

## First Baptist Church in Needham

Meditations for Sunday, April 19, 2020  
(or whenever you are so led to pause, reflect,  
and pray)

## Second Sunday of Eastertide

Edition 5

*Christ is risen—risen, indeed! Alleluia!*



### Lighting the Candle of Life

*(You may wish to light a candle or use the photo of our Candle of Life as a focus.)*

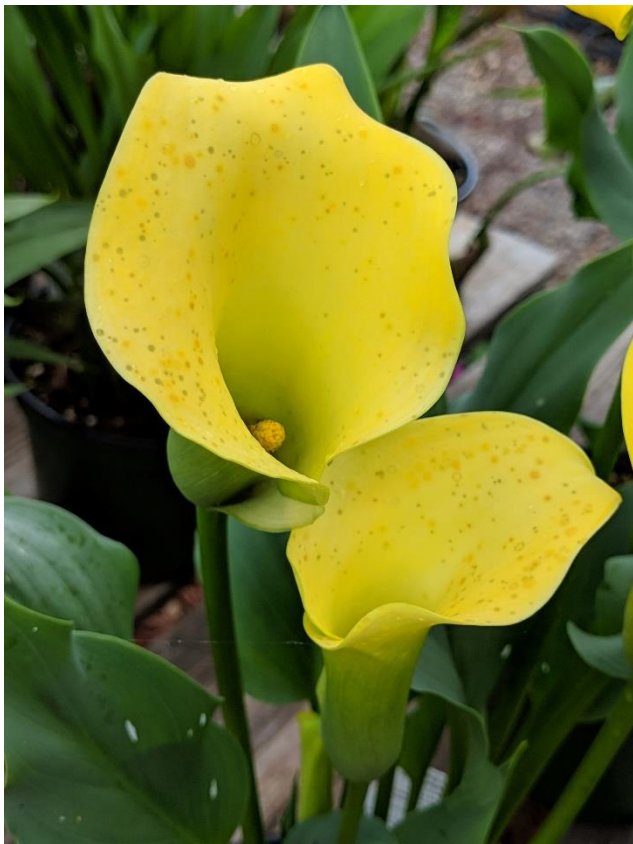
**ALL:** We light the Candle of Life — a candle that represents community, spirit, and the fullness of all of life — birth and death and all of the transitions in between and beyond.

### Hymn 292

### *Because You Live, O Christ*

VRUECTEN

*(As we live into this Eastertide, balancing the risen Christ, spring's burgeoning life, and COVID19's strain and concern, claim these words in hope and promise as written by the prolific New Zealand hymn writer, Shirley Erena Murray (1931-2020). Sing or speak them aloud as your own declaration to a wounded world. To remember the tune, you can hear it played through once here: <https://hymnary.org/media/fetch/148487> .)*



Because you live, O Christ,  
the garden of the world has come to flower,  
the darkness of the tomb  
is flooded with your resurrection power.

*(Refrain)*

*The stone has rolled away and death cannot imprison!  
O sing this Easter Day,  
for Jesus Christ has risen, has risen, has risen!*

Because you live, O Christ,  
the spirit bird of hope is freed for flying,  
our cages of despair  
no longer keep us closed and life denying. *(Refrain)*

Because you live, O Christ,  
the rainbow of your peace will span creation,  
The colors of your love  
will draw all humankind to adoration. *(Refrain)*

## A Reading from John 20: 19-31

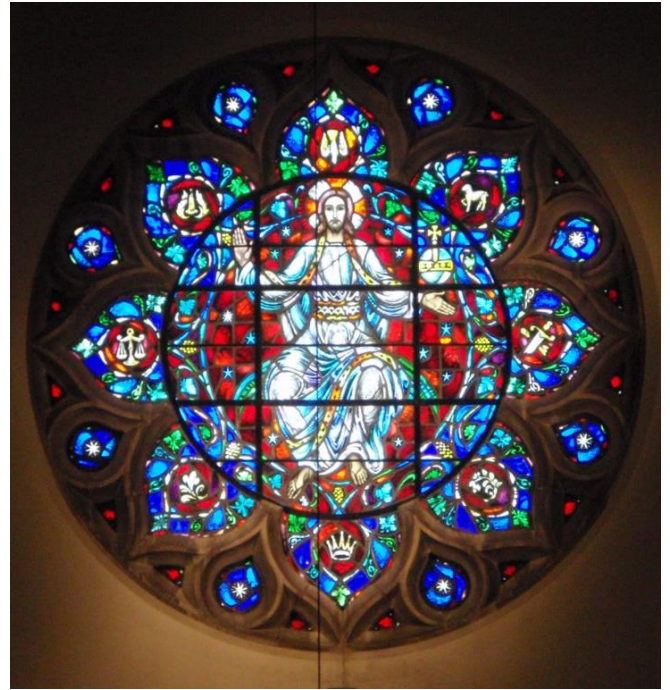
*(Read the text aloud. Pause and notice what image or phrase stands out or "shimmers" as you tell the story.)*

When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors of the house where the disciples had met were locked for fear of the religious leaders, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you." When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained."

But Thomas (who was called the Twin), one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. So the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord." But he said to them, "Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands, and put my finger in the mark of the nails and my hand in his side, I will not believe."

A week later his disciples were again in the house, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were shut, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here and see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it in my side. Do not doubt but believe." Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God!"

Jesus said to him, "Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe." Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book. But these are written so that you may come to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through believing you may have life in his name.



**ALL: The word of our Lord. Thanks be to God.**

**Eastertide Alleluia Hymn 736 Celtic Alleluia** arr. Fintan O'Carroll & Christopher Walker  
*(This Alleluia response to the scripture reading will follow us through the season of Eastertide. Alleluia means "God be praised!" May this response seep into each day in moments great and small as we continue to live in the complexity of both Eastertide and COVID19. You may choose to recite it as a prayer of thanksgiving, sing it to your own tune, or sing along with this online version: [https://youtu.be/kSS\\_TanMwWE](https://youtu.be/kSS_TanMwWE)<sup>1</sup>)*

Alleluia, alleluia.  
Alleluia, alleluia.  
The word of the Lord lasts forever.  
What is the word that is living?

It is brought to us through God's son,  
Jesus Christ.  
Alleluia, alleluia.  
Alleluia, alleluia.

<sup>1</sup> Spirit & Song: Disc B © 2013 OCP. All Rights Reserved All Selections BMI Released on: 2013-11-15 Music Publisher: OCP

## Time of Reflection

(Choose one or more of the following notes to reflect upon the scripture text. Perhaps write your thoughts, call a friend or family member to discuss it, or allow the story to seep into your imagination.)

- What image, word, or phrase stood out or “shimmered” to me? Reflect on its significance today. Consider holding the image or phrase as a focus of prayer this week.
- Imagine hiding in the locked room with the other disciples afraid to leave or be seen. Then, Jesus appears saying “Peace be with you.” As people are isolated today, locked away in caution and fear, what from what am I hiding? What in my life have I “locked away”? How may I accept Christ’s presence there? Am I able to rest within Christ’s peace?
- Notice how physical Jesus is. He’s doing all the things we cannot in COVID19—standing in a crowded room, speaking, breathing on them, touching them, having them touch his wounds. What do I long for about being present with other people? How may I reach out and touch someone in compassion, forgiveness, loving presence, or inclusion this week?
- What might the “other signs” be that Jesus enacted with his disciples? What would I have wanted or needed to see or experience to truly commit myself to a life as a Christ-follower? What do I seek from Christ in my life, community, and world this week?

## Response

### *Prayer of Peace*

words & music arr. by David Haas

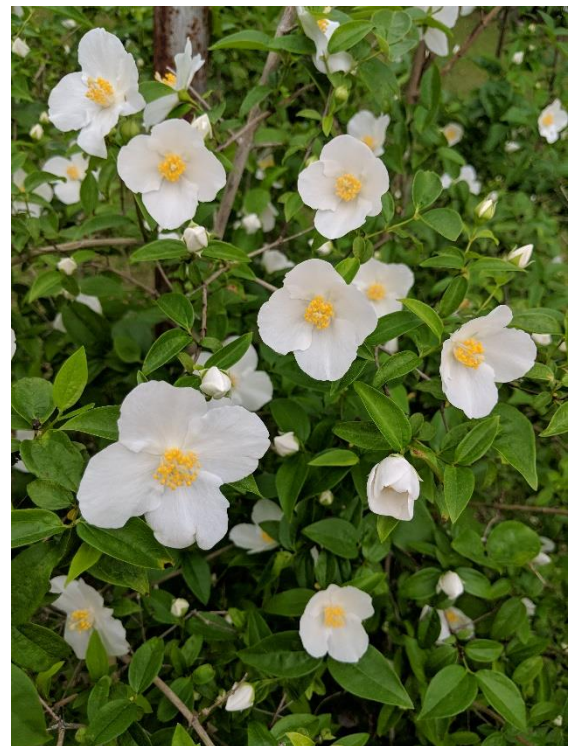
(The Navaho prayer is arranged into a contemplative song by David Haas -b.1957. It is a prayer intended to be fully embodied. As you speak it or sing it, consider placing hands over heart, turning in slow circles, or gazing out a window to enact the prayer. Or dance with Joe Comacho, Betsey Beckman, and Kristin Kissell as they perform it dancing and in sign language online at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yMjkDARTzjY>.)

*Peace* before us, *peace* behind us, *peace* under our feet.  
*Peace* within us, *peace* around us, let all around us be *peace*.

*Love* before us, *love* behind us, *love* under our feet.  
*Love* within us, *love* around us, let all around us be *love*.

*Light* before us, *light* behind us, *light* under our feet.  
*Light* within us, *light* around us, let all around us be *light*.

*Christ* before us, *Christ* behind us, *Christ* under our feet.  
*Christ* within us, *Christ* around us, let all around us be *Christ*.



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<sup>2</sup> Betsey Beckman, *The Dancing Word: Embodying the Sacred in Liturgy and Life*, at Rise Up! Los Angeles Religious Education Congress, March 15-18, 2018. [www.thedancingwork.com](http://www.thedancingwork.com)

## Prayers of the People

*(If you have been attending Sunday worship, you know our sung prayer that brings us into the time of Prayers of the People. Enter into this time in song. If you don't know the tune, let the words be the doorway to your prayer.)*

### Sung Prayer

### *Hear My Prayer, O Lord*

BENZENHAFER  
arr. Holly C. Benzenhafer

Hear my prayer, O Lord. Hear my prayer, O Lord.  
I am asking, hear my prayer, O Lord.

### Prayerful Meditation

Protect me, O God, for in you I take refuge.  
--Psalm 16:1

### We Hold in Prayer...

*(Many of this week's prayers are requests from members of our congregation in the past week. If you have general or specific prayer requests—joys as well as concerns—to share please contact Holly or Daryn to pass them along.)*

As a community of faith gathered in Spirit when we cannot be in person, we offer our hearts and voices in prayer where we are, as we are, entrusting the Spirit's moving among us and responding far beyond our individual reach and influence...

We hold Jim and his family in deep condolence following the death and graveside burial of his stepfather, Johnny Brown, in Connecticut. May Jim's mother and extended family know the Spirit's peace in their grief. Also, for the lives lost to COVID19 and souls who grieve this day...*Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer....*

With Marilyn and Gretchen, we pray for persons who are finding the precautions and need for whole community physical isolation onerous and frustrating; who respond to fear and uncertainty with anger or violence; who put others and themselves at risk; who are caught up in denial and conspiracy theories...and for souls whose names we speak aloud...*Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer....*

With Liz, Barbara, Ernie, Nancy, Bev & Trevor, Pastor Holly, and Harry, we offer gratitude for the many creative ways worship and communication remain possible while we cannot gather in community and worship. For the blessings of technologies, the written word, and sacred rituals and practices that sustain us...*Praise God, from whom all blessings flow....*

We continue to hold Gretchen in prayers of healing as her respiratory illness continues. For her safekeeping and wellbeing as it takes a toll on her health and work...for Andrew's continued return to health and recovery of his voice, John's continued recovery at home, persons finding medical treatment complicated or delayed due to COVID19...and for souls facing illness, injury, and healing whose names we speak aloud...*Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer....*

We pray for patience and forbearance with persons who, in their own need, anxiety, or unthinking create undue demands on those with or near them; who heap unreasonable expectations, deadlines, or additional work upon people struggling to stay focused or stable; who foster difficulty or lack compassion. For the souls who encounter sharp-edged words and hatefulness, who feel unsafe because of racist language and behavior, who struggle to complete tasks on time and satisfactorily ...and for souls in these groups we know personally whose names we speak aloud...*Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer....*

With Dorothy, Harry, Ernie, and Laurie, we offer thanks for the blessings of family and all the ways we may show our love, care, and devotion. So too, we join Barbara and Marilyn in gratitude for staff and administrators in assisted living who coordinate with families to provide the safest conditions with compassion, creativity, and kindnesses. For their presence in our lives, their continued health, and endurance... *Praise God, from whom all blessings flow....*

With Andrew we offer prayer for Betty Martin and the Murrow Home residents in Oklahoma. For their sustaining presence and care in this time of uncertainty...and for souls whose names we speak aloud... *Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer....*

We join Pastor Daryn in celebrating the birth of her cousins', Tanner and Austin Bunce Rivas' third child, Hollis Grace, on April 11. In the joy of this new life, we also hold Hollis Grace in God's watch care as she remains hospitalized to monitor breathing difficulty. We celebrate with First Parish Needham Unitarian Universalist as their pastor, Rev. Catie Scudera and her partner Cole, welcomed Sophia Katherine Scudera Stephenson into the world on April 10th...*Praise God, from whom all blessings flow....*For the light of each new life being born into a world in pandemic, their parents' concern, medical staff who protect and guide them toward heading home...and for souls in these groups we know personally whose names we speak aloud...*Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer....*

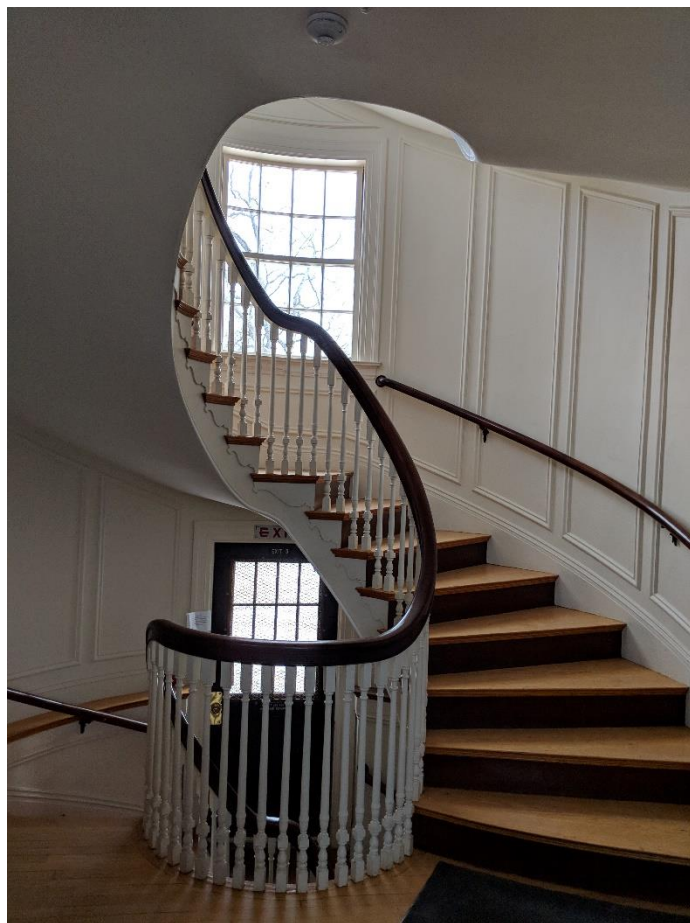
With Pastor Holly, we hold the people and communities devastated by tornados Easter Sunday and Monday, especially the communities of Bassfield and Carson, Mississippi, a few miles from Holly's hometown. For the lives lost and upended; further loss of property, homes, and businesses; the added complications of small communities trying to provide shelter and aid amid COVID19...and for souls and communities impacted by tragedies and disasters whose names we speak aloud... *Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer....*

With Harry, we delight in the beauty of nature, the gradual warming of spring, and the ability to enjoy walks with family; and with Marty, we hold to the consolation of trusting God no matter what happens—realizing doing so aids our ability to see what is truly important and what can be put aside...*Praise God, from whom all blessings flow....*

And for the prayers of our hearts that you,  
Holy One, know even when words cannot  
hold them... *Hear my prayer, O Lord.*

### The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven,  
hallowed be your name.  
Your kingdom come,  
your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day 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 kingdom, and the power,  
and the glory forever. Amen.



### Hymn 442

### 'Tis So Sweet to Trust in Jesus

TRUST IN JESUS

(Sing or read the familiar words of this hymn by Louisa M.R. Stead – 1850-1917 – and let it prepare you for the week ahead. Or, sing it with piano accompaniment online: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UWf3QZWE8eQ> <sup>3</sup>.)

'Tis so sweet to trust in Jesus,  
Just to take Him at His Word;  
Just to rest upon His promise,  
And to know, "Thus saith the Lord!" (Refrain)

*Jesus, Jesus, how I trust Him!  
How I've proved Him o'er and o'er;  
Jesus, Jesus, precious Jesus!  
Oh, for grace to trust Him more!*

Oh, how sweet to trust in Jesus,  
Just to trust His cleansing blood;

And in simple faith to plunge me  
'Neath the healing, cleansing flood! (Refrain)

Yes, 'tis sweet to trust in Jesus,  
Just from sin and self to cease;  
Just from Jesus simply taking  
Life and rest, and joy and peace. (Refrain)

I'm so glad I learned to trust Thee,  
Precious Jesus, Savior, Friend;  
And I know that Thou art with me,  
Wilt be with me to the end. (Refrain)

<sup>3</sup> Solo piano meditation on the hymn "'Tis So Sweet to Trust in Jesus" recorded October, 2010. Produced in Apple Logic Express 9.0 using Kontakt "Alicia's Keys" virtual piano (Yamaha C3 Neo grand). Arrangement and recording copyright 2010 by Rick Betts.

## Offering

(For online giving, go to <https://www.fbcneedham.org> or continue to support the ongoing ministry of the church by sending a check to the church office via mail to: First Baptist Church in Needham, 858 Great Plain Avenue, Needham MA 02492. Please indicate it is your offering or pledge on the check.)

## Doxology

OLD HUNDREDTH

Praise God from whom all blessings flow. Praise God, all creatures here below.

Praise God above ye heavenly host. Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost.

## Benediction

(Speak these words of benediction knowing that you are part of a loving community of faith. If you lit a candle at the beginning, you may wish to blow it out now.)

One: Our blessing to one another is that we are here for one another, that we are with one another, that we celebrate and remember one another along the journey.

**ALL: We extinguish the Candle of Life, but the Light continues to shine within us. As we pass the peace we carry the Light of the Candle of Life from this hour into this world and beyond, offering peace, hope and light wherever the journey leads.**

## Passing of the Peace

(Picture in your mind's eye the faces of beloved souls with whom you would share the peace of Christ in person if you could, and offer each one your blessing of peace.)

One: The peace of Christ be with you.

**ALL: And also with you.**

One: Let us greet one another in peace as we prepare for the journey ahead.

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## Announcements

**The Church Office and Building are currently closed.** Pastoral and office staff are working from home. Office voicemail and email are being checked regularly. If you have a pastoral concern, contact Pastor Daryn or Pastor Holly by email, phone, or text.

**Needham Interfaith Clergy Association** is offering a weekly collection of online meditations from our different traditions. Both Pastor Daryn and Pastor Holly are contributing. You can access the **fourth episode** on YouTube at: <https://youtu.be/WDGjx4TCmsI> and find other episodes by searching "Needham Interfaith Clergy." Or, go to their Facebook page, and Like and Follow them for updates.

**Livestreaming Services:** Many congregations are offering their services online both in real time or recorded to watch or listen as you are able. Here are a few you may wish to virtually "visit":

**Harvard Memorial Chapel** – Available live on Sundays 11:00-noon on WHRB (95.3 FM radio or on online at <https://memorialchurch.harvard.edu/sunday-services-0> and then click "Listen Live" on the current Sunday). Recorded services are available on the same link under "Listen to Sunday Sermons" along with daily Morning Prayers under "Listen to Morning Prayers."

**First Baptist Church in Washington, D.C.** – Available online on Sundays 11:00-noon at <https://www.firstbaptistdc.org/upcoming-worship> and then follow links to Facebook Live. Prior recorded sermons are at <https://www.firstbaptistdc.org/listen-to-sermons>.

**Boston University's Marsh Chapel** – Available live on Sundays 11:00-noon on WBUR (90.9 FM radio or on online at <https://www.wbur.org/> and then click "Listen Live"). Recorded services are available as a podcast on iTunes or other RSS feeders (search: Marsh Chapel).

**Northminster Baptist Church, Jackson, MS** – Available livestreaming online on Sundays 11:30-12:30 Eastern at <https://www.northminsterbaptist.live> . Prior recorded services are at <https://www.northminsterbaptist.live/on-demand> and then click on "Playlist" to select a date.



**Text and Photo Attribution:**

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"Yellow Calla,"

"Teaching Christ – Marsh Chapel,"

"English Rose," "FBC Stair," and  
"Marsh Glass 1"

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