



Service of Word & Sacrament
25 April 2010
4th Sunday of Easter

Order of Worship

Prelude (We listen to music to prepare our hearts and minds for worship. Afterwards please STAND for the Call to Worship and Hymn.)

The people call one another to worship...

Call to Worship

Leader: Today is a new day!

People: New life is rising among us!

Leader: Today we are challenged to live fully in God's love.

People: So we will greet one another in love, and praise the God who uplifts each of us in grace. Alleluia! Amen!

Hymn 4024 – "De Colores"

Welcome & Passing of the Peace

Minister: No matter who you are, or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here. Whether you are here for the first time or the one hundred and first time, it is God who has invited you, and you belong here. So for this next hour set aside your cares and worries, and let God love you. Let us offer our blessing to one another as we gather in God's name.

All: You are a beloved child of God. May God give you abundant life and eternal love. May God make you extravagant in your welcome, courageous in your witness, and through you, transform the world.

Minister: Peace be with you.

People: And also with you.

(Please join us as we greet each other with a handshake or an embrace, saying, "Peace be with you." Then please BE SEATED.)

God speaks!

New Testament Reading from Colossians 3:1 - 4:1

Psalms 23 – New Century Hymnal, page 633

(The accompanist plays the following response (**R**) the first time alone. The second time the congregation joins in song. Then the response (**R**) is sung again with accompaniment where indicated during the reading of the psalm.)

Gospel Reading from Matthew 23: 8-12

(Please STAND before the reading of the Gospel...)

Leader: Listen to what the Spirit is saying to the people:
People: **We listen, O Holy Spirit.**

(After the Gospel...)

Leader: This is our sacred story.
People: **We praise you, O God.**

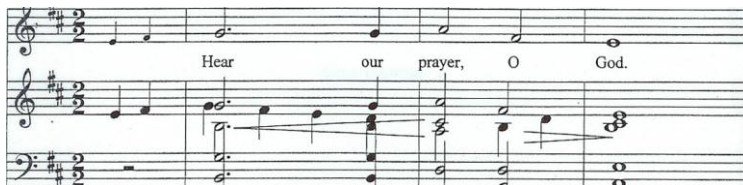
(Please be seated.)

Sermon – “Submit to Freedom” ~ The Reverend Rita Wilbur

Hymn 390 – “Eternal Christ, Who, Kneeling”

Pastoral Prayer & Lord’s Prayer

(Following the pastoral prayer, you are invited to light a candle as you offer a petition or thanksgiving, aloud or in silence. After each individual prayer, we sing the following response. We conclude prayer time with the Lord’s Prayer.)



All: **Our Father in heaven,**
 Hallowed be your name,
 Your kingdom come,
 Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil.
 For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours
 now and forever. Amen.

Welcome & Announcements (Please see page 4.)

The people rejoice!

The Offertory

Leader: God be with you.
People: **And also with you.**

Leader: Open your hearts.

People: We open them to God.

Leader: Let us give thanks to the living God.

People: It is right to give God thanks and praise.

Leader: As the Holy Spirit moves in our midst, may it inspire us toward generosity and fire us with an energy to serve God's will in the world.

(After the offering basket is passed through the congregation, please STAND as the basket and the bread and wine are brought forward and sing the following Offertory Response and then BE SEATED.)

Song of Praise – New Century Hymnal 776

Remembrance

Minister: The message of Easter is...

...Come, Holy Spirit, come

Bless this bread, for as the seed dies to give birth to the wheat, may we, too, be reborn into new life that nourishes others. Bless the fruit of the vine, for as the grape makes the heart glad, may we, too, overflow with joy and abundant life in this Easter season.

People: Bless all of us in our eating and drinking at this table, that in sharing the meal of Christ, we may proclaim the open invitation to all the world. Amen.

The Lord' Supper

(Jesus' table is OPEN to everyone who wishes to share in this communion fellowship.)

Minister: On the night he was betrayed... ...We remember Christ's promise not to drink of the fruit of the vine again until the reign of God had come. But he shares it now with us, breaking down the walls that make us strangers to ourselves and divide us from one another. We are the body of Christ. Around this table, we enact our faith. The body broken is restored to wholeness; lifeblood poured out brings healing to our world. These are the gifts of God for the people of God. All are worthy. All are welcome.

(When the bread is offered, take a piece and hold it. When the cup is offered, dip the bread into the juice and eat it. After a period of silence follows, please STAND for the Prayer of Thanksgiving and REMAIN STANDING for the hymn and the "God is still speaking..." Benediction & Commission that follow.)

Prayer of Thanksgiving:

Leader: Please rise and join in the following prayer.

All: We thank you, God, for inviting us to this table where we have known the presence of Christ and have received your gift of love through this holy meal. Strengthen our faith, increase our love for one another, and let us show forth your praise in our lives; through Jesus Christ. Amen.

Hymn 393 – "Blest Be the Tie That Binds"

God is still speaking...

Benediction & Commission

Leader: Go in peace, and take peace into the world of human need. We are the body of Christ and members of one another. Serve and honor one another, that we may be strengthened to be Christ's body in the world. Amen.
The service is ended.

People: We leave to serve the world.

Announcements

- **Bible 101: Introduction to the Bible** | Rev. Rita will teach the 2nd of four sessions Tuesday, April 27 | 7:00 PM | Location: Liz's & Anna's (evertxn@satx.rr.com) | *Bible 101* is the first in a three-part course of Bible study to be offered throughout 2010, including *Bible 201: Gender and Sexuality in the Bible*, and *Bible 301: The Book of Acts*. In the introductory sessions (*Bible 101*) Rita will teach you how to navigate your Bible, including how to pick a translation and study aids that are right for you. We will also discuss Walter Brueggeman's book, *The Bible Makes Sense*, which gives a comprehensive overview of the content of the Bible and what it means to us today.
- **47th Annual South Central Conference Annual Meeting: Restoring the Dance** | June 4 - 6 | New Orleans (Marriott Convention Center) | Keynote Speaker: Rev. Susan Brooks Thistlethwaite, Professor of Theology @ Chicago Theological Seminary (Rita's *alma mater*) | For more information, please click the following link on our news brief web page: [SCC 47th Annual Meeting Announcement.doc](#).
- **If you can volunteer** to be Sunday School Teacher, Worship Leader, Worship Space "Setter-upper" or Refreshment Provider some Sunday, please let Derek know (invisiblederek@rocketmail.com).

Spirit of Peace Church, UNITED CHURCH of Christ

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THE CENTER FOR
PROGRESSIVE CHRISTIANITY

We are also a member organization of PRO San Antonio (www.prosanantonio.org), an association of progressive, gay-friendly religious communities in San Antonio.