

Call to Offering community-ucc.org/



Offertory *Rejoice Greatly, O Daughter of Zion
from Handel's Messiah* Elena Negruta

*Rejoice greatly, o daughter of Zion, Rejoice!
Shout! O daughter of Jerusalem. Behold, thy king cometh unto thee.
He is the righteous savior, And he shall speak peace unto the heathen.*

*Rejoice greatly, o daughter of Zion.
Shout! O daughter of Jerusalem, behold thy King cometh unto thee.*

***Benediction**

As you go from this place
meet anger with love,
fear with hope,
pain with gentleness.

Speak the Good News
of love for all,
peace that surpasses our understanding,
and justice that
rolls down like water.

Thanks be to God.
Amen.

***Benediction Response** *Hallelujah Chorus* CUCC Choir
from Handel's Messiah

*Hallelujah! Hallelujah! For the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth. Hallelujah!
The kingdom of this world Is become the kingdom of our Lord,
And of His Christ, and of His Christ; And He shall reign for ever and ever,
King of kings, and Lord of lords, Hallelujah!*

***Postlude** Andrey Ivanov

Acknowledgements

Prelude, "*Hornpipe from Water Music*," G. F. Handel

Liturgy from sanctifiedart.org Tell Me Something Good Lenten Series written by Rev. Sarah (Are) Speed

Anthem, "*Christ the Lord is Risen Today*," arr. Brad Nix

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Prayer Response, "*Hold On*," Heidi Ann Wilson, used by composer's permission

Offertory, "*Rejoice Greatly, O Daughter of Zion from Handel's Messiah*," G.F. Handel, Messiah

Benediction Response, "*Hallelujah Chorus*," G. F. Handel, Messiah

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Serving Today

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Your Ministry Team Leaders

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Personnel Committee: Stephen Kolderup

Community Building: Peg Wade*

- **Care Team:** (Coordinator Open)

- **Prayer Shawls:** Elena Kasper

- **Meal Train:** Jennifer Robbennolt

- **Driver's Ministry:** Mary Bunyard

- **Visitor & Healing Music Ministry:** Marilou Hinrichs

- **Card Ministry:** Peg Wade

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- **Hospitality Team:** Rocio (Ro) Arroyave Jamison and Dennis Jamison

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Finance: Roger Wade* (treasurer), David Willcox (financial secretary)

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