

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

EASTER 2023

This Easter feels different! Spring is definitely in the air! This year we have been able to meet as the gathered church for worship during the deeply reflective period of Lent, for celebratory Palm Sunday, and for Holy Communion and the solemn Office of Tenebrae on Maundy Thursday. Some of us will welcome Easter at the ecumenical sunrise service (6:30 a.m.) by the side of the lake in Hopkinton, and we will gather for the celebration of the joyous event of Easter (11:00 a.m.) in our beautifully decorated sanctuary!

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, new life in the face of death.

The disciples had recently lost their Lord. 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! 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 entrusts to them.

This Easter experience is offered to us as well! Like the disciples, we are invited to experience the new life 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.

Be with us this Easter and in the year to come, strengthening 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 your generous support of our ministries, our presence in the life of this community and the lives of the members and friends of our church family are very important to us!

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

The Reverend Paul D. Sanderson
Pastor