



HE IS RISEN

Online Easter Worship

with Holy Communion

Sunday 4th April 2021

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Opening Music – ‘This Joyful Eastertide’ – by John Behnke

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dV2PeKrskVU>

Welcome & Introduction

My friends, I wish you all a very Happy Easter and welcome to our online Easter worship., which includes Holy Communion (so now is a good time to find yourself some bread and wine, or similar elements).

You will notice from our opening music, that we are taking the opportunity to use as many Easter Carols, as we celebrate together.

You also have a ‘Bingo’ card, which came with your Order of Service.

Who doesn’t like worship that has the possibility of a prize!!

On your sheet, there are different words and phrases that remind us of the Easter story.

Now, I'm afraid that the prizes are for those worshipping with us live via zoom on Sunday, because I have no way of knowing who has shouted 'Bingo', if you're watching this at home or on the bus!

You may want to play along as a bit fun, wherever you are – just don't be surprised if you get a funny look if you shout 'bingo' and you're watching the service in the park!

Your simple task is to pay attention during the service for the words and phrases on the card and cross them off as you hear them. They may be in the prayers, hymns, bible readings – anywhere in the service – so no nodding off – and no looking ahead through the Order sheet, which won't help you anyway. The last word to find isn't in your order, so you'll have to listen out!

So, let us open our ears, as we enter into the Easter Story.

We may not be together in our buildings, with beautiful flowers, or singing wonderful hymns, but wherever we are, we meet as one-family, to worship God on this day of celebration.

Call to Worship

*We are not eyewitnesses to an event,
as were the two Mary's.*

*We've not journeyed through a dangerous city
to bring spices to a tomb.*

*We haven't wept in the garden this morning,
because we couldn't find him.*

*But we are here to tell a story
that has not lost its power.*

*We are here because those before us
carried this story as if it were precious Gold.*

*Sisters and brothers in Christ,
take your places here today in celebration and awe.*

*What we are about to hear again,
Is a joyful surprise that can change the world.*

*This is Easter Morning – so with voices full and joyful,
We proclaim
Christ is risen!*

HE IS RISEN INDEED! ALLELUIA!

'GOOD CHRISTIANS ALL, REJOICE AND SING!'

Chet Valley Churches

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RowlQiLQjTU>

Good Christians all, rejoice and sing!
Now is the triumph of our King!
To all the world glad news we bring:
"Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!"

The Lord of life is risen for ay
bring flowers of song to strew his way;
let all the word rejoice and say:
"Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!"

Praise we in songs of victory
that Love, that Life, which cannot die,
and sing with hearts uplifted high:
"Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!"

Your name we bless, O risen Lord,
and sing today with one accord
The life laid down, the life restored:
"Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!"

Words: Cyril Alington

Prayers of Thanksgiving

Lords' Prayer

*Christ our life,
You are alive in the beauty of the earth,
Christ is risen!*

HE IS RISEN INDEED!

*Christ our love,
You are alive in the tenderness of touch,
In the heartbeat of intimacy,
In the insights of solitude,
Christ is risen!*

HE IS RISEN INDEED!

*Christ our hope,
You are alive in the creative possibility of the dullest
conversation,
The dreariest task,
The most nerve-racking event,
Christ is risen!*

HE IS RISEN INDEED!

*Christ our grace,
You are alive offering new creation
To every unhealed hurt,
To every deadened place,
To every damaged heart,
Christ is risen!*

HE IS RISEN INDEED!

*Christ, you still offer us life and love, hope and grace,
despite our humanity that nailed you to a cross.*

*We now know that light overcomes darkness
Life overcomes death
The reality of resurrection soars and surges
through the whole creation.
Therefore, in joy and amazement,
We proclaim*

Christ is risen!

HE IS RISEN INDEED!

Let us prayer together the prayer that gave peace to Jesus and his disciples:

*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 trespasses
As we forgive those who trespass against us.
And Lead us not into temptation But deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, The power and the glory Forever and ever. Amen*

'CHRIST THE LORD IS RISEN TODAY'

Worldwide Easter Choir

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jfNwvNhpKN4>

Christ the Lord is risen today, Alleluia!
Earth and heaven in chorus say, Alleluia!
Raise your joys and triumphs high, Alleluia!
Sing, ye heavens, and earth reply, Alleluia!

Love's redeeming work is done, Alleluia!
Fought the fight, the battle won, Alleluia!
Death in vain forbids him rise, Alleluia!
Christ has opened paradise, Alleluia!

Lives again our glorious King, Alleluia!
Where, O death, is now thy sting? Alleluia!
Once he died our souls to save, Alleluia!
Where's thy victory, boasting grave? Alleluia!

Soar we now where Christ has led, Alleluia!
Following our exalted Head, Alleluia!
Made like him, like him we rise, Alleluia!
Ours the cross, the grave, the skies, Alleluia!

Words: Charles Wesley

Scripture Reading: John 20: 1-18

The Empty Tomb

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

¹¹ But Mary stood weeping outside the tomb. As she wept, she bent over to look into the tomb; ¹² and 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. ¹³ They 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.'

¹⁴ When she had said this, she turned round and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not know that it was Jesus. ¹⁵ Jesus 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.' ¹⁶ Jesus said to her, 'Mary!' She turned and said to him in Hebrew, 'Rabbouni!' (which means Teacher).

¹⁷ Jesus 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." '

¹⁸ Mary Magdalene went and announced to the disciples, 'I have seen the Lord'; and she told them that he had said these things to her.

'Light at the end of the tomb'

Each year, the Easter story speaks to us in new ways.

How could it not?

It is, after all, the greatest story ever told!

A story so potent, it has changed the world and changed lives over and over again.

And this great story has resonance and power in each new age that hears its truth – because each year we are different people and the world is in a different place.

The fact that we are sharing this service together via Youtube, Zoom, or on DVDs, is testament to this truth and to the way we have adapted during the darkest and strangest of times.

For each and every one of us, this past year has both taken its toll and seen us grow and change; there has been the dark of an isolating tomb and the light of new life.

At this point in the pandemic – in this country at least, there is the glowing, glimmer of hope at the end of a very long dark tunnel – and we lean towards it like a flower to the sun.

So, this year, as we have heard again John's account of the resurrection, how have we responded?

It is a passage so full of emotion, dripping from the page.

- Mary's grief in the darkness of night, as she walked to the tomb.
- The shock and despair and horror of finding the stone rolled away – had someone stolen the body?
- The panic, running back to the disciples – who themselves, were hiding away in fear for their lives.
- The disbelief at the news
- The almost comic rush to get back to the tomb first.
- Peering inside: the numbness at seeing only the linen wrappings.
- The confusion and anxiety as the disciples returned home.
- Mary – stood crying in sorrow.

- Then all the fright and surprise and awe of the encounter with the angels, turning to wonder and joy as she sees her Lord standing behind her.

I'm left breathless each time I hear the story.
Holy week is such a roller-coaster of emotion.

This year, I wonder if we experience that breathlessness even more than normal?

Experiences that throw us wildly, from one emotion to the other are typically called trauma's – a shock to the system that cannot fail to change us; both in positive and negative ways, or both.

I don't know about you, but at this point in the pandemic in the UK, I do have that sense that there is light at the end of the tunnel.

We're at the 'beginning of the end', as Churchill might have said. I also hope that we are at the beginning of a new beginning, because there is much that we shouldn't go back to as we emerge from Covid: much that we have learnt.

The resurrection is that growing light at the beginning of an astonishing new reality, that grows through the disciples and early church, and over 2000 years around the world. That day at the tomb is the beginning. Each time we mark Easter, it's like another pulse of light shines from the tomb, renewing our hope and our courage.

Now – just as we are all looking forward into the new life of being unlocked, of slowly getting closer to each other again, of receiving the vaccine and the hope it promises – the grief and pain and trauma are still with us. They don't just disappear.

This sounds so like that experience at the tomb.

There is the grief and pain and anxiety, which doesn't disappear, but there is now the wonder and joy of resurrection and potential and hope of New life!

That feels to be where we are – holding pain and hope in tension.

But, we know the rest of the story.

We know how that earth-shattering moment, that empire-destroying, boundary-wrecking, blast of Good News, has changed lives.

We know that we are resurrection people living in a new reality – leaning into the light – proclaiming that life wins.

What God did for us in Jesus, is to hold up a mirror to humanity's darkest behaviours and to show that, however deep the darkness, God's light is ever present.

As we catch a glimmer of that light, like those who first encountered the risen Christ,

may we gather each other up as brothers and sisters – those who hope and run forwards – those who grieve and hurt and stumble – and may we walk towards the light at the end of the tomb.

Christ is alive! Let Christians sing.
His cross stands empty to the sky.
Let streets and homes with praises ring.
His love in death shall never die.

'CHRIST IS ALIVE! LET CHRISTIANS SING'

Johns Creek United Methodist Church

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A5nB9EuxAZs>

Christ is alive! Let Christians sing.
His cross stands empty to the sky.
Let streets and homes with praises ring.
His love in death shall never die.

Christ is alive! No longer bound
to distant years in Palestine,
he comes to claim the here and now,
and dwell in every place and time.

Not throned afar, remotely high,
untouched, unmoved by human pains
but daily, in the midst of life,
our Saviour, with the Godhead reigns.

In every insult, rift and war,
where colour, scorn or wealth divide,
he suffers still, yet loves the more,
and lives, though ever crucified.

Christ is alive, and comes to bring
good news to this and every age,
till earth and all creation ring
with joy, with justice, love and praise.

Words © Brian Wren

Prayers of Intercession

*Hope of all hopes, God of new life, of resurrection,
we come before you this Easter Sunday, our hearts rejoicing in you.
And yet, despite our joy and hope, we feel the darkness around us.
God, may we know your healing presence in that darkness,
and may your light shine in and through us.*

*Mysterious one, you walk among us,
but we do not always recognize you in our midst.*

Open our eyes to you.

*Open our ears and our hearts that we may see you at work
in the world.*

*Source of all power, we pray for our leaders and the leaders of the
world at large, that they too may recognize you in unexpected places,
that instead of vying for power, they may strive to work with and for
their people.*

*Maker of the universe, as the world around us bursts into life and
colour, we rejoice in your creation. Help us to be good stewards of our
home, the earth, the land, water and air that sustain and nourish us.*

*Source of comfort and peace, we ask that you be with all those who
suffer. We lift up those who have lost loved ones: through illness,
pandemic, old age, disaster or violence.*

*Light of the world, you hear all of our prayers, those spoken aloud and
those whispered only in the silence of our hearts.*

Cast your light upon us, resurrected one.

Amen

Easter Communion

Welcome to the meal

*Here is the table set for our special meal.
There is bread and wine, all laid out for us to share.*

*As we eat and drink together
We remember that Jesus had a meal just like this
with his disciples, his friends.
He included everyone – and so do we.
Children, Adults and all – are welcome here.*

The Peace

*As we come to this table,
We welcome each other
And we offer each other peace.*

*The peace of the Lord be with you,
AND ALSO WITH YOU*

'I DANCED IN THE MORNING'

Sung by Jean Watson

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XLGqavkDszU>

I danced in the morning when the world was begun,
I danced in the moon and the stars and the sun,
I came down from heaven and I danced on the earth:
At Bethlehem I had my birth.

*Dance, then, wherever you may be,
I am the Lord of the dance, said he,
And I'll lead you all, wherever you may be,
And I'll lead you all in the dance, said he.*

I danced for the scribe and the Pharisee,
But they would not dance, no they would not follow me;
I danced for the fishermen, for James and John;
They came with me and the dance went on:

Dance, then, wherever you may be,

I danced on the Sabbath and I cured the lame:
The holy people said it was a shame.
They whipped and they stripped and they hung me high,
And they left me there on a cross to die:

Dance, then, wherever you may be,

I danced on a Friday when the sky turned black;
It's hard to dance with the devil on your back.
They buried my body and they thought I'd gone;
But I am the dance, and I still go on:

They cut me down and I leap up high;
I am the life that'll never, never die.
I'll live in you if you'll live in me:
I am the Lord of the dance, said he.

*Dance, then, wherever you may be,
I am the Lord of the dance, said he,
And I'll lead you all, wherever you may be,
And I'll lead you all in the dance, said he.*

Words© Syndey Carter

Why do we share this meal?

*When Jesus shared that meal with his friends,
He explained that the bread is like his body
That he is the bread of life
And that when we share it, we are strengthened as a community,
to be as Jesus in the world.*

*Jesus also used a cup of wine to teach his friends.
He compared the red wine to blood, to help us remember the
suffering in the world.
Drinking the wine together helps us to remember that God always
believes in us,
That even when we make bad choices, God can turn us around
And through his love and grace, we can serve others and change
the world.*

*This is ordinary bread and wine.
But when we eat and drink together,
Something extraordinary happens which brings us closer to God
and to each other.*

Prayer

*Great God,
We gather for this meal in thanks and praise.
You, the God of all creation
Meet us here in bread and wine.
You are holy.*

*We thank you that all are welcome here,
The tall and short,
Young and old
every colour of skin
from every country
with those who are like us
And those who are very different
You want us all at your table, to eat together
This is what life is like with you.
We try to live like this all the time,
But very often fail.
As we eat and drink, you give us strength to try again.*

*On this Easter Sunday,
We give thanks for Jesus,
For his birth in Bethlehem
His life as a carpenter and teacher
For his bravery as he valued everyone
For the open tomb,
which gives us confidence and hope in new life.*

*As we prepare ourselves to eat and drink –
may your Holy Spirit flow through us,
helping us to know your presence in this meal. AMEN*

Sharing

*Here is bread,
Which we break for all to share.*

*Here is wine,
Which we pour for all to share.*

*This is our simple meal,
It is a foretaste of heaven
which Jesus shared with his friends
and which we share with each other.*

*(share bread)
The Bread of Life shared with you
Be strengthened to do what is right.*

*(share wine)
The cup shared with you.
Remember that God always offers new life.*

Thanks

*Loving God, thank you for this Easter Celebration!
We have shared together
And cannot remain the same
We promise to use our hands and feet, our sight and voices to
follow Jesus and to proclaim: his Kingdom has come. Amen*

Notices

Re-opening

We think of many of our friends from South Croydon United Church, as they have returned to their building – and also for those who are still worshipping online from home.

St Paul's Elders are meeting next week and we be discussing the covid risk assessment for the potential re-opening on the 18th April. More information to come.

Please continue to hold both churches in your prayers, as we make tough but hope-filled decisions in the coming weeks.

Offerings

I have been remis in not thanking those who have been continuing to give your freewill offerings over the past year, which have been vital in supporting both churches through a very tough period.

Please continue to do so as we emerge from lockdown and as we see where God is leading us now.

The Ministers' post-Easter leave

I will be taking my annual post-Easter leave, returning on the 15th April. Please contact Sue or Bea at St Paul's or Eleanor at SCUC, and anything urgent will be passed on.

Next Sunday both churches will be joining the Purley Circuit for a United Online Zoom service – more information to follow.

How did you do on your Bingo Cards?

You might be missing a word – I wonder where it is?

'THINE BE THE GLORY'

Chet Valley Churches

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Tjz4yXUJ rgU>

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 vict'ry
Thou o'er death hast won*

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 the Lord now liveth
Death hath lost its sting

Thine be the glory...

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

Thine be the glory...
...Alleluia, Amen!

Words: Edmund Budry

Dismissal

*Go now, to live with love in a world of despair
Go now, as light-bearers to a world in darkness.
Go now, in the wake of Easter
and ride an irrepressible wave of hope.*

Blessing

*We go in the name of our risen saviour, Jesus Christ,
in the love of God
and in the power of the Holy Spirit.*

Christ is risen!

HE IS RISEN INDEED! ALLELUIA! Amen.

Closing Music – ‘Hallelujah Chorus’

The Tabernacle Choir and 300 worldwide voices

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=akbokD7EHlk>

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