*Mountain Spirit Metropolitan Community Church*

*A spiritual community born out of LGBTQIA+ Appalachia*

*“I praise you for I am fearsomely and wonderfully made.”*

*Ps. 139.14*

**Easter Sunday 2**

April 26, 2025

**Prelude** Paul W., musician

**Welcome and Protocol Honoring Home** Rev. Dr. Lea Brown, Liturgist

**All: We bless these mountains in which we gather, and all the animals, plants, and elements for whom this is home;**

 **We bless all who have walked this land and called this place home long before us;**

 **We bless and honor Congregation Beth Israel for sharing their home with us;**

 **And we pray that we will be a blessing in this place.**

 **May peace be among us. Amen.**

**Opening Hymn Christ the Lord is Risen Today** Paul W. And Christine W., musicians

Christ, the Lord, is risen today Alleluia

Let all Earth and angels say, Alleluia

Raise your voice in triumphs high, Alleluia

Sing, ye heavens, 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 lead, Alleluia

Following our exalted Head, Alleluia

Made like Christ, like Christ we rise, Alleluia

Ours the cross, the grave, the skies, Alleluia

**Invocation**  Sharilyn S., M. Div., liturgist

One: O Mystery, how can that which is dead be alive? How can pain and suffering become hope and joy again?

**All: As long as we embody the Christ of justice, love, and healing, there will be resurrection!**

One: O Mystery, how can the one who was known so well, so personally, suddenly begin appearing in many forms and ways?

**All: As long as we embody the Christ of justice, love, and healing, there will be resurrection!**

One: O Mystery, how can a story of injustice and violence, so long ago and far away, be happening again and again? Is there no hope, no better future for humanity?

**All: As long as we embody the Christ of justice, love, and healing, there will be resurrection!**

One: Then, let it begin with us! Let Spirit breathe new life into the places of desolation - in us, through us, and for all the world. Let the Way of Christ, the Way of Love, not empire, be our path and practice.

**All: Our joy in liberating, compassionate Love will be our solace and resistance. The Ways of Death will not hold us in the ground.**

One: Come, rising Christ, come any way you want. Just come!

**All: Come Holy Spirit. Come any way you want. Just come. Amén/Amen**

**Song We Are the Church Alive!** Paul W. And Christine W., musicians

We are the Church Alive,

Christ's presence on this earth

We give God's Spirit body in

The act of our new birth.

As yielded open channels

For God's descending dove,

We shout and sing, With joy we bring

God's all-inclusive love.

We are the Church Alive,

Our faith has set us free;

No more enslaved by guilt and shame,

We live our liberty!

We follow Christ's example

And freedom now proclaim,

Destroying myths of doubt and fear

In Jesus' mighty name.

We are the Church Alive,

The body must be healed;

Where strife has bruised and battered us,

God's wholeness is revealed.

Our mission is an urgent one;

In strength and health let's stand,

So that our witness to God's light

Will shine through every land.

We are the Church Alive,

All praise to God on high!

Creator, Savior, Comforter!

We laud and magnify

Your name, almighty God of love;

Pray give us life, that we

May be your church, the Church Alive,

For all eternity.

**Welcoming Communion** Rev. Dr. Lea B., celebrant, Angel P., Acolyte

C: God is with you. **All: And also with you**

C: Let us open our hearts. **All: We open them to God**

C: Let us give God thanks and praise **All: It is a good and joyful thing to do**

**Santo, santo, santo**

**Mi corazón te adora**

**Mi corazón sabe decir**

**Santo eres tú**

**Holy, Holy, Holy**

**My heart, my heart adores you**

**My heart knows how to say to you**

**You are holy, God**

**Distribution Song: In This Very Room** Paul W and Christine W, musicians

In this very room, there’s quite enough love for one like me

And in this very room, there’s quite enough joy for one like me

And there's quite enough hope, And quite enough power

To chase away any gloom

For Jesus, yes, Jesus, is in this very room

In this very room, there’s quite enough love for all of us

And in this very room, there’s quite enough joy for all of us

And there's quite enough hope, And quite enough power

To chase away any gloom

For Jesus, yes, Jesus, is in this very room

In this very room, there’s quite enough love for all the world

And in this very room, there’s quite enough joy for all the world

And there's quite enough hope, And quite enough power

To chase away any gloom

For Jesus, yes, Jesus, is in this very room

**The Gospel Reading Juan/John 20:19-27** Angel P. and Susan P., lectors

*(Espanol/Spanish)* Al atardecer de aquel primer día de la semana, estando reunidos los discípulos a puerta cerrada por temor a los judíos, entró Jesús y poniéndose en medio de ellos, dijo:

—¡La paz sea con ustedes!

Dicho esto, les mostró las manos y el costado. Al ver al Señor, los discípulos se alegraron. —¡La paz sea con ustedes! —repitió Jesús—. Como el Padre me envió a mí, así yo los envío a ustedes.

Acto seguido, sopló sobre ellos y les dijo:

—Reciban el Espíritu Santo. A quienes perdonen sus pecados, les serán perdonados; a quienes no se los perdonen, no les serán perdonados.

Tomás, al que apodaban el Gemelo[a] y que era uno de los doce, no estaba con los discípulos cuando llegó Jesús. Así que los otros discípulos le dijeron:

—¡Hemos visto al Señor!

—Mientras no vea yo la marca de los clavos en sus manos, y meta mi dedo en las marcas y mi mano en su costado, no lo creeré —repuso Tomás.

Una semana más tarde estaban los discípulos de nuevo en la casa y Tomás estaba con ellos. Aunque las puertas estaban cerradas, Jesús entró y, poniéndose en medio de ellos, los saludó.

—¡La paz sea con ustedes!

Luego dijo a Tomás:

—Pon tu dedo aquí y mira mis manos. Acerca tu mano y métela en mi costado. Y no seas incrédulo, sino hombre de fe.

 +++++ Palabra de Dios **Te alabamos Dios**

*(English/Ingles)* When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors were locked where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, “Peace be with you.” After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. Jesus said to them again, “Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you.” When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, “Receive the Holy Spirit.If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained.”

But Thomas (who was called the Twin), one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. So the other disciples told him, “We have seen the Lord.” But he said to them, “Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands and put my finger in the mark of the nails and my hand in his side, I will not believe.”

A week later his disciples were again in the house, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were shut, Jesus came and stood among them and said, “Peace be with you.” Then he said to Thomas, “Put your finger here and see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it in my side. Do not doubt but believe.”

+++++ Let us hear Living Words **Thanks be to God**

**Response Precious Lord, Take My Hand** Paul W. and Christine W., musicians

Precious Lord, take my hand

Lead me on, let me stand

I am tired, I am weak, I am worn;

Through the storm, through the night

Lead me on to the light:

Take my hand, precious Lord,

Lead me home

When my way grows drear,

Precious Lord, linger near,

When my life is almost gone,

Hear my cry, hear my call,

Hold my hand lest I fall:

Take my hand, precious Lord,

Lead me home

**Reading The Cure for Sorry by Jan Richardson** Joey D., lector

Because I do not know any medicine for grief

but to let ourselves grieve.

Because I do not know any cure for sorrow

but to let ourselves sorrow.

Because I do not know

any remedy

but to let the heart break,

to let it fall open, then

to let it fall open still more.

Because I do not know how to mend

the unmendable, unfixable,

unhealable wound that keeps finding itself healed

as we tend it,

as we follow

the line of it,

as we let it lead us on the path it knows.

Because I do not know

any solace

but to give ourselves into the love

that will never cease to find us,

that will never loose its hold on us,

that will never abandon us

to the sorrow

for which it holds the cure.

**Response Precious Lord, Take My Hand** Paul W. and Christine W., musicians

Precious Lord, take my hand

Lead me on, let me stand

I am tired, I am weak, I am worn;

Through the storm, through the night

Lead me on to the light:

Take my hand, precious Lord,

Lead me home

When the darkness appears

And the night draws near,

And the day is past and gone,

At the river I stand,

Guide my feet, hold my hand:

Take my hand, precious Lord,

Lead me home.

**Sermon Thomas and Time** Rev. Dr. Lea B., preacher

**Community Prayers**  Rev. Dr. Joan S., liturgist

**Our Mother who lives within us, we celebrate your many names.**

 **Your wisdom come, your will be done, unfolding from the depths within us.**

 **Each day you give us all that we need.**

 **You remind us of our strengths, and we embrace them.**

 **You support us in our power, and we act with courage.**

 **For you are the dwelling place within us,**

 **the empowerment around us,**

 **and the celebration among us, now and forevermore. Amen**

**Offertory Remember God Cherishes You** Christine W., liturgistPaul W., musician

1. There are those who would say we must all be the same,

And that differences must be denied;

But we know that each soul is belov’d in God’s eyes

And we claim all God’s blessings with pride!

*(Chorus)*

*So remember God cherishes you;*

*You are precious, and worthy, and loved.*

*When you live out the truth that is yours,*

*There’s rejoicing in heaven above!*

2. There are voices of fear that deny what we know:

That all of God’s people are blessed.

So we sing loud and clear, with our words and our lives,

And we share the good news we confess: *(to chorus)*

3. When hate threatens to harm, may we speak out as one

And declare that love conquers all fear.

No one shall stand alone; we will walk side by side,

And proclaim that God’s kin\_dom is near! *(to chorus)*

**Announcements** Rev. Dr. Lea B., liturgist

* **New Book Group: The Gospels They Didn’t Want You to See! - Exploring Ancient Extracanonical Gospels and Writings.** We will watch a video together for the first discussion, Tuesday, April 29th, 7:30pm on Zoom.
* **Hendersonville Pride is coming up!** Please see Christine to begin organizing our booth and presence.
* **Prayers for our denomination as our Governing Board meets this week to decide whether to cancel our in-person General Conference and go online instead**. This is because of concerns for Transgender, Genderqueer, and International attendees, especially from Latin America, Africa, and Brazil, who are at heightened risk of detention and deportation by ICE and US Border agents.

**Benediction** Rev. Dr. Lea B., liturgist

**All will be well; and all will be well; and all manner of thing will be well;**

**All will be well, be well.**

 **Go out with peace. Go out with kindness. Go out with Love,**

 **In the name of the Creator, Christ, Comforter, and All that are Wise and Good. Amén/Amen**