

The Congregational Church of Salisbury  
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST



**PRELUDE**

“Prelude,” *Cello Suite 1*

Bach/arr. Kevin Dolan

**WELCOME**

**ANNOUNCEMENTS | JOYS AND CONCERNS | SILENT PRAYER**

**CALL TO HILARITY**

ONE: When God restored the fortunes of the people,  
we were like those who dream.

**ALL: Then our mouth was filled with laughter,  
and our tongue with shouts of joy.**

When God raised Jesus from death to life,  
we were like those who dream.

**Now our mouths are filled with laughter,  
and our tongues with shouts of joy.**

God has done great things for us; let us rejoice!

**May all those who have sowed in tears  
reap with shouts of hilarity!**

✘ **HYMN** (*insert*)      “Christians, We Are Made for Laughter”  
(✘ *The congregation may rise, in body or in spirit.*)

HYMN TO JOY

## **CALL TO RECONCILIATION**

None of us likes to look foolish, but which is sillier? Chasing after the world and all the gaudy trinkets that flatter our souls, or being a 'fool for Christ', imitating him in being a servant to others, offering ourselves in love and joy to the world? Let us admit to God the foolish choices we make each and every day, as we pray, saying,

## **UNISON PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

**You know better than we do, Amused God,  
what important people we think we are.  
Believing we have to be serious all the time,  
we miss out on the joy of your creation.  
Choosing to feast on the pain of the world,  
we skip the picnic offered in paradise.  
Clinging to the despair which is our best friend,  
we ignore Jesus. who can bring us home to your heart.**

**Forgive us, Heart of Joy,  
and make us open to the startling,  
upside-down ways in which you work.  
Fill us with Easter's laughter;  
fill us with your healing joy;  
fill us with the hilarity of love poured into us through Jesus Christ,  
our Teacher and Savior.**

*(Silent prayers may be offered)*

## **WORDS OF ASSURANCE**

The Gospels tell us over and over again of the joy that comes to us through Christ. When Jesus was around, lives were changed, the sick were healed, the sorrowful began to laugh with delight. All this, God gives again — right now!

**Thank you, God, for the Spirit that bursts out in chuckles and gales of laughter. Thank you for the joy that turns us from death to life. Thank you for your forgiveness, lifting us with glee — and send us to give away that gift to anyone who will listen to your great Easter joke.  
Amen!**

## A COMMUNION OF SAINTS AFFIRMATION OF HUMOR

*Compiled by Chris Anderson with help from the Joyful Noiseletter*

ONE: We believe with scripture that “there is a time to weep and a time to laugh.”

**ALL: We believe with Chesterton that**

**“A good joke is the closest thing we have to divine revelation.”**

We believe with Bonhoeffer that “Ultimate seriousness is not without a dose of humor.”

**ALL: We believe with Luther that**

**“You have as much laughter as you have faith.”**

We believe with John Chrysostom that “laughter has been implanted in our souls.”

**We believe with Francis De Sales that**

**“humor is a foundation for reconciliation.”**

We believe with Dostoevski that “If a person laughs well they are a good person.”

**We believe with Flannery O’Conner that**

**“Christianity is a strangely cheery religion.”**

We believe with Krister Stendhal that “humor, along with irony, forms a safeguard against idolatry.”

**We believe with Charles Schultz that “Humor is proof that everything is going to be alright with God nevertheless.”**

We believe with Elton Trueblood, “Never trust a theologian with no sense of humor.”

**We believe that we are made for your gift of joy — and we thank you, God, for renewing that joy in the rising of Christ Jesus. Alleluia! Amen.**

## A THOUGHT FOR YOUNG MINDS

**THE LORD’S PRAYER** (*debts/debtors*)

*Hymnal, p. 35*

✘ **HYMN #249**

“Because You Live, O Christ”

VRUECHTEN

*All attending Sunday School may leave as we sing the hymn.*

## OFFERTORY

### THE LIGHT OF SERVICE

*Each week, offerings not specifically designated for the Church (including any checks with “Light of Service” or “LOS” in the memo line) will be given to an organization*

doing compassionate work that is close to the heart of a participant in our church.  
This week, we share our gifts with **The Village Music School Foundation**.

ONE: God has poured gifts into our lives; we now return our tithes and offerings.

**ALL: Let us gather our gifts with grateful praise,  
and offer them to God's purposes.**

### RECEIVING OUR OFFERINGS

*Our church welcomes every size gift, and thanks you for your generosity.*

**MUSICAL OFFERING**      *Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring*      J.S. Bach

✘ **EASTER DOXOLOGY**      OLD 100TH

**Praise God the source of life and breath;  
Praise Christ, now risen, conquering death;  
Praise Holy Spirit, heav'nly dove;  
One God, revealed in truth and love.**

✘ **UNISON PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

**God, you are powerful beyond measure.  
You whisk stones off of tombs,  
you defy death,  
you cause life to sing out,  
you even raise our hearts when they have grown heavy and tired.  
So we bless these gifts in your life-giving name.  
By your grace, may they provide  
food, healing, hope, and laughter to a hurting, hungry world.  
We pray you will use us to do the same. Amen!**

**SCRIPTURE READING**      I Peter 1:3-9

**SERMON**      "For Real?"      Pastor John A. Nelson

**PASTORAL PRAYER**

✘ **HYMN #246**      "Christ Is Alive"      TRURO

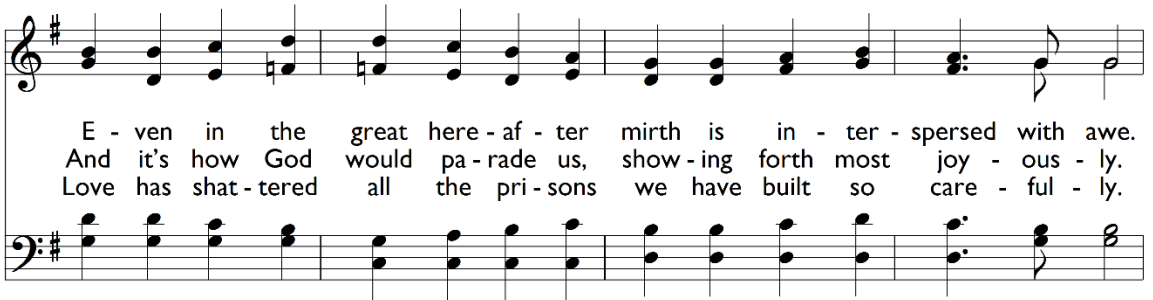
**BENEDICTION and SUNG AMEN**

**POSTLUDE**      *Sheebegg & Sheemore*      Turlogh O'Carrolan

# Christians, We Are Made for Laughter!



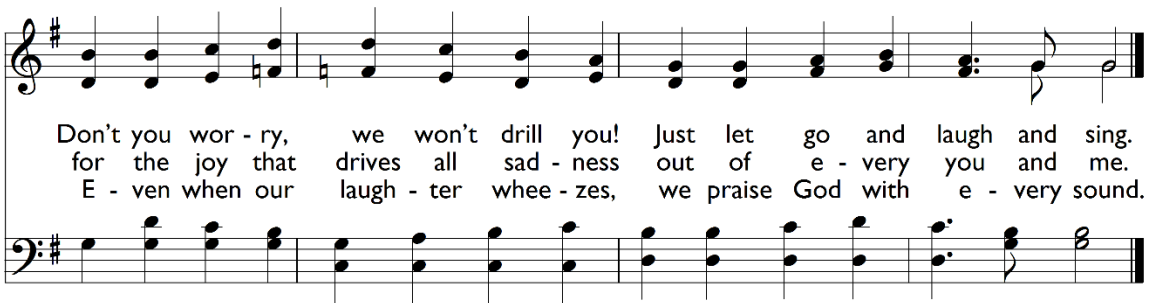
1. Chris-tians, we are made for laugh-ter, born to gig-gle and guf-faw!  
2. This is how our great God made us: fa-ces, lungs, and hearts for glee.  
3. Christ was dead and now he's ri-sen! Is-n't that a cause for glee?



E - ven in the great here - af - ter mirth is in - ter - spersed with awe.  
And it's how God would pa - rade us, show - ing forth most joy - ous - ly.  
Love has shat - tered all the pri - sons we have built so care - ful - ly.



So don't hold back, let it fill you, let your mus - cles do their thing!  
All the love and all the glad - ness, such a great ca - pa - ci - ty  
Now un - fet - tered, free as bree - zes, gig - gles, snorts, and glee a - bound!



Don't you wor - ry, we won't drill you! Just let go and laugh and sing.  
for the joy that drives all sad - ness out of e - very you and me.  
E - ven when our laugh - ter whee - zes, we praise God with e - very sound.

# 249 Because You Live, O Christ

1 Be-cause you live, O Christ, the gar - den of the world has come to  
 2 Be-cause you live, O Christ, the spir - it bird of hope is freed for  
 3 Be-cause you live, O Christ, the rain-bow of your peace will span cre -

flow - er; the dark-ness of the tomb is flood - ed with your  
 fly - ing; our ca - ges of de - spair no lon - ger keep us  
 a - tion; the col - ors of your love will draw all hu - man -

*Refrain*

res - ur - rec - tion pow - er.  
 closed and life - de - ny - ing. The stone has rolled a - way and death can -  
 kind to ad - o - ra - tion.

not im - pris - on! O sing this Eas - ter day, for Je - sus Christ has

This New Zealand author's text contains no familiar images of springtime to bolster its message, because Easter in the Southern Hemisphere comes in autumn. This hymn resulted both from her dissatisfaction with existing hymns and from her love of this exuberant Dutch tune.

ris - en, has ris - en, has ris - en, has ris - en!

# Christ Is Alive!

246

1 Christ is a - live! Let Chris - tians sing. The cross stands  
 2 Christ is a - live! No lon - ger bound to dis - tant  
 3 In ev - ery in - sult, rift, and war where col - or,  
 4 Wom - en and men, in age and youth, can feel the  
 5 Christ is a - live, and comes to bring good news to

emp - ty to the sky. Let streets and homes with  
 years in Pal - es - tine, but sav - ing, heal - ing,  
 scorn, or wealth di - vide, Christ suf - fers still, yet  
 Spir - it, hear the call, and find the way, the  
 this and ev - ery age, till earth and sky and

prais - es ring. Love, drowned in death, shall nev - er die.  
 here and now, and touch - ing ev - ery place and time.  
 loves the more, and lives, where e - ven hope has died.  
 life, the truth, re - vealed in Je - sus, freed for all.  
 o - cean ring with joy, with jus - tice, love, and praise.

In 1968 Easter fell ten days after the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr., and this text was written to express an Easter hope while mindful of that terrible event. Buoyed by a triple-arched tune, it affirms the presence of a wounded, risen Christ with all who suffer.





## Welcome to Church!

Gathered in 1744, the Congregational Church of Salisbury is an Open and Affirming member of the United Church of Christ. It is also a welcoming home to people from a great variety of church backgrounds and life experiences. Your presence is a gift to us! We hope you will feel God's Spirit here today through our worship and fellowship.

*We seek to love God with all our hearts, souls, and minds and love our neighbors as ourselves. This Church is **Open** to all for participation, membership, leadership and employment regardless of race, ancestry, class, gender identity, physical and mental ability or sexual orientation. We **Affirm** each individual as a child of God, celebrating the total identity of each person.*

*As an **Open and Affirming** Congregation, we commit to work toward ending ignorance, fear, hatred, prejudice, and discrimination against any person.*

*Whoever you are, wherever you are on life's journey,  
you are welcome here!*

If you are visiting us, Welcome! Please sign our guest book and introduce yourself to our Pastor or to one of the Deacons. Fill out a welcome card in the pew to join our email list. Assistive Listening Devices are available; please ask an usher for assistance.

**Kindly set phones to silent (unless you're expecting a call from Jesus).**

## Today's Worship Leaders

*Ushers:* Sarah Morrison, Kevin Wolgemuth  
*Reader:* Terre Lefferts • *Deacon:* John Estabrook

Today's liturgy is adapted and reprinted from *Lectionary Liturgies* by the Rev. Thom Shuman © 2022 (lectionaryliturgies.blogspot.com); used by permission.

Psalm adapted from *The Psalms in Worship*, Mary Susan Gast, © 2002; used by permission.

## Our Ministry Team

**Ministers:** All Participants in the Life of the Congregation

### Worship & Music

**Music Director:** David Baranowski  
**Bell Choir Director:** Mary Davidson  
**Cantor:** Jennifer Oberto

### Faith Formation

**Sunday School Coordinator:**  
Holly Tierney  
**Sunday School Assistant:**  
Jennifer Kronholm-Clark

### Holding the Parts Together

**Administrative Assistant:** Loriann Chevremont  
**Sexton:** Richard Tietjen  
**Stewardship & Database Mgr:** Kelly Rybczyk

**Church Officers:** Betsy Beck, *moderator*;  
Jennifer Weigel, *treasurer*;  
Jennifer Oberto, *clerk*

**Pastor and Teacher:** The Rev. Dr. John A. Nelson

## This Week at Salisbury UCC

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### SUNDAY, 16 APRIL

10AM Worship  
*followed by fellowship & refreshments  
in the Parish Hall*  
11:30AM Board of Trustees meeting

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### MONDAY, 17 APRIL

11:30AM Duplicate Bridge Club  
4pm Project SAGE Volunteer  
appreciation

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### TUESDAY, 18 APRIL

10AM Tai Chi class  
4PM Centering Prayer (via Zoom)  
5:15PM Handbell Choir rehearsal

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### THURSDAY, 20 APRIL

5:30PM Choir Rehearsal

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### FRIDAY, 21 APRIL

8:45AM Men's Bible Study

## Occasions for Service, Witness, and Prayer

### IN OUR PRAYERS:

We gladly list joys and concerns, and typically print them for four weeks after they are offered in worship. (Prayer requests may be renewed at any time.)

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#### New concerns:

Weekly prayer from UCC Global Ministries: for mission partners, the Protestant Church in East Timor.

#### Continuing concerns:

Debbie Martin, recovering from injuries from a serious accident • Baby Sid recovering from surgery • Kiau Loi, recovering from stroke.

Margaret Haubrich, in memory care • all affected by gun violence, especially survivors, those tending to the traumatized, and those advocating for safety

- The people of Ukraine and all striving to end war
- All who serve or live in war or in conflict zones around the world.

For those in treatment for cancer — Jenny, Frank Swaye, David Douyea, Deborah Merwin, Keith Blanton and others — prayers for healing and strength.

### Family & Friends who have passed away

Patricia Habacker • MingMing • Art Eddy

We thank God for the gift of life, and pray for the Spirit's strong presence with all who grieve.

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**IF YOU WOULD LIKE A PASTORAL VISIT**, please call the church office (860-435-2442) or email Pastor John (jnelson@salisburyucc.org). Sometimes we don't find out about an injury or illness or other need until long after — so please call!

### Call to Meeting

The 278th Annual Meeting, Part II, of the Congregational Church of Salisbury, United Church of Christ, will be held following the 10am worship service on Sunday, 30 April 2023, for the purpose of:

1. Acceptance of the Minutes of the 278<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting, Part I, of 30 October 2022
2. Presentation of Reports from Boards and Committees
3. Presentation from the Strategic Visioning Team
4. The Election of Officers, Boards, and Committees
5. Any other business that needs to come before the congregation.

All Covenant Partners of the Church are requested to attend and vote. All friends of the church are encouraged to attend.



## *The Congregational Church of Salisbury*

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

*Whoever you are, wherever you are on life's journey: you are welcome here.*

30 Main Street | P.O. Box 392 | Salisbury, CT 06068 • 860-435-2442

email: [welcome@salisburyucc.org](mailto:welcome@salisburyucc.org) • web: [salisburyucc.org](http://salisburyucc.org)

Office Hours: 8:30am – 1:30pm, Monday-Thursday