

Macon United Methodist Church
190 W Bell Street, Macon, IL 62544; (217) 764-5133
Pastor Terry McDorman; 630-390-0414; accesstogodshouse@gmail.com
April 7, 2024 **Second Sunday of Easter**

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

"We cannot embrace God's forgiveness if we are so busy clinging to past wounds and nursing old grudges." T. D. Jakes

RINGING OF THE CHURCH BELL:

PRELUDE

GATHERING

Words of welcome and announcements

*SHARING THE PEACE OF CHRIST

***CALL TO WORSHIP (responsive)**

We gather in the name of the risen Lord.

Christ is risen! Alleluia!

We gather as sisters and brothers of the resurrected one.

Christ is risen! Alleluia!

We gather to share our faith and to worship God.

Christ is risen! Alleluia!

We gather to proclaim the good news of Easter!

Christ is risen! Alleluia!

***OPENING HYMN** *“Easter People, Raise Your Voices”* (UMH # 304)

1. Easter people raise your voices sounds of heaven in earth should ring.

Christ has brought us heaven's choices; heavenly music, let it ring.

Alleluia! Alleluia! Easter people let us sing.

2. Fear of death can no more stop us from our pressing here below.

For our Lord empowered us to triumph over every foe.

Alleluia! Alleluia! On to victory now we go.

3. Every day to us is Easter, with its resurrection song.

When in trouble move the faster to Our God who rights the wrong.

Alleluia! Alleluia! Everlasting Sunday song.



OPENING PRAYER (unison)

God of abundance, we are thankful for the beauty all around us. Weave us together in a life full of goodness and joy. Help us to move in harmony with one another and with all Creation. Let us travel on your path toward release in your presence. We pray in the name of the risen Christ. Amen.

COMMUNITY PRAYERS

Let us lift our prayers in thoughts of praise.

SILENT PRAYER

Let us share our doubts with God.

THE LORD'S PRAYER (all)

FIRST SCRIPTURE READING

Acts 4:32-35 (CEB)

The community of believers was one in heart and mind. None of them would say, "This is mine!" about any of their possessions, but held everything in common. The apostles continued to bear powerful witness to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and an abundance of grace was at work among them all. There were no needy persons among them. Those who owned properties or houses would sell them, bring the proceeds from the sales, and place them in the care and under the authority of the apostles. Then it was distributed to anyone who was in need.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (unison)

God of mercy, we come celebrating our unity, but we confess the many ways that we are divided. Our nationality, ethnic origin, economic status, gender, age, and musical preferences all too often obscure the common calling we share in Christ's name. May our common identity as your children and our communal witness to Christ bind us together in your name. Forgive our tendency toward separation and division, and remind us that we are your Easter people.

SECOND SCRIPTURE READING

John 20:19-31(CEB)

It was still the first day of the week. That evening, while the disciples were behind closed doors because they were afraid of the Jewish authorities, Jesus came and stood among them. He said, "Peace be with you." After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. When the disciples saw the Lord, they were filled with joy. Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father sent me, so I am sending you." Then he breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive anyone's sins, they are forgiven; if you don't forgive them, they aren't forgiven." Thomas, the one called Didymus, one of the Twelve, wasn't with the disciples when Jesus came. The other disciples told him, "We've seen the Lord!"

But he replied, “Unless I see the nail marks in his hands, put my finger in the wounds left by the nails, and put my hand into his side, I won’t believe.”

After eight days his disciples were again in a house and Thomas was with them. Even though the doors were locked, Jesus entered and stood among them. He said, “Peace be with you.” Then he said to Thomas, “Put your finger here. Look at my hands. Put your hand into my side. No more disbelief. Believe!”

Thomas responded to Jesus, “My Lord and my God!”

Jesus replied, “Do you believe because you see me? Happy are those who don’t see and yet believe.”

Then Jesus did many other miraculous signs in his disciples’ presence, signs that aren’t recorded in this scroll.

But these things are written so that you will believe that Jesus is the Christ, God’s Son, and that believing, you will have life in his name.

UNISON PRAYER:

When our faith stands at the grave, grieving for a stone that’s rolled away, forgive us.

When our faith is short of understanding though the truth is there to see, forgive us.

When our faith, beset by doubt, sees no further than an empty tomb today, forgive us.

Bring to mind the cry of Mary, ‘I have seen the Lord!’ and grant us faith to believe!

MESSAGE

“Belief--a Reflection on the Cross”

Pastor Terry

HYMN

“Grace Alone”

(FWS #2162)

1. Every promise we can make, every prayer and step of faith, every difference we can make is only by His grace. Every mountain we will climb, every ray of hope we shine, every blessing left behind is only by His grace.

Grace alone which God supplies, strength unknown He will provide. Christ in us our cornerstone; we will go forth in grace alone.

2. Every soul we long to reach, every heart we hope to teach, everywhere we share His peace is only by His grace. Every loving word we say, every tear we wipe away, every sorrow turned to praise is only by His grace.

Grace alone which God supplies, strength unknown He will provide. Christ in us our cornerstone; we will go forth in grace alone.

INVITATION TO SHARE

PRESENTATION OF OUR TITHES AND OFFERINGS

***DOXOLOGY**

(UMH # 94)

Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise God, all creatures here below: Alleluia! Alleluia!
Praise God, the source of all our gifts! Praise Jesus Christ, whose power uplifts!
Praise the Spirit, Holy Spirit! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

***PRAYER OF DEDICATION (unison)**

Generous God, as we gather to offer our tithes and offerings, we are reminded of the words of the apostle John about the Word of life. Just as your word brings light into our lives, may our giving be an act of generosity, a reflection of the abundance of your grace and love. We thank you for the forgiveness and grace offered through your Son, Jesus Christ, and as we give, may we also steward these gifts wisely for the betterment of your kingdom. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

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.

Creator God, you revealed to us your Creation on earth.

The waters flowed, and the winds blew.

You set the cosmos into motion and created living beings.

You gave life to the plants and the sea creatures and the land animals.

You put into flight the birds and insects, and you made people to walk on the ground.

You blessed us all and called us good.

But when our love failed and we turned away,

You revealed a love for your people and all of Creation that never ends.

And so we praise you, with all the company of saints and sinners, singing your unending hymn:

Holy, holy, holy God of power and might,

Heaven and earth are full of your glory

Hosannah in the highest.

Blessed is the One who comes in the name of the Lord.

Hosannah in the highest.

You continued to reveal your love for us in your son, Jesus,
who came to live among us and move as a human on this Earth.

When he dined with his friends, just before he was to be executed,
he reminded them of your love revealed in the gifts of bread and juice before them on

the table.

He took the bread in his hands, gave thanks to you, broke it, and shared it with his friends, saying the familiar words,

“Take, eat. This is my body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of me.”

And when the supper was over, he took the cup, again gave thanks for it, and shared it with all who gathered, reminding them,

“Drink this all of you. This is the cup of my covenant with you, for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.”

Together we proclaim the mystery of faith.

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

Still-creating Spirit, be poured out on those gathered here and on these gifts from the field in bread and juice. As we receive them into our bodies, make us your body.

Unite us with those who have come before us in your kingdom and with those who will come after us, now and always. **Amen.**

(All are invited to come forward, taking a piece of bread from the plate, dipping it into the juice. Please let the usher know if you are unable to come forward and the elements will be brought to you. The bread is gluten-free.)

MUSICAL REFLECTION

CLOSING PRAYER (unison)

We go out from this place trusting that God walks with us. We go out from this place knowing that we walk in the light. We go out from this place shining with the good news that Christ is risen: we are new people who love our neighbors, share God’s abundance, and care for God’s creation. Christ is risen indeed.

***CLOSING HYMN**

“We Are the Church”

(UMH # 558)

Chorus

I am the church! You are the church! We are the church together!

All who follow Jesus, all around the world! Yes we're the church together!

1. The church is not a building, The church is not a steeple

The church is not a resting place, The church is a people.

I am the church! You are the church! We are the church together!

All who follow Jesus, all around the world! Yes we're the church together!

2. We're many kinds of people, with many kinds of faces

All colors and all ages too, from all times and places.

I am the church! You are the church! We are the church together!

All who follow Jesus, all around the world! Yes we're the church together!

3. Sometimes the church is marching, sometimes it's bravely burning,
Sometimes it's riding sometimes hiding, always it's learning.
I am the church! You are the church! We are the church together!
All who follow Jesus, all around the world! Yes we're the church together!

4. And when the people gather, there's singing and there's praying,
There's laughing and there's crying sometimes, all of it saying:
I am the church! You are the church! We are the church together!
All who follow Jesus, all around the world! Yes we're the church together!

5. At Pentecost some people Received the Holy Spirit
And told the Good News Through the world to all who would hear it.
I am the church! You are the church! We are the church together!
All who follow Jesus, all around the world! Yes we're the church together!

***BENEDICTION**

POSTLUDE:

Special thankyou's to all those that assisted with worship today.

ATTENDANCE LAST WEEK: 72

ATTENDANCE GOAL: 70

Be certain to check the church website, <https://maconilumc.net/> for updated information about the church, events and news. Please use webmaster.maconumc@gmail.com to submit updates or additions to the church website.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRESENCE AND SERVICE

Sun Apr 14 9:00 am Sunday School
Sun. Apr 14 10:00 am Worship and Zoom Service
Sun. Apr 14 11:00 am SPRC Meeting; Pastor's office
Sun Apr 21 7:00 am UMM Breakfast; Fellowship Hall
Sun Apr 21 9:00 am Sunday School
Sun. Apr 21 10:00 am Worship and Zoom Service
Sun Apr 28 9:00 am Sunday School
Sun. Apr 28 10:00 am Worship and Zoom Service

BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES

Apr 07 Vicky Hilvety Apr 10 Debbie Stewart
Apr 13 Stephanie Allen

MISSIONS



Items requested by the food pantry are: Any kind of cereal and/or oatmeal, canned fruit and vegetables, canned soup, pasta sauce, and shampoo. Cash donations are always welcome.