



Bethany Presbyterian Church

Graham, North Carolina

www.bethanypreschurch.org

www.facebook.com/bethanypresbyterian

April 12, 2020 – 11:00 am

Easter Sunday



*“Don’t be afraid. I know that you are looking for Jesus who was crucified.
He isn’t here, because he’s been raised from the dead, just as he said.
Come, see the place where they laid him.”
Matthew 28:5-6 (CEB)*

GATHERING AS GOD’S PEOPLE

PREPARATION FOR WORSHIP

The women bring spices to anoint the body of their slain leader. Instead, they are told, “He has risen,” and gone on to Galilee as foretold. God has rolled back the stone, the covering cast over all peoples, the veil spread over all nations. Death is swallowed up forever. Henceforth there shall be gladness and rejoicing. Christ reigns eternally, so that all may have life.

TRINITY CHIMES

ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE RESURRECTION

*What if the stories are true
That Jesus is alive
That salvation is a free gift
Imagine a God who deeply loves you
Who regards your every moment
And wants to spend eternity with you
What if miracles can happen
What if freedom is within grasp
Imagine you never have to be alone
And this life is just the beginning
What if your story
Has all be leading to this moment
For those seeking answers
There is good news
Jesus is alive*

Salvation is a free gift
God deeply loves you
And He regards your every moment
Miracles happen
Freedom is within your grasp
You never have to be alone
And this life is just the beginning
All of this is true
All of this applies to you
Simply answer His call
And believe

Following the Easter Sunday introduction video, *The Cross*, veiled in black at the Maundy Thursday Communion Service is now unveiled, and the Christ Candle is re-lit, symbolizing the resurrection and new life in Christ. And the congregation responds:

The Lord is Risen!
The Lord is Risen indeed!

PRELUDE: *Welcome, Happy Morning!*

J. SCRIVEYNER

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

AN OFFERING OF PEACE

May the Peace of Christ be with you.

And also with you.

(Please take a moment to share the peace of Christ with your neighbor.)

* CALL TO WORSHIP

God is good!

All the time!

And all the time!

God is good!

Give thanks to the Lord, for God is good. Let all the people proclaim, "God's steadfast love endures forever!"

God's steadfast love endures forever!

The Lord is my strength, my song, and my salvation! Shouts of joy resound in the tents of the righteous!

God's steadfast love endures forever!

The Lord's right hand has done mighty things!

We will not die but live. We will proclaim what the Lord has done.

We enter the gates of the Lord and give thanks, for this is the day the Lord has made!

Let us rejoice and be glad in it!

This is the day - Easter Day!

Christ is Risen! Hallelujah!

* **OPENING HYMN #123:** *Jesus Christ Is Risen Today*

EASTER HYMN

OFFERING OURSELVES FOR RENEWAL

AN INVITATION TO THE WORD

As God has spoken in ages gone by,

God speaks to us now.

Hear the word of the Lord.

AN OFFERING OF SCRIPTURE

MATTHEW 28:1-10

Holy wisdom, Holy Word.

Thanks be to God.

PEW BIBLE, PAGE 1213

AN OFFERING OF PRAYERS

Christ the Lord is Risen today! Alleluia! Our hopes and dreams have come true. We do not have to fear death, for Christ goes before us. Praise be to God who has raised Christ from the dead and given to us new life.

Open our hearts to receive your wondrous words of love, O God. Help prepare us for the opportunities to serve you by serving others.

We have to admit it, Lord, that we had our doubts. We have heard the Resurrection story and for so many years it has remained just a nice story. But this time it is different. This time we have walked the path with Christ. We have journeyed through the wilderness and valleys, to the mountaintops, to the courtyard, the garden and the cross.

Now you bring us to the empty tomb and to the joyous news of the truth of Christ. Forgive us when we so easily doubt the truth of his resurrection. Forgive us when we feel we have to have absolute proof of everything. Your love in Jesus Christ is all the proof we need. You conquered death and sin, you brought us to new life. We praise your holy name and sing our unending song of hope and thanksgiving. Christ the Lord is risen today! Alleluia!

AN OFFERING OF SILENCE

AN OFFERING OF GOD'S GRACE

God, our Creator, gives us new life; Christ. This is the good news: the tomb is empty, sin is powerless, death is defeated forever.

On this very first day, and every day, we walk as God's people, forgiven and made whole. Thanks be to God. Amen.

* SAYING WHO WE ARE AND WHAT WE BELIEVE

EXCERPTED FROM A BRIEF STATEMENT OF FAITH

As the people of God gathered in this place, who are we?

We are a community of believers, called by God to WORSHIP, SERVE, TEACH, and SUPPORT.

With the whole church, let us say what we believe. To whom do we belong?

In life and in death we belong to God. Through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit, we trust in the one triune God, the Holy One of Israel, whom alone we worship and serve.

In whom do we trust?

We trust in Jesus Christ, fully human, fully God. Jesus proclaimed the reign of God: preaching good news to the poor and release to the captives, teaching by word and deed and blessing the children, healing the sick and binding up the brokenhearted, eating with outcasts, forgiving sinners, and calling all to repent and believe the gospel. Unjustly condemned for blasphemy and sedition, Jesus was crucified, suffering the depths of human pain and giving his life for the sins of the world. God raised this Jesus from the dead, vindicating his sinless life, breaking the power of sin and evil, delivering us from death to life eternal.

In what do we rejoice?

With believers in every time and place, we rejoice that nothing in life or in death can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. Amen.

AN OFFERING OF OUR RESOURCES

* PRAYER OF DEDICATION

* HYMN OF THE DAY: *This Easter Celebration*

AURELIA / CAROLYN WINFREY GILLETTE

This Easter celebration is not like ones we've known.

We pray in isolation, we sing the hymns alone.

We're distant from our neighbors — from worship leaders, too.

No flowers grace the chancel to set a festive mood.

No gathered choirs are singing; no banners lead the way.

O God of love and promise, where's joy this Easter Day?

*With sanctuaries empty, may homes become the place
we ponder resurrection and celebrate your grace.*

*Our joy won't come from worship that's in a crowded room
but from the news of women who saw the empty tomb.*

Our joy comes from disciples who ran with haste to see —

who heard that Christ is risen, and then, by grace, believed.
In all the grief and suffering, may we remember well:
Christ suffered crucifixion and faced the powers of hell.
Each Easter bears the promise: Christ rose that glorious day!
Now nothing in creation can keep your love away.
We thank you that on Easter, your church is blessed to be
a scattered, faithful body that's doing ministry.
In homes and in the places of help and healing, too,
we live the Easter message by gladly serving you.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed by 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.

LISTENING FOR GOD'S VOICE

THE WORD PROCLAIMED

Sermon: *Empty Churches . . . Empty Tomb!*

REV. JOHNSON

RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD AS WE LEAVE TO SERVE

* **EASTER HYMN #495:** *We Know That Christ Is Raised*

ENGELBERG

* **RESPONSIVE PRAYER FOR EASTER**

Lord Jesus, here are your disciples – your wounded hands and feet in the world today are ours.

At times we have been the frightened ones, staying at a distance, worried about our safety or our reputations. But you come close to us, bringing peace and challenge, unlocking our potential and setting us free.

At times we have been the doubting ones, when creeds conflict or certainty has evaded us. But you come close and allow us to speak our minds, accepting us, and setting us free.

At times we have been the confused ones, feeling far from you with questions that don't have answers. So, on this day of resurrection, we listen for your voice.

The risen Christ says to us: "Peace be with you. As the Father sent me, so I am sending you."

Through our fear, through our doubt, through our confusion may we continue Jesus' work, as we travel many roads, liberated and united by the love of the resurrected one. Amen.

* **CLOSING HYMN:** *Christ is Risen! Shout Hosanna!*

HYMN TO JOY

Christ is risen! Shout Hosanna! Celebrate this day of days!

Christ is risen! Hush in wonder: all creation is amazed.

In the desert all surrounding, see, a spreading tree has grown.

Healing leaves of grace abounding bring a taste of love unknown.

Christ is risen! Raise your spirits from the caverns of despair.

Walk with gladness in the morning. See what love can do and dare.

Drink the wine of resurrection, not a servant, but a friend!

Jesus is our strong companion. Joy and peace shall never end.

Christ is risen! Earth and heaven nevermore shall be the same.

Break the bread of new creation where the world is still in pain.

Tell its grim, demonic chorus: "Christ is risen! Get you gone!"

God the First and Last is with us. Sing Hosanna everyone!

* **CHARGE AND BENEDICTION**

* *Please stand in body or spirit.*



Our Faith Community @ Work

WORSHIP Ministry: (Lead Elders: Nancy Purcell and A. J. Campbell)

WELCOME to this service of worship at Bethany Presbyterian Church (PCUSA). Whether you are a member or a visitor we are so glad that you are worshipping with us this morning and pray that this time of worship will be both renewing and rewarding for you. If you have any questions about Bethany, please speak to the pastor or call the church at 336.227.4041. You can find us online through our website at www.bethanypreschurch.org; on Facebook at www.facebook.com/bethanypresbyterian; or on Twitter by following [@bpresbyterian](https://twitter.com/bpresbyterian).

Obviously, due to the ongoing health crisis surrounding the outbreak of the COVID-19 virus, we are not worshipping in person at this point in time, but rather gathering virtually using the Zoom meeting platform. Each week the congregation will be emailed a link by which everyone can join the meeting using their computer, laptop, smartphone, or tablet. John will lead worship in this manner, and congregants are invited to participate as they are able. For those who are unable to connect via Zoom, we are also hoping to be on Facebook Live as well. We are still trying to work out some glitches in that.

For those unable to get the link via email, it will also be on our Facebook page, and on our website.

Audio Recordings of each Sunday's sermons are available through a link on our website, on our Facebook page, or at www.buzzsprout.com/9198. A **Video Recording** of our Zoom worship will be available on our Facebook page and on our website.

This **Thursday, April 9th**, we will gather virtually on Zoom for our annual **Maundy Thursday Communion Service**. The PC(USA) has authorized churches to celebrate the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper virtually. As we gather on Thursday evening, please have handy bread or some other element to symbolize the body, and a drink to represent the cup.

Resources used in today's worship:

- *Feasting on the Word* worship resources
- *Ministry Matters* website (www.ministrymatters.com)

SERVE Ministry: (Lead Elders: Randy Cousins and Tina Patterson)

Our ongoing prayer list is below. Please let the church office know if there are any changes.

Bill Faucette
Jack Cook
Joan Richardson
Teresa Wilborn
Tiffany Tauchren
Jean Berry
Christy Lutterloh
Eleanor Thompson
Nancy Sutton
Norma Proctor
Katherine Bayliff
Randy Thompson
Frederica Beatty
Christopher Bagley
Family of Harry Smith

Diane Miller
Peter Slater
Joey Leake
Shannon Russell
Mary Moore
Barbara Cousins
Pat Kennedy
Donna Mitchell-Ayers
Pete Campbell
Ben Johnson
Alex Thomas
Glenn Thompson
Carol Brooks
Lou Crutchfield

John & Ann Sutton
Ruby Martin
Shirley Lane
Ida Whitney
Katherine Turner
Jeremy Harden
Anne McDaniels
Mike Sutton
Steward Dillard
Shelvia Russell
Family of Foy Bayliff
Ritchie Fishburne
Janie Holt Clapp
Robert Sykes
Jean Payne

TEACH Ministry: (Lead Elders: Karen Maxwell and Tracey Troxler)

All are invited to take advantage of the several educational opportunities for all ages on Sunday mornings. Sunday school classes begin at 9:45 a.m. (Classes will resume when we return to having church in person!)

Fellowship Class (Fellowship Classroom – by ramp door)

This class is using our denomination's *Present Word* curriculum and lives up to the class name in all aspects of their life here at Bethany.

Children (Upstairs – the really, really green room!)

This class for younger children is using our denomination's *We Believe* curriculum in introducing our children to the faith.

Youth (Upstairs, across from the choir room)

Using a variety of creative curricula, this class explores topics that relate to faith and adolescence.

SUPPORT Ministry: (Lead Elders: Chip Allen, Ben Russell, and Bill Abplanalp)

Elders of the Month for April are **Ben Russell** and **Tracey Troxler**.

This Week's Calendar:

Today:

- **EASTER SUNDAY / CELEBRATION OF THE RESURRECTION**
- 11:00 – Worship Online

Wednesday, the 15th:

- 7:00 – Choir Practice (not meeting)

Sunday, the 19th:

- 11:00 – Worship Online

Session

Moderator: Rev. John W. Johnson

Clerk: Karen Maxwell

Treasurer: Glenn Patterson

Class of 2020:

Chip Allen
Randy Cousins
Karen Maxwell

Class of 2021:

Nancy Purcell
Ben Russell
Tracey Troxler

Class of 2022:

Bill Abplanalp
Helen Brown
Tina Patterson

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love learn serve



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Bookkeeper: Pam Hurt – finance@bethanypreschurch.org

Elder Emeritus: Bobby Peele

Elder Emeritus: Don Boggs

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Bethany Presbyterian is a Stephen Ministry Congregation

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