

GATHERING

Gather in front of your computer or phone in a comfortable, quiet space. Light a candle or turn on a lamp to acknowledge Christ's presence in your worship space. Offer your attendance by posting a greeting or prayer request in the [Facebook](#) comments or fill out the [website](#) connect card.

CALL TO WORSHIP (John 20:1-17)

Reading: "The Mourning" **John 20:1**
Early in the morning of the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb and saw that the stone had been taken away from the tomb.

Response: *Low in the grave he lay, Jesus my Savior* *UMH 322*
Waiting the coming day, Jesus my Lord

Reading: "The Investigation" **John 20:2-10**
² She ran to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved, and said, "They have taken the Lord from the tomb, and we don't know where they've put him." ³ Peter and the other disciple left to go to the tomb. ⁴ They were running together, but the other disciple ran faster than Peter and was the first to arrive at the tomb. ⁵ Bending down to take a look, he saw the linen cloths lying there, but he didn't go in. ⁶ Following him, Simon Peter entered the tomb and saw the linen cloths lying there. ⁷ He also saw the face cloth that had been on Jesus' head. It wasn't with the other clothes but was folded up in its own place. ⁸ Then the other disciple, the one who arrived at the tomb first, also went inside. He saw and believed. ⁹ They didn't yet understand the scripture that Jesus must rise from the dead. ¹⁰ Then the disciples returned to the place where they were staying.

Response: *Vainly they watch his bed, Jesus my Savior* *UMH 322*
Vainly they seal the dead, Jesus my Lord

Reading: "The Encounter" **John 20:11-17**
¹¹ Mary stood outside near the tomb, crying. As she cried, she bent down to look into the tomb. ¹² She saw two angels dressed in white, seated where the body of Jesus had been, one at the head and one at the foot. ¹³ The angels asked her, "Woman, why are you crying?" She replied, "They have taken away my Lord, and I don't know where they've put him." ¹⁴ As soon as she had said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but she didn't know it was Jesus. ¹⁵ Jesus said to her, "Woman, why are you crying? Who are you looking for?" Thinking he was the gardener, she replied, "Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have put him and I will get him." ¹⁶ Jesus said to her, "Mary." She turned and said to him in Aramaic, "Rabbouni" (which means *Teacher*). ¹⁷ Jesus said to her, "Don't hold on to me, for I haven't yet gone up to my Father. Go to my brothers and sisters and tell them, 'I'm going up to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.'"

Response: *Death cannot keep its prey, Jesus my Savior* *UMH 322*
He tore the bars away, Jesus my Lord

Up from the grave he arose
With a mighty triumph o'er his foes
He arose a victor from the dark domain
And he lives forever with his saints to reign
He arose! He arose! Hallelujah! Christ arose!

OPENING PRAYER

God of mystery and might, your wondrous love always seems to catch us off guard. We come to the tomb looking for death, but find life instead. As we behold the glory of our salvation, take us back to that moment of discovery – when grief and loss gave way to a glimmer of hope. Before we shout our alleluias, remind us of the moment when despair was transported into glimpses of new possibilities. In the holy awe of Easter morning, we take a moment of silent gratitude that Christ calls each of us by name. *(moment of silence)* Shout it from the mountaintop: Christ is risen! Alleluia! Christ is risen indeed!

HYMN OF PRAISE

“Christ the Lord Is Risen Today”

UMH 302

1. Christ the lord is risen today, Alleluia!
Earth and heaven in chorus say, Alleluia!
Raise your joys and triumphs high, Alleluia!
Sing, ye heavens, and earth reply, Alleluia!
2. Love’s redeeming work is done, Alleluia!
Fought the fight, the battle won, Alleluia!
Death in vain forbids him rise, Alleluia!
Christ has opened paradise, Alleluia!
3. Lives again our glorious King, Alleluia!
Where, O death, is now thy sting? Alleluia!
Once he died our souls to save, Alleluia!
Where’s thy victory, boasting grave? Alleluia!
4. Soar we now where Christ has led, Alleluia!
Following our exalted Head, Alleluia!
Made like him, like him we rise, Alleluia!
Ours the cross, the grave, the skies, Alleluia!

SERMON

“While It Was Still Dark”

Pastor Melody Webb

PASTORAL PRAYER *(written by Gail Ramshaw)*

Post prayer requests in the [Facebook](#) comments or fill out the [website](#) connect card.

LORD’S PRAYER

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed by thy name.
Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread;
And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil,
For thine is the kingdom, and the power and the glory for ever and ever. Amen.

OFFERING

Make your offering [online](#) or mail checks to 1421 W. Broadway St., Polk City, IA 50226 (Attn: Finance Secretary)

WORDS OF BLESSING

From darkness and despair, we find hope and joy. From doubt and betrayal, we find trust and faith. From suffering and death, we find healing and life. Christ is risen. Christ is risen indeed. Go and tell the good news!

SONG OF SENDING

“Amazing Grace (My Chains Are Gone)”

CCLI #4768151

1. **Amazing grace how sweet the sound
That saved a wretch like me
I once was lost but now I'm found
Was blind but now I see**
2. **'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear
And grace my fears relieved
How precious did that grace appear
The hour I first believed**

**Chorus: My chains are gone I've been set free
My God my Savior has ransomed me
And like a flood His mercy rains
Unending love amazing grace**

3. **The Lord has promised good to me
His word my hope secures
He will my shield and portion be
As long as life endures**

**Chorus: My chains are gone I've been set free
My God my Savior has ransomed me
And like a flood His mercy rains
Unending love amazing grace**

**My chains are gone I've been set free
My God my Savior has ransomed me
And like a flood His mercy rains
Unending love amazing grace**

4. **The earth shall soon dissolve like snow
The sun forbear to shine
But God who called me here below
I'll be forever thine
I'll be forever thine
I am forever thine**

Today's liturgy is from The Abingdon Worship Annual edited by Mary J. Scifres and B.J. Beu, Copyright © Abingdon Press.