



Thomas A. Edison
Congregational Church

MARCH 31, 2024



Order of Worship

Easter Sunday

** You are invited to stand
(Please remember to silence your cell phone during the service.)

When the prelude begins, let us quiet our hearts and conversation.

Church Bell Calls Us to Worship

Prelude

The Rejoicing

By: Charles Callahan

Call to Worship (responsively)

One: God, make Easter our home. Shelter us from apathy

All: With a desire to do good.

One: God, let the rhythm of our days pulse with Your call to live justly.

All: God, set the table of our souls with the generosity of Your Spirit.

One: God, furnish our lives with such hope that, while we still have breath, we might not only share good news but also be a source of it.

All: God, make Easter not only our home but also our mission.

One: People of faith, Christ is Risen!

All: Christ is Risen Indeed! Amen.

~ Adapted from a prayer found @ <https://united-church.ca/prayers/shelter-world-love-easter>

Hymn #183

**Dan England, Trombone
and Congregation**

Jesus Christ is Risen Today

Words: Latin, 14th c.

Music: Easter Hymn, from Lyra Davidica

**Jesus Christ is ris'n today, Alleluia!
Our triumphant holy day, Alleluia!
Who did once, upon the cross, Alleluia!
Suffer to redeem our loss, Alleluia!**

**Hymns of praise then let us sing, Alleluia!
Unto Christ, our heav'nly King, Alleluia!
Who endured the cross and grave, Alleluia!
Sinners to redeem and save, Alleluia!**

**But the pains which He endured, Alleluia!
Our salvation hath procured, Alleluia!
Now above the sky He's King, Alleluia!
Where the angels ever sing, Alleluia!
Sing we to our God above, Alleluia!
Praise eternal as His love, Alleluia!
Praise Him, all ye heav'nly host, Alleluia!
Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, Alleluia!**

Opening Prayer...

One: God of grace and power,

All: We have longed and prepared for this joyous day:

One: God, on Ash Wednesday the church universal humbled ourselves before You — with the sign of the cross on our foreheads in the form of ashes; on Maundy Thursday the church universal learned a new commandment — to love one another as Jesus loves us; on Good Friday, the church universal cried at the foot of the cross — as the whole world went dark; on Holy Saturday we kept vigil — as the church prayed for a miracle to happen in our midst: and on this Blessed Sunday we rejoice in the risen power of love, hope, and new life.

All: God, make this rising real in our own lives. Let us be people of love, hope, and new life. Let us be people of joy. In the name of all that is good, holy, and resurrected in our lives we pray — Amen.

~Adapted from a prayer found @ The United Church of Canada, Easter Resources

Song of Prayer

**Hallelujah, Hallelujah
Hallelujah, Hallelujah**

~slightly adapted prayer from: Mac Campbell's Easter Lyrics to Leonard Cohen's anthem "Hallelujah"

~and slightly adapted from Prayers found @Homileticonline

Passing of the Peace

May the Peace of Christ be with you!

And, also with you!

Prayer of Discipleship (responsively)

One: We believe in an Easter God, who transforms darkness into light, hatred into tolerance and despair into hope.

All: We believe God is always working for good, changing every Good Friday nightmare into an Easter day full of new possibilities.

One: We believe in the risen Christ, who befriends us on our roads of doubt and worry: who touches us through song and silence, word and gesture; who calls us by name to enter the dance of resurrected life.

All: We believe in the Spirit, the hidden presence behind every resurrection, who beckons us to leave tomblike safety and trust the gracious invitation to live joyfully and fully in

Christ.

One: We believe the Spirit is always renewing the church and transforming us into people who practice kindness, encourage beauty and work for biblical justice and freedom.

All: We believe we are Easter people. We believe with God all things are possible. And as Easter people we gather to worship and celebrate together on this beautiful resurrection day. Amen.

~slightly adapted from Prayers found @Homileticonline

Our Lord's Prayer (*unison*)

Our Father, 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 and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

Song of Prayer

**Hallelujah, Hallelujah
Hallelujah, Hallelujah**

~slightly adapted prayer from: Mac Campbell's Easter Lyrics to Leonard Cohen's anthem "Hallelujah"
~and slightly adapted from Prayers found @Homileticonline

Gift of Music

Dan Davis, Baritone

**Cannon of Joy,
Based on "Cannon in D" Johann Pachelbel
and "Ode to Joy"**

By: Ludwig van Beethoven,
Arr. By: Michael Scott

Empty tomb

16 When the Sabbath was over, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices so that they could go and anoint Jesus' dead body. ² Very early on the first day of the week, just after sunrise, they came to the tomb. ³ They were saying to each other, "Who's going to roll the stone away from the entrance for us?" ⁴ When they looked up, they saw that the stone had rolled away. (And it was a very large stone!) ⁵ Going into the tomb, they saw a young man in a white robe seated on the right side; and they were startled. ⁶ But he said to them, "Don't be alarmed! You are looking for Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has been raised. He isn't here. Look, here's the place where they laid Him. ⁷ Go, tell His disciples, especially Peter, that He is going ahead of you into Galilee. You will see Him there, just as He told you." ⁸ Overcome with terror and dread, they fled from the tomb. They said nothing to anyone because they were afraid.

— Common English Bible

Response to the Sharing of God's Story

The Story of God for the People of God!
Thanks Be to God!

Hymn of Praise #182

**Dan England, Trombone
and Congregation**

Christ Arose!

Words: Robert Lowry

Music: Christ Arose, Robert Lowry

**Low in the grave He lay, Jesus my Savior!
Waiting the coming day, Jesus my Lord!
Up from the grave he arose,**

**with a mighty triumph o'er His foes,
He arose a victor from the dark domain,
And He lives forever, with His saints to reign.
He a-rose! He a-rose! Hallelujah! Christ a-rose!**

**Vainly they watch His bed, Jesus my Savior!
Vainly they seal the dead, Jesus my Lord!
Up from the grave he arose,
with a mighty triumph o'er His foes,
He arose a victor from the dark domain,
And He lives forever, with His saints to reign.
He a-rose! He a-rose! Hallelujah! Christ a-rose!**

**Death cannot keep his prey, Jesus my Savior;
He tore the bars away, Jesus my Lord!
Up from the grave he arose,
with a mighty triumph o'er His foes,
He arose a victor from the dark domain,
And He lives forever, with His saints to reign.
He a-rose! He a-rose! Hallelujah! Christ a-rose!**

Pastoral Words

Invitation to the Offering

*What we give and the spirit with which we give it, enables this church
to make a difference in the lives of all whom we touch.*

Offertory

Dr. Dan Davis, Saxophone

Praise to the Lord!

Arr. By: Brant Adams

**** Easter Doxology**

**Let trumpets sound and voices sing!
Let all on earth their praises bring!
For Christ has conquered sin and death
And given life eternal breath.**

Tune: Old Hundredth; Text: John H. Danner

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise Him, all creatures here below;
Praise Him above, ye heavenly host;
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.**

Tune: Thomas Ken, 1709

Life of Our Church

Faith Development

**NO Faith Development on
Wednesday, April 3rd, or Thursday April 4th.**

**Sign-up sheet is on the bulletin board to donate
flowers to enhance our Sunday Service.**

**We are looking for Volunteers for Greeters and for Ushers.
Sign-up sheets are on the bulletin board, or you can
go to the website “Signup Genius” if interested.**

**If you haven’t returned your Volunteer Survey,
Please pick one up in the basket in the Fellowship
Hall and return it filled out.**

Sunday April 7th

Beth Moss will be offering Blood Pressure checks. Blood Pressure Screening is an important part of health maintenance. All are encouraged to do this.

Sunday April 14th Lunch and Learn

Immediately following the service on April 14th, Beth Moss, our Faith community Nurse, will have a discussion on: Anger and Resolutions. Beth will discuss what Anger is and suggestions on what works to lessen its power.

There will be a sign-up sheet on the bulletin board or you can RSVP to the office by April 10th so we will know how many boxed lunches to order.

WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP NEWS APRIL 17th

Women's Fellowship will meet Wednesday, April 17th at noon at the church and the speaker will be Kim Gaide from Lee Health Military Support Group. Please bring your own lunch – coffee and dessert will be provided.

Spring Piano Recital April 19th

**You're invited to Alena Michel's Spring Piano Recital, where talented kids of all ages will showcase their musical skills. Join us for an enchanting evening filled with beautiful melodies and youthful performances!
Friday, April 19th at 6:00 PM here at the church.**

**Guest Soloist for next Sunday morning
will be Katy Sumrow**

**For next week's God's
word:
Easter Too!
John 20:19-31**

Benediction (responsively)

One: Resurrection took Jesus of Nazareth from a dead end to lively encounters with humankind throughout history! Transformation took Jesus from a shroud of death to be the empowering Christ for each season of life. Creativity through Christ continues to enliven us and the world. Life everlasting in the "kingdom of God" is an invitation to be intimate with the Holy, beginning now, beginning today!

All: Easter liberates us from the caves which threaten to imprison us. Resurrection freedom promises us healthy souls! Thanks be to God! Amen.

Postlude

Toccata on the "Easter Hymn"

By: Page Long

Time with our Children

The Mystery

By Lois Parker Edstrom

Mark 16:1-8

Let's talk about the word "mystery." A jigsaw puzzle is a mystery. We can't see the whole picture until all the pieces are put together.

As we begin to work on the puzzle, we get clues about what the picture might look like when it is finished. We see different colors and shapes or bits of the picture such as a leaf, a stone, or a part of a person's face. We get clues along the way.

The same thing happens when we read a good mystery book. Something is unknown to us. We need to follow clues to help us figure out the mystery. Sometimes the mystery is a big surprise – something we did not expect.

Three women in the Bible had first-hand experience with the biggest mystery of all. After Jesus died, these women, Mary Magdalene, Mary, the mother of James, and Salome went to Jesus' tomb. When they arrived, they discovered "that the stone was rolled back". (This was the first clue.)

When they entered the tomb they found, "a young man sitting on the right side, dressed in a white robe, and they were amazed". The young man said, "You seek Jesus... He is not here". They looked and saw with their own eyes that Jesus was not there. (Another clue.) The young man said, "He has risen".

As you can imagine, this was a big surprise; not what the women had expected. They were amazed and frightened because they did not yet understand the mystery.

This is the mystery of our faith. We do not know how Jesus was raised to live again after He died, but we have been given many clues. Jesus asks us to believe. We have faith even though the picture is not complete. We don't have all the answers, but we know the mystery will be revealed in God's time.

Scripture quotations from the World English Bible
Copyright 2007, Richard Niell Donovan

Ten Reasons Why You Should Be Going to Church

I've just seen one too many articles on why people aren't coming to church. Admittedly, there are some good reasons. But I'd like to share my top 10 reasons why you *should* be coming to church. Others will have different reasons, and some may disagree with the ones I have listed, but here they are.

10. Coming to church doesn't mean you have no doubts about God or faith or religion. It means you have a place you can share with people who have their own doubts.

9. Bad stuff is going to happen in your life. It just is. A church community cannot be everything to everyone in times of crisis, but when the bottom falls out of your world, it's great to have a community to lift you back up.
8. Bad stuff is going to happen in your life, part two. The time to build a relationship with God is not when life turns ugly, and you've run out of all other options. Attending worship regularly helps build a relationship with God and others that will give you a solid foundation when the winds blow, and the storms come.
7. Not all churches are anti-something. Most of us are for people, for acceptance, for hospitality. Really, we're out there. We just don't get the good press.
6. Any church worth its salt has really good food on a regular basis.
5. Churches offer paint-by-number opportunities to serve. Many people would like to help the poor, the hungry and the homeless, but they don't know how to get involved, how to make the time to be involved, or what they can do to really make a difference. Churches offer you ways to plug in to help those who need it most.
4. You've got a gift. Probably two or ten of them. Becoming involved in the ministry of a church will help you discover and use gifts you never even knew you had.
3. Not all churches are after your money. Good churches want you to have a healthy relationship with money. Sure, churches need to pay the electric bill and the pastor and the youth director, but money and the church is more about you than it is about the church. It's about your own relationship with money. World events have proven that it's much better to put faith in God than in a bank account. Church can help you with that.
2. Taking a break from our hectic lives to come to church is accepting the gift of Sabbath. Wayne Mueller says "[Sabbath] dissolves the artificial urgency of our days, because it liberates us from the need to be finished." We don't take Sabbath and come to worship because we have time and have finished up everything that needs to be done. We take Sabbath because it is time to stop, and we are designed to stop, rest, and reflect. Those who don't are destined to crash and burn.
1. Jesus is really cool. Even if you don't know if you can believe in the whole Son-of-God thing, even if you refer to the resurrection as the Zombie Jesus event and even though those of us already in church often do a lousy job of following him, come to church to get to know Jesus. The more you get to know him, the more you'll understand why people call his way The Way.

Rev. Anne Russ, Pastor, Argenta Presbyterian Church,
North Little Rock, Arkansas

Welcome,

Here is a little fable about how the sting of death has been taken away. Imagine a little boy and his father driving down a country road on a beautiful spring afternoon.

Suddenly out of nowhere a bumblebee flies through the open car window. Since the little boy is deathly allergic to bee stings, he becomes petrified.

But the father quickly reaches out, grabs the bee, squeezes it in his hand, and then releases it. But as soon as he lets it go, the young son becomes frantic again as it buzzes by him.

His father, seeing his panic-stricken face, extends his hand. Pointing to his hand, he shows his son that there, still stuck in his skin, is the stinger of the bee.

“Do you see this?” he asks. “You don’t need to be afraid anymore. There’s no more sting in that bee!”

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Are you afraid to die? Are you afraid of living? These are some of the concepts that we deal with as a community of faith, as we strive to grow in our faith and faithfulness. We find that a relationship with God helps us face our fears and live our lives faithfully and boldly. If you are curious, about discovering this type of understanding and peace for yourself or if you are interested in what it means to belong to a community of faith that wrestles with such ideas; inquire by asking Pastor Anton, Beth Moss, Alena Michel, Cindy Wilson, or Pastor Jim. As we travel together, may we grow stronger in our faith and faithfulness. Happy Easter!

Rev. Jim Harper III

photo credit: <https://newsnetwork.mayoclinic.org/.../bee-prepared-for.../>



Edison Church and Our Ministry Partnerships.

Ministry Partnerships 2024

Edison Park Elementary School

Operation INASMUCH Fort Myers

South Fort Myers Food Pantry

Mission Peniel

Nations Association Charities

Lee County Military Support

ACT – Abuse, Counseling & Treatment

National Association of Congregational Christian Churches

One Great Hour of Sharing

Builders without Borders

Campolo Center for Ministry

Local outreach with Food, Power Bill's and Prescriptions

Center for Sight, a US Eye Company, Ahuachapan, El Salvador
Eye and Medical Care

Fires in Lahaina, Hawaii

Guardian ad Litem

PRAYER LIST

Our Church Members:

Kate Baumann; Roy Shipley; Liz Lloyd;
Barry Pierce; Dan Van Riper; Sharlene Dozier; Barbara Buch;
Joe Helling; Greg Haston; Ian Laughlin; Pat Jessie;
Nancy Bergman and family after the passing of John.

Friends & Family:

Pat Tanguzzo (Friend of the Church and Quilter);
Duane (Friend of Tom & Sherrie McIntyre); Prayers for the family (Sister-in-law
of Tom Johns & Joseph Helling); Betty Denson; Jim Martin (Teri Martin's
husband); Martha Calvert, (Friend of Ian Laughlin); Jeffrey Lloyd (Son of Liz
Lloyd); John Schmidt (Gail Courtwright's brother); Carmella Colitti (great niece of
Rosemary Priore); Shannon Randall (daughter of co-worker of Pastor Anton);
Jim Marc-Aurele (Lou & Carol's son); Darlene Gonzalez (Flo Newbrough's
sister); Bob and Darlene Kulesza (Bob is Carol Marc-Aurele's brother); Rhonda
and Hunter (friends of Martha Long); Howard Youngquist (brother of Malcolm
Youngquist); Clay (homeless gentleman); Elvis, Pamela, Franciso & other son
(homeless family); Roy Waldhauer (friend of Sandy Cole); Stephen (homeless
gentleman); Lori and Pops (homeless couple); Mitch (homeless gentleman);
Carl Richard Gilmore (friend of Sandy Cole); Matt (homeless man);
Norma Stott (friend of Sandy Cole).

***No matter who you are, or where you are on life's journey,
you're welcome here at Edison Congregational Church.
Welcome home!***

Website:	www.edisonchurch.com
Facebook:	Facebook.com/EdisonChurch
Email Pastor:	Pastorjim@taecc.com
Email Office:	Admin@taecc.com
Office Phone:	239-334-4978
Office Hours:	Monday-Friday 9 AM – 2 PM
Mailing:	1619 Llewellyn Dr., Ft. Myers 33901

Pastor Jim can be reached at the office
or on his cell phone at 502-494-6649 (voice & text).

Our Church Staff

*Senior Minister – Rev. Jim Harper, III
Associate Minister – Rev. Anton Pierce
Administrative Assistant – Cindy Wilson
Director of Sacred Arts – Alena Michel
Pianist - Barry Pierce
Beth Moss – RN, MA Faith Community Nurse*

Your gifts are deeply appreciated and enable this ministry to continue. Our church retains the right to redirect donations to the area of greatest need.

