

Easter Sunday Service: 12/04/20

Welcome:

Welcome to our Easter Online Service

- This is the best day of the year – the best day of all time
- For at dawn our grief is turned to joy.
- Defeat and death turned to victory and life
- For on this day we find that Jesus, who was dead, is alive again
- We celebrate his resurrection and our salvation
- We hear again His promise
- That he will never leave us
- And those who put their trust in him will not be swept away by death
- But shall have eternal life.

Response:

When I say, "Christ is risen!", you say, "**Alleluia!**"

Then I say, "The Lord is risen!" and you say, "**He is risen indeed!**"

Christ is risen! **Alleluia!** The Lord is risen! **He is risen indeed!**

It is fitting that the heavens should rejoice: And that the earth should be glad,
That the whole world, both visible and invisible, should keep the feast.
For Christ is risen, the everlasting joy.

Christ is risen! **Alleluia!** The Lord is risen! **He is risen indeed!**

Now all things are filled with light, Heaven, and earth, and all places under the earth.
All creation celebrates the resurrection of Christ.
It is the day of resurrection,

Christ is risen! **Alleluia!** The Lord is risen! **He is risen indeed!**

Let us be revel in the glorious truth of the resurrection,
For Christ has risen from the dead, He has defeated death and risen victorious
and has bestowed life to us who were dead.

Christ is risen! **Alleluia!** The Lord is risen! **He is risen indeed!**

Prayer:

Lord Jesus, today we are apart, yet we are together in your name.

We are your body, your church, your family.

Make us all one in you,

Meet us where we are and draw us into your presence by your Holy Spirit

So, we may share in the joy of your resurrection and in the hope of your return

In your precious name

Amen

Reading: Matthew 28: 1-20**Jesus Has Risen**

After the Sabbath, at dawn on the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to look at the tomb.

² There was a violent earthquake, for an angel of the Lord came down from heaven and, going to the tomb, rolled back the stone and sat on it. ³ His appearance was like lightning, and his clothes were white as snow. ⁴ The guards were so afraid of him that they shook and became like dead men.

⁵ The angel said to the women, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. ⁶ He is not here; he has risen, just as he said. Come and see the place where he lay. ⁷ Then go quickly and tell his disciples: 'He has risen from the dead and is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see him.' Now I have told you."

⁸ So the women hurried away from the tomb, afraid yet filled with joy, and ran to tell his disciples. ⁹ Suddenly Jesus met them. "Greetings," he said. They came to him, clasped his feet and worshiped him. ¹⁰ Then Jesus said to them, "Do not be afraid. Go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee; there they will see me."

The Guards' Report

¹¹ While the women were on their way, some of the guards went into the city and reported to the chief priests everything that had happened. ¹² When the chief priests had met with the elders and devised a plan, they gave the soldiers a large sum of money, ¹³ telling them, "You are to say, 'His disciples came during the night and stole him away while we were asleep.' ¹⁴ If this report gets to the governor, we will satisfy him and keep you out of trouble." ¹⁵ So the soldiers took the money and did as they were instructed. And this story has been widely circulated among the Jews to this very day.

The Great Commission

¹⁶ Then the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had told them to go. ¹⁷ When they saw him, they worshiped him; but some doubted. ¹⁸ Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹ Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely, I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

Thoughts:

This is a strange time for all of us,

- At a time when many of the things we have taken for granted have gone
- And we are left uncertain and fearful
- It is strange not to be able to meet together
- We miss each other
- And we worry for those we know and love.

As I said last week

- When Jesus came into Jerusalem riding a donkey,
- He also was facing fear for what was to come

But this is now Sunday and Jesus has risen

- Fear and doubt have turned to joy
- And we celebrate His victory over death and sin.

We know that whatever trials we may face,

- Whether as individuals or as nations
- God will be with us and will bring us through to the other side
- Where there will be rejoicing and celebration

This is the message of Easter

- It is the message David prophetically foresaw in the 23rd Psalm
*The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. He makes me lie down in green pastures.
 He leads me beside still waters. He restores my soul.
 He leads me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake.
 Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil,
 for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.
⁵ You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies;
 you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.
⁶ Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life,
 and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD forever.*

Jesus is our good Shepherd

- He will guide and lead us
- Even when we go through 'The Valley of the Shadow of Death'
- He will be with us and preparing a table for us.
- The thing about shadows is, they may look dark.
- But you only get shadows when the sun is shining.

There are three verses from the Easter story I want to focus our attention on this morning

- Luke 24:2. *"They found the stone rolled away from the tomb"*
- Matt. 27:51 *"At that moment the curtain of the temple was torn in two"*
- Matt. 28:20. *"And surely, I am with you always, to the very end of the age."*

These three verses express the primary aim of Jesus death

- To restore our relationship with God.
- The curtain in the temple separated the Holy of Holies from the rest of the temple
- We were screened from Gods presence less we be overcome by His holiness and die.
- But now Jesus death has torn the curtain in two
- And we are free to come into Gods presence

Even death could not hold Jesus and he is risen

- And the Stone was rolled away so we might find our risen lord
- Discover Him
 - in the garden, with the women
 - In our houses, like the disciples
 - On the road, like the men walking to Emmaus

- We will meet him as we work, like Peter and the others fishing in Galilee
- And as we eat together.
- We will know Him as we break bread together

And his promise is here for us to hold on to

- He will never leave us
- We will never be alone.

And he calls us serve him and trust Him,

- Not because it is easy but because he is Lord
- Because all authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Him
- Because He will never leave us or abandon us
- As Paul reminds us (Romans 8:35, 37-39)

³⁵ Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword?

³⁷ No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. ³⁸ For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, ³⁹ neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Let us celebrate this as we share communion together

Communion

We come to this table, not because we must, but because we may,

Not because we are strong, but because we are weak.

Not because we have earned the right but because we are in need of mercy and forgiveness

We come because we love the Lord a little and would like to live Him more

Because he loves us and gave himself for us

We come bringing our doubts and fears

We come to meet with the risen Christ because we are His body and He is our Lord

Prayer.

Thank you, Jesus, that you died so that we might be forgiven, that the curtain was torn in two and we may come into your presence and know your peace and forgiveness.

We thank you that you rose from the dead

We know that before you we have no secrets for you know us better than we love ourselves and yet you still love us

We ask you forgive us for all we have said and done that is not worthy of you and for those things we did not do that we should have done.

Cleanse us and make us clean by the power of your blood and through your Holy Spirit continue your work in our hearts to help us love you and live our lives for your Glory

Let us know your presence with us

In your precious name, Amen

Reading: 1 Corinthians 11:23-26

For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you: The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread, ²⁴ and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, "This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me." ²⁵ In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, " ²⁶ For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

Hold up the bread

- Jesus said, *"This is my body which is for you"*
- Take, eat and receive life

Hold Up the Cup

- Jesus said,
"This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this in remembrance of me."
- Let us drink and receive forgiveness
- And know the presence of our Risen Lord
- Say as we drink
- Christ is risen! **Alleluia!** The Lord is risen! **He is risen indeed!**

Prayer.

*Father God, we thank you that you have called us to be your sons and daughters.
We thank you for the price Jesus paid for us and the hope and security we have in Him.
For the love joy and peace, we can know through your Holy Spirit.*

*We ask this morning for those who are not experiencing your peace this morning.
We pray for those who are anxious and fearful because of this terrible virus
For those who have loved ones who are sick or who are ill themselves.
For those struggling with lockdown and are lonely or stressed
For those who are in financial difficulty and struggling to feed themselves and their family.
We pray that they will find peace and hope in you this Easter*

*We pray for those who are working hard to tend, treat and heal.
Those who serve our communities.
We thank you for their dedication and courage and ask you will bless and protect them.*

We pray for those in authority. Our Government and other world leaders. For the World Health Organisation. That you will give them wisdom and compassion to lead justly and with integrity

Give us patience and faith to trust you and enable us to share your love with our friends and neighbours.

In the name of Jesus, our saviour, Amen

Blessing: (from Jude 1:24)

To him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you before his glorious presence without fault and with great joy— ²⁵to the only God our Saviour be glory, majesty, power and authority, through Jesus Christ our Lord, before all ages, now and forevermore! Amen.

Grace, (Say together)

May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.