

# Centre Street Congregational Church

An Open and Affirming, Shared Ministry  
of the United Church of Christ



## WE GATHER

***Prelude***

"Shades of Dawn"  
Bonnie Beiswenger, pianist

Harold Strack

***Welcome and Introduction***<sup>1</sup>

Cindy Huggins

***Candle Lighting***

"Consecrated, Surrendered, Loved"<sup>2</sup>

Bell Choir

---

<sup>1</sup> Lent series by Marcia McFee, Worship Design Studios, 2022. Adapted, used, and livestreamed with permission.

<sup>2</sup> Arr. Linda Lamb. Medley of "Take My Life and Let It Be," "I Surrender All," and "My Jesus, I Love Thee."

Holy One, you whose love endures forever, you keep offering us new life and hope, no matter what. We praise you, for you are our strength and our salvation. We shall not die, but live, for you call us into the light. You encourage us to reach for the sun, unfurl our full colors, and know that we are held in the deep and rich soil of your garden—and this is *more* than good enough for us! Amen.

**“In the Bulb There Is a Flower”**

NCH 433

In the bulb there is a flower; in the seed, an apple tree;  
in cocoons, a hidden promise: butterflies will soon be free!  
In the cold and snow of winter, there’s a spring that waits to be,  
unrevealed until its season, something God alone can see.

There’s a song in every silence, seeking word and melody;  
there’s a dawn for every darkness, bringing hope to you and me.  
From the past will come the future; what it holds, a mystery,  
unrevealed until its season, something God alone can see.

In our end is our beginning; in our time, infinity;  
in our doubt there is believing; in our life, eternity.  
In our death, a resurrection; at the last, a victory,  
unrevealed until its season, something God alone can see.

**Honest Questions, Compassionate Response**

Linda Mills

Becky Davis

Linda Easter is tricky when it comes to faith. We come for the happy ending, the “and then they lived happily ever after” part. The resurrection story proclaims hope over despair, and life over death.

Becky Yet we know that life continued—and continues for us—as a story of spiking heartbreak moments that are not forever fixed. The nature of being created for love is that we will always hunger for more, that there is never enough life and love to satisfy. And endings often come too soon.

Linda But perhaps a good enough faith is one that moves through the chronic nature of being incurably human with an eye for resurrection moments that assure us that this good enough life is worthy of our amazement. I invite you to imagine in this silence the deep seed and shoot that is growing within you, yearning for light and life. Let’s share a moment of silent reflection . . .

*Moment of silent reflection*

- Becky Hear this compassionate word from the prophet Isaiah: “I am about to create new heavens and a new earth; the former things shall not be remembered or come to mind. But be glad and rejoice forever in what I am creating; for I am about to create Jerusalem as a joy, and its people as a delight.”<sup>3</sup>
- Linda Know that already, God is offering us freedom from the fear of isolation and anguish at endings, inviting us to community and creativity for birthing new life—unexpected life, unending love.
- Becky And know that despite our sometimes faltering steps, in the name of Jesus Christ, we are being forgiven, even now.
- Linda In the name of Jesus Christ, we are forgiven. Glory to God!  
Amen.

**WE PROCLAIM**

***“Now the Green Blade Rises”***

NCH 238

Now the green blade rises from the buried grain;  
Wheat that in dark earth for many days has lain;  
Love lives again, that with the dead has been:  
Love is come again like wheat that rises green.

In the grave they laid their Love whom hate had slain,  
Thinking that their Love would never wake again,  
Laid in the earth like grain that sleeps unseen:  
Love is come again like wheat that rises green.

Christ came forth at Easter, like the risen grain,  
Jesus, who for three days in the grave had lain,  
Quick from the dead like the risen One is seen:  
Love is come again like wheat that rises green.

<sup>3</sup> Second Corinthians 5:16–17. All Scripture readings from the Common English Bible.

When our hearts are wintry, grieving, or in pain,  
Christ's warm touch can call us back to life again,  
Fields of our hearts that dead and bare have been:  
Love is come again like wheat that rises green.

## **Gospel Reading**

John 20:1–18

Sarina Brooks

Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the tomb. So she ran and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved, and said to them, “They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him.” Then Peter and the other disciple set out and went toward the tomb. The two were running together, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. He bent down to look in and saw the linen wrappings lying there, but he did not go in. Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb. He saw the linen wrappings lying there, and the cloth that had been on Jesus’s head, not lying with the linen wrappings but rolled up in a place by itself. Then the other disciple, who reached the tomb first, also went in, and he saw and believed, for as yet they did not understand the scripture, that he must rise from the dead. Then the disciples returned to their homes.

But Mary stood weeping outside the tomb. As she wept, she bent over to look into the tomb, and she saw two angels in white sitting where the body of Jesus had been lying, one at the head and the other at the feet. They said to her, “Woman, why are you weeping?” She said to them, “They have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid him.” When she had said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not know that it was Jesus. Jesus said to her, “Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you looking for?” Supposing him to be the gardener, she said to him, “Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away.” Jesus said to her, “Mary!” She turned and said to him in Hebrew, “Rabbouni!” (which means Teacher). Jesus said to her, “Do not touch me, because I have not yet ascended to the Father. But go to my brothers and say to them, ‘I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.’” Mary Magdalene went and announced to the disciples, “I have seen the Lord,” and she told them that he had said these things to her.

## **Message**

“A Good Enough Gardener”<sup>4</sup>

read by Lisa Bartlett

---

<sup>4</sup> Kate Bowler and Jessica Richie, *Good Enough: 40ish Devotionals for a Life of Imperfection*. NY: Convergent (1922): 226–232.

## WE RESPOND

### *Preparation for Prayer*

“Grant Us Wisdom”

Chancel Choir

Grant us wisdom to perceive you, hearts awakened to receive you, minds alert to thoughts that grieve you, God of mercy, hear us.

Grant us faithfulness in praying, strength to keep our souls from straying, sense to cease from disobeying, God of mercy, hear us.

### *Prayers of the People*

#### *The Lord's Prayer*

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be 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 forever. Amen.

### *Prayer Response*

“Grant Us Wisdom”

Chancel Choir

Grant us diligence in doing, patience when your truth pursuing, eager to receive renewing, God of mercy, hear us.

### *“An Easter Story”*<sup>5</sup>

Bell Choir

---

<sup>5</sup> Arr. Karen Robards. Medley of “All Glory, Laud, and Honor,” “O Sacred Head, Now Wounded,” and “Jesus Christ Is Risen Today.”

## WE GO FORTH

### ***A Blessing for You Who Are Being Planted***<sup>6</sup>

Linda Mills

Blessed are you who are buried. You who feel stuck in the depths of grief and despair or who sit in the pit of unknowing. You who are learning to trust the timing of a tender Gardener.

Blessed are you who are growing, you who burst with new life, fresh creativity. Who understand the pain that sometimes comes with stretching and changing, pruning and being cut back.

And blessed are you in your season of fruitfulness. You who are learning to abide in the vine, and who taste the sweetness of God's loving-kindness. The God who was there all along—planting, waiting, watering, pruning, delighting. The God who pays careful attention to God's garden.

### ***Invitation to Generosity***

Cindy Huggins

Beloved friends, who we are—and who we are becoming—reveals God's presence in the world. That divine presence is reflected even more fully, powerfully, and transformatively as we unite in this Beloved Community. Let us bring ourselves, our gifts, and our resources together that God's work may be done and God's will may be accomplished.

### ***Doxology***

Praise God from whom all blessings flow. Praise God, all creatures here below. Praise God for all that love has done, Creator, Christ, and Spirit one. Amen.

### ***Prayer of Dedication***

Cindy Huggins

Generous God, in light of your extravagant blessings—no matter what the state of the world or our imperfect lives—we offer our gifts and ourselves, and know that you transform it into love. Amen.

---

<sup>6</sup> From *Good Enough: 40ish Devotionals for a Life of Imperfection*, by Kate Bowler and Jessica Richie.

Christ the Lord is risen today, Alleluia!  
Mortal tongues and angels say, Alleluia!  
Raise your joys and triumphs high, Alleluia!  
Sing, glad heavens, and earth reply, Alleluia!

Let the Victor's people sing, Alleluia!  
Where, O death, is now your sting? Alleluia!  
Dying once, Christ lives to save, Alleluia!  
Where your victory, O grave? Alleluia!

Love's redeeming work is done, Alleluia!  
Fought the fight, the battle won, Alleluia!  
Death in vain forbids Christ rise, Alleluia!  
God has opened paradise, Alleluia!

Soar we now where Christ has led, Alleluia!  
Following our exalted Head, Alleluia!  
Made like Christ, like Christ we rise, Alleluia!  
Ours the cross, the grave, the skies, Alleluia!

***Benediction***

Sarina Brooks

And now, may the God who loves all of creation, especially the lonely bits,  
and Jesus, our companion along this crooked path called life,  
and the Holy Spirit, who loves to improvise in surprising ways,  
go with you, dwell among you, and give you joy.  
Amen.

***Postlude***

"Christ is Alive!"

Keesucker  
trad. Irish air medley

## **CENTRE STREET BULLETIN BOARD**

### **Shared ministry**

Centre Street Church is a shared ministry led by volunteers who offer their time, gifts, and energy to the ongoing mission of this spiritual community. While honoring our rich history that stretches back over 250 years, we are actively seeking new and exciting ways to follow God's call into the future. We'd love to have you join us!

### **Pastoral care**

Pastoral care is available to Centre Street parishioners by contacting Sarina Brooks, Director of Pastoral Care, at 207-263-8138 or [sarinabrooks18@yahoo.com](mailto:sarinabrooks18@yahoo.com).

**Please note:** For the next few months, Sarina will be engaged in an internship at Union Congregational Church of Hancock, UCC. During this time, she will be attending worship services at Centre Street only on the second Sunday of each month. However, this will not affect her work as our Director of Pastoral Care. Please continue to reach out to her for support if you're experiencing difficult times, and rest assured that Sarina will continue to respond promptly to phone calls and email. She's still here for you!

### **Giving**

To support the work of Centre Street Church, visit the [Tithe.ly](https://www.tithe.ly) website, leave a gift in the offering plate at the back of the sanctuary, or mail a check to the church office. Thank you!

### **Events and opportunities**

To sign up for our e-newsletter, email the church or visit our website.

Tu.	4/2	5:30	Deacons (Zoom)
We.	4/3	6:00	Worship Planning Team (Zoom)
Th.	4/4	9:00	Church office open until 1:00
Sa.	4/6	10:00	Private event in the vestry until 3:00
Su.	4/7	9:00	Chancel Choir rehearsal
		10:00	Worship service
		11:15	Chancel Choir rehearsal
			Hannaford Card reload day
Th.	4/11	9:00	Church office open until 1:00
Sa.	4/13	1:00	Memorial service for Ernie Reisman
Su.	4/14	10:00	Worship service

### **Contact information**

Office hours	Thursdays 9:00–1:00 (Linda Mills)
Phone	207-255-6665 (leave a message)
Email	<a href="mailto:CentreStreetChurchUCC@gmail.com">CentreStreetChurchUCC@gmail.com</a>
Snail mail	PO Box 265, Machias, ME 04654
Website	<a href="http://www.CentreStreetChurch.org">www.CentreStreetChurch.org</a>