



THE ROAD TO EMMAUS

GRACE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Church and Winter Streets, Hagerstown, Maryland
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If you are on Facebook, “like” our page at www.facebook.com/graceuntoyou

Third Sunday of Easter

April 19, 2026

Sermon Series: *Stories That Matter*

Greeting

Leader: The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

People: And also with you.

Leader: Unless we see him on the road to Emmaus, we will not believe.

People: Our believing is an act of faith.

Leader: Christ is risen!

People: Christ is risen indeed!

All: Glory to God. Amen.

Prelude - 'Pasacaglia in D' – Dietrich Buxtehude (1637-1707)

The Light of Christ Enters the Sanctuary

Introit “Christ is Alive”

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

**2 Christ is alive! No longer bound to distant years in Palestine, he comes to claim the here and now and
dwell in every place and time.**

**3 Not throned afar, remotely high, untouched, unmoved by human pains,
but daily, in the midst of life, our Savior in the Godhead reigns.**

4 In every insult, rift, and war, where color, scorn, or wealth divide, he suffers still, yet loves the more, and lives, though ever crucified.

5 Christ is alive, and comes to bring good news to this and every age, till earth and all creation ring with joy, with justice, love, and praise.

Call to Worship (responsive)

Leader: Easter people, we gather today as people who spent the week inundated with news reports, social media posts, and reels that inundated us with information, worry, and stress.

People: Like the disciples on the road to Emmaus, we carry the weight of being overwhelmed and anxious, wondering who we can believe.

Leader: We gather as people who long for peace, for God to break through and bring us clarity and hope once again.

People: Like the disciples on the road to Emmaus, we don't always recognize when the Risen One comes alongside us, showing us the way where there seems to be no way.

Leader: We gather as people hoping to catch a glimmer of Resurrection, ready for our hearts to burn with the truth of the resurrected Christ.

People: Like the disciples on the road to Emmaus, we open our hearts to the possibility that God's Resurrection life is closer than we think.

Leader: Easter people, God knows the burdens we carry, and God is faithful to meet us where we are with good news.

People: May the good news of the Resurrection astound us today as we come to worship God! Amen.

Opening Hymn "Easter People, Raise Your Voices"

1. Easter people, raise your voices, sounds of heaven in earth should ring. Christ has brought us heaven's choices; heavenly music, let it ring.

Alleluia! Alleluia! Easter people, let us sing.

2. Fear of death can no more stop us from our pressing here below. For our Lord empowered us to triumph over every foe.

Alleluia! Alleluia! On to victory now we go.

3. Every day to us is Easter, with its resurrection song. When in trouble move the faster to our God who rights the wrong.

Alleluia! Alleluia! See the power of heavenly throngs.

Opening Prayer (in unison)

Risen Christ, On the road to Emmaus, you were the disciples' companion. Be at our side on the journey of faith on life's pathways and at every encounter, engender our compassion, so that we may welcome others and listen to their stories.

Kindle anew the desire to proclaim your Word. May it illumine us, and may our hearts burn to bear witness to it. May your Holy Spirit teach us the art of explaining scripture and open our hearts to recognize you. Grant us the courage to become vulnerable so that our siblings may know you through us and that we may know you through them. Amen.

Children's Message Charissa

Acts of the Apostles: Acts 2:14a, 36-41

Receiving God's promise through baptism

But Peter, standing with the eleven, raised his voice and addressed them,

"Therefore let the entire house of Israel know with certainty that God has made him both Lord and Messiah, this Jesus whom you crucified."

Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and to the other apostles, "Brothers, what should we do?"

Peter said to them, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ so that your sins may be forgiven, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is for you, for your children, and for all who are far away, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to him."

And he testified with many other arguments and exhorted them, saying, "Save yourselves from this corrupt generation."

So those who welcomed his message were baptized, and that day about three thousand persons were added.

Psalter: Psalm 116:1-4, 12-19

A reading from the psalms

I will call upon God

Leader: I love the LORD because he has heard my voice and my supplications. Because he inclined his ear to me, therefore I will call on him as long as I live.

People: The snares of death encompassed me; the pangs of Sheol laid hold on me; I suffered distress and anguish.

Leader: Then I called on the name of the LORD,

People: "O LORD, I pray, save my life!"

Leader: What shall I return to the LORD for all his bounty to me?

People: I will lift up the cup of salvation and call on the name of the LORD;

Leader: I will pay my vows to the LORD in the presence of all his people.

People: Precious in the sight of the LORD is the death of his faithful ones.

Leader: O LORD, I am your servant; I am your servant, the child of your serving girl. You have loosed my bonds.

People: I will offer to you a thanksgiving sacrifice and call on the name of the LORD.

Leader: I will pay my vows to the LORD in the presence of all his people,

People: in the courts of the house of the LORD, in your midst, O Jerusalem. Praise the LORD!

Epistle Reading: 1 Peter 1:17-23

A reading from 1st Peter

Born anew

If you invoke as Father the one who judges impartially according to each person's work, live in fear during the time of your exile. You know that you were ransomed from the futile conduct inherited from your ancestors, not with perishable things like silver or gold but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without defect or blemish. He was destined before the foundation of the world but was revealed at the end of the ages for your sake. Through him you have come to trust in God, who raised him from the dead and gave him glory, so that your trust and hope are in God.

Now that you have purified your souls by your obedience to the truth so that you have genuine mutual affection, love one another deeply from the heart. You have been born anew, not of perishable but of imperishable seed, through the living and enduring word of God.

Here ends the reading of the Word.

Gospel Hymn "Open My Eyes, That I May See"

1. Open my eyes, that I may see glimpses of truth thou hast for me; place in my hands the wonderful key that shall unclasp and set me free. Silently now I wait for thee, ready, my God, thy will to see. Open my eyes, illumine me, Spirit divine!

2. Open my ears, that I may hear voices of truth thou sendest clear; and while the wavenotes fall on my ear, everything false will disappear. Silently now I wait for thee, ready, my God, thy will to see. Open my ears, illumine me, Spirit divine!

3. Open my mouth, and let me bear gladly the warm truth everywhere; open my heart and let me prepare love with thy children thus to share. Silently now I wait for thee, ready, my God, thy will to see. Open my heart, illumine me, Spirit divine!

Prayer of Illumination (unison)

Lord, you opened the meaning of the Scriptures to the disciples on the road to Emmaus and set their hearts ablaze. By the power of your Spirit, kindle our hearts as we hear your word proclaimed, that we may receive you with joy. Amen.

Gospel Lesson: Luke 24:13-35

A reading of the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, according to Luke

Eating with the risen Christ

Now on that same day two of them were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem, and talking with each other about all these things that had happened. While they were talking and discussing, Jesus himself came near and went with them, but their eyes were kept from recognizing him.

And he said to them, **"What are you discussing with each other while you walk along?"**

They stood still, looking sad. Then one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answered him, **"Are you the only stranger in Jerusalem who does not know the things that have taken place there in these days?"**

He asked them, **"What things?"**

They replied, **"The things about Jesus of Nazareth, who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, and how our chief priests and leaders handed him over to**

be condemned to death and crucified him. But we had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel. Yes, and besides all this, it is now the third day since these things took place.

Moreover, some women of our group stood averted. They were at the tomb early this morning, and when they did not find his body there they came back and told us that they had indeed seen a vision of angels who said that he was alive. Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said, but they did not see him."

Then he said to them, **"Oh, how foolish you are and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have declared! Was it not necessary that the Messiah should suffer these things and then enter into his glory?"** Then beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them the things about himself in all the scriptures. As they came near the village to which they were going, he walked ahead as if he were going on.

But they urged him strongly, saying, *"Stay with us, because it is almost evening and the day is now nearly over."*

So he went in to stay with them. When he was at the table with them, he took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. Then their eyes were opened, and they recognized him, and he vanished from their sight.

They said to each other, *"Were not our hearts burning within us while he was talking to us on the road, while he was opening the scriptures to us?"*

That same hour they got up and returned to Jerusalem, and they found the eleven and their companions gathered together. They were saying, *"The Lord has risen indeed, and he has appeared to Simon!"*

Then they told what had happened on the road and how he had been made known to them in the breaking of the bread.

Pastor: "The word of God for the people of God."

People: Thanks be to God. Amen.

"Astounded Us"

Rev. Becki Wessinger

***Apostle's Creed, UMH #881**

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth; and in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord: Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried;

The third day he arose from the dead; He ascended into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come to judge the quick 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.

Gloria Patri

**Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost;
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,
world without end. Amen. Amen.**

Pastoral Prayer

Let us unite our hearts in prayer, saying God of resurrection, **hear our prayer.**

For the church throughout the world, that as we celebrate the great fifty days of Easter we may renew our faith and strengthen our witness in Jesus' name;
God of resurrection, **hear our prayer.**

For pastors, teachers, and ministers that they recognize the risen Christ in Word and Sacrament and lead your church with wisdom, humility, and courage;
God of resurrection, **hear our prayer.**

For the governments of the world and its leaders, that they may resist the corruption of sin and serve the common good;
God of resurrection, **hear our prayer.**

For our planet Earth, that all people may be good stewards of its resources and share in its abundance;
God of resurrection, **hear our prayer.**

For the poor and the stranger, that they may receive a place of refuge and hope, and that the church may offer the hospitality the first disciple offered to Jesus on the road to Emmaus;
God of resurrection, **hear our prayer.**

For the sick and those in distress, that they may find healing for their pain and be restored to fullness of life;
God of resurrection, **hear our prayer.**

For our neighbors, that we may live together in peace and share in our resources;
God of resurrection, **hear our prayer.**

For our enemies, that they may receive good things, and that we, your servants, not return evil for evil;
God of resurrection, **hear our prayer.**

Almighty God, receive these prayers we offer, and by the power of the Holy Spirit make us witness to the glorious resurrection of Jesus Christ, through whom we pray. **Amen.**

The Lord's Prayer

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

Call to Confession

God judges all people impartially according to their deeds. Trusting in God's love in Jesus Christ, let us confess our sins before God and one another.

Prayer of Confession (unison)

Heavenly Stranger, our Companion on the Way, we yearn for your love and grace. We seek your wisdom and guidance. We relish the joy which burns within our hearts when you are with us. Yet, sometimes we would cling to you, hoard the blessings of relationship with you, and not share your love with others.

Forgive us, Dear One.

Remind us that your love is to be carried throughout the world. Press us to share the hope and joy of your love, so that someone who hungers for spiritual food may be filled by our witness to your grace. Shine the light of your Spirit through us, so that we may show your Way to those who long for peace and help to revive those in whom hope has died. Amen.

Words of Assurance (responsive)

Leader: Followers of Jesus: God has promised salvation to us, to our children, and to all who are near and far. In the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven.

People: In the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven.

All: Thanks be to God. Amen.

Passing of the Peace (responsive)

Leader: The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with all of you.

People: And also with you.

Invitation to the Offering

Bountiful are God's gifts to us. In gratitude, let us offer our hearts and the fruit of our labor to God's service.

Offertory Anthem 'Most Glorious Lord of Life' – William Harris

(1883-1973)

Doxology

**Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
praise God, all creatures here below: Alleluia! Alleluia!
Praise God, the source of all our gifts!
Praise Jesus Christ, whose power uplifts!
Praise the Spirit, Holy Spirit! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!**

Offertory Prayer (unison)

Astounding God of the road and the table, you walk with us even when we don't recognize you. You speak, and our hearts burn within us. You break the bread, and our eyes are opened. Today, we bring these offerings as signs of our gratitude and hope. May our giving reflect the joy of being found, the wonder of Resurrection, and the call to share good news. Use these gifts to kindle faith, feed the hungry, and proclaim your presence in every Emmaus moment. We give because we've seen you—alive, loving, and leading us still. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Closing Hymn "God Be with You till We Meet Again" verse 1

1. God be with you till we meet again; by his counsels guide, uphold you, with his sheep securely fold you; God be with you till we meet again. Till we meet, (till we meet,) till we meet, (till we meet again) till we meet at Jesus' feet; (till we meet) till we meet, (till we meet), till we meet, (till we meet again) God be with you till we meet again.

Postlude 'Voluntary in D' – C.V. Stanford (1852-1924)

The Light of Christ goes into the world.

Charge

Go in the joy of resurrection: purify your souls; be obedient to the truth; be genuine in love, through the living and enduring Word of God.

Benediction

Go now in the courage and blessing of the Risen Christ to live as bearers of the astounding good news to bring hope and peace in a world that so desperately needs Resurrection. Amen.

Grace Notes

April 19, 2026

Mission Statement: *Glorify God ~ Draw All to Christ ~ Edify & Equip*

From the Pastor: How do we live as Easter people? We pray. We are people of prayer; prayer for unsettled places in our church, community, nation, and world. We pray for the uncertainty and for the settled. We pray for Resurrection, a blessed yet uncomfortable place because resurrection only comes after death. Open our hearts and minds to comfort each other in the death of old, traditional, settled ways. Open our hearts, minds, hands, and eyes to the Resurrection power you have for us in the new ways you are leading us. Be with us as we live in the tension between joy and astonishment as we live as Easter people. **Amen.**

Pastor Dionne

Membership Reports: As faithful members of Grace UMC, we faithfully strive to remember our membership vows to support the church by upholding the church with our **prayers, presence, gifts, service, and witness.**

Prayers - Persons listed on Joys & Concerns will appear for two weeks. Please fill out a request card if you would like your request shared on Sunday morning and listed in Grace Notes. You may call or email the church office Monday thru Wednesday (**by 10am**) with those you would like to include or remove. If a person requires additional time, or has a long-term illness, request they be added to the "Long-term" list. The joys and concerns will list first name and last initial; no details will appear.

Joys & Concerns

April 12: Warren B.

April 5:

Prayers (Long-term): John S., Robin G., Lucy K.; Bill S., Erin B., Doris K.; Bill H., Wendi C., Margie C., Bev. B., Connie M.; Vickie S., Rhonda and Tony W., Harriett H.; Mike and Angel P.; Shelby B., Jane H.

The Daily Scripture Lessons April 19 – April 25

Sunday: Acts 2:14a, 36-41; Psalm 116:1-4, 12-19; 1 Peter 1:17-23; Luke 24:13-35

Monday: Psalm 134; Genesis 18:1-14; 1 Peter 1:23-25;

Tuesday: Psalm 134; Proverbs 8:32-9:6; 1 Peter 2:1-3;

Wednesday: Psalm 134; Exodus 24:1-11; John 21:1-14;

Thursday: Psalm 23; Exodus 2:15b-25; 1 Peter 2:9-12;

Friday: Psalm 23; Exodus 3:16-22, 4:18-20; 1 Peter 2:13-17;

Saturday: Psalm 23; Ezekiel 34:1-16; Luke 15:1-7;

Presence – Join us for worship in person or via Facebook Live.

Worship: 62 Sunday School: 27 Facebook Live: 432 Ladies T4U: 15

GIFTS – Your gifts offer HOPE to Grace Church and the community. When we tithe, we follow the example given to us in Genesis 28:10-22 by giving at least 10% to the **General Fund**. United Methodists value the tithe as a benchmark for giving, one we encourage our members to move toward and, once achieved, move beyond. We believe that there is joy in giving, and the greater the generosity the deeper the joy. The **General Fund** is responsible for ensuring all the needs of the church are met; this includes all of the ministries, missions, and operational costs of Grace Church. **The One Board (as of May 14, 2023) asks that all tithes and offerings be placed in the General Fund except those for T.H.R.I.V.E., Micah's Backpack & Building for the Future. Separate envelopes are provided for these ministries and located by the lectern. This is the only way to donate to these ministries.** This will allow Grace Church to move towards fully funding all ministries and missions of the church. This will bring us up to date with current UMC budget practices.

General Fund: \$1,956.25

Endowment Withdrawal: \$

Estate Gift:

Music Fund: \$350.00

Needed for Weekly Budget: \$4,500

Building for the Future: \$60.00

T.H.R.I.V.E. & Micah's Backpack: \$0.00

Service and Witness:

Ushers: J.C. Martin, Bill Thompson, Donna and Roy Shoop, Madison Shoop, Lucas Shoop, Ella Sholty, Justus Osuji

Greeter: Daisy Wolfensberger

Lay Readers: John Hess, Earlene Johnson, Sandy Kendall, Kurt Zimmerman

Media Managers: Donnie Bryan, Roy Shoop

Choir: Becca Bryan, Donnie Bryan, Patti Hull, Hannah Kamseuh, Polly Martin, Peace Osuji, Ryan Wetzel

Congregational Care Committee/Communion Stewards: Chris Jeter, Krista Zimmerman, Cindy Tedrick, Ruth Smith, Patti Hull, Helen Gilliam, Daisy Wolfensberger, Polly Martin, Rose Shank, Earlene Johnson, Sandy Kendall, Donna Bolinger, Amy Bryan, Becca Bryan, Jane Staley, Rhonda Weaver, Wanda Stouffer, Ruth Thompson, Pastor Dionne, Sonja Shearer, Cindy Swales, Patty Frazier, Caroline Jenkins and Vivienne, Margaret Hess

T.H.R.I.V.E. (Thankful, Hopeful, Revitalized, Intentional, Victorious, Educated). Continued needs are non-perishables, dry goods, feminine care products, hand soap, shower gel, razors, shave cream, individually wrapped paper towels and toilet paper, shampoo, toothpaste/toothbrushes, laundry detergent, etc. Monetary donations are gratefully accepted, and please use the indicated envelopes located by the lectern. **Closet 712** Volunteers are always appreciated. Donations drop off is Monday -Thursday 10am-12pm., **spring and summer clothing ONLY.** Both T.H.R.I.V.E and the clothes closet are open on Saturday, **May 9, 2026**, 9:00 am – 11:00 am.

Pastoral Care and Emergency Contact Information: In case of an emergency, please contact Pastor Dionne at (240) 347-2345 (cell), Facebook Messenger, or pastordionne.hall@gmail.com. The church office number is (240) 850-2934. Please inform the hospital and/or funeral home that Pastor Dionne is the Pastor at Grace. ***The Pastor and church should be notified of any illness or death of a member or family member first.*** The Pastor will confirm availability dates for Services of Death and Resurrection with the funeral home director.

CALENDAR

Sun., Apr. 19

8:30 am	Coffee, Donuts & Fellowship is provided in Rider Hall
9:00 am	<i>Third Sunday of Easter</i>
10:15 am	Sunday school for all ages

Tues., Apr. 21	6:30 pm	Choir Rehearsal
Wed., Apr. 22	1:30 – 3:00 pm	Pop-Up Pantry
Sun., Apr. 26	8:30 am	Coffee, Donuts & Fellowship is provided in Rider Hall
	9:00 am	<i>Fourth Sunday of Easter</i>
	10:15 am	Sunday school for all ages
	4:00 pm	<i>Organ Concert featuring Jonathan Leonard</i>
Tues., Apr. 28	6:30 pm	Choir Rehearsal
Wed., Apr. 29	1:30 – 3:00 pm	Pop-Up Pantry
Sun., May 3	8:30 am	Coffee, Donuts & Fellowship is provided in Rider Hall
	9:00 am	<i>Fifth Sunday of Easter, Communion</i>
	10:15 am	Sunday school for all ages
Mon., May 4	12:00 pm	T4U Luncheon and meeting in Rider Hall
Thurs., May 14	10:30 am	Senior Citizens meeting – Charlene, Director of Operations from Brooks House will be speaking

Information – two wheelchairs are located in the sanctuary. One is located along the wall behind the organ, and the one is located at the coat rack in the back of the sanctuary.