

Sunday 12th April 2020 –

Charity Hamilton

CCLI: 95928

This short act of **Easter worship** has been produced for you if you are unable to attend church. If you are well enough why not spend a few moments with God, knowing that other people are sharing this act of worship with you.

Call to Worship:

Christ is risen, he is risen indeed! Alleluia!

Hymn: Christ the Lord is Risen today (Singing the Faith 298)

1 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!

2 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!

3 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!

4 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!

5 Hail the Lord of earth and heaven, Alleluia!
Praise to thee by both be given, Alleluia!
Thee we greet triumphant now, Alleluia!
Hail the Resurrection, thou, Alleluia!

6 King of glory, soul of bliss, Alleluia!
Everlasting life is this, Alleluia!
Thee to know, thy power to prove, Alleluia!
Thus to sing, and thus to love, Alleluia!

Charles Wesley

Let us pray together

Resurrection God, you offer life overcoming death, love overcoming emptiness, light overcoming darkness.

I give you thanks for the hundred small and powerful ways I experience resurrection every day.

Thank you for Jesus, who shows us how to live as a resurrection people, living defiant and in resistance to death.

For those times when I have failed to challenge the things of death, the political systems, relationships, selfish desires, I'm sorry.

For those times when I have failed to resist death and ignored your call to live the life I am gifted, I'm sorry.

I trust that you forgive me, I hear your forgiveness intertwined with your call to me to live the life I am gifted, and I trust that you are merciful in all ways. Amen.

Read Today's Gospel Reading:

John 20:1-18

The Resurrection of Jesus

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. So 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." Then Peter and the other disciple set out and went toward the tomb. The two were running together, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. He bent down to look in and saw the linen wrappings lying there, but he did not go in. Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb. He saw the linen wrappings lying there, and the cloth that had been on Jesus' head, not lying with the linen wrappings but rolled up in a place by itself. Then the other disciple, who reached the tomb first, also went in, and he saw and believed; for as yet they did not understand the scripture, that he must rise from the dead. Then the disciples returned to their homes.

Jesus Appears to Mary Magdalene

But Mary stood weeping outside the tomb. As she wept, she bent over to look into the tomb; 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. 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." When she had

said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not know that it was Jesus. Jesus said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you looking for?" 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." Jesus said to her, "Mary!" She turned and said to him in Hebrew, "Rabbouni!" (which means Teacher). 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.'" 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.

Time to Reflect

Take a moment to think about:

The Easter story is one that is familiar to us, we know it so well but how do we live it? How do we live as resurrection, Easter Day people, the whole year round?

We are surrounded by death, and we are called to live as resurrection, Easter day people in the midst of death, how is that possible? How do we do that?

Easter isn't just "happy". Easter is much more powerful than happiness. Easter isn't safe. Saying 'Alleluia' isn't a passing pleasantry. Easter is the big shout of protest to all that is death. Easter is a defiant act against all that has tried to suppress life.

Easter is black Americans chanting "I can't breathe" whilst those with white privilege often become deaf. Still they chant attempting to dispel death. That is Easter, it's angry.

Easter is a young journalist from Northern Ireland, shot dead by terrorists but whose message of inclusion for the LGBTQI+ community continues to echo after her death. That is Easter, it is passionate.

Easter is the force of climate change protestors, trying to alert us all to the climate catastrophe about to happen, being arrested in their pursuit of the truth. That is Easter, it recognises truth. Truth is life.

Easter is the welcome we offer refugees who leave behind their home, fleeing violence and conflict for the increasing hatred and far right politic of the west. That is Easter, it is the love of welcome.

Easter is throwing off the grave clothes of death, not in a pretty delicate fashion but with power, with force,

with strength. Easter is life beyond the things of death amidst the things of death.

It's Easter, it is triumphant, it is victorious, it is persistent, it is angry, passionate, truth, life and love.

While I was ill, I claimed a phrase as my own and it was 'live the life you are gifted'. By that I mean, whatever life you have - really live it,

So at Easter we talk about life winning over death, light over darkness, hope over despair. I invite you to really think about that life that you have been gifted, with whatever limitations you might have, and really embrace it, really live it. Resurrection is living the life you are gifted in the face of death.

We experience resurrection in a hundred small and powerful ways every day. And it all begins when we commit ourselves to live the life we are gifted as a form of strong resistance to death.

To live the life we are gifted as resurrection people, as an act of radical resistance to death.

Take a time to sit quietly and listen to this **Taize chant: Bless the Lord My Soul**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3IC2XWBxktk>

Bless the Lord, my soul, And bless God's holy name. Bless the Lord, my soul, Who leads me into life.

A time of prayer

Resurrection God I bring before you now my hopes, desires, needs and concerns and I trust that you hear me and help me.

For your church, a people of resurrection; frightened, weary, hopeful – may we all know your love empowering us to live the life we are gifted.

For your world, a people and creation; frightened, weary, determined – may we all know your love empowering us to live the life we are gifted.

For your vulnerable ones, the sick, the grieving, the isolated; frightened, weary, loved – may we all know your love empowering us to live the life we are gifted.

I especially want to pray for

**Resurrection God,
These are my prayers, our hopes, concerns, desires and needs and I trust that you hear me and will help me, help me to be your hands, your feet, your voice in all those situations and with all those people who need to know your gift of life. Amen.**

Our Father

Hymn: Thine be the Glory Singing the Faith 313

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

Refrain:

Thine be the glory, risen, conqu'ring Son;
endless is the vict'ry 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.

[Refrain]

3 No more we doubt thee, glorious Prince of life;
life is naught without thee: aid us in our strife;
make us more than conqu'rors, thro' thy deathless love:
bring us safe thro' Jordan to thy home above. [Refrain]

A prayer of blessing:

**May we know life rising from the death,
May we know hope rising from the pain,
May we know light rising from the darkness,
May we know and live love,
May we know and live the life we are gifted. Amen**

JESUS Risen and Ascended Lord

