

Macon United Methodist Church
190 W Bell Street, Macon, IL 62544; (217) 764-5133
Pastor Terry McDorman; 630-390-0414; accesstogodshouse@gmail.com
April 27, 2025 **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

for all to remember the glory of the Resurrection!

PRELUDE

GATHERING **Words of welcome and announcements**

***SHARING THE PEACE OF CHRIST**

***CALL TO WORSHIP (responsively)**

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** *“Holy, Holy, Holy! Lord God Almighty”* (UMH # 64)

OPENING PRAYER (unison)

God of the resurrection, we gather this morning as a community of believers. We come with joy to greet one another and to tell again and again the amazing news: Christ is risen! Love is victorious over death! You have given us new life in the name of your Son! May our singing, praying, listening, and proclaiming be a testimony to the power of your love to make us a new creation as a community of faith. 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 5:27-32 (CEB)

The apostles were brought before the council where the high priest confronted them: "In no uncertain terms, we demanded that you not teach in this name. And look at you! You have filled Jerusalem with your teaching. And you are determined to hold us responsible for this man's death."

Peter and the apostles replied, "We must obey God rather than humans! The God of our ancestors raised Jesus from the dead—whom you killed by hanging him on a tree. God has exalted Jesus to his right side as leader and savior so that he could enable Israel to change its heart and life and to find forgiveness for sins. We are witnesses of such things, as is the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey him."



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.

MESSAGE

"Forgiveness and Confession—a Reflection on the Cross"

Rev. McDorman

HYMN

"Breathe on Me, Breath of God"

(UMH # 420)

INVITATION TO SHARE

PRESENTATION OF OUR TITHES AND OFFERINGS

***DOXOLOGY**

(UMH # 94)

(You are invited to raise your arms symbolically lifting up your praise and thanksgiving to Christ)

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)**

God, from you comes every bounty. Every sacrifice of life that sustains ours is the sacrifice of your beloved. As we return a small part of the bounty you have blessed us with, we pray that it will be used to forge stronger connections among all creation until the whole world is redeemed by your love.

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 "I Love to Tell the Story" (UMH# 156)

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE (Please be seated and silent during the Postlude)

The Easter Candle: Please see the special insert explaining the meaning of the Easter candle which shall be lit each Sunday during Eastertide.

Special thank yous 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. April 27 11:00 am SPRC Committee Meeting
Sun. May 4 9:00 am Sunday School
Sun. May 4 10:00 am Sunday Worship and Zoom Service
Sat. May 10 9:00 am All Church Workday
Sun. May 11 Mother's Day
Sun. May 11 9:00 am Sunday School
Sun. May 11 10:00 am Sunday Worship and Zoom Service
Wed. May 14 6:30 pm Finance Committee Meeting; Pastor's Office
Wed. May 14 7:00 pm Administrative Council Meeting; Pastor's Office
Sun. May 18 8:00 am Men's Breakfast; Fellowship Hall
Sun. May 18 9:00 am Sunday School
Sun. May 18 10:00 am Sunday Worship and Zoom Service

BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES

Apr 29 Devin and Victor Serbe

MISSIONS



LOCAL MISSIONS

Items requested by the food pantry are: Any kind of cereal, cereal bars and/or oatmeal, canned fruit, **canned soup**, canned pasta, shampoo, bar soap and toothpaste. Cash donations are always welcome.

The Pantry is looking for volunteers to help with the Central Illinois food bank deliveries on the first and third Mondays of each month at 9:00 am.

The Easter candle, also known as the Paschal candle, is a large, white candle lit during Easter services to symbolize the Resurrection of Jesus Christ and his victory over death. It represents new life, hope, and the light of Christ. The candle is often decorated with symbols like a cross and the letters Alpha and Omega, signifying the beginning and end of all things. Here's a more detailed breakdown of the candle's symbolism:



Light: The Paschal candle is a visual representation of Christ as the "light of the world," who dispels darkness and brings hope.

Resurrection: The candle's flame represents the resurrected Christ, who has overcome death and offers eternal life.

Cross: The cross inscribed on the candle represents Christ's sacrifice on the cross and the path to salvation.

Alpha and Omega: These Greek letters signify that Christ is the beginning and end of all things, the first and the last.



Incense: Five grains of incense, often red in color, are placed on the candle in the form of a cross, representing the five wounds of Jesus on the cross.

Beeswax: The pure beeswax candle represents Christ's sinless nature and his sacrifice for humanity.

Flame: The flame represents Christ's divine nature, while the wick symbolizes his humanity.

