

Glebe-St. James United Church

Second Sunday of Easter

April 12, 2026

Gathered by God

Preparing Our Hearts for Worship

Come Away to the Skies

Welcome

Julia Barry

We're so glad you're here today. Whether you're a first-time guest or a longtime member, whether you are joining us in person or online, we hope you feel at home. This is a place of faith, love, and community. Glebe-St. James is an Affirming Community of Faith in the United Church of Canada. We are committed to creating a safe and inclusive environment where people of all ages, backgrounds, and identities feel loved and supported. Thank you for being here.

And now, let's acknowledge the land on which our sanctuary stands.

Land Acknowledgement

Ruth Burnett-Cole

Candle Lighting We Light This Candle

TLUS 55

We light this candle for hope.

Await the new life within.

May our hearts now live each day,

so hope can find a way, so hope can find a way.

Call to Worship

Christ is risen!

Christ is risen indeed!

Light out of shadows!

Life out of death!

Hope out of despair!

Power out of surrender!

God, this is your grace, marvelous and wonderful!

This is your way, always and forever.

You raise us up with Christ, and we thank you.
You create us anew, and we worship you. Alleluia!

Opening Prayer

Holy God, Lover of your children:
the tomb has been opened,
and we dance into your future.
Your life has dawned on us,
and we surround you with our praise.
You reach out your hand,
and lead us into joy.

Jesus Christ, Faithful Witness:
you pick open the locked doors
of our hearts
and come in to be with us forever.
You breathe peace into our souls,
so we may bring healing
to a troubled world.

Holy Spirit, Breath of Peace:
you show us our hearts,
so we may give love to others.
You show us our hands,
sending us to serve the needy.
You show us your hope,
so we may live in your joy.

Hymn Christ is Alive

VU 158

**1 Christ is alive! Let Christians sing.
The cross stands empty to the sky.
Let streets and homes with praises ring.
Love, drowned in death, shall never die.**

- 2 Christ is alive! No longer bound
to distant years in Palestine,
but saving, healing, here and now,
and touching every place and time.**
- 3 In every insult, rift, and war,
where colour, scorn, or wealth divide,
Christ suffers still, yet loves the more,
and lives, where even hope has died.**
- 4 Women and men, in age and youth,
can feel the Spirit, hear the call,
and find the way, the life, the truth,
revealed in Jesus, freed for all.**
- 5 Christ is alive, and comes to bring
good news to this and every age,
till earth and sky and ocean ring
with joy, with justice, love and praise.**

Call to Healing

Christ is alive, and comes to bring good news to this and every age,
till earth and sky and ocean ring with joy, with justice, love and praise.
But while God is constant, sometimes we're not, sometimes we stray from
walking the path of good news. Would you pray the prayer for healing with me:

Prayer for Healing

We join with all of creation to shout the praise of Almighty God, and to sing for joy
at God's loving faithfulness. Yet we must acknowledge to God and one another
that we have failed to live as Easter people in the hope of the resurrection.

Silence for personal reflection

**Creator of all mercy and grace,
We confess that though your child has risen as Saviour,
we have failed to serve as witnesses of that hope in our everyday lives.**

**We have not loved you with our whole heart;
we have not loved our neighbours as ourselves.
For the sake of Jesus, grant us grace and forgiveness.
Renew our hearts, enlighten our minds, and lead us to walk in Your ways.
Amen.**

Assurance of God's Love

Know with certainty the good news: Jesus came to fulfill the words of the prophet Isaiah. "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour."

In the mercy of almighty God, Jesus Christ suffered and died, and on the third day rose from the dead, so that we might have forgiveness of sins. He sets us free from guilt and shame, and gives us a sure and certain hope for a victorious life on earth and in eternity.

Alleluia! Christ is risen!

He is risen indeed! Alleluia!

Sign of Peace

Friends, the peace of Christ be with you!

And also with you.

Hymn Send Your Peace to Our World

TLUS 135

**Send your peace to our world, God,
You, the creator of peace.
Our hearts fill with peace, God
You are the source of healing peace.**

Listening for Wisdom

Theme Conversation

Good morning, friends!

I brought something with me today. (Hold up a small box or bag.) Inside this, I have something—but you can't see it yet. Do you know what's inside?
(Let children guess.)

You're not sure, right? It's hard to believe something is there if you can't see it. In our Bible story today, one of Jesus' friends—Thomas—felt that way too. His friends told him, "We saw Jesus!" But Thomas said, "I'm not sure. I need to see him to believe it."

Have you ever felt unsure about something? Maybe you said, "I'll believe it when I see it!" That's kind of what Thomas was saying.

Well, later, Thomas was with his friends, all together. And guess what? Jesus came and stood right there with them! And when Thomas saw him, he said, "My Lord and my God!"

Now let's look in the box. (Open it and show the object—something simple like a small heart or cross.)

Even when Thomas couldn't see Jesus at first, Jesus was still alive. And even when we can't see Jesus, Jesus is still with us—especially when we're together, like we are right now.

So here's the important thing: we don't have to see everything to know it's real. We can feel love, we can share kindness, and we can be together—and that's where Jesus is too.

Let's say a short prayer:

**Dear Jesus,
Thank you for loving us,
Even when we have questions.
Help us remember you are with us,
Especially when we are together.
Amen.**

**Little by little by little.
Little by little by little.
Little by little by little I know,
The tiniest seed will grow.**

**Habits of peace and justice.
Habits of peace and justice,
Habits of peace and justice:
Tools to change our world.**

**Little by little by little.
Little by little by little.
Little by little by little I know,
The tiniest seed will grow.**

Prayer for Wisdom

O Parent of all peoples,
breathe your Holy Spirit on us
that we may see the peace
and be filled with the joy
of the risen Christ.
Teach us how to speak his words of forgiveness
so that we can be your agents of reconciliation
in a broken and troubled world. Amen.

Gospel John 20:19-31

Donna-Fay Mailhot

When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors were locked where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you." When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained."

But Thomas (who was called the Twin), one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. So the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord." But he said to them, "Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands and put my finger in the mark of the nails and my hand in his side, I will not believe."

A week later his disciples were again in the house, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were shut, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here and see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it in my side. Do not doubt but believe." Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God!" Jesus said to him, "Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe."

Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples that are not written in this book. But these are written so that you may continue to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through believing you may have life in his name.

This is wisdom from the gospel of John.

Gift of Music

Alleluia, Alleluia, Give Thanks To The Risen Christ

Words and Music by Donald Fishel

Refrain

Alleluia, alleluia, give thanks to the risen Christ;

Alleluia, alleluia, give praise to God's name.

Jesus is Lord of all the earth;

Firstborn of all creation.

(refrain)

Spread the good news o'er all the earth;

Jesus has died and is risen.

(refrain)

We have been crucified with Christ;
Now we shall live forever.
(refrain)

Come, let us praise the living God,
Joyfully sing to our Saviour.
(refrain)

Reflection

Rev. Dr. Teresa Burnett-Cole

Grace and peace to you on this Second Sunday of Easter.

We return, as we so often do in this season, to that locked room. The disciples are gathered in fear, the doors shut tight against a world that suddenly feels dangerous and uncertain. And into that space—into their anxiety, their confusion, their grief—Jesus comes and stands among them, saying, “Peace be with you.”

But Thomas is not there.

We’ve heard this story so many times that Thomas has earned a nickname he may not entirely deserve: “Doubting Thomas.” And yes, his doubt is real. He wants evidence. He wants to see and touch for himself before he can believe. And many of us have taken comfort in that. We’ve said, “See? Doubt is part of faith.” And that’s true.

But perhaps there is something more here. Something quieter, but just as important.

Thomas is absent.

The first time Jesus appears, Thomas is not with the others. We aren’t told why. Maybe he needed space. Maybe his grief was too heavy to share. Maybe he was disillusioned, or afraid, or simply exhausted. We don’t know.

What we do know is this: when the community gathers, Thomas is missing—and he misses the moment.

A week later, the disciples are together again. This time, Thomas is with them. The doors are still closed. The fear has not magically disappeared. The world outside is no less threatening. And yet, in that same kind of space, Jesus comes again. He stands among them. And this time, Thomas is there to encounter him.

And it is then—within the gathered community—that Thomas makes one of the most profound declarations of faith in all of Scripture: “My Lord and my God!” So perhaps this story is not only about doubt. Perhaps it is also about presence. What does it mean to be absent from the community of disciples? And what does it mean to be present within it?

To be absent is not just about physical location. We can be physically present and still absent in spirit—guarded, disconnected, going through the motions. And we can be physically away yet still deeply connected in heart and prayer. But there is something about showing up—about placing ourselves, as best we can, in the company of others who are seeking, questioning, hoping—that matters deeply.

Because the risen Christ seems to meet people there.

Not only there, of course. God is not confined to sanctuaries or gatherings. But again and again, in this story and throughout the life of the church, we see that Christ is made known in community—in shared meals, in spoken peace, in wounds revealed and recognized, in lives lived together.

Thomas, on his own, cannot quite believe the testimony of the others: “We have seen the Lord,” they tell him. It is not enough. But when he stands among them, when he shares in that same space of vulnerability and waiting, everything changes.

And maybe that speaks to something we recognize in our own lives. There are moments when faith feels distant, when belief feels fragile, when God seems absent. In those times, the temptation is often to withdraw—to step back, to isolate, to say, “I’ll come back when my faith is stronger.”

But this story suggests the opposite movement.

It suggests that it is precisely in our uncertainty, in our questioning, even in our doubt, that we most need to remain connected—to keep showing up, to stay within the circle of community, to let others hold faith for us when we cannot hold it ourselves.

Because something happens there that does not happen in quite the same way anywhere else.

In community, we hear words of peace spoken over us when we cannot speak them ourselves.

In community, we see glimpses of grace in the lives of others.

In community, we are reminded—again and again—that we are not alone.

And sometimes—sometimes—we encounter Christ in ways that surprise us. Notice how Jesus meets Thomas. There is no scolding, no rejection. Jesus does not say, “Why weren’t you there last week?” He simply offers himself: “Put your finger here. See my hands. Reach out your hand and put it in my side.”

It is an invitation. A deeply personal one.

And yet, it happens within the gathered community.

Thomas’s declaration—“My Lord and my God!”—is both intensely personal and profoundly communal. He speaks for himself, yes. But he speaks from within the body of believers, among those who have also seen, also struggled, also come to faith in their own ways.

So where is it that we can safely declare those words?

Where can we say, with honesty and courage, “My Lord and my God”?

Ideally, it is here. In communities like this one. Not because we have everything figured out, not because doubt is absent, but because grace is present.

A safe community of disciples is not one where questions are silenced or certainty is demanded. It is one where people can be honest—about their doubts, their fears, their hopes—and still be held in love.

It is a place where wounds are not hidden, because the risen Christ still bears his. It is a place where peace is spoken, even when the doors are still locked.

And it is a place where, week after week, we gather—sometimes in strong faith, sometimes in fragile hope, sometimes simply out of habit—and trust that Christ will meet us there.

Not always in dramatic ways. Not always in ways we can easily name. But faithfully, persistently, gently.

“Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe,” Jesus says. That blessing is not a rebuke. It is a promise.

A promise that even when we do not see clearly, even when we are unsure, even when we feel like Thomas in his absence, Christ continues to come among us. And so the invitation is simple, but not always easy:

Stay.
Show up.

Be present—however imperfectly—within the community of disciples. For it may be there, in the ordinary gathering of ordinary people, that we find ourselves able, at last, to say with Thomas: “My Lord, and my God.”
Amen.

Responding in Thanksgiving

Hymn You Tell Me That the Lord is Risen

VU 185

**1 You tell me that the Lord is risen,
 that you have seen his face.
Then tell me why you crouch in fear
 and hide within this place.**

**You say that he spoke words of peace
and stood just as before.
But 'til I touch his very flesh
I will not trust your joy.**

**2 You claim a resurrection here,
that God has broken death.
No easy words like these will soothe
the pain that tears my breath.
How well do I recall his face,
compassion, strength in fear.
How deep my grief that he should die.
Spare me your words of cheer!**

**3 'Now peace be with you. Come, my friend,
my wounded body see.
Let the rich courage of your doubt
bring you to fresh belief.
Fear not to wonder at the Word,
to search the depths of grace.
Reach out and touch, here is my hand.
Receive the gift of faith.'**

**4 'How blest are they, how fortunate
who know without the sight.
But Thomas, you are favoured too,
for searching yields its light.'
So may each pilgrim in the Way,
each road to Christ be blest,
'til lips declare, 'My Lord and God!',
Christ's body one at last.**

Invitation to Give

**What can I do? What can I bring?
What can I say? What can I sing?
I'll sing with joy, I'll say a prayer
I'll bring my love. I'll do my share.**

Offering Prayer

Beloved One,
take our offerings of time, talent, and money
and use them to create peace
by meeting the needs of the suffering.
We each have a little but together as a congregation,
what we offer you here in love becomes more.
We ask you to bless our gifts
and with the addition of your blessing,
we believe that there could be enough for all.
Amen

Prayers of the People Send Your Peace on Our World

**Send your peace on our world, God,
you, the creator of peace.
Our hearts fill with peace, God.
You are the source of healing peace.**

May we always remember: alleluias came after the grave.
As we live like Easter people, let us continue to pray the words Jesus taught us to
pray, saying...

Prayer of Jesus

**Our Mother and 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 trespasses
as we forgive those who trespass against us,
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, the power,
and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.**

Sent by the Spirit

Hymn I Have Called You By Your Name

MV 161

- 1. I have called you by your name, you are mine;
I have gifted you and ask you now to shine.
I will not abandon you;
all my promises are true.
You are gifted, called, and chosen;
you are mine.**

- 2. I will help you learn my name as you go;
read it written in my people, help them grow.
Pour the water in my name,
speak the word your soul can claim,
offer Jesus' body given long ago.**

- 3. I know you will need my touch as you go;
feel it pulsing in creation's ebb and flow.
Like the woman reaching out,
choosing faith in spite of doubt,
hold the hem of Jesus' robe,
then let it go.**

- 4. I have given you a name, it is mine;
I have given you my Spirit as a sign.
With my wonder in your soul,
make my wounded children whole;
go and tell my precious people
they are mine.**

Sending Forth

We have come from darkness and despair
to hope and joy.

We have been transformed by new life.

Go forth to witness and to testify to the message of hope
we have received this day.

Christ is risen. Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia.

Sung Amen

Music to Send Us Forth

A Resurrection Fanfare

End of Worship | Beginning of Service

Welcome to Glebe-St. James United Church.

Thank you for joining with us for our morning worship.

Please join us in Fraser Hall, following the service for a time of fellowship and refreshments.

This week's Music

This week's organ prelude, "Come Away to the Skies," is by John Leavitt (b.1956), a Kansas-based composer, conductor and pianist. The tune is MIDDLEBURY, originally published in A Supplement to the Kentucky Harmony, c. 1821. The piece is part of "A Little Easter Suite."

The organ postlude, "A Resurrection Fanfare," is by Lani Smith (1934-2015), an American organist best known for his prolific compositions. He published under at least seven pseudonyms.

Musical Acknowledgements

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Next Sunday: The Women's Intergenerational Group will gather for a potluck following the service. The labyrinth will be open 2-5 pm.

Glebe-St James: April 12 – April 18th

Monday			
	1 pm	Monday Crafts	Judy Wolanski's
	1 – 3 pm	GMS: Art Class	Art Room
	3:30 – 7 pm	GNAG: after school programming	Art Room & Lounge
	6 – 7:30 pm	Embers	Fraser Hall
	8 pm	Monday Meditation	Zoom
Tuesday			
	10 am	Chess	Sanctuary
	1:30 pm	Knitting	Lounge
	3:30 – 7 pm	GNAG: after school programming	Art Room, Lounge & Sanctuary
	6:30 – 7:30 pm	Beavers	Fraser Hall
Wednesday			
	3:30 – 5:30 pm	GNAG: after school programming	Art Room & Lounge
	7:30 pm	Council (in-person) meeting	Art Room
Thursday			
	3:30 – 6:15pm	GNAG: after school programming	Art Room & Lounge
	7 pm	Writing Group	Art Room
	7 pm	Cubs (cub car rally)	Fraser Hall
	7 pm	GSJ Choir	Sanctuary
	7:30 pm	Venturers	Lounge
Friday			
	1 - 4 pm	GMS: Art Class	Art Room
	3:30 – 6:15pm	GNAG: after school programming	Art Room & Lounge
Saturday			
	to 5 pm	Music (Paul)	Sanctuary
	9 am – 1 pm	Exercise with Cate (2 sessions)	Fraser Hall
	6 – 7 pm	Queer Space	Lounge

If you are interested in any of the above events, please contact Jennifer (admin@glebestjames.ca) and she will provide you with contact info.

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