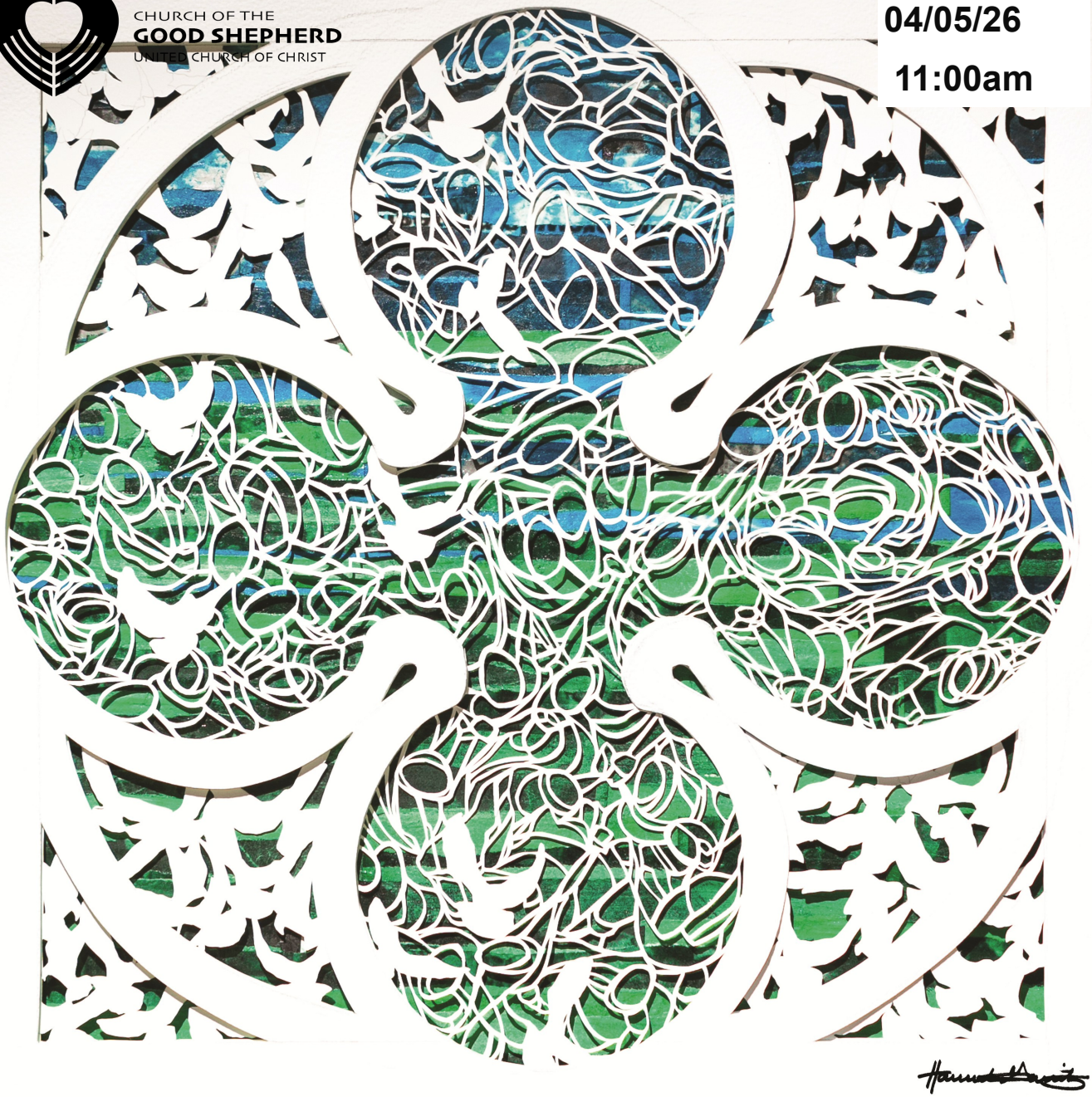
CHURCH OF THE
GOOD SHEPHERD
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

04/05/26

11:00am



No matter where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here.

APRIL 05, 2026

Cover Art: "Meet Me in Galilee"

by Hannah Garrity, Inspired by Matthew 28:1-10

18x18" Hand-dyed and collaged newspaper with paper lace overlay

The good news is alive in the world. Do not be afraid. Go back to Galilee. Go back to Galilee where it all started. Go back to Galilee and celebrate like we did at the beginning when we were not afraid, when these words of liberation had not yet drawn the trappings of imperial execution.

Here in this artwork, the crowd is celebrating. Figures are dancing and dancing and dancing. Doves fly among the dancers, breaking borders, Holy Spirit. This throng is in the vacant space of the empty cross. The cross here is mirroring the traditional, four-petaled, stained-glass window design element, which has long represented the cross in European architecture.

The crowd dancing within the cross celebrates the resurrection of Jesus, fearlessly awaiting his arrival in Galilee. The Roman weapon of oppression, the cross, inflicts but a pause in the steadfast and abiding ministry of revolutionary love offered by Jesus in his public ministry. It is fitting then that we should go back to the place it began, when fear was not such a lethal factor. God has overcome death. Hallelujah!

Around the dancing figures in Galilee, patterns of doves disperse outward. The good news, the euaggelion, is alive in the world. Do you remember? The cross is empty, yet full. Overcome. Go and you will find Jesus, free in the world in the faces of strangers and neighbors. —Hannah Garrity

Worship Leader: **Gina Sears**

PRELUDE.....

1. "Love Divine, All Loves Excelling," by John Zundel, Tune: BEECHER, arr. By Larry Shackley

2. "What Wondrous Love Is This," Tune: WONDROUS LOVE (Southern Harmony, 1835) arr. By Lloyd Larson. Dorenda Morse, piano

CALL TO WORSHIP.....

One: Christ is risen!

Many: He is risen indeed!

One: The women ran from the empty tomb with fear and joy, their hearts pounding with a story too alive to keep quiet.

Many: We are listening! We are ready to hear their Good News!

One: Where fear once held us, Love whispers courage.

Many: Where despair once settled in, Grace declares a new beginning.

One: The Living God is still speaking!

Many: Alleluia! Let us celebrate the God of new life!

HYMN #245 "The Day of Resurrection"

1 The day of resurrection!
Earth, tell it out abroad;
the Passover of gladness,
the Passover of God.
From death to life eternal,
from earth unto the sky,
our Christ has brought us over
with hymns of victory.

2 Our hearts be pure from evil,
that we may see aright
the Christ who reigns eternal
in resurrection light;
We listen for the teachings
once heard so calm and plain,
for we, too, want to follow
and raise the victor strain.

3 Now let the heavens be joyful,
let earth its song begin,
the whole world keep high triumph,
and all that is therein;
Let all things seen and unseen
their notes of gladness blend,
for Christ again has risen,
our joy that has no end.

OPENING REFLECTION.....
"Now the Green Blade Riseth" French Carol, arr. Michael Tyree
Violin: Liana Austin, Maria Stefanova; Viola: Andrea Rutan; Cello, Beth Purvis

JOYS AND CONCERNS.....

PRAYER.....

SCRIPTURE.....
Matthew 28, New Revised Standard Version Updated Edition

28 After the Sabbath, as the first day of the week was dawning, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to see the tomb.2 And suddenly there was a great earthquake, for an angel of the Lord, descending from heaven, came and rolled back the stone and sat on it. 3 His appearance was like lightning and his clothing white as snow. 4 For fear of him the guards shook and became like dead men. 5 But the angel said to the women,

“Do not be afraid, for I know that you are looking for Jesus who was crucified. 6 He is not here, for he has been raised, as he said. Come, see the place where he lay. 7 Then go quickly and tell his disciples, ‘He has been raised from the dead, and indeed he is going ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see him.’ This is my message for you.” 8 So they left the tomb quickly with fear and great joy and ran to tell his disciples. 9 Suddenly Jesus met them and said, “Greetings!” And they came to him, took hold of his feet, and worshiped him. 10 Then Jesus said to them, “Do not be afraid; go and tell my brothers and sisters to go to Galilee; there they will see me.”

Mateo 28, Nueva Versión Internacional

1 Después del sábado, al amanecer del primer día de la semana, María Magdalena y la otra María fueron a ver el sepulcro.
2 Sucedió que hubo un terremoto violento porque un ángel del Señor bajó del cielo, se acercó al sepulcro, quitó la piedra y se sentó sobre ella. 3 Su aspecto era como el de un relámpago y su ropa era blanca como la nieve. 4 Los guardias tuvieron tanto miedo de él que se pusieron a temblar y quedaron como muertos.
5 El ángel dijo a las mujeres:
—No tengan miedo; sé que ustedes buscan a Jesús, el que fue crucificado. 6 No está aquí, pues ha resucitado, tal como dijo. Vengan a ver el lugar donde estaba. 7 Luego vayan pronto a decirles a sus discípulos: “Él se ha levantado de entre los muertos y va delante de ustedes a Galilea. Allí lo verán”. Eso vine a decirles.
8 Así que las asustadas mujeres se alejaron a toda prisa del sepulcro, pero muy alegres corrieron a dar la noticia a los discípulos. 9 En eso Jesús les salió al encuentro y las saludó. Ellas se acercaron, abrazaron sus pies y lo adoraron.
10 —No tengan miedo —dijo Jesús—. Vayan a decirles a mis hermanos que se dirijan a Galilea y allí me verán.

A TIME FOR ALL AGES.....

ANTHEM: “Across the Vast Eternal Sky” music by Ola Gjeilo, text by Charles Anthony Silvestri
Chancel Choir; Dorenda Morse, piano; String Quartet

Lyrics: Sunlight shines on my face
This is my grace, to be restored, born again, in flame
When I was young, I flew in the velvet night
Shining by day, a fire bird bathed in light!
Grey now my feathers, which once were red and gold
My destiny to soar up to the sun
Sunlight shines on my face
This is my grace, to be

Restored, born again
In flame
Sunlight shines on my face
This is my grace, to be
Restored, born again
In flame
Do not despair that I am gone away
I will appear again when the sunset
Paints flames across the vast, eternal sky

SERMON.....**Rev. Dr. Sarah Townes**

PASTORAL PRAYER.....

PRAYER OF JESUS

Our Father, Our Mother,
Who is in Heaven, Holy be Your name,
Kin(g)dom come, Your will be done,
On Earth as it is in Heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread
And forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors.
And do not lead us into temptation,
But deliver us from evil,
For yours is the Kin(g)dom and the
Power and the glory,
Now and forever, Amen.

SHARING OUR GIFTS.....

OFFERTORY.....

"Exuberant Joy" by Arnold Sherman
Joyful Noise Bell Choir

DOXOLOGY

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! Alleluia!

PRAYER OF DEDICATION.....

Special Music: "Christ the Lord is Risen Today" EASTER HYMN arr. Tyree
Violin: Liana Austin, Maria Stefanova; **Viola:** Andrea Rutan; Cello, Beth Purvis

CLOSING HYMN #233 Christ the Lord is Risen Today 1,2,3,4

1 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!

2 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!

3 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!

4 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.....

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Welcome!

Thank you for joining us in worship today

We are delighted to have you worshiping with us today!

Church of the Good Shepherd, UCC is a dynamic congregation with a rich history and vibrant ministry in the community. Our church is a part of a blend of five major Protestant denominations that united together in 1957 to form the United Church of Christ: Congregational, Christian, Afro-Christian, German Evangelical and Reformed. We celebrate the words of Pastor John Robinson, who in his farewell remarks to the Pilgrims as they were leaving for the "new world," said, "There is still more light and truth to break forth from God's holy word." We say at our church that "God is still speaking!" "There is still more light and truth to break forth from God's holy word."

- We are a church that:
  - Centers our faith and practice in the life and ministry Jesus Christ.
  - Takes the Bible seriously, not literally.
  - Builds community partnerships across differences.
  - Worships God with joyful hearts and open minds.
  - Includes children in the life and ministry of the church.
  - Celebrates creativity and the arts.
  - Encounters Christ in Creation, community, sacraments, music, scripture, and service.
  - Listens and responds to the movement of the Holy Spirit.
  - Celebrates an open table and seeks to be inclusive of ALL people.
  - Seeks to live out our faith in the world as we build God's reign of love and justice on earth.
  - Believes that growth in wisdom and understanding happens at all stages of life.
  - Embraces solidarity, not just charity.
  - Is committed to work for justice for all people and for the environment.
  - Cares for one another, laughs easily, and rests in God's love.

Vision Statement

Church of the Good Shepherd desires to be an

Mission Statement

The mission of Church of the Good