



The Congregational Church of Needham, *United Church of Christ*

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Rev. Maddie Foster, *acting senior minister*

Valerie Becker, *director of music*

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Cindy Sullivan, *financial administrator*

Tom Mollerus, *moderator*

Pastor-Parish Relations Committee

on sabbatical

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March 31, 2024: Easter Sunday

CENTERING An excerpt from “The Strangest Part” Christine Woolgar

INTROIT *God of Grace and God of Glory,* Phil Gotwals, horn
arr. Michael Ware

WELCOME Rev. Maddie Foster

SHARING THE STORY Matthew 28:1-10

One: On this Easter morning of now done darkness we lift our hearts
with praise, we open our lives with joy! Alleluia! Christ is risen!

Many: Christ is risen indeed! Alleluia!

One: We give thanks for our Saviour, the Light of the world who has
brought death to death, and life to life. Alleluia! Christ is risen!

Many: Christ is risen indeed! Alleluia!

One: We come into God’s presence with singing, our hearts echoing the
chorus of the ages. Alleluia! Christ is risen!

Many: Christ is risen indeed! Alleluia!

**ALL: *Let us worship God together, in spirit and in truth, in word and
in deed.***

BLOOMING THE CROSS *As the music begins, you are invited to come
forward with your flowers (and use the provided flowers) to “bloom” the
cross as a sign of Easter resurrection.*

HYMN *Christ the Lord is Risen Today! (see below)*

READING FROM SCRIPTURE *From the Gospels, John 20:1-18*

SERMON “They Did Not Understand” Rev. Maddie Foster

ANTHEM *That Easter Day with Joy Was Bright,* Chancel Choir
arr. John Leavitt

*That Easter day with joy was bright, the sun shone out with fairer light
when to their longing eyes restored. The apostles saw their risen Lord!
Alle, alleluia! Our Lord is risen on this Day!*

*O Jesus, King of gentleness, with constant love our hearts possess;
That we may give You all our days, the tribute of our grateful praise.
Alleluia, alleluia, allelu! Our Lord is risen on this day!*

*All thanks, O risen Lord we give to You, once dead, but now alive!
To God, the Father, equal praise, with Son and Spirit now we raise!
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!
O Lord of all, with us, abide, in this, our joyful Eastertide!*

SHARING OUR PRAYERS (“O God, hear our prayer”)

THE LORD’S PRAYER

(using these or whichever words are closest to your own heart)

**Our Father/Mother in heaven, holy is your name. Your reign come,
your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily
bread. And forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against
us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For
yours is the kin-dom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.**

HYMN *Christ is Risen, Shout Hosanna! (see below)*

PARTNERING IN THE GOOD NEWS

SINGING OUR THANKS AND PRAISE

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise God, all creatures here below;
Praise God above, you heavenly hosts:
Creator, Christ, and Holy Ghost.**

BLESSING

CHORAL BENEDICTION *Old Irish Blessing,* *Chancel Choir*
Denes Agay

*May the Lord rise to meet you, May the wind be always at your back,
The sun, shine warm upon your face, the rains fall softly upon your fields,
And until we meet again, May God, may God,
May God hold you in the palm of His hand.
May the Lord bless you and keep you, May the Lord cause his face to
shine upon you and give you peace.*

POSTLUDE

*The altar flowers have been given to the glory of God and in loving
memory of Esther H. Ohrn from her loving daughter, Sandra O. Moose.*

***Would you like to make this congregation your church home?
Would you like to know more about what it means to be a member here?
Reach out to Rev. Maddie at revmaddie@needhamucc.org***



Kids'N'Church

Children of all ages are always welcome in worship!
Quiet books and **pew pals** (soft toys) are available in our **family room**, just outside the sanctuary, where you'll also find a cozy couch, big toy box, and a speaker that broadcasts the service. All bathrooms have **changing tables**. Our **Nursery** is available for infants & toddlers when volunteers are available. **Sunday School** (for children in older Pre-K through Grade 5) and **Youth Group** (grades 6-12) are both offered during our 10am worship service on the 2nd & 4th Sundays. All children and youth remain in the sanctuary with their families to share **communion** (as parents decide), usually on the first Sunday of the month.

Have questions about our Children's and Youth Ministries?

Check in with Rev. Maddie after the service or email

RevMaddie@NeedhamUCC.org



Your support makes a difference.

You may notice we do not collect an offering during our worship service but there are multiple ways to give financially. You can leave a cash or check offering in the collection plate in the foyer outside the sanctuary. Paypal, credit, or debit card donations can be made online at: www.NeedhamUCC.org/giving

Thank you for your generous contributions to support the work of our congregation and our ministry partners in our community and around the world.

CHURCH ACTIVITIES & ANNOUNCEMENTS: March 31, 2024



We Need YOU to Teach Sunday School!

Both our Sunday School and Youth Group programs rely on the help of volunteers to teach and lead! All of the material prep is done in advance by Rev. Maddie and lesson plans are available online to make teaching as straightforward as possible for our volunteers. When you arrive to teach you simply grab the box marked for that Sunday, give everything a once-over, and prepare to welcome kids to the classroom! **Sign up at this link:** <https://tinyurl.com/CEYouth2324>



Sabbatical Project: Lay Preachers Series

While Rev. John is on sabbatical (until May 19), we'll be reconnecting to our ministry as a congregation through a series of sermons delivered by church members serving on our ministry teams: Prayer & Care (2/25), Christian Education (3/10), Environmental Ministries (3/17), **Guatemala**

Partnership (4/14), Open & Affirming (4/28), and Outreach (5/12). These preaching teams will be working with our consulting pastor, Rev. Chris Mereschuk, to share with us not just what they do, but why, and how it connects to their faith and our shared faith. Please make plans to attend those Sundays to support your fellow members and learn more about who we are as a congregation and who God is calling us to become.



Mindful Meditation ONLINE
Sundays @ 7pm LIVE! via Zoom
at <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/79920727588>

What is mindful meditation? *Focusing on being intensely aware of what you're sensing and feeling in the moment, without interpretation or judgment. Practicing mindfulness involves breathing methods, guided imagery, and other practices to relax the body and mind and help reduce stress.* Join longtime practitioner Sue Findlay and others Sunday evenings online.



HYMN SING: Submit Your Song Suggestions
Sunday, April 7 @ 10 AM

Join us for a special Communion Sunday full of song! Submit your suggestions for hymns online using our Google form or on-site outside the sanctuary. Part of the form will ask you why you love the hymn you're submitting. If you choose to answer this optional question, we may include your reflections when we're introducing hymns.

Submit your favorite hymns online: <https://forms.gle/5yPWZKSeTwot1xzH7>



Immigration Issues Series #3

Sunday, 4/7 @ 11:15am Live and online via Zoom

The Outreach Committee presents a talk on Immigration in Massachusetts by Heather Yountz on Sunday, 4/7 @ 11:15AM LIVE! onsite & online via Zoom at

<http://zoom.us/j/907548568>

"Heather Yountz, a resident of Needham, is currently the Senior Immigration Staff Attorney at MLRI (Massachusetts Law Reform Institute). Previously, she worked as an immigration attorney at Demise & Church. Prior to private practice, she was an asylum attorney in the Immigration Unit at Greater Boston Legal Services." (credit: MLRI website bio)



Join Us for a Sunday Supper Potluck!

Sunday, April 7 @ 5 PM

A potluck dinner will be held at several church members' homes to bring together younger and older, newer and longer-term members for a cozy evening of connection and great food. Simply email Kristin

Mollerus (kristin@mollerus.net) by **Sunday March 24th** and share the names of the adults who will be joining the dinner. And please let us know if you're interested in hosting as we have a few more slots available. We'll do the rest to match you with a host home, and meal contributions will be coordinated at that point. *Looking forward to feasting and fun together!*



Needham UCC & Me: Our Local Church & Denomination

Sunday, May 5 @ 11:11, Reception room

Learn about the ministry of our church and our participation in our denomination, the United Church of Christ. This program is open to anyone but can be particularly useful for folks who have recently become members or who are considering making

Needham UCC their spiritual home through membership.



Women's Retreat @ Craigville Conference Center on Cape Cod

3 PM Friday, May 10 - 3 PM Saturday, May 11, 2024

Join our wonderful community of women for an overnight stay and three meals at the UCC Craigville Retreat Center in Centerville on Cape Cod. This year's theme is "Choosing Hope."

The cost is \$150/person in a dorm-like setting. Events include morning beach walk, yoga, music, discussions, a craft, Communion, and overall camaraderie.

To register: please mail or drop off a check made out to Congregational Church of Needham, with "Women's Retreat" in the memo section, as well as a note listing your email address, phone number, and any food allergies or dietary restrictions. Space is limited to 23 participants, reserve your spot now!

If you have any questions, contact a member of the Women's Retreat planning team:

Stephanie Oddleifson (soddleifson@gmail.com)

Carol Oberle (coberle1@verizon.net)

Carol Brown (walshbrown1@gmail.com)

Janet Jankowiak (janetjankowiak@comcast.net)

Cici Hunt (cicihunt@gmail.com)

Dibby Moder (dmoder@verizon.net)



EXPLORING CONFIRMATION (grades 9&10):

This year's confirmation offering will be partially self-led, with podcast-style lectures from Rev. Maddie and Thursday night Zoom checks in to discuss the lecture and reflection questions. Confirmation students participate in worship by attending with their families, and lead the Call to Worship/read scripture one time. There will also be a service project, the date will be determined by the participants. Participating students will receive the first podcast and reflection questions on April 4. Class dates are April 11, 18, 25, and May 2 via Zoom at 7 pm.

If a student would like to participate but would not be able to make Thursday evening zoom meetings, please reach out and we can find an alternative (for example, submitting written reflections vs. live discussion, etc) If your student is interested in Confirmation this year, email Rev. Maddie by 3/31.

An excerpt from “The Strangest Part” by Christine Woolgar



the strangest part was at the tomb, for early
Sunday morning
Came a violent earthquake and an angel without
warning
And he rolled away the stone
To show the body—it was gone!
And the angel simply said
“He is risen from the dead.”

Then we started hearing stories, people said that they had seen him,
Heard his voice and held his hands, and they were sure that it had been him.
But a question still remained if one did not believe the women:
Who would steal a dead man's corpse
and choose to leave behind the linen?

Christ the Lord is Risen Today!

1. Christ the Lord is risen to - day,
2. Lives a - gain our glo - rious King,
3. Love's re - deem - ing work is done, Al - - le - lu - ia!
4. Soar we now where Christ has led,

The first system of the hymn features a treble and bass staff in B-flat major (two flats) and 4/4 time. The melody is in the treble staff, and the bass staff provides a harmonic accompaniment. The lyrics are written below the staves, with the 'Al - - le - lu - ia!' refrain appearing after the third line.

Mor - tal tongues and an - gels say:
Where, O death, is now thy sting?
Fought the fight, the bat - tle won, Al - - le - lu - ia!
Fol - lowing our ex - alt - ed Head,

The second system continues the melody and accompaniment. The lyrics are written below the staves, with the 'Al - - le - lu - ia!' refrain appearing after the third line.

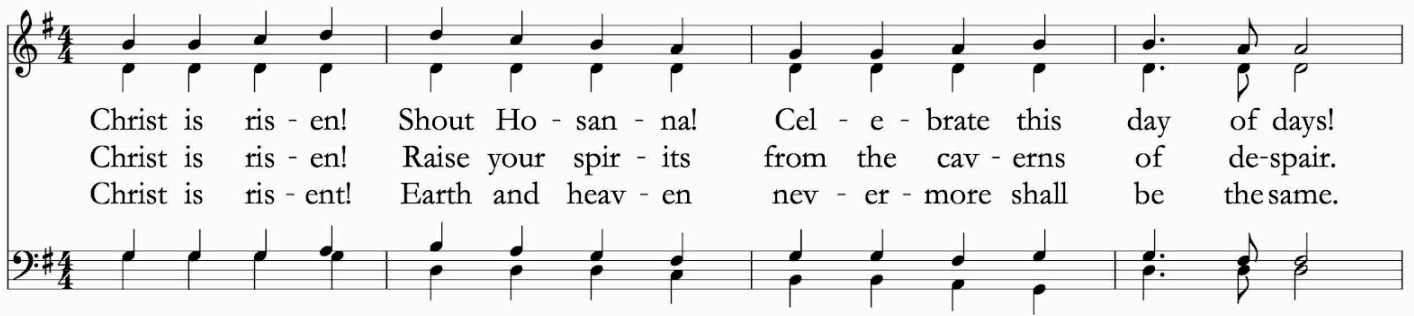
Raise your joys and tri - umphs high,
Dy - ing once, he all doth save,
Death in vain for - bids him rise, Al - - le - lu - ia!
Made like him. like him we rise.

The third system continues the melody and accompaniment. The lyrics are written below the staves, with the 'Al - - le - lu - ia!' refrain appearing after the third line.

Sing, ye heavens, and earth re - ply:
Where thy vic - to - ry, O grave?
Christ has o - pened Par - a - dise, Al - - le - lu - ia!
Ours the cross, the grave, the skies,

The fourth system concludes the hymn. The melody and accompaniment end with a double bar line. The lyrics are written below the staves, with the 'Al - - le - lu - ia!' refrain appearing after the third line.


Christ is Risen, Shout Hosanna!



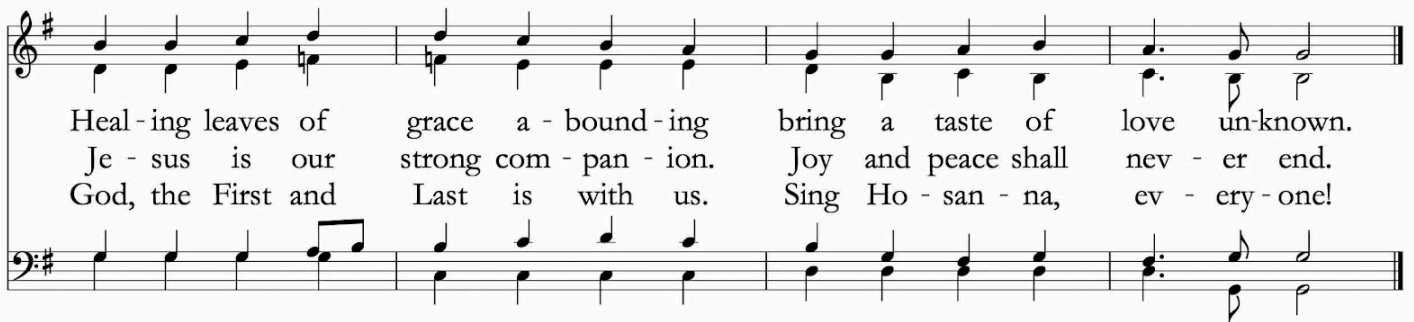
Christ is ris - en! Shout Ho - san - na! Cel - e - brate this day of days!
Christ is ris - en! Raise your spir - its from the cav - erns of de-spair.
Christ is ris - ent! Earth and heav - en nev - er - more shall be the same.



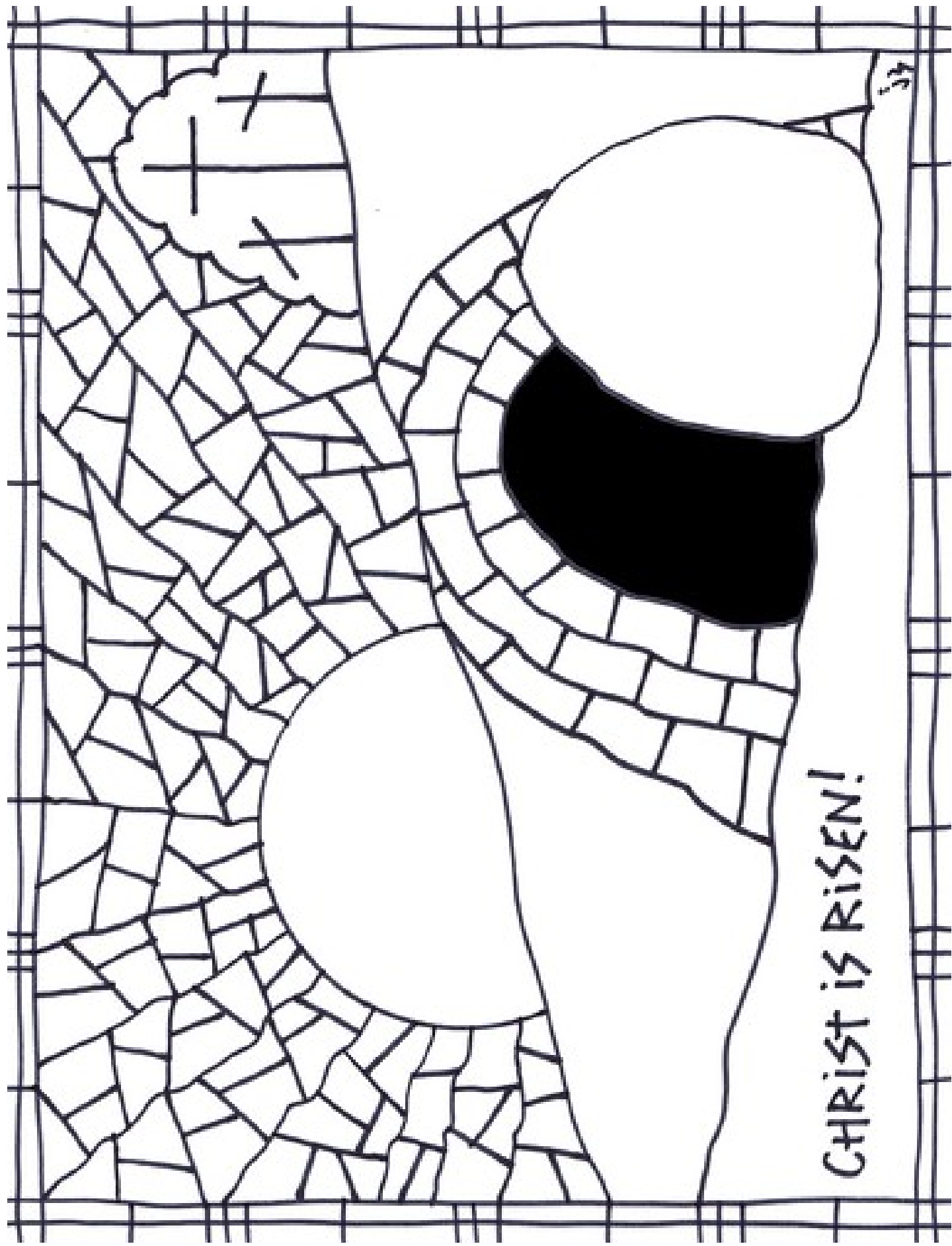
Christ is ris - en! Hush in won - der: all cre - a - tion is a - mazed.
Walk with glad - ness in the morn - ing. See what love can do and dare.
Break the bread of new cre - a - tion where the world is still in pain.



In the des - ert all - sur - round - ing, see a spread - ing tree has grown.
Drink the wine of res - ur - rec - tion, not a ser - vant, but a friend.
Tell its grim, de - mon - ic cho - rus: "Christ is ris - en! Get you gone!"



Heal - ing leaves of grace a - bound - ing bring a taste of love un-known.
Je - sus is our strong com - pan - ion. Joy and peace shall nev - er end.
God, the First and Last is with us. Sing Ho - san - na, ev - ery - one!



CHRIST IS RISEN!