



Central Congregational United Church of Christ

SECOND SUNDAY OF EASTER

April 27, 2025

Ministers / **All of us**

Guest Preacher / **Jennifer Parson**

Worship Leader / **Becky Wedeking**

Music Director and Accompanist / **Linda Smith**

Song Leaders / **Gayle Hassler and Janice Ayers**

Music for Gathering

Greetings & Announcements

Words About Gifting

Linda Wilder-Towery

Call to Worship

Praise God with clapping hands;
praise God with hands comforting a child.

Praise God with silent hearts;
praise God with hearts broken for the world.

Praise God with a hallelujah chorus;
praise God with quiet hymns.

Praise God with dancing steps;
praise God with feet walking for justice.

** indicates to rise in body or spirit.*

***Bold** indicates to speak or sing in unison.*

**Holy God, lover of your children:
The tomb has been opened, and we dance into your future.
Your life has dawned on us, and we surround you with our praise.
You reach out your hand and lead us into joy.**

**Jesus Christ, faithful witness:
You pick open the locked doors of our hearts
and come in to be with us forever.
You breathe peace into our souls,
so we may bring healing to a troubled world.**

**Holy Spirit, breath of peace:
You show us our hearts, so we may give love to others.
You show us our hands, sending us to serve the needy.
You show us your hope, so we may live in your joy.**

**God in Community, Holy in One,
who is, who was and who is to come. Amen.**

***Congregational Hymn**

“Morning Has Broken”

**Morning has broken like the first morning,
blackbird has spoken like the first bird.
Praise for the singing! Praise for the morning!
Praise for them, springing fresh from the Word!**

**Sweet the rain’s new fall sunlit from heaven,
like the first dew fall on the first grass.
Praise for the sweetness of the wet garden,
sprung in completeness where his feet pass.**

**Mine is the sunlight! Mine is the morning
born of the one light Eden saw play!
Praise with elation, praise every morning,
God’s re-creation of the new day!**

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Prayer of Confession

God of empty tombs and emptier people:

When we hesitate to speak of your hope,

forgive us, and give us a voice.

When we find it difficult to love one another,

forgive us, and give us fresh compassion.

When we want to stand with the high and mighty,

forgive us, and seat us next to the poor and oppressed.

When we stay locked behind our fears and doubts,

forgive us, and send us out to share you grace.

When we cannot believe your Word of new life,

forgive us, and fill us with your joy. Amen.

Assurance of Pardon

Passing the Peace

The First Reading

Acts 5:27-32

The apostles were taken before the Sanhedrin, and the high priest began to interrogate them: “We gave you strict orders not to teach about that name, yet you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching — and you’re determined to make us responsible for Jesus’ blood.”

To this, Peter and the apostles replied, “Better for us to obey God than people! The God of our ancestors has raised Jesus, whom you put to death by hanging him on a tree. This One, who has been exalted to God’s right hand as Ruler and Savior, is to bring repentance and the forgiveness of sins to Israel. We are eyewitnesses to this. And so is the Holy Spirit, who has been given to those who obey God.”

Special Music

“Jesus Walked This Lonesome Valley”

Linda Smith, Gayle Hassler and Janice Ayers

The Second Reading

Revelation 1:4-8

From John,

To the seven churches in the province of Asia:

Grace and peace to you, from the One who is, who was, and who is to come, from the seven spirits before the throne and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the Firstborn from the dead, sovereign of the rulers of earth.

To Christ — who loves us, and who has freed us from our sins by the shedding of blood, and who has made us to be a kin-dom of priests to serve our God and Creator — to Jesus Christ be the glory and power forever and ever! Amen.

Look! Christ is coming on the clouds
for every eye to see,
even those who pierced Jesus,
and all the people of the earth
will mourn over Christ.
So be it! Amen.

“I am the Alpha and the Omega,” says our God, “who is, who was and who is to come, the Almighty.”

Message

Jennifer Parson

*Congregational Hymn

“Now the Green Blade Rises”

**Now the green blade rises from the buried grain;
wheat that in dark earth for many days has lain;
Love lives again, that with the dead has been:
Love is come again like wheat that rises green.**

**Christ came forth at Easter, like the risen grain,
Jesus, who for three days in the grave had lain,
quick from the dead the risen One is seen:
Love is come again like wheat that rises green.**

Continued on next page.

* indicates to rise in body or spirit.

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When our hearts are wintry, grieving, or in pain,
Christ's warm touch can call us back to life again,
fields of our hearts that dead and bare have been:
Love is come again like wheat that rises green.

Joys and Concerns

We respond with "Lord, hear our prayer."

Time of Silence

Pastoral Prayer

The Prayer of Jesus

Please pray any version you wish. Here is one version:

**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.
Thy Kin-dom 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 Kin-dom, the power and the glory forever. Amen.**

Offering

God is good! **All the time!**
All the time! **God is good!**
Let us share the goodness of our God.

*A note to visitors: Your presence here today is a gift to us.
We are "centralchurchtopeka" on Venmo.*

*Doxology

**Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
Praise God, all creatures here below;
Praise God for all that love has done;
Creator, Christ and Spirit, One. Amen.**

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***Prayer of Dedication**

We could keep our treasures locked up where they never see the light of your love; instead, we offer them back to you so that those who live in the shadows of poverty might be fed, those who walk the streets of loneliness find a community, and those who long for peace will find an end to the violence in their lives. Amen.

Prayer of Affirmation

Christ was the One who died because of us;
Christ is the One who is risen to save us;
Christ is the One who walks among us. Amen.

***Closing Hymn**

“On a Hill Far Away (The Old Rugged Cross)”

On a hill far away stood an old rugged cross,
the emblem of suffering and shame;
and I love that old cross where the dearest and best
for a world of lost sinners was slain.

Refrain: So I'll cherish the old rugged cross,
till my trophies at last I lay down;
I will cling to the old rugged cross,
and exchange it someday for a crown.

Oh, that old rugged cross, so despised by the world,
has a wondrous attraction for me;
for the dear One of God left the glory of heaven
to bear it to cold Calvary.

Refrain

To the old rugged cross I will ever be true,
its shame and reproach gladly bear;
when God calls me someday to my home far away,
there God's glory forever I'll share.

Refrain

***Benediction**

Music for Sending

“Amen”