

A Service of Witness to the Resurrection



***Rhonda K. Dyer***

November 16, 1948 - March 29, 2025

April 26, 2025

The liturgy of the Witness to the Resurrection is an Easter liturgy,  
and so it finds all its meaning there, in the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Because Jesus was raised from the dead, we too shall be raised.

The liturgy, therefore, is characterized by joy, in the certainty that

“neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers,  
nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers,  
nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation,  
will be able to separate us from the love of God  
in Christ Jesus our Lord.” (Rom. 8:38-39)

This joy, however, does not make human grief un-Christian.

The very love we have for each other in Christ  
brings deep sorrow when we are parted by death.

Jesus himself wept at the grave of his friend.

So while we rejoice that one we love  
has entered into the nearer presence of our Lord,  
we sorrow with those who mourn.



As Christians, we may think of death as the completion of our baptism.

Having received “the water of life as a gift” (Rev. 22:17),  
we now gather at the life-giving river that flows from God’s throne,  
to stand with the risen Lord and dwell in the presence of God forever.

ORDER OF SERVICE  
*for the Witness to the Resurrection*  
***Rhonda K. Dyer***  
November 16, 1948 — March 29, 2025

April 26, 2025

2:00 p.m.

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***THE GATHERING***

*Please silence electronic devices.*

PROCESSIONAL

*Amazing Grace*  
John Dubois, bagpipes

GREETING

Christopher Q. James

THANKSGIVING FOR BAPTISM

...To you, O blessed Trinity,  
be glory and honor, forever and ever.  
**Amen.**

OPENING SENTENCES & PRAYER

\*HYMN 840

When Peace Like a River  
*(It Is Well with My Soul)*

VILLE DU HAVRE

\*THE CONFESSION

God of mercy,  
whose loving-kindness endures forever:  
we confess that often we have failed  
to receive and give love;  
to care for others as we care for ourselves;  
to forgive and accept forgiveness.  
We remember good intentions that were not put into actions;  
harsh words that were hurtful;  
selfish purposes that caused pain;  
persistent pride that would not yield.  
We acknowledge our fear in the face of death  
and our failure to accept the hope you offer us in Christ.  
Hear us, O Lord,  
as in this silence, we make our confession to you.

*(Worshippers may offer confession in silence.) ...cont.*

Gracious God,  
forgive us and help us to forgive others;  
heal us from the pain of self-condemnation;  
free us from the burden of failures that cannot be corrected;  
renew us with your loving assurance  
that our sins have been forgiven,  
through Jesus Christ, our Redeemer.

DECLARATION OF FORGIVENESS

The mercy of the Lord  
is from everlasting to everlasting.  
I declare to you, in the name of Jesus Christ,  
you are forgiven.

**Thanks be to God.**

May the God of mercy,  
who forgives you all your sins,  
strengthen you in all goodness,  
and by the power of the Holy Spirit  
keep you in eternal life.

**Amen.**

***THE WORD***

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Psalm 103:1-5,15-22  
Philippians 1:20-26  
2 Timothy 4:2-8  
Matthew 11:25-28

HOMILY

✠ *A moment for silent prayer and reflection follows the homily.*

\*HYMN 819

*Be Still, My Soul*

FINLANDIA

\*THE APOSTLES' CREED (*Ecumenical Version*)

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,  
creator of heaven and earth.** ...cont.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,  
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,  
born of the Virgin Mary,  
suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died, and was buried;  
he descended to the dead.  
On the third day he rose again;  
he ascended into heaven,  
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,  
and he will come again to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy catholic church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and the life everlasting. Amen.

WORDS OF REMEMBRANCE

Randy Riesenberger  
Leah Riesenberger  
Wendy Radford

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE & THE LORD'S PRAYER

...And now with the confidence of the children of God, let us pray.

Our Father in heaven,  
hallowed be your name,  
your kingdom come,  
your will be done,  
on earth as 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.

## *THE SENDING*

### \*COMMENDATION

O God, you are immortal, the creator and maker of all.  
We are mortal, formed of the earth,  
and to earth shall we return.  
This you ordained when you created us, saying,  
"You are dust, and to dust you shall return."

**All of us go down to the dust;  
yet even at the grave we make our song:  
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.**

Give rest, O Christ, to your servant with all your saints,  
where there is neither pain nor sorrow nor sighing,  
**Amen.**

Holy God,  
by your creative power you gave us life,  
and in your redeeming love you have given us new life in Christ.  
We commend Ronald to your merciful care  
in the faith of Christ our Lord  
who died and rose again to save us,  
and who now lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and forever.  
**Amen.**

### \*BLESSING

...the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,  
remain with you always.  
**Amen.**

### \*RECESSIONAL

*Going Home (from Antonín Dvořák's 9th Symphony)*  
John Dubois, bagpipes

*The family will be led out of the sanctuary.  
All are welcome to greet the family at a reception in the narthex immediately following.*

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\*In body or in spirit, please rise.



## WORSHIP RESOURCES

The liturgy for "Funeral: Witness to the Resurrection," *Book of Common Worship*, Presbyterian Church (USA) (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2018), 780-794.

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*Striving to welcome and include all,  
worship God,  
grow in Christian faith,  
serve others,  
and be God's love in the world.*

The Rev. Dr. Christopher Q. James, Pastor  
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