

Grace Devotion

Week of April 20, 2025

Pastor Fred Young

++++
For this Easter Sunday, I would like to share with you words from a favorite poet and theologian, Jan Richardson. I find her blessings speak wisdom into the scriptures for me, granting deeper insight and new perspective. Here are her words on our Easter text from John.

I never fail to be dazzled by this moment when Jesus calls out the name of the woman whom he finds weeping by his tomb. Mary. At the sound of her name, the Magdalene finally sees and knows who has found her there. It is a stunning moment of recognition.

Yet as I spiral back around this passage this week, what draws my attention is not only the way that Mary Magdalene sees Christ when he calls her name. What tugs at me this time is how, in that moment of hearing her name, Mary Magdalene must see herself.

With an inflection that only Christ could have given to it, his speaking of her name conveys everything: all their history, all that passed between them in their friendship, all that he knows of this woman whom he healed and who, along with other women, traveled with him and sustained him from her own resources. He knows her. He sees her. And now he asks her to see herself as he does.

Mary...

In that moment, and in the call and commissioning that will soon come, the risen Christ gives Mary Magdalene to herself. Long ago, Jesus had released Mary from the seven demons that haunted her. Now he releases her again, this time from clinging to him, from becoming entangled with him. Where holding onto him might seem holy, Christ sees—and enables Mary Magdalene to see—that her path and her life lie elsewhere. In going, Mary

affirms that she has seen what she needed to see: not just Christ in the glory of his resurrection, but also herself, graced with the glory that he sees in her.

This day, what will we allow ourselves to see: of Christ, of ourselves? How would it be to know ourselves as he does, to see ourselves as he sees us, to know that the risen Christ speaks our name, too, and releases us, to tell what we have seen? What will you proclaim as you leave the empty tomb this day?

+++++

The myrrh bearers: Mary Magdalene, Mary and Martha of Bethany, Joanna, Salome, Susana, and two more named, Mary, the women who came to honor Jesus and prepare his body, hastened to the tomb before the sun began to glow. Grief stricken, they planned to continue the rituals started by Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea before the Sabbath. The women found the stone rolled away. Peter and John raced each other to the place where Jesus was laid but found only the burial wrappings in the empty space. Jesus, mistaken for the gardener, moved out of the shadow of despair and into the light of that first Easter morning. Death is moved to life, the rejected stone is lifted to become the cornerstone of faith, and the horror and heartbreak of Good Friday are transformed to the rejoicing gladness of the Lord's new day!

As Christians, we know how the Easter story begins, ends and begins again. What we need to work on is our understanding of how Christ's resurrection continues to impact our lives every day in ordinary ways. "Mary!" With this one word, Mary truly and completely saw her Lord, just as wonderfully, she saw herself, complete. On this Easter Sunday, what is it that you need to hear from Jesus? How might having Christ see you and call your name change your life? The tomb is empty, but our hearts are full!

PRAYER: Hallelujah, the Light of the world continues to shine! Amen.

Blessings!
Pastor Fred

April 20, 2025

11AM

Easter Sunday

+++++

Gathering Music

Welcome/Announcements

Westminster Chimes

Prelude: "The Strife is Over" By: Norman Johnson

*Easter Greeting

**Passing of the Peace of Christ

**Hymn: "Christ the Lord is risen Today" #217

**Prayer

Giver of new life, we come this morning with our Alleluias restored.

We come to worship in beauty and in truth, because we have faith that Jesus Christ has been raised from the dead. Accept our worship, gracious God. Be present with us as miracle, mystery, and tender hands of grace. We celebrate the Risen Christ and join every creature in proclaiming that Christ is worthy to receive glory and honor and power forever and ever. Amen.

**Response to Prayer: (First Verse of opening hymn)

**An Easter Affirmation of Faith

Joys and Concerns

Praying for Others/Lord's Prayer

Grace Choir

Call to Offering/Celebration of our Gifts

** Offertory Response:

** Prayer of Dedication

Let this offering, and the works of our hands and feet, be the resurrection we need to see in the world. Amen.

**Easter Athem: "Christ Is Risen, Alleluia" Albrecht/Althouse

Scripture Readings:

Psalms 118:1-2, 14-24

John 20:1-18

Time for the Young at Heart

Sermon: "Empty Tomb, Full Hearts"

**Hymn: "Thine is the Glory" #277

Holy Communion

Invitation

Prayer Of Confession/Assurance of Grace

Words of Institution

Prayer of Consecration

Sharing of the Elements

**Prayer of Thanksgiving

Thank you, God: for the bread and cup, for the life and the love, for the wisdom to walk into your world. With your strength, our faith is strengthened. With your love, our love grows. Help us to share that love, strength, and faith. Help us to accept when others share it with us

that it might change the world. In the name of the Risen Christ. Amen.

**Hymn: "Christ Arose"

#216

** Final Blessing

"A Choral Benediction" (circle around sanctuary)

**Postlude: "Song for all the Saints" By: Mary McDonald

*On the screen ** Please stand, if you are able.

Because the tomb is empty our lives can be full, so let us go out to every place and every day as people brimming with the love of God. Be graceful in spirit, hopeful in word, faithful in deed. Live for the Risen Christ as Christ lives in you. Alleluia and Amen!

Upcoming Events

- Bible Study Group April 30th @ 12:30PM & Movie @ 2:00PM
- Monthly Movie, May 9th @ 3:00 PM

Financial Information

General pledge April 2025: \$2,715.00

General pledge April 2024: \$79,999.45

YTD income: \$51,185.75

YTD expenses: \$75,915.66

YTD deficit: \$24,729.91

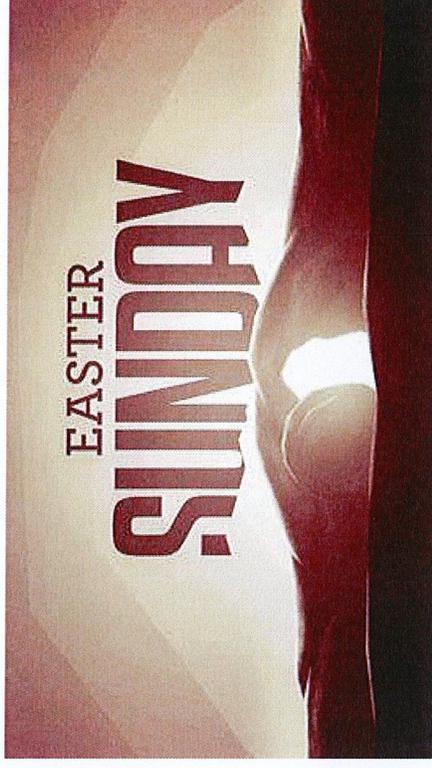
Upcoming Meetings

April

- Personnel Committee Meeting – April 23rd @ 3:45PM
- Employee Meeting – April 28th @ 3:45PM
- Worship and Music – April 28th @ 6:30PM

May

- Consistory Meeting – May 12th @ 6:00PM



Grace United Church of Christ

100 Fourth Street

Hanover, Pennsylvania 17331

717-632-1146

Today's worship leaders:

Fred Young - Pastor
Amy Fawks – Associate Pastor
Christian Keller – Organist

Joleen Fennell & Vickie Arnold – Head Usher

Name: _____

Date: _____

BIBLE EASTER WORD SEARCH



K C T E K A M S R H T O A Q T L T J T S H P
L G D A B H C I A A O Z F S S P C X E U Z I
M A G P K K R M E P A W E S A A A B Z N M L
Q R M C M R U O S O B U E O I C V A T D P A
O O U B O M C N C S L N C H U Y R I R A E T
F P F G F A I O R T O G N W F A J I O Y K E
P P W Q A R F F I L O O V R Q W T S F R G D
C A Z X H Y I C S E D L X E S S T T R I Y Y
R A S Y J F X Y E S N M S T N R B J E H C U
L L L S D Z I R N G O L G O T H A E W I L E
N R I V O R O E G O T D U M C R O S S G L Y
I G G C A V N N L P N O X B Z A J U H H O O
S Z K M J R E E V R I B L E F Q Z S V P L M
G Z N Z W G Y R S J T G R Y E D F D H R O O
R O B E R O M A N S K S O N O F G O D I X Z
T S O B E N A I L S Y U H N Z M B A L E S V
P J B T H R E E D A Y S N S N G H G K S L N
N C F A N G E L S W S Z G W Q V C N M T D B

ROMANS
RISEN
SACRIFICE
THREE DAYS
ANGELS
SAVIOR

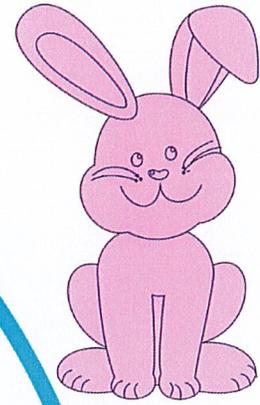
GOLGOTHA
BLOOD
SIMON OF CYRENE
JESUS
ROSE
LAMB

SON OF GOD
TOMB
APOSTLES
CALVARY
CROSS
NAILS

MARY
CRUCIFIXION
PILATE
HIGH PRIEST
PASSOVER
SUNDAY

Easter

Word Search



S O A
R S C C M
D P T E Q X E
V I E E L Z L X M
S Y K O E E F M O J Y
J S G M E B P C H Q L
S A G W C E R D Y E I H M
B Q O Z E R A H O A C D B
V U K N G R T W T E A W E
G N N A G E I N F A R E F
F R D N S U O J I T R C I
Q A W L Y T N U H P O H N
G B P E T U D K O U T I D
S B F O E A B H R X S C N
V I C H O C O L A T E K W
T K G H H F H I B S S
Q V R B O U Q U E T M
Z D L U N M Z I C
F L O W E R S
J T O Q B



Word list:

BASKET
BOUQUET
BUNNY
CARROTS

CELEBRATION
CHICKS
CHOCOLATE
COTTONTAIL

DYE
EGGS
FIND
FLOWERS

HIDE
HOP
PEEP
RABBIT