

Third Sunday of Easter

April 14, 2024



First Congregational Church of Fresno
United Church of Christ
2131 N. Van Ness Blvd.
Fresno, CA 93704

Rev. Simon Biasell-Moshrefi
Pastor

Third Sunday of Easter

April 14, 2024

Our Gathering

(*Congregation may stand | Responses: Liturgist/**Congregation/all**)

Prelude	“Beach Spring” - arr. McChesney “Ring a Round” - D. Wagner“	Handbells
Welcome		Rev. Simon Biasell-Moshrefi
*Call to Worship		Pauline Phillips, Liturgist

Let us fill our hearts and minds with hope as we hear the Words of Jesus Christ.

“Peace be with you.”

When peace and justice seem uncertain, let us hear anew the Words of Jesus Christ.

“Why are you troubled, and why do doubts rise in your minds?”

Let us be comforted by the presence of Christ, whose love, and light dwells within us.

Let our lives be witnesses of these things.

Help us to be instruments of Christ’s peace to all in need of God’s healing love.

*Hymn	“The Strife is O’er”	#242 , pew hymnal
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Prayer of Confession		Pauline Phillips
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Loving God, in your infinite wisdom, we are glad that you make all things new. Where there is hate, show your love. Where there is war, bring your peace. Where there is despair, bring your hope. Where there is fear, bring your understanding. Where there is scarcity, bring your abundance. Where there is systemic oppression, bring equal justice for all. By your perfect grace and mercy, make us new. May it be so. Amen.

Assurance of Pardon

Time for Discovery [children are invited to the chancel steps with the pastor]

***Draw the circle wide, draw it wider still;
let this be our song — no one stands alone,
standing side by side. Draw the circle wide.***

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Special Music	“On Eagles Wings” - arr. Ryan	Handbells
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The Lord's Prayer

*Our Creator, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come;
thy 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 lead us not into temptation;
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
the power, and the glory,
forever. Amen.*

*Hymn

“There Is a Balm in Gilead”

#553, pew hymnal

Scripture

Acts 3:12–19

Pauline Philips, liturgist

When Peter saw it, he addressed the people, “Fellow Israelites, why do you wonder at this, or why do you stare at us, as though by our own power or piety we had made him walk? The God of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob, the God of our ancestors, has glorified his servant, Jesus, whom you handed over and rejected in the presence of Pilate, though he had decided to release him. But you rejected the holy and righteous one and asked to have a murderer given to you, and you killed the author of life, whom God raised from the dead. To this we are witnesses. And by faith in his name, his name itself has made this man strong, whom you see and know, and the faith that is through Jesus has given him this perfect health in the presence of all of you.

“And now, brothers and sisters, I know that you acted in ignorance, as did also your rulers. In this way God fulfilled what he had foretold through all the prophets, that his Messiah would suffer. Repent, therefore, and turn to God so that your sins may be wiped out.

Liturgist: For the Word of God in Scripture, for the Word of God within us, and for the Word of God among us.

Congregation: Thanks be to God.

Sermon

Rev. Simon Biasell-Moshrefi

Sung Call to Prayer

**Lord, listen to your children praying:
Lord send your Spirit in this place.
Lord, listen to your children praying:
Send us love, send us power, send us grace.**

Invitation to Generosity

Pauline Phillips



Here at the Big Red Church, everyone counts, and every gift counts!

- ⇒ *There are two donation boxes and giving envelopes for your gifts in the Narthex (the area where an usher handed you an Order of Worship).*
- ⇒ *You can also give through the Givelify App by scanning the QR code.*
- ⇒ *BigRedChurch.org/giving/ has more instructions, links, and information about giving to the church. Thank you for supporting and joining in the ministry of this church.*

Offertory

“The Garden” - Easterling and Hayes

Chancel Choir

***Doxology (Tune: LASST UNS ERFREUEN)**

**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!**

***Dedication**

Rev. Simon Biasell-Moshrefi

***Closing Hymn**

“All Hail the Power of Jesus’ Name”

#304, pew hymnal

***Benediction**

Rev. Simon Biasell-Moshrefi

***Blessing Song**

“Go Now in Peace”

**Go now in peace, never be afraid;
 God will go with you each hour of ev’ry day.
 Go now in faith, steadfast, strong and true;
 know God will guide you in all you do.
 Go now in love and show you believe.
 Reach out to others so all the world will see
 God will be there, watching from above.
 Go now in peace, in faith, and in love.
 Amen. Amen. Amen.**

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***Postlude**

“Toccata, from Organ Symphony 5” - C.M. Widor Scott Horton, organ

It is our tradition to be seated for the Postlude.



Reverend Julia Lucretia "Lu" Hoke Parks

March 24, 1941 to October 17, 2023

Celebration of Life for Rev. Lu Parks will be held on April 20th at 11:00am in the Sanctuary with a reception to follow in the Courtyard.



- PorchFest Venue -

BIG RED PORCH

2131 N. Van Ness Blvd.

**Matt Shaver | Awhanichi | Brother Luke
Jackie Boot Straps | The New Old Man**

April 27th

1-5pm

Food & Drinks Available for Purchase

This Week at Big Red

Monday, April 15

- ◆ 5:00pm: Yoga - Room 1

Tuesday, April 16

Wednesday, April 17

- ◆ 8:00am: Bible Study - Zoom
- ◆ 6:00pm: Handbell rehearsal - Music Room
- ◆ 7:00pm: Chancel Choir rehearsal – Sanctuary

Thursday, April 18

Friday, April 19

Saturday, April 20

- ◆ 11:00am: Celebration of Life for Rev. Lucretia “Lu” Parks - Sanctuary

Sunday, April 22

- ◆ 9:00am: Exploration Hour - Roots and Branches - Fireside Room
- ◆ 10:00am: Worship - Sanctuary
- ◆ 11:00am: Coffee Hour - Fellowship Hall

Upcoming Events

- ◆ Celebration of Life for Rev. Lu Parks - April 20th - 11:00am
- ◆ PorchFest - April 27 - 1:00pm to 5:00pm
- ◆ Campus Clean-up - May 4
- ◆ Congregational Meeting - May 19



We believe God wants to liberate those in bondage. If you are a victim of domestic violence we encourage you to find safety. 559.233.HELP
Help@MMCenter.org

First Congregational Church of Fresno

2131 N. Van Ness Blvd., Fresno, CA 93704 | (559) 227-8489

Bigredchurch.org

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Brad Jenkins

Assisting in Today's Service

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Liturgist: Pauline Phillips

Ushers: Cliff Dodd, Mike Gostanian,

Acolytes: Makenna and Sarah

Technician: Brad Jenkins

Coffee Hour: Kymberly Lindsey

FCCF Open and Affirming Statement

We believe that all people are sacred creations of a loving God. We affirm the diversity that exists among us.

We strive to answer the call of Christ by extending his love, compassion and acceptance to everyone. In this spirit, we open our family of faith to people of every religious background, sexual orientation, family composition, physical and mental ability, race, age and gender.

As Christians, we experience God's reconciling love. In response we stand with those who suffer discrimination, isolation and alienation.

We welcome all people to participate fully in our church's life and ministry. We celebrate the variety of talents and perspectives which flow into our spiritual community, continuing to enrich us in ways we could not have predicted or envisioned.

1 Cor. 15:53-57

Latin, c. 1695

Transl. Francis Pott, 1861; alt.

Refrain (before st. 1 and after st. 4)

Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!

1 The strife is o'er, the bat - tle done, the vic - to -
 2 The powers of death have done their worst, but Christ their
 3 The three sad days are quick - ly sped, Christ ris - es
 4 Christ, by your wounds on Cal - va - ry from death's dread

ry of life is won; The song of tri - umph
 le - gions has dis - persed: Let shouts of ho - ly
 glo - rious from the dead: All glo - ry to our
 sting your ser - vants free, That we may live e -

has be - gun. Al - le - lu - ia!
 joy out - burst. Al - le - lu - ia!
 ris - en Head! Al - le - lu - ia!
 ter - nal - ly. Al - le - lu - ia! to Refrain

A seventeenth-century Jesuit collection published in Cologne, Germany, is the earliest known source of this Latin hymn. The hymn is firmly associated with this musical setting from a Magnificat by the Italian composer Palestrina.

Tune: VICTORY 8.8.8. with alleluias
 Giovanni Perluigi da Palestrina, 1591
 Arr. William H. Monk, 1861

Jer. 8:18-22; 46:11; Acts 10:34-43

African-American spiritual; alt.

Refrain

There is a balm in Gil-e-ad, to make the wound-ed whole,

there is a balm in Gil-e-ad, to heal the sin-sick soul.

Last time, end

1 Some - times I feel dis - cour-aged, and think my work's in vain,
 2 Don't ev - er feel - dis - cour-aged, for Je - sus is your friend,
 3 If you can - not preach like Pe - ter, if you can - not pray like Paul,

to Refrain

But then the Ho - ly Spir - it re - vives my soul a - gain.
 who, if you ask for knowl-edge, will nev - er fail to lend.
 you can tell the love of Je - sus, who died to save us all.

This is one of the most moving of the African-American spirituals because it illustrates the way in which the enslaved tried to encourage those who were feeling especially weighed down by the burden of their captivity.

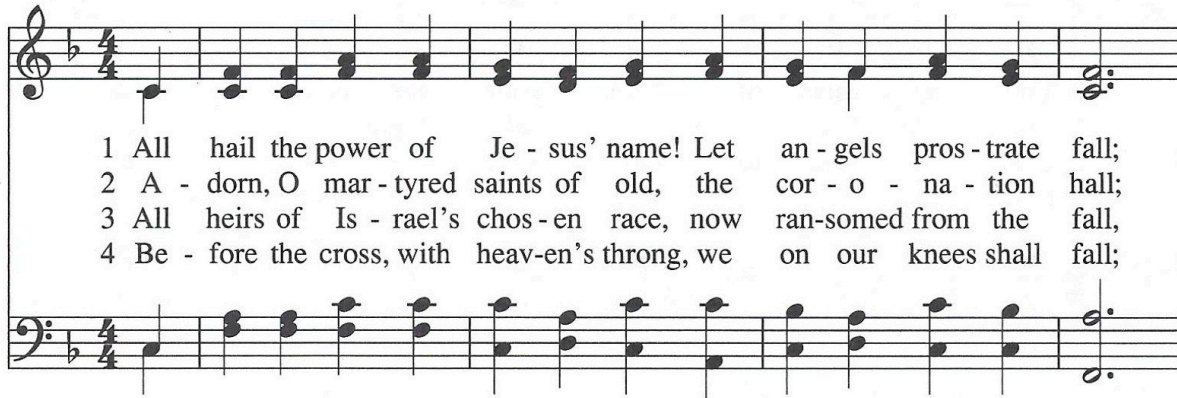
Tune: BALM IN GILEAD Irr. with refrain
 African-American spiritual

All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name

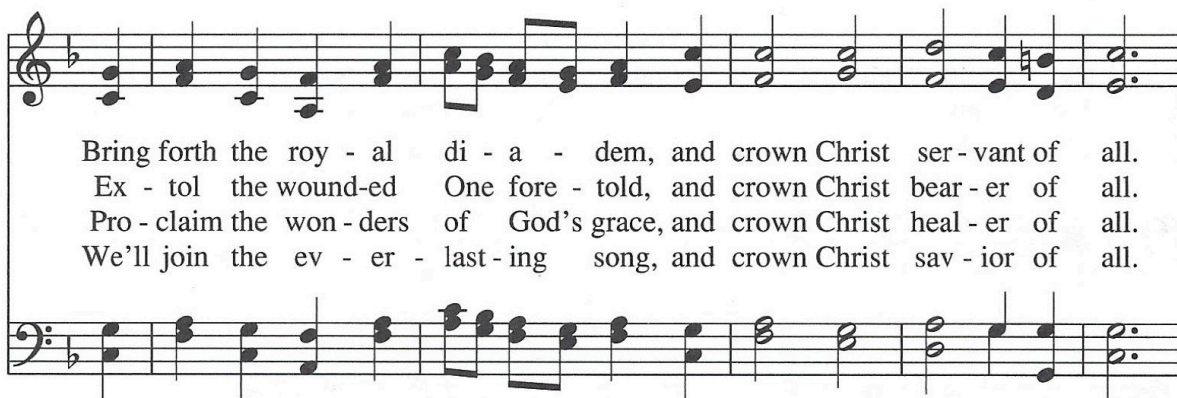
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St. 1-3, Edward Perronet, 1779, 1780; alt.
St. 4, John Rippon, 1787; alt.

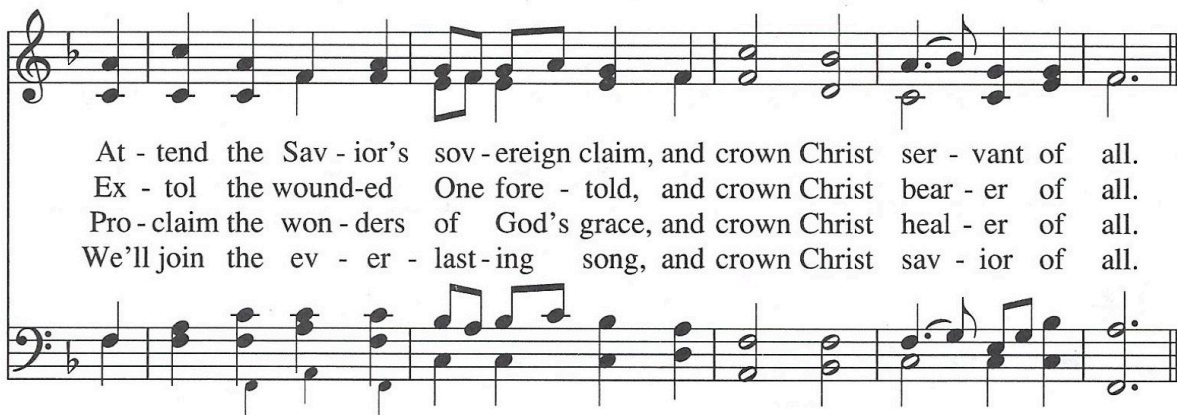
Rev. 19; 5:9; Phil. 2:9-11



1 All hail the power of Je - sus' name! Let an - gels pros - trate fall;
2 A - dorn, O mar - tyred saints of old, the cor - o - na - tion hall;
3 All heirs of Is - rael's chos - en race, now ran - somed from the fall,
4 Be - fore the cross, with heav - en's throng, we on our knees shall fall;



Bring forth the roy - al di - a - dem, and crown Christ ser - vant of all.
Ex - tol the wound - ed One fore - told, and crown Christ bear - er of all.
Pro - claim the won - ders of God's grace, and crown Christ heal - er of all.
We'll join the ev - er - last - ing song, and crown Christ sav - ior of all.



At - tend the Sav - ior's sov - ereign claim, and crown Christ ser - vant of all.
Ex - tol the wound - ed One fore - told, and crown Christ bear - er of all.
Pro - claim the won - ders of God's grace, and crown Christ heal - er of all.
We'll join the ev - er - last - ing song, and crown Christ sav - ior of all.

Edward Perronet, long a worker for English Methodism, later became a Congregational minister near Canterbury. John Rippon, an English Baptist minister, wrote more than 1,000 hymns. The tune is by Oliver Holden, an early American carpenter, legislator, musician, and hymnal editor.

Tune: CORONATION C.M.
Oliver Holden, 1793