

EASTER SUNDAY 04.09.23 | COURT STREET UMC



**seeking:**  
Who are you  
looking for?

10 A.M. | EASTER EGG HUNT | FELLOWSHIP HALL

10:45 A.M. | WORSHIP IN-PERSON & YOUTUBE LIVESTREAM

### GATHERING

Gathering Song

Who Are You Looking For

WORDS: © Anna Strickland, 2021. Commissioned by A Sanctified Art, LLC. Free for congregational use.

MUSIC: Trad. English melody; adapt. by Franklin L. Sheppard, 1915

Who are you looking for?  
A body in the tomb?  
The grave is death but God has breath  
The Spirit's wings need room  
Who are you looking for?  
He is not here but raised  
The empty tomb is now a womb  
Christ lives! Let God be praised!

Who are you looking for?  
The man of Galilee?  
He is not here but always near  
Lift up your head and see

Who are you looking for?  
Your rabbi and your friend  
Is God in flesh who conquered death  
Whose reign is without end

Who are you looking for?  
An answer to pin down?  
We cannot know where God will go  
But seeking we are found  
Who are you looking for?  
God will not be boxed in  
What we have found is love unbound  
Dynamic as the wind

Gathering

One: Friends, what are you looking for?

**All: The light before dawn.**

One: What are you looking for?

**All: A reason to hope.**

One: What are you looking for?

**All: Joy after grief and flowers after winter.**

One: What are you looking for?

**All: We are looking for the Messiah.**

One: Good news! Come in. Love is alive!

**All: Surely God is in this place.**

## Entering the Land of the Seeking

WORDS & MUSIC: © 2023 Spencer LaJoye  
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*There's a place you can get to without any sound  
It's a place where the wick has burned out  
There's a place at the point that's past turning around  
There is a place to be lost long after you're found  
There's a land you can reach if you follow yourself  
It's a land beyond hoarding your fears so to quell  
There's a land where the bottom falls out of the well  
There is a land where your worry and wonder can dwell*

*Coax your quiet questionings  
Speak your soft uncertainties*

*There is room for these  
In the land of seeking*

### Call to Confession

#### Prayer of Confession

**God of resurrection,  
We confess, like a dog with a bone, we run aimlessly.  
We chase our tails, looking for things that provide answers  
to the suffering of the world, looking for comfort to our longest nights.  
You meet us in the darkness before dawn, but we mistake you for the gardener.  
Forgive us for seeking after worldly things.  
Forgive us for forgetting to seek you.  
Speak to us. Call us by name, that we might recognize you in our midst.  
With hope and gratitude we pray, amen.**

*Draw a map without borders and see where you go  
In the cover of night, call a question a home  
Past the edge of defenses you're never alone  
There is a place where your worries and wonder are known*

*Coax your quiet questionings  
Speak your soft uncertainties*

*There is room for these  
In the land of seeking*

*The compass points straight to the heart of a shadow of a doubt  
The key is the most honest thing that you can't speak aloud  
There is no wrong way to be unsure of things  
There is no wrong way to the land of the seeking*

*Coax your quiet questionings  
Speak your soft uncertainties*

*There is room for these  
In the land of seeking*

### Words of Forgiveness

**One:** Family of faith ... the good news proclaimed in resurrection:

**All:** **What once was lost is found. We are held in God's loving embrace: forgiven, claimed, and sent to serve. Alleluia! Amen.**

*Coax your quiet questionings  
Speak your soft uncertainties*

*There is room for these  
In the land of seeking*

WORDS: Charles Wesley, 1707-1788      MUSIC: Lyra Davidica, 1708  
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*Christ the Lord is risen today, Alleluia!  
Earth and heaven in chorus say, Alleluia!  
Raise your joys and triumphs high, Alleluia!  
Sing, ye heavens, and earth reply, Alleluia!*

*Lives again our glorious King, Alleluia!  
Where, O death, is now thy sting? Alleluia!  
Once he died our souls to save, Alleluia!  
Where's thy victory, boasting grave? Alleluia!*

*Love's redeeming work is done, Alleluia!  
Fought the fight, the battle won, Alleluia!  
Death in vain forbids him rise, Alleluia!  
Christ has opened paradise, Alleluia!*

*Soar we now where Christ has led, Alleluia!  
Following our exalted Head, Alleluia!  
Made like him, like him we rise, Alleluia!  
Ours the cross, the grave, the skies, Alleluia!*

### ENGAGING

Prayer for Illumination

The Word

John 20:1-18

The Word in Music

*Empty Grave*

Rev. Jim West

Message

*seeking: Who are you looking for?*

Rev. Rebecca Dunger Peak

Affirmation of Faith

One: We believe in resurrection—

**All: mysterious, beyond our understanding, and yet,  
like tulips after the snow: real.**

One: We believe in Easter morning—

**All: in the promise of a God who would roll back every stone to return to us.**

One: We believe in Jesus—

**All: who calls us by name and asks,  
“Who are you looking for?”**

One: So we look—

**All: for justice, for mercy, for God in our midst.**

One: And as we look, we sing, “Alleluia!” Amen.

### THANKSGIVING

Gathering at the Table of Christ

Time Now to Gather, #2265; WORDS: Mary Nelson Keithahn  
MUSIC: John D. Horman; © 1998 Abingdon Press, admin. by The Copyright Co.  
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*Time now to gather, time now to feel  
Christ's holy presence gracing this meal.  
Grain from the harvest, fruit of the vine;  
simple the supper, sacred the sign.*

Invitation

*Time to remember Christ who was sent.  
Time to say, "Thank you" for all he meant.  
Come to this table. Come, without fear.  
God will forgive you, welcome you here.*

### The Great Thanksgiving

One: The Lord be with you.

**All: And also with you.**

One: Lift up your hearts.

**All: We lift them up to the Lord.**

One: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**All: It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

One: Resurrecting God, ... join their unending hymn:

**All: Holy, holy, holy Lord,  
God of power and might,  
heaven and earth are full of your glory.  
Hosanna in the highest.  
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.  
Hosanna in the highest.**

One: With gratitude, we recall Maundy Thursday. ... we proclaim the mystery of faith.

**All: Christ has died; Christ is risen; Christ will come again.**

One: And now, as we come to the Table, ... taught us to pray, saying,

### The Lord's Prayer

**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kin-dom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kin-dom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.**

### Breaking the Bread

*All who are hungry, come, and be fed.  
Serve one another this cup and bread.  
All who are troubled, hurting, or sad,  
come, and find healing. Come, and be glad!*

### Sharing the Feast

*As you come forward to the feast, we invite you to place your offerings and connections cards in the plate at the center of the aisle. You may also place your gifts in our virtual offering plate at [cour-tumc.org/give](http://cour-tumc.org/give). We celebrate an open Table at which everyone is welcome to the feast. Won't you come? There's plenty good room for you!*

### Prayer of Thanksgiving

**Where don't we seek after you, God? We look for you in the mirror, in strangers, in sunrises, on mountain tops, in the laughter of children, and in meals shared together. We look for you on the city streets, in hospital rooms, in jail cells, in poetry, and hymn melodies. We look for you everywhere! Sometimes the seeking is hard, but then at other times, we come to this Table and all are fed, and all are welcomed, and there is room for everyone, and no one is turned away, or made**

to feel unworthy. And in those moments, we see you clearly. So thank you for meeting us in our seeking. Thank you for receiving the gift our hearts, the work of our hands, that they might be used to tell out the Good News until the whole world hears. Oh God, please don't stop seeking us. Gratefully we pray, amen.

## SENDING

Upcoming

Song of Faith

*He Lives*

#310

WORDS & MUSIC: Alfred H. Ackley, 1933

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*I serve a risen Savior, he's in the world today;  
I know that he is living whatever foes may say.  
I see his hand of mercy, I hear his voice of cheer,  
and just the time I need him, he's always near.*

*He lives, he lives*

*Christ Jesus lives today!*

*He walks with me and talks with me  
along life's narrow way.*

*He lives, he lives. Salvation to impart.*

*You ask me how I know he lives?*

*He lives within my heart.*

*In all the world around me I see his loving care,  
and though my heart grows weary,*

*I never will despair.*

*I know that he is leading  
through all the stormy blast;*

*the day of his appearing will come at last.*

*He lives, he lives*

*Christ Jesus lives today!*

*He walks with me and talks with me  
along life's narrow way.*

*He lives, he lives. Salvation to impart.  
me how I know he lives?*

*He lives within my heart.*

*Rejoice, rejoice, O Christian,  
lift up your voice and sing*

*eternal hallelujahs to Jesus Christ the King!*

*The hope of all who seek him,  
the help of all who find;*

*none other is so loving, so good and kind.*

*He lives, he lives*

*Christ Jesus lives today!*

*He walks with me and talks with me  
along life's narrow way.*

*He lives, he lives. Salvation to impart.*

*You ask me how I know he lives?*

*He lives within my heart.*

Blessing

Postlude

*Up from the Grave He Arose*

Rev. Jim West

WORDS & MUSIC: Robert Lowry, 1826-1899; arr. Jim West

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Liturgy written by and adapted from Rev. Sarah A. Speed | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org

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# seeking:

## honest questions for deeper faith

### daily devotional prompts & prayers

Beginning with Ash Wednesday and continuing through the beginning of Easter, use these daily devotional prompts and prayers to expand and deepen your spiritual walk through Lent. You might read them first thing in the morning or incorporate them into your bedtime routine. Perhaps use the questions as prompts to journal and reflect. Day by day, may these prayers remind you that, as you seek God, God is always seeking you.

#### sunday

04.09.23

*prompt:* Where are you experiencing new life?

*prayer:* Risen God, you bring us with you on Easter Sunday, giving us new life—a renewed hunger for faith, a louder curiosity, a more vibrant sense of self. Whatever it is for each of us, help us recognize the holiness in that newness. Help me see the gift in this season. Amen.

#### monday

04.10.23

*prompt:* Where and when do you feel closest to God?

*prayer:* Mary found you in the garden. I find you in music, in crowded tables, in the feeling of coming home. I find you in the sunrise, in quiet mornings with the dog stretched over my lap. I find you in the children's choir, in a warm cup of coffee, in Communion breadcrumbs scattered all around the floor. I find you all over the place, holy God. Keep meeting me there. Amen.

#### tuesday

04.11.23

*prompt:* Where have you felt God this Lenten season? What have you learned?

*prayer:* God of the journey, I have spent the last six weeks walking this Lenten path, seeking after you. This seeking has led me deeper into faith and closer to you. So as I reflect back on this Lenten season, help me appreciate the lessons that have been learned. Help me carry that same curiosity into the coming days. With joy in my heart, amen.

#### wednesday

04.12.23

*prompt:* What is bringing you energy in your life right now?

**prayer:** Holy God, I could write a novel about the joys in my life—the things that jumpstart my heart, the things that make me feel most alive. What a gift! Tie a string from the center of my soul to those sources of life-giving energy, that I might never lose my way. Amen.

**thursday**

**04.13.23**

**prompt:** What will you seek in this new season of life? What are you looking for?

**prayer:** God of the empty tomb, I know that Easter does not mean the work of seeking stops. Instead, you are now on the loose—out in the world, anywhere and everywhere. So my seeking only continues as I look for your fingerprints all around me. Give me clarity for the things I seek, and the energy to continue the work. Amen.