

**FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER
COSSO SPIRITUAL FORMATION**

April 18, 2026

**A SERVICE OF EASTER-ING:
LIVING AS EASTER PEOPLE IN ALL SEASONS**

PRELUDE **"This is the Day/What a Friend We Have In Jesus"**

WELCOME **Grace Wallace, COSSO Coordinator**

INTRODUCTION **Rev. Dr. Rebeka Maples, COSSO Spiritual Formation Director**

GREETING

In the name of the Creator, the Christ, and the Holy Spirit, we come together to worship and praise God. Grace and peace be with you,
and also with you.

PROCLAMATION OF EASTER HOPE

Welcome, Easter People! Easter is an action verb that reminds us resurrection is an on-going process, not just a one-day event. Easter is our hope.

All: We are Easter people, Alleluia!

Easter people, raise your voices. Let the sounds of heaven echo through your heart.

We are Easter people. Sing praises to God's name!

Easter fills us with all hope, to right the wrongs that we have done,

Alleluia! We are Easter people!

PRAYER FOR HOPE

Please join me in this prayer for hope:

Easter-making God, you fill us with strength and hope,
and you invite us to share in the cost and joys of discipleship.

You promise to be with us always.

Meet us here, we pray,

that your word will be fulfilled in our hearing,

and that your Spirit will fill us with all hope for Easter-living. Amen.

HYMN "Easter People, Raise Your Voices"

UMH 304

EASTER TRANSFORMATION

Easter-ing reminds us of the transformation that Christ brings into our life. Hear once again, these words from the Gospel of John:

SCRIPTURE **John 14:1-14**

HYMN **"Seek Ye First"**

UMH 405

EASTER RENEWAL

Easter-ing is a process of renewal, it embraces the joy of spring, rejuvenation, and new beginnings. In Easter we know Spring is coming. Seeds that were dormant through Winter begin to stir and push through frozen ground. Trees that lost their leaves in Autumn are sprouting buds with promise of new life. We are always moving through seasons of change, and Easter is our season of renewal. Thanks be to God.

PRAYERS OF EASTER PEOPLE

God of the universe, creator of galaxies and rivers and trees, author of hope and giver of peace, there is no end to the amazing things you have done.

Help us to live as Easter people, to learn from the stories of others, to notice your Easter presence all around us.

Savior and Christ, you call out to us in many ways.

Make us aware of all the places where you are calling us to serve and to give of ourselves, to plant seeds of kindness in grand and humble ways, wherever we are.

Holy Spirit, open our hearts to extend generosity to others. Break through our fears and dismantle our prejudices.

Make us responsive to your Easter presence in our lives.

O Lord, we offer up to you all those people and concerns that lie close to our hearts. Hear our prayers, O God, in these moments of silence...

(silence)

Glory to God, from season to season, in the world and through the Spirit, now and forever.

Amen.

HYMN

"Hymn of Promise"

UMH 707

EASTER LIVING

Easter-ing is about spiritual living and growing through what we experienced in Lent - the death and resurrection of Jesus. We live as Easter people in the living out of our spiritual lives. We show others what it means to be a Christian - through our words and our actions. Our worship gives us hope in these troubling times, and our singing reminds us what we believe. Songs help us do that, whether we can carry a tune or not, speaking and singing God's word help release stress and bring us together.

SCRIPTURE PSALM 137:1-6

"How Can I Keep from Singing?" is a song that first appeared in the late 1860s, just after the Civil War had torn the United States apart. The war left many people dead. Families were divided. Cities were burned. The nation was trying to find its footing again after unimaginable loss. In that moment, Baptist minister Robert Lowry adapted a poem written by Pauline T and made a

song about an inner calm that no storm could shake. As we close our time together, take these moments and listen as we sing...

HYMN

"How Can I Keep From Singing?"

TFWS 2212

SENDING FORTH FOR THE EASTER JOURNEY

Easter-ing is living the spiritual life, living out the full meaning of the Christian belief that Jesus conquered death, offered reconciliation and a new covenant of hope. And as Easter people, that's enough! Receive this blessing and be at peace in your Easter living -

May we go and be Easter people, in all the storms we face.

May we choose kindness when the world rewards cruelty.

May we stand with those who are afraid.

And may we on singing in all our Easter-ing.

POSTLUDE "Oh Happy Day"

SOME HELPFUL RESOURCES

<https://www.preacherexchange.com/index.htm> (Dominican preaching resource)

<https://www.beswick.info/rcresources>

<http://www.textweek.com/yeara>

<https://www.ionabooks.com/product/spring/>

<https://www.ionabooks.com/product/finding-our-way-back-praying-our-way-forward/>

<https://www.ionabooks.com/product/sing-to-god-with-joy-pdf-download/>