

**The First Community Church of Southborough**  
137 Southville Road  
Southborough, Massachusetts 01772-1937

**EASTER 2022**

This Easter will be different from the past two pandemic-restricted Easters! For the first time in three years, we have been able to meet as the gathered church for worship during the deeply reflective period of Lent and, this past Sunday, on Palm Sunday. This Thursday we will gather at 7:00 p.m. in the sanctuary to share in the Sacrament of Holy Communion and to observe the ancient office of Tenebrae. Then, for those of us who are into suffering, the United Parishes of Southborough will hold its ecumenical Easter sunrise service at 6:30 a.m. by the side of the lake in Hopkinton. At 11:00 a.m. we will gather for the celebration of the joyous event of Easter in our beautifully decorated sanctuary!

Some Easters are different from others. However, Easter, like spring, comes every year! The Good News of the resurrection is a timeless message!

The small, struggling community that we know as the early church proclaimed its message of good news to all the world--at least to all who would listen. They proclaimed the message of light in the face of darkness, life in the face of death.

The disciples had recently lost their Lord. He died a slow, painful, and shameful death, crucified between two thieves. They experienced not only the death of their Lord, but also their own death--the death of their courage, the death of their faith, the death of their hope.

Suddenly, through the darkness of their grief and despair, they realized that what they saw and experienced as death was not the end! They experienced an awakening of heart, mind, and spirit. They began to see and understand more clearly. Jesus, the one they proclaimed as the Christ, was not dead! In fact, he was not even separate from them. He continued to be alive in them and through them. This experience transformed them from disciples into apostles, those who courageously and joyfully carry on the work that Jesus entrusted to them.

This experience is offered to us as well. Like the disciples, we are invited to experience the Easter that our Lord offers us. Like them, we can rise

from the ashes of depression and loss to a new life of courage and joy. Like them, we can accept Christ's invitation to become not only disciples but also apostles, letting the light of the Holy Spirit shine through our lives and through our church.

Be with us in spirit this Easter; then be with us in whatever way you can in the year to come, strengthening, supporting, and empowering the church, the mystical body of Christ, by sharing your presence, your gifts, and your talents that our little church might continue to reach out to the world with the resurrection message of hope and joy! Please know that the gifts you share are very important to us, especially as we weave our way through the labyrinthian maze of this pandemic experience.

May the blessings of Easter be with you, and may it drive out all the darkness in your life.

The Reverend Paul D. Sanderson  
Pastor