



CHRIST  
PRESBYTERIAN  
CHURCH  
MILFORD

April 18, 2021  
3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Easter

## REFLECTION

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### **Celebrating the Immortal Jesus as the Resurrection Community of Justice and Mercy**

Jesus, the majestic Word of God  
From all eternity, Humbled himself to serve us,  
Even when we had no claim upon the divine Mercy.  
Now he rules the universe,  
Forever joyful in his victory over Death on our behalf.  
As his mighty resurrection inspires our joy,  
So it constrains us to love justice and practice mercy,  
To rise cheerfully to the occasion  
Of serving and defending others.  
In this we follow the great example  
Of our once-suffering, now-glorified Servant King,  
Who is coming to establish a Perfect Justice in the earth!  
Bless his high Name. Alleluia!

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### THIRD SUNDAY OF EASTER

Advent + Christmas + Epiphany + Lent + Easter + Pentecost

**Gathering Hymn**    Jesus Christ is Risen Today

1. Je - sus Christ is ris'n to - day, Al - le - lu - ia!  
 2. Hymns of praise then let us sing, Al - le - lu - ia!  
 3. But the pains which he en - dured, Al - le - lu - ia!  
 4. Sing we to our God a - bove Al - le - lu - ia!

our tri - um - phant ho - ly day, Al - le - lu - ia!  
 un - to Christ our heav'n - ly King, Al - le - lu - ia!  
 our sal - va - tion have pro - cured; Al - le - lu - ia!  
 praise e - ter - nal as his love; Al - le - lu - ia!

who did once up - on the cross Al - le - lu - ia!  
 who en - dured the cross and grave, Al - le - lu - ia!  
 now a - bove the sky he's King, Al - le - lu - ia!  
 praise him, all ye heav'n - ly host, Al - le - lu - ia!

suf - fer to re - deem our loss. Al - le - lu - ia!  
 sin - ners to re - deem and save. Al - le - lu - ia!  
 where the an - gels ev - er sing. Al - le - lu - ia!  
 Fa - ther, Son, and Ho - ly Ghost. Al - le - lu - ia!

Unison

— God + calls + cleanses + speaks + strengthens + sends —

**Call to Worship** Micah 6:6-8

With what shall I come before the LORD,  
and bow myself before God on high?

**Shall I come before him with burnt offerings,  
with calves a year old?**

Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams,  
with ten thousands of rivers of oil?

**Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression,  
the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?"**

He has told you, O man, what is good;

and what does the LORD require of you?

**but to do justice, and to love kindness,  
and to walk humbly with our God.**

Invocation

**Praise Hymn** My Soul Cries Out

Em C D Em

1 My \_\_\_\_\_ soul cries out with a joy - ful shout that the God of my  
 2 Though I am small, my God, my all, you work great  
 3 From the halls of power to the for - tress tower, not a stone will be  
 4 Though the na - tions rage from age to age, we re - mem - ber who

C D Em G

heart is great, and my spir - it \_\_\_\_\_ sings of the won - drous  
 things in me, and your mer - cy will last from the depths of the  
 left on stone. Let the king be - ware for your jus - tice  
 holds us fast: God's \_\_\_\_\_ mer - cy \_\_\_\_\_ must de - liv - er \_\_\_\_\_

D Em C Em G

things that you bring to the ones who wait. You fixed your  
 past to the end of the age to be. Your ver - y  
 tears ev - ery ty - rant \_\_\_\_\_ from his throne. The hun - gry  
 us from the con - quer - or's crush - ing grasp. This sav - ing

D Em

sight on your ser - vant's plight, and my weak - ness you  
 name puts the proud to shame, and to those who would  
 poor shall \_\_\_\_\_ weep no more for the food they can  
 word that our fore - bears heard is the prom - ise which

C D Em

did not spurn, so from east to west shall my  
 for you yearn, you will show your might, put the  
 nev - er earn; there are ta - bles spread, ev - ery  
 holds us bound, till the spear and rod can be

G D Em C Em

name be blest. Could the world be a - bout to turn?  
 strong to flight, for the world is a - bout to turn.  
 mouth be fed, for the world is a - bout to turn.  
 crushed by God, who is turn - ing the world a - round.

*Refrain* G D

My heart shall sing of the day you bring. Let the

Em C D Em

fires of your jus - tice burn. Wipe a - way all tears, for the

C D Em C Em

dawn draws near, and the world is a - bout to turn!

— God + calls + cleanses + speaks + strengthens + sends —

**Old Testament Lesson**    Isaiah 58:6–10

**Confession of Sin**                    **(based on Amos 2 and Proverbs 31)**

O Lord, we confess that we have sold the righteous for silver,  
and the needy for a pair of sandals—

That we trample the head of the poor into the dust of the earth  
and turn aside the way of the afflicted;

We pervert the sexuality which you have given us as a gift,  
so that Your holy name is profaned;

We lay ourselves down beside every idol: money, sex, power, security, possessions;

We build our sense of security on the backs of the poor,  
And we pervert your Church with our self-centeredness.

We become drunk with our self-importance and forget what has been decreed;  
And pervert the rights of the afflicted.

We do not open our mouth for the mute,  
for the rights of all who are destitute,  
or defend the rights of the poor and needy.

O Lord, we confess that we are all poor and needy.  
But in our material wealth we have become proud,  
and look down on those who would teach us humility,  
and dependence on You.

Forgive us, O Lord, we cry! Amen.

*Individual Confession*

**Absolution**

Isaiah 43:1-5

But now thus says the LORD, he who created you, O Jacob, he who formed you, O Israel: "Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are mine. When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you; when you walk through fire you shall not be burned, and the flame shall not consume you. For I am the LORD your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior. I give Egypt as your ransom, Cush and Seba in exchange for you. Because you are precious in my eyes, and honored, and I love you, I give men in return for you, peoples in exchange for your life. Fear not, for I am with you; I will bring your offspring from the east, and from the west I will gather you.

**Thanksgiving Hymn**

Behold the Lamb

Behold the Lamb who bears our sins away  
Slain for us and we remember  
The promise made that all who come in faith  
Find forgiveness at the cross  
So we share in this Bread of Life  
And we drink of His sacrifice  
As a sign of our bonds of peace  
Around the table of the King

The body of our Savior Jesus Christ  
Torn for you eat and remember  
The wounds that heal the death that brings us life  
Paid the price to make us one  
So we share in this Bread of Life  
And we drink of His sacrifice  
As a sign of our bonds of love  
Around the table of the King

The blood that cleanses every stain of sin  
Shed for you drink and remember  
He drained death's cup that all may enter in  
To receive the life of God  
So we share in this Bread of Life  
And we drink of His sacrifice  
As a sign of our bonds of grace  
Around the table of the King

And so with thankfulness and faith we rise  
To respond and to remember  
Our call to follow in the steps of Christ  
As His body here on earth  
As we share in His suffering  
We proclaim Christ will come again  
And we'll join in the feast of heaven  
Around the table of the King

**New Testament Lesson** James 1:27-2:13

**Peace of Christ**

The peace of the Lord be with you!  
**And also with you!**

**Doxology**

Praise God from whom all blessings flow!  
Praise Him, all creatures here below!  
Praise Him above, you heavenly host!  
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost! Amen!

— God + calls + cleanses + speaks + strengthens + sends —

**Sermon Text**      A “String of Pearls” from Proverbs on Speech

This is the Word of the Lord!

**Thanks be to God!**

**Sermon**              Flourishing: a Study in Proverbs; Speech | Curran Bishop

**Response Hymn**    Come People of the Risen King

Come people of the Risen King  
Who delight to bring Him praise  
Come all and tune your hearts to sing  
To the Morning Star of grace  
From the shifting shadows of the earth  
We will lift our eyes to Him  
Where steady arms of mercy reach  
To gather children in

**Chorus**

Rejoice! Rejoice! Let every tongue rejoice!  
One heart one voice  
O Church of Christ rejoice!

Come those whose joy is morning sun  
And those weeping through the night  
Come those who tell of battles won  
And those struggling in the fight  
For His perfect love will never change  
And His mercies never cease  
But follow us through all our days  
With the certain hope of peace

**Chorus**

Come young and old from ev'ry land  
Men and women of the faith  
Come those with full or empty hands  
Find the riches of His grace  
Over all the world His people sing  
Shore to shore we hear them call  
The truth that cries through ev'ry age  
Our God is all in all

## **Chorus**

— God + calls + cleanses + speaks + strengthens + sends —

## **Bringing Our Life to God**

Prayers | Collection | Profession

## **Prayers of the People**

### **Collection**

text **MNA 1708** to **76959** and follow the prompts  
or visit [give.pcamna.org/to/1708/](http://give.pcamna.org/to/1708/)

### **Confession of Faith**

The Nicene Creed, Masai Version

*Christians, what do you believe?*

We believe in the one High God, who out of love created the beautiful world and everything good in it. He created man and wanted man to be happy in the world. God loves the world and every nation and tribe on the earth. We have known this High God in the darkness, and now we know him in the light. God promised in the book of his word, the Bible, that he would save the world and all nations and tribes.

We believe that God made good his promise by sending his son, Jesus Christ, a man in the flesh, a Jew by tribe, born poor in a little village, who left his home and was always on safari doing good, curing people by the power of God, teaching about God and man, showing that the meaning of religion is God's love. He was rejected by his people, tortured and nailed hands and feet to a cross, and died. He was buried in the grave, but the hyenas did not touch him, and on the third day, he rose from that grave. He ascended to the skies. He is the Lord.

We believe that all His people's sins are forgiven through him. All who have faith in him must be sorry for their sins, be baptized in the Holy Spirit of God, live the rules of love, and share the bread together in love, to announce the good news to others until Jesus comes again. We are waiting for him. He is alive. He lives. This we believe. Amen."

### **Communion in Christ Jesus**

*All Christians are invited to join us to receive Christ's presence of bread and wine. During this time of social distancing we offer for our pastor to come and bless your partaking of elements you provide to preserve the corporate-presence of Christ pictured in the supper as best we can. If you've been part of our streaming service please text Curran (203-812-9928) to set up a time he can meet you (from a distance) to celebrate communion.*

### **Sinclair Alleluia**

#### **Prayer for those searching**

*Oh God, I am discovering that the more I have, the more I need to have, the more I am loved, the more I need to be loved, the more I achieve, the more I need to achieve. Nothing seems to satisfy me. Could it be, as someone once said, that "Our hearts are restless until they find their rest in thee." Dear God, if this is true, and if as the Bible teaches there is life and life eternal in Christ alone, please guide me to Him. Open me to the reality of the One who alone can satisfy my restless heart. Give me the courage to believe that which I cannot see but can understand, feel and touch through the Word, sacraments and church family. Lord I want to believe, help my unbelief! Amen.*

7

1. O God, your judgments give the King, his son your righteous-ness;  
 2. The people's poor ones he shall judge, the needy's children bless;  
 3. His large and great dominion shall from sea to sea extend;  
 4. Now blessed be the Lord our God, the God of Israel,

with right he shall your people judge, your poor with upright-ness.  
 and he will break in pieces those who would the poor oppress.  
 it from the River shall reach forth to earth's remotest end.  
 for he alone does wondrous works in glory that excel.

And then the mountains shall bring forth to all the people peace;  
 The just shall flourish in his days, and prosper in his reign;  
 Yea, kings shall all be before him bow, all nations shall obey;  
 And blessed be his glorious name to all eternity.

7

the hills because of righteousness their blessing shall increase.  
 and while the moon endures he shall abundant peace maintain.  
 he'll save the needy when they cry, the poor who have no stay.  
 The whole earth let his glory fill; amen, so let it be.

— God + calls + cleanses + speaks + strengthens + sends —

## **Coronation Hymn**

**Benediction**          2 John 1:3

Grace, mercy, and peace will be with us, from God the Father and from Jesus Christ the Father's Son, in truth and love. Amen.

## REFLECTION

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### **The Empty Tomb, Justice and Mercy**

Christians have been accused of lots of things: having their head in the sand, being culturally irrelevant, being preoccupied with middle class “consumerism.” Too many of us believers, too often, are probably guilty as charged.

And yet, stepping back and looking at the bigger picture, it is striking that, through the centuries, where human needs have been genuinely served, it is Christians who have so often been there. To be sure, there are all sorts of service organizations and relief efforts in the world that were not founded and are not run by Christians. But it’s arguable that Christianity has been the main inspiration behind the development of the modern “charitable organization” in the West. Who took in the infant girls left outdoors to die by hard-hearted fathers in the Greco-Roman world of the first century? Christians. Who founded orphanages, hospitals, and homes for physically and mentally disabled people in every age? Christians. Who reached out to the poor urban class created by the Industrial Revolution in the early 1800’s? Christians. Who fought for the freedom of black slaves in England and America in the 18th and 19th centuries? Christians. Who rescued young girls sold into prostitution in India and pressured the government there in the 19th century to outlaw the barbaric practice of burning widows after their husbands died? Christians. Who is reaching out to unwed mothers in the 21<sup>st</sup> century with crisis pregnancy clinics and adoption services and is fighting for the rights of unborn children? Christians. Who started some of the most effective “relief agencies” to respond to people devastated by natural disasters? Christians are...

It’s true that Christians have sometimes been the cause of social problems: it was Christians, largely, who enslaved black Africans. And often our service has been paternalistic and condescending. But still it’s true that wherever the risen Christ breaks into the lives of men and women, he inspires them to defend the weak and to show mercy to those around them by giving love, time, money.

What's the connection between resurrection and practicing mercy and fighting for justice? It’s simple. Those who have grasped that they are loved so much by God that he gives them an eternal share in the immortal life of Jesus Christ can afford to be generous and think about the well-being of others. They love Christ in return for his love. They want to obey his command that as he served them—and was not ruined by putting others first—so his followers should walk in his footsteps and serve others.

– Ron Lutjens

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

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**Community Group** – Meets tonight, April 18, 5:30-6pm at the Bishop's (21 Green St, Milford, CT 06460) for an outside picnic and bonfire.

**Women's Bible Study** – Every-other-Tues. 7:30-9 pm, in person and on zoom (next week, April 27). Please RSVP to [cpcmilford@gmail.com](mailto:cpcmilford@gmail.com). [Link](#) to the study guide (\$2.50). [Zoom Link](#) | Meeting ID: 828 6871 9345 | Passcode: 246223

**Thursday Night Prayer Meeting** – 7-7:50pm. In the midst of pandemic, political chaos and social distancing we need each other, and we need God. Please join us as we follow a short prayer and scripture liturgy, pray for each other, and have some “digital fellowship.” [Zoom link](#) | Meeting ID: 856 4475 2681 | Passcode: 665297

**Helping Without Hurting** – Every-other-Thursday, (this week, April 22), 8-9 pm  
We'll look at how the nature and character of God shapes the mercy ministry of His Church using the book *When Helping Hurts*.  
[Zoom link](#) (same as prayer meeting) | Meeting ID: 856 4475 2681 | Passcode: 665297

### Contact us

203.812.9928 or [cpcmilford@gmail.com](mailto:cpcmilford@gmail.com); find us on Facebook at [facebook.com/CPCMilford](https://facebook.com/CPCMilford) or visit us online at [cpcmilford.org](http://cpcmilford.org)

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