

Christ Church, Ipswich

Sunday 31st March 2024

Easter Sunday All-age Worship

Good morning to you! Happy Easter! I hope you are well. It is wonderful to be able to share with you on this most special of days within the Christian year and as we worship together today, I pray that you will know the renewing, hope-filled presence of God as we celebrate and reflect on the resurrection of Jesus.

Let us join together in praising God this Easter Sunday:

Call to worship

Christ is risen!

Alleluia!

The Lord is risen!

He is risen indeed!

The Lord Jesus Christ is risen indeed!

And so we worship together this day

remembering once more the Good News of Easter,

rejoicing once more in the victory of Jesus

over sin and evil, darkness and death,

celebrating once more the triumphant message of the Resurrection:

New hope! New joy! New life!

The Lord is risen!

He is risen indeed!

A gathering prayer

Risen Lord,

in the stillness and wonder of this moment,

we hardly dare to believe that you are indeed alive!

Yet our hearts are filling with faith, hope and love,

and our souls are beginning to believe!

Wonderful Lord, we fall on our knees with thanksgiving. **Amen.**

A prayer of approach

Cosmic God,

your Son Jesus walked the earth as we do today,

and his life, death and resurrection free us to embrace

the fullness of life you offer to all that you have made.

In his name, we your Church, your family,

gather to celebrate this day,

to encourage one another,

to draw close to you –

glad to be alive, glad to worship you,

glad to sing out: **Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!**

R&S 250**The strife is o'er, the battle done**

1 The strife is o'er, the battle done;
now is the Victor's triumph won;
O let the song of praise be sung:
Alleluia!

2 Death's mightiest powers have done their
worst,
but Christ their legions has dispersed;
let shouts of praise and joy outburst:
Alleluia!

3 On the third day he rose again
glorious in majesty to reign;
O let us swell the joyful strain:
Alleluia!

4 He broke the ancient chains of hell;
the bars from heaven's high portals fell;
let hymns of praise his triumph tell:
Alleluia!

5 Lord, by the stripes which wounded thee,
from death's dread sting thy servants free,
that we may live, and sing to thee:
Alleluia!

Latin, 17th cent.
tr. Francis Pott (1832-1909) altd.*

A prayer of adoration

Loving God,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit,
We praise you this morning for all that you are, and all that you have done.
We thank you for coming to us in Jesus Christ,
and for Jesus's willingness to journey to the Cross for us.
We cannot fully comprehend your suffering or sacrifice,
but we give thanks for amazing grace, and we celebrate his glorious resurrection.
Through Jesus, we can be in no doubt of your love for us.
Through Jesus, we receive your forgiveness and mercy.
Through Jesus, there is victory over sin and death.
Through Jesus, we are adopted into your family.
Through Jesus, we can be filled with your transforming Spirit.
Through Jesus, there is hope. Amen.

A prayer of confession

Among all the emotion and celebration,
we come before you now,
quietly trusting our lives to you.
When we don't fully understand what
is happening,
when we hesitate to act:
lighten our darkness, Lord, we pray.
Bless us with your forgiveness.
When we don't trust you, O God,
when fear overtakes us.

When we take refuge in the tomb,
and don't want to come out.
Lighten our darkness, Lord, we pray.
Bless us with your forgiveness.

When we don't take in
the true importance of your resurrection.
When we don't live as an Easter people,
remembering that we have a faith to proclaim.
Lighten our darkness, Lord, we pray.
Bless us with your forgiveness. Amen.

Assurance of forgiveness

Risen Christ, wipe away our fears and our tears. Cleanse us, renew us, refresh us, release us from all that we have confessed and let us walk with you our resurrection God, knowing that our sins are forgiven. **Amen.**

A prayer of praise

Lord God, we thank you for today's experience of your amazing resurrection. We want to take our response into our everyday. We have to get out there, and live. In the fear, in the joy, in the rollercoaster moments, as well as when the path runs smoothly – wherever you call us, whatever you ask us to do, we trust you, Lord. You are always with us – thanks be to God. **Amen.**

Easter Egg Hunt in the sanctuary for our children**All-age Prayer**

Heavenly Father,
 thank you for the fun and happiness of Easter.
 Thank you for food and treats.
 Thank you for laughter and friendship.
 Thank you for eggs and excitement.
 Thank, above all, that Jesus is alive,
 and that we can celebrate that today! Amen.

Action Song Lord, I lift our name on high

Lord, I lift Your name on high,
 Lord, I love to sing Your praises;
 I'm so glad You're in my life,
 I'm so glad You came to save us.
 *You came from Heaven to earth
 to show the way,
 from the earth to the cross
 my debt to pay;
 from the cross to the grave,
 from the grave to the sky,
 Lord, I lift Your name on high.*

Rick Founds © 1989 Maranatha! Music / Copycare

Easter Day Old Testament Reading: Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24*A Song of Victory*

¹ O give thanks to the Lord, for he is good;
 his steadfast love endures for ever!

² Let Israel say,
 'His steadfast love endures for ever.'

¹⁴ The Lord is my strength and my might;
 he has become my salvation.

¹⁵ There are glad songs of victory in the tents of
 the righteous:

'The right hand of the Lord does valiantly;

¹⁶ the right hand of the Lord is exalted;
 the right hand of the Lord does valiantly.'

¹⁷ I shall not die, but I shall live,
 and recount the deeds of the Lord.

¹⁸ The Lord has punished me severely,
 but he did not give me over to death.

¹⁹ Open to me the gates of righteousness,
 that I may enter through them
 and give thanks to the Lord.

²⁰ This is the gate of the Lord;
 the righteous shall enter through it.

²¹ I thank you that you have answered me
 and have become my salvation.

²² The stone that the builders rejected
 has become the chief cornerstone.

²³ This is the Lord's doing;
 it is marvellous in our eyes.

²⁴ This is the day that the Lord has made;
 let us rejoice and be glad in it.

Easter Day Gospel Reading: John 20:1-18*The Resurrection of Jesus*

20 Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the tomb. ²So she ran and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved, and said to them, 'They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him.' ³Then Peter and the other disciple set out and went towards the tomb. ⁴The two were running together, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. ⁵He bent down to look in and saw the linen wrappings lying there, but he did not go in. ⁶Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb. He saw the linen wrappings lying there, ⁷and the cloth that had been on Jesus' head, not lying with the linen wrappings but rolled up in a place by itself. ⁸Then the other disciple, who reached the tomb first, also went in, and he saw and believed; ⁹for as yet they did not understand the scripture, that he must rise from the dead. ¹⁰Then the disciples returned to their homes.

Jesus Appears to Mary Magdalene

¹¹But Mary stood weeping outside the tomb. As she wept, she bent over to look^[a] into the tomb; ¹²and she saw two angels in white, sitting where the body of Jesus had been lying, one at the head and the other at the feet. ¹³They said to her, 'Woman, why are you weeping?' She said to them, 'They have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid him.' ¹⁴When she had said this, she turned round and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not know that it was Jesus. ¹⁵Jesus said to her, 'Woman, why are you weeping? For whom are you looking?' Supposing him to be the gardener, she said to him, 'Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away.' ¹⁶Jesus said to her, 'Mary!' She turned and said to him in Hebrew,^[b] 'Rabbouni!' (which means Teacher). ¹⁷Jesus said to her, 'Do not hold on to me, because I have not yet ascended to the Father. But go to my brothers and say to them, "I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God."' ¹⁸Mary Magdalene went and announced to the disciples, 'I have seen the Lord'; and she told them that he had said these things to her.

BPW 251 I know that my Redeemer lives!

1 I know that my Redeemer lives!
What joy the blest assurance gives!
He lives, he lives, who once was dead;
He lives, my everlasting Head!

2 He lives, to bless me with his love;
He lives, to plead for me above;
He lives, my hungry soul to feed;
He lives, to help in time of need.

3 He lives, and grants me daily breath;
He lives, and I shall conquer death;
He lives, my mansion to prepare;
He lives, to lead me safely there.

4 He lives, all glory to his name;
He lives, my Saviour, still the same;
What joy the blest assurance gives!
I know that my Redeemer lives!

Samuel Medley (1738-99)

Reflection

The talk will be included within the Sunday service and will be shared on the 'Christ Church, Ipswich' YouTube channel during Sunday afternoon.

A moment for reflection as Stephen plays some music**BPW 256 Low in the grave he lay**

1 Low in the grave he lay,
Jesus, my Saviour;
waiting the coming day,
Jesus, my Lord.

*Up from the grave he arose,
with a mighty triumph o'er his foes;
he arose a victor from the dark domain,
and he lives for ever with his saints to reign:
He arose! He arose! Hallelujah! Christ arose!*

2 Vainly they watch his bed,
Jesus, my Saviour;
vainly they seal the dead,
Jesus, my Lord.

3 Death cannot keep his prey,
Jesus, my Saviour,
he tore the bars away,
Jesus, my Lord.

Robert Lowry (1826-99)

Our prayers of intercession

Living God, through your love:
hear our prayer.

Transforming God,
 in the glory of this Easter morning,
 we praise you for new opportunities,
 new hopes and new visions.
 We thank you that we are Easter people
 and the hope of renewal is always alive for us.

As we celebrate this Easter,
 we remember that today, for some,
 this is still a Good Friday type day.
 We pray for those who are in pain,
 or missing someone,
 or wrapped in concerns and doubts.
 We pray for your transforming love to be with them.

Relational God,
 we pray for places where there is not much to celebrate.
 We think of places overwhelmed by war,
 places where there is corruption,
 places where people are exploited
 and where violence and injustice have become normal.

Thank you loving God for the communities that we belong to:
 for people we know well,
 people we have met before
 and for those people we cross the road to avoid.
 May our communities be places of peace and hope.

In these quiet moments,
 we name before you people and places in need of your love:

(a time of silence)

We thank you for the determination of Mary
 to not just share the news but to also get the answers she needed.
 We pray for all who need answers,
 be with them in their seeking and discerning.

God of new beginnings and incredible life:
 we pray for our church as we start on this new Easter Journey.
 May this time be a time of renewal, restoration, and new life.

Living God,
 accept these prayers in the name of Jesus. **Amen.**

The Lord's Prayer

R&S 247 Thine be the glory, risen, conquering Son

1 Thine be the glory, risen, conquering Son,
 endless is the victory thou o'er death hast won;
 angels in bright raiment rolled the stone away,
 kept the folded grave-clothes where thy body lay.

*Thine be the glory, risen, conquering Son,
 endless is the victory thou o'er death hast won.*

2 Lo! Jesus meets us, risen from the tomb;
 lovingly he greets us, scatters fear and gloom;
 let the church with gladness, hymns of triumph sing,
 for her Lord now liveth, death hath lost its sting:

3 No more we doubt thee, glorious Prince of Life;
 life is naught without thee: aid us in our strife;
 make us more than conquerors, through thy deathless love;
 bring us safe through Jordan to thy home above:

Edmund Budry (1854-1932) Tr. R. Birch Hoyle (1875-1939)

A sending out prayer

Easter joy is to be shared,
 to be grown, to be treasured.
 As we go out into the world and a new week,
 may that joy be our strength, our inspiration,
 and our refuge in trouble. **Amen**

The Blessing

May the blessing of God Almighty,
 Father, Son and Holy Spirit,
 be upon us and all those we love,
 this day and always, Amen.

The Grace

**May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,
 the love of God,
 and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit,
 be with us all evermore. Amen.**