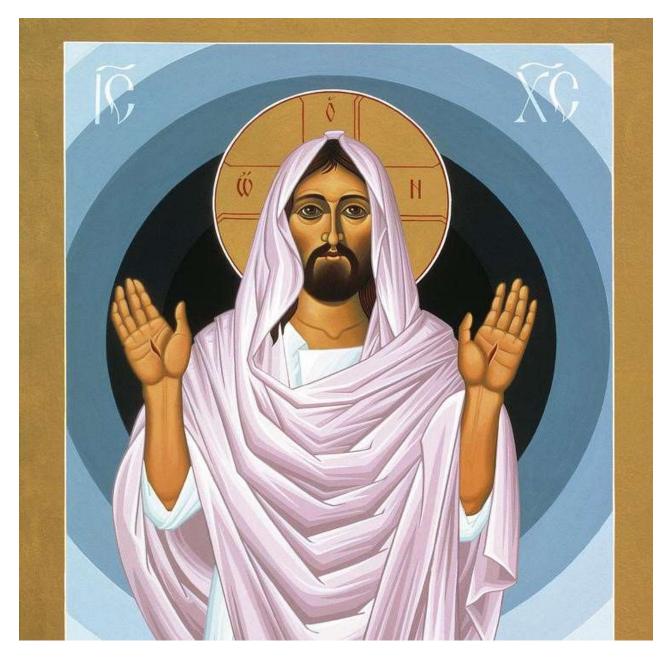
## ZION UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST OF TREMONT

April 14th, 2024 Third Sunday of Easter A Service of the Word



## The Risen Christ 014

The Risen Christ is a sacred icon by iconographer Fr. William H. McNichols for The Risen Christ Church in Denver, CO *PX Pixel*. https://pixelsmerch.com/



## April 14<sup>h</sup>, 2024 Third Sunday of Easter A Service of the Word

#### WE GATHER IN COMMUNITY

"The best way to prepare for the coming of Christ is to never forget the presence of Christ." -William Barclay-

#### Prelude – Adam Petrosino

#### \*Call to Worship

One: Let us fill our hearts and minds with hope as we hear the Words of Jesus Christ: **All: "Peace be with you."** 

One: When peace and justice seem uncertain, let us hear anew the Words of Jesus Christ: **All: "Why are you troubled, and why do doubts rise in your minds?"** 

One: Let us be comforted by the presence of Christ, whose love and light dwells within us. **All: Let our lives be witnesses of these things.** 

One: Help us to be instruments of Christ's peace to all in need of God's healing love.

\*Gathering Prayer

Risen Christ, create in us a clean heart so that we can meditate in your peace; abide in your mercy; be filled with your justice; and be made new by your love. In your name, we pray. Amen.

\*Gathering Hymn: NCH 241 - "Joy Dawned Again on Easter Day"

#### A READING OF THE WORD

#### First Reading Acts 3:12-19

For the Revised Common Lectionary in the season of Easter, in place of a Hebrew Scripture reading we read passages from the book of Acts of the Apostles, telling of the early church community following the resurrection and ascension of Jesus. At the beginning of Acts chapter 3, soon after Pentecost, the apostles Peter and John were going to the temple at the hour of the afternoon prayer and encountered a person who, from birth, couldn't walk, being carried in. This person would beg from the temple gates every day, because in that time, if you were disabled, one of the only ways you could survive, was to beg. However, Peter called out to person and told that one to look at him and John, then told them in the name of Jesus to stand up and walk. The person then leaped up, praising God, and all the people recognized the person and were amazed. In vs. 12, Peter addressed the people, declaring that Jesus was the servant of the God of their ancestors, the very one rejected by the people and crucified by Pilate, while a true criminal was released. Peter assures the crowd that they can repent and turn to God so their sins may be wiped away, for according to Peter, God fulfilled what had been foretold through the prophets about the Messiah.

**3** 12 When Peter saw this, he addressed the people as follows:

"Why does this surprise you? Why do you stare at us as if we had made this person walk by our own power or holiness? You are Israelites, 13 and it is the God of Sarah and Abraham, Rebecca and Isaac, Leah and Rachel and Jacob, the God of our ancestors, who has glorified Jesus—the same Jesus you handed over and then disowned in the presence of Pilate, after Pilate had decided to release him. 14 You disowned the Holy and Just One and asked instead for the release of a murderer. 15 You put to death the Author of life, whom God raised from the dead—a fact to which we are witnesses. 16 It is the name of Jesus, and faith in it, that has strengthened the limbs of this one whom you see and know well. Such faith has given this beggar perfect health, as all of you can see.

17 "Yet I know, my sisters and brothers, that you acted out of ignorance, just as your leaders did. 18 God has brought to fulfillment by this means what was announced long ago by the prophets: that the Messiah would suffer. 19 Therefore, reform your lives! Turn to God, that your sins may be wiped away,

#### \*Psalm Response: Psalm 4 (Responsively)

The psalmist cries out for God to answer their prayer. The psalmist addresses the ones who have spoken against them, who have gossiped and lied. God is with those who are faithful, the psalmist sings, and God hears the psalmist's prayers. They instruct their enemies to turn to God's ways instead. The psalmist knows that those who are faithless are still seeking, but as one who is faithful, the psalmist rests assured in God's presence and safety.

**4** 1 Answer me when I call, God of my justice! Give me relief from my distress! 2 Have mercy! Hear my prayer!

> How long will you people dishonor me before God? How long will you love delusion and pursue lies?

- 3 Know that those who love God have been set apart by divine will— God will hear me when I call!
- 4 Tremble, and stop your sinning; search your heart, alone and silent in your room.
- 5 Offer sacrifices of justice, and put your trust in God.
- 6 So many are asking, "Does good even exist anymore?" Let the light of your face, God, shine on us!
- 7 You put joy in my heart a joy greater than being full of bread and new wine.
- 8 In peace I'll lie down; in peace I will sleep: for you alone, God, keep me perfectly safe.

#### Second Reading: 1 John 3:1-7

The writer of 1 John speaks of the love God has for all of us who are faithful, all of us called children of God. We are God's children now, but are to become something new, something yet to be revealed. We live into this hope, so we live into God's ways. Everyone who lives into God's ways is righteous, for that is right-living. Sin, however, deceives us, leading us astray; but in Christ there is no sin, for Christ removes our sin. Instead, we are called to flee from sin, and live into God's ways.

- 3 1 See what love Abba God has lavished on us in letting us be called God's children! yet that in fact is what we are. The reason the world does not recognize us is that it never recognized God.
  2 My dear friends,
  - now we are God's children, but it has not been revealed what we are to become in the future. We know that when it comes to light we will be like God,

for we will see God as God really is. 3 All who keep this hope keep themselves pure, just as Christ is pure.

4 Anyone who sins at all breaks the Law, because to sin is to break the Law. 5 Now, you know that Christ, who is sinless, appeared to abolish sin. 6 So everyone who lives in union with Christ does not continue to sin, but whoever continues to sin has never seen or known Christ.

7 Dear children, do not let anyone lead you astray; to live a holy life is to be holy, just as Christ is holy.

#### Gospel Reading: Luke 24:36b-48

The resurrection account continues in Luke 24. Jesus appeared before the disciples, and they were frightened. Jesus shows them his hands and feet (similar to John 20:19-31). The disciples, while full of joy, continue to struggle with their doubts and disbelief, but Jesus asks them for something to eat, and has some broiled fish (similar to John 21). Repeating the discourse with the two travelers on the road to Emmaus told earlier in the chapter, Jesus goes through the scriptures with the disciples, to understand that the Messiah was to suffer and die, and on the third day rise again. The disciples are witnesses of his death and resurrection, and the proclamation of repentance for the forgiveness of sins in Christ's name. They are called to go forth from Jerusalem to proclaim what they have seen and heard.

**24** 36 While they were still talking about this, Jesus actually stood in their midst and said to them, "Peace be with you."

37 In their panic and fright, they thought they were seeing a ghost. 38 Jesus said to them, "Why are you disturbed? Why do such ideas cross your mind? 39 Look at my hands and my feet; it is I, really. Touch me and see—a ghost doesn't have flesh and bones as I do." 40 After saying this, Jesus showed them the wounds.

41 They were still incredulous for sheer joy and wonder, so Jesus said to them, "Do you have anything here to eat?" 42 After being given a piece of cooked fish, 43 the savior ate in their presence. 44 Then Jesus said to them, "Remember the words I spoke when I was still with you: everything written about me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the psalms had to be fulfilled."

45 Then Jesus opened their minds to the understanding of the scriptures, 46 saying, "That is why the scriptures say that the Messiah must suffer and rise from the dead on the third day. 47 In the Messiah's name, repentance for the forgiveness of sins will be preached to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. 48 You are witnesses of all this.

#### Reflection – "In the Flesh" - Rev. Scott Rosenstein

\* Prayer of Response

When we are blinded by anger, you pour out your love for all to see; when we wonder what tomorrow will bring, you call us to trust in you; when sadness fills our hearts, you plant gladness in our hearts. God of Easter: touch us with your grace.

You show us your hands, so we may reach out to mend the broken; you show us your feet, so we may walk with those the world passes by; you show us your face, so we may know who our sisters and brothers look like. Risen Christ: touch us with your compassion.

You open our eyes, so we may see God's love; you open our minds, so we may welcome God's Word; you open our lips, so we may be God's witnesses. Spirit of Hope: touch us with your peace.

God in Community, Holy in One, open us to your presence; in the risen Christ's name we pray. Amen.

#### \*Hymn of Response: "O Christ, Your Friends Were Gathered" (to the tune of NCH 386 – "The Church's One Foundation")

#### "O Christ, Your Friends Were Gathered"

Author: Carolyn Winfree Gillette, 2015 Included in I Sing to My Savior: New Hymns from the Stories in the Gospel of Luke (2022). Tune: AURELIA 7.6.7.6 D "The Church's One Foundation" Composer: Samuel S. Wesley, 1864 Reprinted with permission under ONE LICENSE #A-736636. All rights reserved.

> 1 O Christ, your friends were gathered together in a room. They'd heard the women's stories about your empty tomb. Some talked about Emmaus —they'd seen you breaking bread. Some claimed that you were risen; some thought you still were dead.

2 You met your friends and showed them your wounded hands and side, For you were Jesus risen and Jesus crucified.
You showed them God had triumphed and God had suffered pain. And in that intersection, you made them whole again.

3 You meet us in the places where all seems doomed or lost— Where people face oppression, where children pay the cost, Where poor ones cry in hunger, where illness takes its toll: You meet us, suffering Savior, and make the wounded whole.

4 O Christ, your resurrection gives hope and life anew. And yet your wounds and anguish give peace and promise, too. For you've been there before us! Now send us out to be A church that bears your suffering and claims your victory.

#### Invitation to Share Our Tithes and Offerings

One: All are invited to give joyously to the church that bears witness to Christ's love. **All: Let us give with a joyful heart.** 

One: God's loving generous love has given us every good and gracious gift. All: We offer our gratitude for God's abundant blessings in our lives.

One: Now, let us be a blessing to others in the ways that God has faithfully and generously blessed us.

The Offertory – Adam Petrosino

\*Presentation of Offerings – Doxology

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

#### \*Blessing of the Gifts

Let us remember that weeping may endure for a night, but joy comes early in the morning. May these gifts of blessing be a sign of the love, light, and glory of our redeeming God who has created a world of abundance with all that we need. May we remain thankful witnesses to your generosity, O God, as we dedicate these offerings to you and your beloved creation. Amen.

Choir Hymn: NCH 237 - "I Come to the Garden Alone (In the Garden)"

"I Come to the Garden Alone (In the Garden)" Author: C. Austin Miles, 1912 Tune: GARDEN 8.9.5.5.7. with refrain. Composer: C. Austin Miles, 1912 Choir: Barbara Rossington, Bob Bucklew, and Keith KoOnet Accompanist: Adam Petrosino

**Prayers of the People** 

The Lord's Prayer (using "debts" and "debtors")

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.

#### **GOING FORTH**

### \*Parting Hymn: NCH 253 - "Yours Is the Glory, Resurrected One!" ("A toi la gloire, ô Ressuscité!")

#### \*Commissioning

One: Go now, to be God's children in the world. All: We will open our minds to understand the needs around us.

One: Go now, to be Christ's servants in the world. All: We will open our hands to share our blessings with all.

One: Go now, to be the Spirit's hope for the world. All: We will open our hearts to welcome those who have no one to care for them.

#### \*Benediction

Living God, we are witnesses to your love and light. Your peace is seen in the dawning of each new day. Your equal justice bears witness in the interconnected universe that you have created. Faithful God, help us to feel the warmth of your loving light in the cooler moments of life. As we leave this worship service, let us go back into The world renewed as instruments of your loving peace And justice for all. May it be so. Amen.

**Postlude** - *Adam Petrosino* (please be seated for the Postlude)

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#### Credits

- (1) The Call to Worship, Gathering Prayer, Invitation to Share our Tithes and Offerings, Blessing of the Gifts, and the Benediction are adapted from *Witnesses of These Things: Service Prayers for the Third Sunday of Easter, written by The Rev. Dr. Sheila Harvey, Pastor of Union Congregational United Church of Christ.* Permission given to reproduce or adapt this material for use in services of worship or church education. All rights reserved.
- (2) The Prayer of Response is adapted from Prayer of the Day Liturgy w/communion for April 14, 2024 (Easter 3 B), written by the Rev Thom M. Shuman, and posted April; 7th 2024, on his blog, Lectionary Liturgies. https://lectionaryliturgies.blogspot.com/
- (3) Commissioning is adapted from *Liturgy and Communion for April 14th, 2024, Easter 3-B,* written by Thom M. Shuman, and posted April 7th<sup>t</sup>, 2024, on the blog, *Lectionary Liturgies*. http://lectionaryliturgies.blogspot.com/.
- (4) Permission to stream the music in this service obtained from ONE License #A-736636. All rights reserved

Ministers, All of Us Scott Rosenstein, Pastor Adam Petrosino, Music Director and Pianist Keith Konet, Council President Beverly Wurm, Administrative Assistant



## **NEWS AND UPCOMING EVENTS**

#### God is Still Speaking...

No matter who you are, or where you are on life's journey, you will find a spiritual home in this United Church of Christ congregation. WELCOME!

**Zion United Church of Christ of Tremont** is committed to reaching out to all people with the saving "Good News" of God's Love. To do this, we strive to attain a covenant relationship with people of all races, colors, ethnic origins, ages, sexual orientations and gender identity. We are also committed to grace-filled inclusivity in our worship, programs, membership, mission and social activities. We very strongly believe in outreach and community involvement, as well as ecumenical spiritual involvement within the surrounding community. We are committed to listening to history while joining with the future.

**Tithes and Offerings -** Checks and Money Orders can be made payable to: "Zion United Church of Christ" and placed in the offering basket or mailed to:

Zion United Church of Christ c/o Keith Konet 1039 Bridlewood Drive Copley, OH 44321 Questions: Contact Keith Konet at 330.604.6939

## Adam D. Petrosino, Our Music Director/Pianist

We are so pleased to welcome Adam, and his partner, Kiel, to our community of faith here at Zion United Church of Christ of Tremont. We're grateful to you sharing your presence, faith, and your musical gifts with us. Adam can be reached by e-mail at A.D.Petrosino@gmail.com and by phone at 234-205-9397.

## Administrative Assistant, Beverly Wurm

Beverly is keeping some limited Office Hours at church (2700 W. 14<sup>th</sup> Street/home. The days and hours are:

#### Winter Schedule:

Tuesday– 9am – 1pm Wednesday – 10am-2 pm Thursday – 9am – 1pm

Beverly can be reached at: zionchurchtremont@gmail.com or by phone at: 216-273-7561 (church) or 216-310-6810 (mobile)

## Please Remember in Prayer

- The Universal Church, its members and mission,
- The nation and all in authority, the leaders of our nation federal, state, and local.
- For democracy and our democratic institutions and norms in the United States.
- The welfare of the world and the concerns of the local community.
- The interrelationship of Gospel values and civic engagement.
- Ministries of the United Church of Christ and of Zion Church.
- The leaders of our church: local, regional, and national, including The Rev. Karen Georgia Thompson, General Minister and President of the United Church of Christ. We also pray for our Living Water Association UCC, Association General Minister, The Rev. Nayiri Karjian, and Association Faith in Action Minister, The Rev. Michael Howard.
- The ministers and missionaries of the world.
- Those who are refugees and immigrants.
- For racial and religious justice and reconciliation in the United States and around the world.
- Mother Earth and the global reflection on climate disruption.
- For peace, justice, and freedom throughout the world and and for an end to violence and bloodshed particularly for the peoples of Ukraine, Afghanistan, Iraq, Yemen, Israel and Gaza.
- The people of Haiti.

• According to data from the Gun Violence Archive a total of 132 mass shooting incidents occurred in the US in 2024 as of April 11<sup>th</sup>

## Mass shooting incidents in the past 10 years in the US:

2023 – 656 (While mass shooting incidents increased slightly since 2022, 2023 has shown an 8-10% overall DECREASE in deaths and injuries from gun violence. Some cities saw 20%+ decreases.)

- 2022 646 2021 - 689 2020 - 610 2019 - 414 2018 - 335
- 2017 247
- 2016 383
- 2015 332
- 2014 272

While we pray for the families and friends of those whose lives have been taken in violent acts – and we pray for those injured in body, mind, soul, and spirit—and for their neighborhoods and communities across the United States – We know that our words and prayers are not enough. We must repent for our collective inaction and commit to tirelessly working toward meaningful gun violence prevention.

- For those affected by the coronavirus COVID-19 pandemic and the various variant surges: for all those who are infected and/or sick, and those who are grieving, for all who are affected, all around the world, for essential workers and frontline workers...we pray for their comfort, for safety, for health, and for wholeness.
- The residents and management of the San Sofia Apartments who share a campus with us.
- Those anticipating surgery, recovering from surgery, or undergoing medical procedures, tests, or treatments.
- Those living in assisted living or in a nursing home
- Those who are homebound and those who are caregivers
- Those who suffer or are in any trouble, and the departed.
- Those on our church prayer list:
- Patti Augustine and family including Noah, Kate, Lucy, and Max along with Patti's brother Dave doing well after another procedure ).
- Robert O Bucklew (*Bob Bucklew's Dad*) is residing in Senior Living. Robert recently celebrated his 91st Birthday.
- The family, loved ones, and friends of Betty Funk.
- Marian Heffernan (*neighbor to Scott and Bob*)
- Ken Kauffman & friends: Nim Bryant, Isadora Almaro, Joe & Janelle Reardon, and Nancy Moore's neighbor - also Ivory, Ken's downstairs neighbor.
- Maddie (the young daughter of Scott's friend) prayers for her, her parents, Rachel and Ron, and her younger brother.
- Keith Konet and family (including granddaughter, Jocelyn Paulette, and her parents, Kevin & Jacqui and for Keith's brother -in-law Bob Naugle.

- The family, loved ones, and friends of Elaine Lukacs.
- Patricia Matheny Kellogg and family *(including prayers for her Cousin Paul Kevin McCray).* Also Patricia's friend, Sue Renovitz and Heather diagnosed with thyroid cancer.
- Our Music Director & Pianist, Adam Petrosino, and his partner, Kiel.
- Our Pastor Scott Rosenstein
- Barbara Rossington and Barb's cousin, Robert
- o Debbie Webb
- Beverly Wurm and family

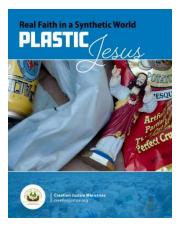


## **April is Earth Month**

For congregations, it can be a great time to further discern how to best answer our first calling as Christians: the caretaking of God's creation. Form a plan for making the most of April. Check out these suggested activities:

- (1) Join the UCC Earth Day Summit Featuring Bill McKibben! This online event will take place on Saturday, April 20th at 1 PM ET. In addition to a keynote delivered by McKibben, this two and a half hour summit will feature a panel of award-winning grassroots activists in a David-versus-Goliath struggle against one of the world's largest producers of plastics. Register now: https://tinyurl.com/mvk6vsnj
- (2) Celebrate Earth Sunday (April 21st, 2024)! Many churches celebrate God's creation on the Sunday closest to Earth Day (April 22<sup>nd</sup>). For this occasion, the UCC partnered with the ecumenical organization Creation Justice Ministries to produce an Earth Sunday resource on plastics entitled "Plastic Jesus: Real Faith in a Synthetic World."

# Join Creation Justice Ministries and the United Church of Christ in observing Earth Day Sunday with this resource!



#### Everywhere we look in our culture you will find plastic.

It surrounds our food, it makes up our technology and it is a standard element in our household items. Unfortunately, it is also overflowing from our landfills, floating in our waters and polluting our soil. More and more, you can even find it in our own bodies and those of other living creatures. There have even been traces of plastic found in breast milk. Despite the fact that we have learned the harms of plastics, we are steadily increasing our production of the material and integrating it into more and more items. Plastic is everywhere!

#### One place where you will not find plastic, however, is in the Bible.

This resource is designed to help congregations think more deeply about the ways that plastics impact our lives and God's creation. It is also intended to equip people of faith to take actions to address this epidemic in faithful and practical ways.

**Download this resource** - https://tinyurl.com/yjjtjkxr - to find stories of individuals and communities making a positive impact, sermon starters to spark meaningful discussions in your church, worship resources to unite in prayer and reflection, and actionable steps to address the plastic crisis in your life, community and our world.

## When is Eid al-Fitr 2024 and how is it celebrated?

## The three-day festival celebrates the completion of the fasting month of Ramadan by Muslims across the world.

The first day of Eid 2024 was celebrated on Wednesday, April 10,

The first day of Eid al-Fitr is determined by the sighting of the crescent moon – completing the holy month of Ramadan – and marking the start of the month of Shawwal, the 10th month of the Islamic (Hijri) calendar.

Traditionally, Eid is celebrated for three days as an official holiday in Muslim-majority countries. However, the number of holiday days varies by country.

Muslims begin Eid day celebrations by partaking in a prayer service that takes place shortly after dawn, followed by a short sermon.

On their way to the prayer, which is traditionally held in an open area, Muslims recite takbeerat, praising God by saying "Allahu Akbar", meaning "God is great".



prepared before Eid or on the morning of the first day.

Girls and women in many countries decorate their hands with henna. The celebration for Eid begins the night before as women gather in neighborhoods and large family gatherings for the application of henna.

In some countries, families visit graveyards to offer their respects to departed family members right after the morning prayers.

It is common for Muslim-majority countries to decorate their cities with lights and hold festivities to commemorate the end of the fasting month.

## What are common Eid greetings?

The most popular greeting is "Eid Mubarak" (Blessed Eid) or "Eid sa'id" (Happy Eid). Eid greetings also vary depending on the country and language.

## Passover in 2024

This year, Passover starts before sundown on Monday, April 22, and concludes after nightfall on April 30 in the United States. Many Jewish communities will host Seders the first two nights of the holiday.

Passover is later than last year. In 2023, it began at sundown Wednesday, April 5, and ended at sundown Thursday, April 13, according to USA Today.

#### What is Passover?

Passover is considered the "festival of freedom," . It is a celebration freedom - of God's deliverance of the Jewish people from enslavement in Egypt. The holiday is rooted in the biblical story of Moses and the 10 plagues, which contributed to freeing the Jewish people from Egypt.

The term Passover comes from the Israelites marking the doors of their homes with lamb's blood. This saved their firstborn son from one of the 10 plagues and allowed the angel of death to pass over their house, according to History.com.

#### How is Passover celebrated?

Jewish people observing Passover will often gather for a Seder, which is the ritual combination of service and dinner.

Some Jewish families or groups will display a Seder plate, the "centerpiece" of Seders that hold symbolic foods marking the holiday. For example, <u>maror</u>, or bitter herbs, represent the bitterness of slavery.

Seders involve moving through a book called a *Haggadah*, which contains stories, prayers, poetry and other teachings.



### What food is eaten (or not eaten) during Passover?

Food served during Passover will differ depending on family traditions, according to TIME. Some dishes include matzo ball soup, gefilte fish, beef brisket, chicken and potatoes. *Matzo*, an unleavened bread, is a well-known symbol of Passover.

Many Jews during Passover do not eat certain leavened foods, known as chametz. The dietary changes "reflect the plight of the Israelites as they left Egypt," according to USA Today.

#### Should I say "Happy Passover" or other greetings?

If you want to greet a friend of loved one who is celebrating Passover, "Happy Passover" is an appropriate sentiment.

You could also say "chag sameach," which means happy holiday in Hebrew.