



Worship Resources

Easter Day 2017

And so we finally come to what may be thought of – in some senses at least – as the most important Sunday of the year. If resurrection is just about a miraculous event that happened to Jesus long ago, or if it's only about something that happens to some people at the end of time, then it has little real value, no matter how fascinating it may be. But, of course, resurrection is about far more than this. It's the promise of God's life available to us both now and forever. And it the call for us to follow Christ by becoming life-givers and agents of resurrection in our families, communities and our world. What a glorious and miraculous challenge!



May the empty tomb be more than an event for us as we worship this year, and may our worship lead us into a real and transforming encounter with God's irrepressible life!

INTRODUCTIONS

For use by lectors, in order of service, parish bulletins and magazines

Acts 10 : 34-43

[If the readings from Acts will be used as the first lesson throughout the Easter season:

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During the Easter season, in place of the Hebrew Scriptures, we read the witness of the early church to the power of the Lord's resurrection.]

This is a small part of the story of Peter and a centurion of the Roman occupying army, when the Gospel first reached beyond the Jews. The teaching sums up Jesus's old and new life.

or

Jeremiah 31 : 16

The prophet's vision is of Jerusalem rebuilt after it had been totally destroyed. His song of resurrection fits our mood today, when we know that the life of Jesus was destroyed on Friday but is now raised again to save us and restore us.

Second Reading

Colossians 3 : 1-4

It is not just that Christ is risen, says Paul. Our life is now his life, so we too are raised up above much that is earthly, to dwell in God's realm of being.

Or Acts 10 : 34-43

The Gospel Reading

John 20 : 1-18

Mary Magdalene is sometimes called 'The Apostle to the Apostles', for she was the first to see the risen Lord and tell the others. But his appearance had changed and only love speaking to love made him known to her.

or

Matthew 28 : 1-10

The birth of Jesus was announced to Mary by an angel; so now it is angels who tell the two Marys that he is risen to new life. They run to share the good news, and meet him on their way.

View readings:

http://bible.oremus.org/?show_adj=no&passages=%0AActs%2010:%2034-43%0A%2BOR%0AJeremiah%2031:%201-6%0Acw%20Psalm%20118:%201-2,%2014-24%0AColossians%203:%201-4%0A%2BOR%0AActs%2010:%2034-43%0AJohn%2020:%201-18

COLLECTS OF THE DAY

Collect One

Almighty God,
who through thine only-begotten Son Jesus Christ
hast overcome death,
and opened unto us the gate of everlasting life;
We humbly beseech thee,
that, as by thy special grace preventing us
thou dost put into our minds good desires,
so by thy continual help we may bring the same to good effect;
through Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy
Spirit,
ever one God, world without end.

*If there are two celebrations of the Holy Communion this collect may be used
at the first.*

and/or

O God,
who for our redemption didst give thine only-begotten Son
to the death of the cross,
and by his glorious resurrection
hast delivered us from the power of our enemy;
Grant us so to die daily from sin,
that we may evermore live with him in the joy of his resurrection;
through the same Christ our Lord.

Collect Two

Almighty God,
through your only-begotten Son Jesus Christ
you have overcome death
and opened to us the gate of everlasting life:
Grant that, as by your grace going before us
you put into our minds good desires,
so by your continual help we may bring them to good effect;
through Jesus Christ our risen Lord
who is alive and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE 1

Presider or deacon

Filled with joy on this royal feast of feasts, let us offer prayers to God who leads his sons and daughters through the Red Sea waters.

Deacon or other leader

For the holy churches of God,
N our bishop, the presbyters and deacons, our new brothers and sisters, this holy gathering, and all the holy people of God.
Glory and praise to you, O living God.

For the world and its leaders, our nation and its people.
Glory and praise to you, O living God.

For all those in need, the suffering and the oppressed, travellers and prisoners, the dying and the dead.
Glory and praise to you, O living God.

For ourselves, our families, and those we love.
Glory and praise to you, O living God.

That our Saviour may grant us triumph over our visible and invisible enemies.
Glory and praise to you, O living God.

That with Christ we may crush beneath our feet the prince of darkness and all evil powers.
Glory and praise to you, O living God.

That Christ may fill us with the joy and happiness of his holy resurrection.
Glory and praise to you, O living God.

That we may enter the chamber of the divine wedding feast and rejoice without limit with the angels and saints.
Glory and praise to you, O living God.

Remembering our most glorious and blessed Saint N , and all the saints, let us offer ourselves and one another to the living God through Christ.
To you, O Lord.

Presider

Blessed are you, O Lord our God, for the victory over death of your Son Jesus Christ.

Hear the prayers we offer this holy day, and grant that we who have received new life in

baptism may live for ever in the joy of the resurrection; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE 2

Throughout the church, across the world, please loving God, may the message of the living Christ penetrate beneath the level of familiarity, and begin to awaken that which is lost and dying within the human spirit.

Come living Christ, ***Come among us and make all things new.***

For brilliant thinkers we pray, those whose thoughts divert them into doubts and enigmas that leave a genius confused while little children dance freely into your kingdom.

Come living Christ, ***Come among us with the priceless gift of faith.***

For confused minds we pray, those who have been over impressed with smart theories or bullied around by sharper intellects, and who this day live like puppets.

Come living Christ, ***Come among us with truth that sets prisoners free.***

For perverted souls we pray, those who for the sake of varied lusts have told lies to themselves so often that they now believe their own crooked self-justifications.

Come living Christ, ***Come among us with your light and make us see.***

For thirsty minds we pray, those who are awakening to questions previously ignored, or who are dissatisfied with the answers of religious quacks and social dogmatists.

Come living Christ, ***Come among us with waters that bubble up with eternal life.***

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For wounded souls and bodies we pray; those in hospitals and clinics, those who watch by their beds, and those who are grieving and waiting for funerals later in the week.

Come living Christ, ***Come among us with rest for the weary and peace for the distraught..***

For our own loved ones we pray, some with faith and others on the fringe, those who are strong and others who are weak, some who are confident and others who are riddled with anxieties, those close at hand and those who are far away in body or spirit.

Come living Christ, ***Come among with that grace which shows its perfection in human weakness.***

Amen! Even so come, Lord Jesus.

Amen!

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE 3

Blest are you, Lord Jesus who came to us a little child one of us,
flesh and blood to share in our humanity
For God so loved the world
That all might have eternal life

Blest are you, Lord Jesus who came to us as carpenter
and yet in whose creative hands a world was fashioned
For God so loved the world
That all might have eternal life

Blest are you, Lord Jesus who came to us as fisherman
and yet pointed to a harvest that was yet to come
For God so loved the world
That all might have eternal life

Blest are you, Lord Jesus who came to us as teacher
and opened eyes to truths that only the poor could understand
For God so loved the world
That all might have eternal life

Blest are you, Lord Jesus who came to us as healer
and opened hearts to the reality of wholeness
For God so loved the world

That all might have eternal life

Blest are you, Lord Jesus who came to us as prophet, priest and king
and yet humbled himself to take our place upon the cross
For God so loved the world

That all might have eternal life

Blest are you, Lord Jesus who came to us as servant
and revealed to us the extent of his Father's love for human kind
For God so loved the world

That all might have eternal life

Blest are you, Lord Jesus, who rose from the ignominy of a sinner's death
to the triumph of a Saviour's resurrection
For God so loved the world

That all might have eternal life

God so loved the world that he gave his only Son
for the sake of me
and you
and other sinners too
God so loved the world
Blest are you Lord Jesus, our Saviour and Redeemer

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE 4

Because the tomb no longer holds us, let us lift joyful voices saying, "Hear us, Lord," and respond, "Hear us, Alleluia!"

For the baptized, who share in Christ's crucifixion and resurrection, that we might always give witness to this day's good news. Hear us, Lord.

Hear us, Alleluia!

For the nations of the world, that, honouring the Feast of the Resurrection, peace might grow and flourish. Hear us, Lord.

Hear us, Alleluia!

For those in our parish family who have recently been visited by death, especially _____, that they might encounter hope through the same Spirit that raised Jesus from the dead.

Hear us, Alleluia!

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For all catechumens/those confirmed who have entered the water of life, especially

_____, that their nakedness might gently be clothed in Christ's own righteousness. Hear us, Lord.

Hear us, Alleluia!

For those preparing for baptism whose journeys have not yet brought them to the font, especially _____, that they might walk with Christ with joy and thanksgiving until the day of their baptism. Hear us, Lord.

Hear us, Alleluia!

For this community here gathered, that our failure to come to the aid of the earth's starving peoples might be forgiven, and that by breaking bread and sharing wine we might discover anew how to live as citizens of God's earth. Hear us, Lord.

Hear us, Alleluia!

Lord of Life, you triumph over death. Forgive us when we cling to ways that bring decay, and fill us with hope for tomorrow. For the sake of Christ, crucified and risen. **Amen.**

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE 5

Dear Lord, we thank you for the glories of Easter and for the promise of resurrection on this joyous morning. We thank you for the love that you have shown us in the life of your Son, Jesus Christ, and for the immeasurable gift of your Son. We pray that day by day we may draw closer to him, and be able to extend your love to others.

Your will be done - **On earth as in heaven.**

Loving Father, we pray for those who are unable to worship in freedom as we are, through persecution in distant hostile lands. We pray also for the missionaries spreading the good news of the Gospel of the Kingdom of God, and the promise of our Lord's resurrection in bringing us all to the eternal joys of your heavenly kingdom.

Your will be done - **On earth as in heaven.**

In compassion we call to mind all who are locked in physical or emotional pain, all who are weighed down with worry, guilt or despair. Restore and refresh them, comfort and free them, and let the light of your resurrection shine upon them.

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Your will be done - **On earth as in heaven.**

We thank you for raising up Jesus – raise us up in newness of life.

Your will be done - **On earth as in heaven.**

Dear Lord, we thank you for your many gifts to us and we look forward to the time when we are raised up to be with your Son, Jesus Christ, in heaven.

Your will be done - **On earth as in heaven.**

POST COMMUNION

Living God,
for our redemption you gave your only-begotten Son
to the death of the cross,
and by his glorious resurrection
you have delivered us from the power of our enemy.
Grant us so to die daily unto sin,
that we may evermore live with him in the joy of his risen life;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

or

Lord God our Father,
through our Saviour Jesus Christ
you have assured your children of eternal life
and in baptism have made us one with him:
deliver us from the death of sin
and raise us to new life in your love,
in the fellowship of the Holy Spirit,
by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

PRAYERS

Mighty God,
in whom we know the power of redemption,
you stand among us in the shadows of our time.
As we move through every sorrow and trial of this life,
uphold us with knowledge of the final morning
when, in the glorious presence of your risen Son,
we will share in his resurrection,
redeemed and restored to the fullness of life
and forever freed to be your people. Amen.

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Living God,
long ago, faithful women
proclaimed the good news
of Jesus' resurrection,
and the world was changed forever.
Teach us to keep faith with them,
that our witness may be as bold,
our love as deep,
and our faith as true. Amen.

Creator of the universe,
you made the world in beauty,
and restore all things in glory
through the victory of Jesus Christ.
We pray that, wherever your image is still disfigured
by poverty, sickness, selfishness, war and greed,
the new creation in Jesus Christ may appear in justice, love, and peace,
to the glory of your name. Amen.

Let us pray for the needs of the church and the world
to God who raised Jesus to new life.

Prayers of the People, concluding with:

Through the resurrection of your son, O God,
you destroy the power of death
and remove your people's shame.
By the power of the Spirit,
raise us from sin
and seat us at the paschal feast,
that we may rejoice in the gift of salvation
Jesus has won for us. Amen.

We exult in your love,
O God of the living,
for you made the tomb of death
the womb from which you bring forth your Son,
the first-born of a new creation,
and you anointed the universe
with the fragrant Spirit of his resurrection.
Make us joyful witnesses to this good news,

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that all humanity may one day
gather at the feast of new life
in the kingdom where you reign
for ever and ever. Amen.

Our gracious, eternal God, like those women who first arrived at the empty tomb we bow on this Easter day in awe and amazement. Yet we confess that sometimes in our journey we are like the disciples to whom these women went. Upon hearing the story they thought it an idle tale and did not believe it. Like them we have difficulty, O God, in embracing new truth and new realities. When the new comes we sometimes persist in living in the old. Be with us as we vacillate between thinking the gospel an idle tale and bowing in utter amazement. Lead us to embrace this living Lord who goes before us into the streets and places of our lives even as he went before the disciples to Galilee.

Be our companion on our journey just now. The world has presented us so much bad news of late. We hear daily of our soldiers, of nationals from other countries, and of innocent bystanders dying from the world's hostilities. They are mostly numbers of people to us because we do not personally know them. Yet they are beloved by their families. Be with those left behind who reluctantly have had to learn the language and emotion of grief and loss. Grant them comfort. Bring peace where now there is hostility and chaos. Bolster us, living daily in a world of conflict, when we are tempted to succumb to moments of despair. May we lay claim to the victory of the living Jesus. May we make the conscious choice to live with hope in our hearts. May we not tire of confidently claiming that this is still your world. And may we always remember Jesus' assertion that he has overcome the world. Lead us in living confidently. Assist us in being a part of a great Christian force which brings healing to the human spirit, joy to places of sadness, and laughter to our broken world.

Guide us, O Prince of Peace. Amen

Almighty Father,
you have given your only Son to die for our sins
and to rise again for our justification:
grant us so to put away the leaven of malice and wickedness
that we may always serve you
in pureness of living and truth;
through the merits of your Son Jesus Christ our Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you,

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in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever. Amen.

How Blessed Is The Day

How blessed is this day, when earth and heaven are joined and humankind is reconciled to God!

May the light of Jesus shine continually to drive away all darkness. May Christ, the Morning Star who knows no setting, find his light ever burning in our hearts—he who gives his light to all creation, and who lives and reigns for ever and ever. Amen.

-- adapted from the Book of Common Prayer -1979, the Episcopal Church in the United States of America.

A Prayer for Easter Morning

O Lord Jesus Christ, who upon this day did conquer death and rise from the dead,
and who are alive for ever more, help us never to forget your Risen Presence forever with us.

Help us to remember,

That you are with us in every time of perplexity to guide and to direct;
That you are with us in every time of sorrow to comfort and console;
That you are with us in every time of temptation to strengthen and to inspire;
That you are with us in every time of loneliness to cheer and befriend;
That you are with us even in death to bring us to the glory of your side.

Make us to be certain that there is nothing in time or in eternity which can separate us from you, so that in your presence we may meet life with gallantry and death without fear.

You turn our darkness into light, in your light we shall see light.

Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer.
Christ the Lord is risen today!
ALLELUIA

-- Adapted from ThisIsChurch.com

Easter prayers

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Dear Lord God, we thank you that you are a forgiving God, who wipes out all the wrongs from the past, and starts anew with us today.

Bring healing and comfort to those who are anxious, upset, lonely, or ill today; encourage those who help and care for them. May all who suffer be led from pain to peace.

We give you thanks for your loving mercy shown to us in Jesus Christ, who endured the suffering of the cross to overcome all that separates us from you, and was raised up to new life.

Strengthen our faith in the victory of the cross and the hope of eternal life. Help us to grow in the life which does not end, in love and friendship with you, which lasts for ever; through your Son our Saviour Jesus Christ.

Amen.

Lord our God, we thank and praise you for the greatness of your love, shown to us in Jesus Christ, who was willing to die for us, to bring us into your family, and to bless us with the life that lasts for ever.

We thank you for the new life we celebrate at Easter; help us to keep growing in the life that never comes to an end.

We pray for our families, our friends, and all those we care about: fill them with hope and happiness.

We pray for people who are unhappy today: those who are hungry, or homeless, those who fear violence or harm; may they find protection and peace.

We pray for those who are ill, or facing difficulties: may they find hope in the cross of Christ, and be strengthened by the knowledge of your love.

Lord, accept our prayers, and be with us now and for ever.

Amen.

O God, who for our redemption gave your only-begotten Son to the death of the cross, and by his glorious resurrection delivered us from the power of our enemy: Grant us so to die daily to sin, that we may evermore live with him in the joy of his resurrection; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

Almighty God, who through your only-begotten Son Jesus Christ overcame death and opened to us the gate of everlasting life: Grant that we, who celebrate with joy the day of the Lord's resurrection, may be raised from the

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death of sin by your life-giving Spirit; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

God our Father,
by raising Christ your Son
you conquered the power of death
and opened for us the way to eternal life.
Let our celebration today
raise us up and renew our lives
by the Spirit that is within us.
Grant this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you and Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever.

Lord,
the resurrection of Your Son
has given us new life and renewed hope.
Help us to live as new people
in pursuit of the Christian ideal.
Grant us wisdom to know what we must do,
the will to want to do it,
the courage to undertake it,
the perseverance to continue to do it,
and the strength to complete it.

New Saint Joseph People's Prayer Book

Blessed be the God and Father
of our Lord Jesus Christ.
In His great mercy
He has given us a new birth
to a living hope through the resurrection
of Jesus Christ from the dead
and to an inheritance
that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading.
It is reserved in heaven for you,
who because of your faith in God
are being protected by His power
until the salvation
that is ready to be revealed at the end of time.

New Saint Joseph People's Prayer Book

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Almighty God,
who hast given thine only Son
to be unto us both a sacrifice for sin,
and also an ensample of godly life;
Give us grace that we may always
most thankfully receive that his inestimable benefit,
and also daily endeavour ourselves
to follow the blessed steps of his most holy life;
through the same Jesus Christ our Lord.

Almighty Father,
who in your great mercy gladdened the disciples
with the sight of the risen Lord:
Give us such knowledge of his presence with us,
that we may be strengthened
and sustained by his risen life
and serve you continually in righteousness and truth;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Living God,
your Son made himself known to his disciples
in the breaking of bread.
Open the eyes of our faith,
that we may see him in all his redeeming work;
who is alive and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

Easter Prayer

When everything was dark
and it seemed that the sun would never shine again,
your love broke through.

Your love was too strong,
too wide,
too deep
for death to hold.

The sparks cast by your love
dance and spread
and burst forth
with resurrection light.

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Gracious God,
We praise you for the light of new life
made possible through Jesus.
We praise you for the light of new life
that shone on the first witnesses of resurrection.
We praise you for the light of new life
that continues to shine in our hearts today.

We pray that the Easter light of life, hope and joy,
will live in us each day;
and that we will be bearers of that light
into the lives of others.
Amen.

*Michaela Youngson
Superintendent Minister of the Ealing Trinity Circuit, Methodist Church*

Easter Blessings

May the loving power of God,
which raised Jesus to new life,
strengthen you in hope,
enrich you with his love,
and fill you with joy in the faith;
and the blessing ...

Blessed are you, Lord God of our salvation,
to you be praise and glory for ever.
As once you ransomed your people from Egypt
and led them to freedom in the promised land,
so now you have delivered us from the dominion of darkness
and brought us into the kingdom of your risen Son.
May we, the first fruits of your new creation,
rejoice in this new day you have made,
and praise you for your mighty acts.
Blessed be God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
Blessed be God for ever.

Common Worship

A Litany For Easter

Blest are you, Lord Jesus who came to us a little child
one of us, flesh and blood to share in our humanity

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For God so loved the world
That all might have eternal life

Blest are you, Lord Jesus who came to us as carpenter
and yet in whose creative hands a world was fashioned
For God so loved the world
That all might have eternal life

Blest are you, Lord Jesus who came to us as fisherman
and yet pointed to a harvest that was yet to come
For God so loved the world
That all might have eternal life

Blest are you, Lord Jesus who came to us as teacher
and opened eyes to truths that only
the poor could understand
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Blest are you, Lord Jesus who came to us as healer
and opened hearts to the reality of wholeness
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Blest are you, Lord Jesus who came to us as prophet, priest and king
and yet humbled himself
to take our place upon the cross
For God so loved the world
That all might have eternal life

Blest are you, Lord Jesus who came to us as servant
and revealed to us the extent of his Father's love
for human kind
For God so loved the world
That all might have eternal life

Blest are you, Lord Jesus, who rose
from the ignominy of a sinner's death
to the triumph of a Saviour's resurrection
For God so loved the world
That all might have eternal life

God so loved the world that he gave his only Son
for the sake of me

and you
and other sinners too
God so loved the world
Blest are you Lord Jesus, our Saviour and Redeemer
Birch

-- *John*

POETRY AND READINGS

I do not know

I do not know
what resurrection is
(though I'm almost sure
it has something to do
with hallowing the common ground.)
Of course, that's not all of it.
I expect one day I'll get up
and find that it sneaked up on me
while I wasn't looking,
and maybe even that it's been there all along.
That's as may be.
There's no point in trying to see things
before you're ready.
You have to walk before you can run.
In the meantime,
I believe in it
And that feels like an initial step.
For now,
it will do.
It is enough.
Kathy Galloway

The Resurrected Christ Who Saves Us

O Jesus, King,
Receive my supplication,
And consider my supplication,
As a pledge to you.
For you, O living King,
Have gone forth and gone up,
Out of hell,
As conqueror.

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Woe to those who have rejected you;
For, to evil [spirits](#) and demons,
You are sorrow,
To Satan and to Death,
You are pain,
To Sin and Hell,
You are mourning.

Yet, joy has come today,
For those who are born anew.
On this great day therefore,
We give great glory to You,
Who died and is now alive,
That to all you may give
[Life](#) and resurrection!
- St. Ephrem the Syrian

Death Be Not Proud

Death, be not proud, though some have called thee
Mighty and dreadful, for thou art not so;
For those whom thou think'st thou dost overthrow,
Die not, poor Death, nor yet canst thou kill me.
From rest and sleep, which but thy pictures be,
Much pleasure; then from thee much more must flow,
And soonest, our best men with thee do go,
Rest of their bones, and soul's delivery.
Thou art slave to fate, chance, kings, and desperate men,
And dost with poison, war, and sickness dwell;
And poppy or charms can make us sleep as well
And better than thy stroke; why swell'st thou then?
One short sleep past, we wake eternally,
And death shall be no more; Death, thou shalt die.
- John Donne

Christ Resurrected

Christ, rising again from the dead
Dieth now no more:
Death shall no more have dominion over him;
For in that he died, he died once:

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But in that he liveth, he liveth unto God,
Alleluia, alleluia.

Let the Jews now tell us,
How the soldiers,
Who guarded the sepulchre,
Lost the King,
Though they had placed a rock over him.
Why kept they not the Rock of Justice?
Either let them restore the buried One,
Or adore with us the risen One, saying:
But in that he liveth,
He liveth unto God,
Alleluia, alleluia.

- The Liturgical Year: Book 7

God, give us eyes to see
the beauty of the Spring,
And to behold Your majesty
in every living thing -
And may we see in lacy leaves
and every budding flower
The Hand that rules the universe
with gentleness and power -
And may this Easter grandeur
that Spring lavishly imparts
Awaken faded flowers of faith
lying dormant in our hearts,
And give us ears to hear, dear God,
the Springtime song of birds
With messages more meaningful
than man's often empty words
Telling harried human beings
who are lost in dark despair -
'Be like us and do not worry
for God has you in His care.

Helen Steiner Rice

LECTIONARY NOTES

REFLECTIONS ON THEME:

It goes without saying that the theme for Easter Sunday is the resurrection of Christ. But, more than just a historical event that happened to Jesus years ago, the readings make it clear that the resurrection is also something that happens for us today. All of the Old Testament readings speak of restoration and new life that can be experienced by those who have been broken. In Acts Peter reminds the gathering in Cornelius' house of Christ's resurrection as part of his call for them to believe. Paul in his letter to the Colossians reminds them that they too are raised with Christ, and that they have life that lasts beyond the grave. So, even as we walk with the women and the disciples through the resurrection story, we are called to remember that, as we receive Christ, it becomes our story too.

CONNECTING WITH LIFE:

GLOBAL APPLICATION: It's easy to make the resurrection an intellectual exercise that focuses on details, doubts and questions of evidence. Equally it is easy to make the resurrection little more than a touch stone of belief – of intellectual agreement – that qualifies us to call ourselves Christians. But, as the readings today show, the resurrection is far less about what goes on in our minds as it is about what goes on in our lives. The two big challenges for us as believers is to open our lives to this resurrection life of Christ, to allow God's life to break in and free us from all the little deaths that seek to control our lives. Then, as those who have experienced life, we are called to be those who bring life – agents of resurrection – in all the places in our world where death is at work. This year we cannot avoid asking how resurrection can be experienced in Japan and New Zealand, or in the Middle East where protests against oppressive regimes have broken out in various nations. Also, we need to face the ongoing question of how resurrection can be experienced for our diseased planet, how resurrection can come to those who live in dire poverty, or who have been trafficked as sex slaves, or who live with the burden of dread diseases. One thing is certain, God's resurrection life will only come to those people as we – the people of the resurrection – carry it into the world.

LOCAL APPLICATION: It is crucial that Easter Sunday is not allowed to become just an interesting academic exercise. In every community, and in every life, we struggle with both life and death. The beauty of resurrection is that death is not so much opposed or destroyed as transformed and absorbed into life. And so, as we celebrate resurrection this Sunday, we are also called to live resurrection in our own lives. This means that God is

challenging us to face the death within us – the self-centredness, apathy, destructiveness and cynicism that keep us and others from life – and allow it be transformed into life. It also means that we be prepared to bring life to others wherever we can through our compassion, hospitality, listening, giving, friendship, involvement and advocacy. When we become aware of how our actions bring life or death to others, we find ourselves making different choices. If our use of energy robs the planet of life, we will gratefully seek to be more responsible and careful. If our choice of products or our tendency to consume more than we need leaves others in poverty, or leads to people not receiving fair pay for their work or products, we will shop more compassionately. And if simple acts like voting, signing petitions or engaging our local government officials can help to make our communities more just and peaceful, we have brought life to others. Then, flowing from these works, we can speak – with actions having backed up our words – of the eternal life that can be experienced through Christ.

SERMON OUTLINE 1

Jn 20:1-18 Mary went to the tomb

Imagine how Mary felt - Jesus dead & buried... couldn't sleep - tossing & turning? sitting, talking to the other women? - had to get up & get out – early = *proi* = last watch of the night – 3-6am – at the earliest opportunity *went to the tomb...*

1. Mary Wandering - through the streets of the city *while it was still dark* - alone with her thoughts & feelings....

2. Mary Wondering - as she drew closer to the tomb, she *saw that the stone (2) had been removed from the entrance*. What on earth could have happened? What could she do? Seek help somewhere - so *she came running to Peter & John* - & they then raced to the tomb & found it empty... John *saw & believed*.

3. Mary Weeping - Typical men!! - *went back (10) to their homes* when Mary needed their support most! Meanwhile *she stood outside crying...* Then she had a most wonderful encounter with the Risen Lord - whom at first *she thought was the gardener* who might have known where the body was. As he gently called her name - *Mary* - she recognised him! He gave her a task to perform - *Go to my brothers* - tell the disciples the good news of
a) his resurrection from the grave;
b) his return to heaven - *I am returning to my Father...*

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4. Mary Witnessing - went (18) to the other disciples with the news that she had seen the Lord & that he had told her this. Down through the ages Christians have been witnesses similarly of the good news of the Gospel... Jesus transforms every situation and assures us with the message - *becos I live, you shall live also* with me in heaven - enjoying the blessings & benefits of eternal/everlasting life...

ONLINE SERMON SOURCES

["Already and Not Yet,"](#) the Rev. Dr. Mary Frances Schjonberg, *Sermons that Work*, Episcopal Digital Network
<http://episcopaldigitalnetwork.com/stw/2014/03/23/easter-day-a-2014/>

["Easter Evidence,"](#) David J. Wood, *Faith and Leadership*
<https://www.faithandleadership.com/david-j-wood-easter-evidence>

["God Reached Out,"](#) Rev. Mark Zabriskie, *Day 1*
http://day1.org/5722-god_reached_out

["Beyond Bunnies and Jelly Beans,"](#) the Rev. Pam Driesell, *Day 1*
http://day1.org/2865-beyond_bunnies_and_jelly_beans

["Power for Ministry,"](#) Rev. Richard Lischer, Duke Divinity School, *Faith & Leadership*
<https://www.faithandleadership.com/sermons/power-for-ministry>

["The Insecure Tomb,"](#) the Rev. Dr. Mary Hinkle Shore, *Day 1*
http://day1.org/1087-the_insecure_tomb

[Easter Sermons](#), Pastor Edward F. Markquart, Grace Lutheran Church, Seattle, Washington - *Sermons from Seattle*.
<http://www.sermonsfromseattle.com/easter.htm>

CHILDREN

[Observing Lent and Celebrating Easter in Year A](#), Carolyn C. Brown

[Gathering](#), from the United Church of Canada. Includes sermon seeds, liturgical
<http://worshipingwithchildren.blogspot.co.uk/2014/01/observing-lent-and-celebrating-easter.html>

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["Sermon of the Week," / "Mensajes para ninos,"](#) Sermons 4 Kids, Charles Kirkpatrick, Object Lessons & Children's Sermons, Coloring Pages, Puzzles.
<http://www.sermons4kids.com/>

[Don't Despair, Eyes Open,](#) Anna Shirey, *Anna's Hosannas*, Children's Lesson for Easter
<http://annashosannas.net/Lesson-for-Easter-A.php>

["We Are His Flowers,,"](#) Fran Woodruff, *On The Chancel Steps*
<https://onthechancelsteps.wordpress.com/2014/03/25/calling/>



[Children's Sermon,](#) *Faith Formation Journeys*
<http://faithformationjourneys.org/?p=1482>

HYMN SUGGESTIONS

[Christ The Lord Is Risen Today](#)

[Thine Be The Glory](#)

[Hail Thou Once Despised Jesus](#)

[Up From The Grave He Arose](#)

[Crown Him With Many Crowns](#)

[We Shall Go Out With Hope Of Resurrection](#)

[Mighty To Save](#) (*Link to YouTube video*)

[Crown Him](#) (*Link to YouTube video*)

[Easter Song](#) (*Link to YouTube video*)

[Lord, I Lift Your Name On High](#) (*Link to YouTube video*)

1st Reading Acts 10: 34–43

250* All hail the power of Jesu's name

263* Crown him with many crowns (vv.1–4)

264* Finished the strife of battle now

91* He is Lord, he is Lord

271* Jesus Christ is risen today

96* Jesus is Lord! Creation's voice proclaims it

102* Name of all majesty

306* O Spirit of the living God

197* Songs of thankfulness and praise

286* The strife is o'er, the battle done

491* We have a gospel to proclaim

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Alternative Jeremiah 31: 1–6

1st Reading 569* Hark, my soul, it is the Lord

Psalm Psalm 118: 1–2, 14–24

683* All people that on earth do dwell

326* Blessèd city, heavenly Salem

* (Christ is made the sure foundation)

327* Christ is our corner stone

282 Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good (Surrexit Christus)

714* Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might

715* Holy, holy, holy, Lord God, the Lord Almighty

334 I will enter his gates with thanksgiving in my heart

340* Sing and be glad, for this is God's house!

678* Ten thousand times ten thousand

78* This is the day that the Lord has made

493* Ye that know the Lord is gracious

Alternative Canticle Easter Anthems 1 Cor.5: 7–8; Rom.6: 9–11; 1 Cor.15: 20–22

258* Christ the Lord is risen again

328* Come on and celebrate

264* Finished the strife of battle now

431* Lord, enthroned in heavenly splendour

703 Now lives the Lamb of God

108* Praise to the Holiest in the height (vv. 1–4, 7)

283* The Day of Resurrection

286* The strife is o'er, the battle done

186 What Adam's disobedience cost

2nd Reading Colossians 3: 1–4

251 Alleluia, alleluia, hearts to heaven and voices raise

272* Jesus lives: thy terrors now

427* Let all mortal flesh keep silence

392 Now is eternal life

284* The golden gates are lifted up

287* The whole bright world rejoices now

The Gospel John 20: 1–18

256 Christ is risen, as he said

87 Christ is the world's light, he and none other

258* Christ the Lord is risen again

74 First of the week and finest day

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265 Good Joseph had a garden
271 Jesus Christ is risen today
338* Jesus, stand among us
424* Jesus, stand among us at the meeting of our lives
273 Led like a lamb to the slaughter
274 Light's glittering morn bedecks the sky
277 Love's redeeming work is done
107 One day when heaven was filled with his praises
283* The Day of Resurrection
288* Thine be the glory, risen, conquering Son
115* Thou art the Way: to thee alone
290 Walking in a garden at the close of day

Alternative Gospel Matthew 28: 1–10

260* Christ is alive! Let Christians sing
255* Christ is risen, alleluia!
256 Christ is risen, as he said
258* Christ the Lord is risen again
262 Come, ye faithful, raise the strain
264* Finished the strife of battle now
74 First of the week and finest day
693* Glory in the highest to the God of heaven!
269* Hark ten thousand voices sounding
271* Jesus Christ is risen today
274 Light's glittering morn bedecks the sky
277 Love's redeeming work is done
278 Now the green blade rises from the buried grain
279 O sons and daughters, let us sing! (vv.1–3 & 9)
107 One day when heaven was filled with his praises
283* The Day of Resurrection
286* The strife is o'er, the battle done
288* Thine be the glory, risen, conquering Son
115* Thou art the Way: to thee alone
491* We have a gospel to proclaim

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