



United Methodist Church  
of Westport and Weston

April 7, 2024  
Hybrid Worship – 10:00am  
Communion Sunday  
2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Easter

*Our Vision is to Know, to Live and  
to Share the Love of Jesus Christ.*

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CENTERING PRAYER

*Lord Jesus, after your death and resurrection you sent your followers into the world to proclaim your resurrection to the entire world. Send us into the world to bear witness to all you have done in our lives.*

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE

*Le Papillon Op. 50 No. 19*  
John Hoddinott, guitar

M. Giuliani

\*CALL TO WORSHIP & OPENING PRAYER

Sing a new song!

**A joyful melody of springtime glory and rebirth!**

Sing praise to our Still-Laughing Easter God!

**Who has rolled away the bindings of yesterday.**

Immerse your anxiety and despair in the fountain of new birth.

**We place our visions and hopes on the table of wine and wheat.**

For God has taken ordinary things.

**And made them extraordinary.**

Sing a new song!

**Holy God,**

**as you have taken what we call an absurdity**

**and turned it into possibility,**

**as you have coaxed us to sing springtime alleluias**

**where once there was a gray dawn,**

**as you have called us out of the tombs we inhabit**

**into an undreamed of tomorrow,**

**we praise you for this new season of life!**

**Come, Risen Christ,**

**in newness and hope on this Eastertide day. Amen.**

\*HYMN

*The Day of Resurrection*

UMH 303

MESSAGE FOR ALL GOD'S CHILDREN

“Total Eclipse of the Heart”

Pastor Heather

*Following the Message, all children are invited to remain in Worship. The Nursery is open and staffed for children under age five. There are coloring pages and activity bags in the Narthex.*

SCRIPTURE READING

Acts 1:1-14

Dean Zarras

This is the Word of God for the People of God. **Thanks be to God.**

SERMON

“Back to the Table

Rev. Heather A. M. Sinclair

## OFFERING OUR PRAYERS &amp; GIFTS

*Through our baptism and membership in the church, we covenant to give of our prayers, presence, gifts, service and witness. Financial gifts, tithes and offerings support the mission and ministries of this congregation and the connectional church. Online giving is available at [WestportUMC.org](http://WestportUMC.org).*

*Prayer cards may be placed in the offering plates to be lifted up during the Prayers of the People and/or added to the weekly Prayer List.*

## MUSIC OFFERING

*Praise Him! Praise Him!*  
Ahyoung Son, piano

C. Allen, arr. M. Hayes

\*HYMN OF THANKSGIVING *Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow*

UMH 94

*T. Ken, G. H. Vieira ©1989 United Methodist Publishing House; One License # A-735187. All rights reserved.*

***Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;  
Praise God, all creatures here below: Alleluia! Alleluia!  
Praise God, the source of all our gifts!  
Praise Jesus Christ, whose power uplifts!  
Praise the Spirit, Holy Spirit! Alleluia! Alleluia!***

## OFFERING PRAYER

## PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

## SHARING THE PEACE OF CHRIST

## HOLY COMMUNION

## THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.

**We lift them up to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, almighty God.

You created all things ...

from the cleverness of the fox to the swiftness of a river,

from the quirkiness of the clownfish to the playfulness of a puppy,

from the puzzle-solving intelligence of the octopus to the noble height of a sequoia.

No one could look at a platypus and not see your sense of humor, Creative God!

You created us too, each bearing your image but also unique in our own ways. You loved us with that very first breath of life, and even when we turn away, still, your love remains steadfast.

You have continued to guide and goad us, ushering us towards the path of justice and righteousness. You worked through teachers and tricksters, through prophets and priests, through schemers and scholars, through fools and Pharaohs, all a part of this mischievous story of your tenacious love for us, your Creation.

And so, with all your creatures—great and small—on earth and all the company of heaven we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

**Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord, God of joy and creativity,  
Heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest.  
Blessed is the One who comes in the name of the Lord.  
Hosanna in the highest!**

Holy are you, and mischievous too! For who would have guessed that the Creator of the universe would take on human flesh to come and live among us in Jesus the Christ.

Jesus, master storyteller that he was, kept explaining again and again that the wisdom and justice of God are not what we humans keep imagining. Jesus kept inviting folks to stretch their imaginations. He modeled how to color outside of the lines of human institutions with God's love. And he painted vivid imagery of God's kingdom that turns power upside down and inside out. Jesus used playful analogies, dramatic hyperbole, and even some comedic irony.

Experiencing the fullness of human life—Jesus played! Jesus laughed! Jesus rejoiced! Jesus probably even heard and told jokes! And Jesus kept on inviting adults who were determined to take things all-seriously all-the-time to be more like playful children.

And teaching the disciples, like children, Jesus loved a good object lesson. So even on that last night of his human life, Jesus tried one last time to engage the disciples' imaginations.

He took what he had at hand—a loaf of bread. And he invited them to see not just a loaf of bread but to see, to imagine, to experience his body. Jesus instructed them that when they ate this bread, they should re-member, re-tell, re-construct the meaning of his life and love and share that experience in community.

And then he took the cup, gave thanks to God, and invited the disciples to keep imagining, to keep leaning into the mystery of our faith—that in this cup, we taste not only grapes but we taste salvation. We taste forgiveness. We taste a joy that outlasts and outlaughs even death itself.

And so, we remember.

We remember Jesus.

We remember his last supper with the disciples.

We remember the mystery we encounter at this table—the mystery of God's grace.

We remember that God flipped the script yet again declaring that it is precisely in the breaking of the bread, that we are made whole.

And so as we remember, we proclaim together the mystery of our faith:

**Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.**

Let all God's people joyfully say, **Amen.**

THE LORD'S PRAYER (*You are invited to pray in the version and language of your heart.*)

BREAKING THE BREAD

SHARING THE BREAD AND THE CUP

*In the United Methodist Church, all who wish to receive the love and grace of Jesus are welcome at the Lord's Table. At the direction of the ushers, you will be invited forward to receive a cup of juice and piece of gluten-free bread. Move down the altar rail to eat the bread and drink the juice. Leave your empty cup in the altar rail. Please return to your seat by the side aisles.*

*If you prefer pre-sealed communion and/or for the bread and cup to be brought to you, please notify the servers. If you are worshipping at home, the blessing of the table extends to the bread and cup in your worship space.*

COMMUNION MUSIC

*Come, Let Us Eat*

UMH 625

*Words & Music: Billema Kwillia, ©1972 Lutheran World Federation, One License Song #19641*

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

**God of celebration, you have nourished and filled us with your love and grace. Now send us forth in joy to extend the invitation to abundant life through Jesus Christ. Amen.**

\*HYMN

*Easter People, Raise Your Voices*

UMH 304

*William M. James, ©1979 United Methodist Publishing House, One License Song #18255*

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

*Thine Be the Glory*  
Ahyoung Son, organ

G. F. Handel



*Portions of the Order of Worship are adapted from:*

*The United Methodist Hymnal, The United Methodist Book of Worship,  
and The Faith We Sing, Nashville, TN: The United Methodist Publishing House*

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*Narrative Lectionary at WorkingPreacher.org*

*Call to Worship: Still Laughing God: Service Prayers for the Second Sunday of Easter, [www.ucc.org/worship/worship-ways](http://www.ucc.org/worship/worship-ways)*

*Communion Liturgy: Rev. Angela Wells, Christ UMC,*

*Owen Brown Interfaith Center, Maryland*

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UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

OF WESTPORT AND WESTON

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OUR MINISTERS

EVERY PARTICIPANT IN THE LIFE OF OUR CONGREGATION

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