

Westminster United Church

Order of Worship

April 1, 2018

(*invites people to stand as they are able; people's part in **bold** type)

Easter Sunday

Prelude

Welcome

***Call to Worship**



Christ has risen. **Christ has risen indeed.**

God is alive . . . **new birth is given.**

Hope is alive . . . **a new age is dawning.**

Joy is alive . . . **redemption is here.**

Love is alive . . . **death cannot harm us.**

We are alive . . . **new life is within us.**

The church is alive . . . **God's Spirit is within us.**

Let us celebrate the God of resurrection!

***Hymn VU 155**

v 1,2,4

"Jesus Christ Is Risen Today"

Prayer of Approach

Lord God, you loved this world so much that you sent Jesus to live among the world and to show us the way. Help us to live in the gladness and grace of Easter Sunday, every day. Let us have hearts of thankfulness for your love. Let us have eyes that see your grace and rejoice in our salvation. Help us to walk in that mighty grace and tell your good news to the world. Amen.

Conversation *"Spreading the Joy"*

Gift of Music

"Easter Medley" Westminster Chorale
(*Christ the Lord is Risen Today; Christ Arose; Crown Him with Many Crowns*)

Scriptures

John 20: 11-18 *Mary Magdalene at the empty tomb*

Acts 10: 34-43 *Peter preaches to a crowd*

Message

"No Fooling!"

Brian Stocks

Prayers of the People; Lord's Prayer VU 959

Life and Work of Westminster

Offertory Prayer

Ever present and resurrecting God, we give you thanks for your gift of everlasting life as witnessed through our Saviour Jesus. Accept these offerings as a sign of our thanks, and may they be used toward fulfillment of your divine purpose. Amen.

Offering

***Hymn VU 164** *"The Day of Resurrection"*

***Commissioning**

May the miracle and joy of the empty cross encourage and empower you to live your lives in the full knowledge that you are not alone. Know that the love and spirit of the resurrected Saviour go with you wherever your path may lead. Amen.

***Choral Response VU 173**

"Thine Is the Glory"

v 1,2

Postlude



Moderator's Easter 2018 Message:

Hallelujah, Christ Is Risen! (Transcript of video message)

Hallelujah, Christ is risen! He is risen indeed, hallelujah!

That is our Easter refrain—full of joy and conviction. But that sure wasn't the response of Jesus' disciples on that first Easter morning. The various gospel accounts show the disciples responding with awe, fear, incomprehension, doubt, terror, and amazement.

Our response is born of hindsight. Knowing what we now know about how it all turned out, we think of Easter morning and we declare, "Hallelujah!"

But when one is in the midst of resurrection, when it is happening to you or around you right now, it's a very different experience: full of uncertainty, anxiety, dread, and disbelief.

Resurrection is, by its very nature, unexpected and unimaginable. We cannot see it coming; we are never prepared for it. It is the revelation of new life where just moments ago there was nothing but the possibility of despair and loss.

The hallelujahs we announce at Easter are our affirmation that despite whatever hopelessness threatens to overwhelm us, we trust in the power of God's love to bring about resurrection within our lives. We don't know when, we don't know how, we don't know what it will look like, and we will certainly be confused and confounded by it if it should happen. But today, our hallelujahs declare that we believe resurrection is possible.

And so we do not lose hope, no matter how hopeless a situation appears.

This Easter season, as you sing, shout, whisper, and proclaim "Hallelujah!" may it strengthen your faith in the power and possibility of new life for you, your church, and our world.

May we truly be a resurrection people.