

Dawn Service for Easter Day 2020 Year A

Blessed are you, Lord God of all creation,
to you be glory and praise for ever.
Your steadfast love extends to the heavens
and your faithfulness never ceases.
Illuminate our hearts with your wisdom
and strengthen our lives with your word,
for you are the fountain of life;
in your light we see true light.
Blessed be God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

All Blessed be God for ever.

Reading: Exodus 14

10 As Pharaoh drew near, the Israelites looked back, and there were the Egyptians advancing on them. In great fear the Israelites cried out to the Lord.

13 But Moses said to the people, "Do not be afraid, stand firm, and see the deliverance that the Lord will accomplish for you today;

15 Then the Lord said to Moses, "Why do you cry out to me? Tell the Israelites to go forward. **16** But you lift up your staff, and stretch out your hand over the sea and divide it, that the Israelites may go into the sea on dry ground.

21 Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea. The Lord drove the sea back by a strong east wind all night, and turned the sea into dry land; and the waters were divided. **22** The Israelites went into the sea on dry ground, the waters forming a wall for them on their right and on their left. **23** The Egyptians pursued, and went into the sea after them, all of Pharaoh's horses, chariots, and chariot drivers.

26 Then the Lord said to Moses, "Stretch out your hand over the sea, so that the water may come back upon the Egyptians, upon their chariots and chariot drivers." **27** So Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and at dawn the sea returned to its normal depth. As the Egyptians fled before it, the Lord tossed the Egyptians into the sea. **28** The waters returned and covered the chariots and the chariot drivers, the entire army of Pharaoh that had followed them into the sea; not one of them remained. **29** But the Israelites walked on dry ground through the sea, the waters forming a wall for them on their right and on their left.

The Easter Light is lit

Eternal God,
who made this most holy night
to shine with the brightness of your one true light,
set us aflame with the fire of your love,
and bring us to the radiance of your heavenly glory;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All Amen.

The Easter Acclamation

'Alleluia.

Christ is risen.

All : He is risen indeed. Alleluia'

Gospel: Matthew 28.1-10

Two women, disciples of Jesus, visit his tomb once the sabbath is over. They find the tomb empty, and experience both fear and joy. They are sent by an angel to tell the rest of the disciples that Jesus is raised.

Reflection:

It was early ...

very early ...

dawn early.

They must have been so committed these women.

Still caring for the 'what might have been'.

They say there is no dignity in death.

But there was in this one.

Jesus was not forgotten.

He would not be allowed to be forgotten while these faithful followers, who followed to the foot of the cross, were still alive.

The body would be looked after.

It was the least they could do.

So they did it.

But they weren't prepared for what God could do.

No body?!

What?

Dazzling angels?!

???

Talk about a shock!

They had already seen the worst - the light of life drain in columns of deep red to the empty ground.

No more surprises please.

No more shocks.

No more pain or dark questions.

But slowly, the surprise sinks in.

'Why do we look for the living among the dead?'

????

'Why do we ...?' Indeed. Why do we?

He is risen!

And the joy, exuberance, lift of life sings in their hearts.

Things cannot ever be the same.

It will always be different.

From now on, his-story is one story.

The story of life.

The story of death defeated.

The story of Jesus.

And today, you partake in the story of life fulfilled,
death defeated,

hope assured.

The women ran to tell the disciples.

Where will you run?

Who will you tell?

God of grace,
we bring before you those who have no joy and no hope,
those who see no future, no light at the end of the tunnel,
those scarred by pain and sadness, those who grieve.
God of grace and resurrection power,
bring your joy and healing today.

We pray for those yet to hear your good news,
whether that is because they live in far-flung places,
or because they are closed to the message and the possibility
of 'What if?'
May we be Easter people, willing always to share the good news
of hope, restoration and freedom to all those we meet -
neighbours, friends and strangers alike.
God of grace and resurrection power,
bring your joy and healing today.

We pray for those recovering from natural disasters
such as earthquakes and hurricanes, famine, flood and poverty,
for all whose darkness is very real.
God of grace and resurrection power,
bring your joy and healing today.

We pray for all those effected by the worldwide pandemic,
those suffering at home, those in hospital separated from loved ones feeling lost,
frightened and alone,
For those on the front line using their skills and expertise to bring healing and comfort
For leaders and those working in government that they may act with wisdom and courage
For the church across the world that they may minister to your people
God of grace and resurrection power,
bring your joy and healing today.

May all share in the joy of your resurrection.
Amen.

Holy Communion

The Lord is here.

All His Spirit is with us.

Lift up your hearts.

All We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

All It is right to give thanks and praise.

It is right to praise you, Father, Lord of all creation;

in your love you made us for yourself.
When we turned away
you did not reject us,
but came to meet us in your Son.

**All You embraced us as your children
and welcomed us to sit and eat with you.**

In Christ you shared our life
that we might live in him and he in us.

**All He opened his arms of love upon the cross
and made for all the perfect sacrifice for sin.**

On the night he was betrayed,
at supper with his friends
he took bread, and gave you thanks;
he broke it and gave it to them, saying:
Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you;
do this in remembrance of me.

**All Father, we do this in remembrance of him:
his body is the bread of life.**

At the end of supper, taking the cup of wine,
he gave you thanks, and said:
Drink this, all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant,
which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins;
do this in remembrance of me.

**All Father, we do this in remembrance of him:
his blood is shed for all.**

As we proclaim his death and celebrate his rising in glory,
send your Holy Spirit that this bread and this wine
may be to us the body and blood of your dear Son.

**All As we eat and drink these holy gifts
make us one in Christ, our risen Lord.**

With your whole Church throughout the world
we offer you this sacrifice of praise
and lift our voice to join the eternal song of heaven:

**All Holy, holy, holy Lord,
God of power and might,
Heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.**

As our Saviour taught us, so we pray

**All Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,**

**your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.**

**Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Lead us not into temptation
but deliver us from evil.**

For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours
now and for ever.

Amen.

We break this bread
to share in the body of Christ.

All Though we are many, we are one body,
because we all share in one bread.

Alleluia. Christ our passover is sacrificed for us.

All Therefore let us keep the feast. Alleluia

Risen Lord Jesus,
thank you.

Thank you for the delight and elation of this day.

Thank you, for the victory won,
and thank you for the light and hope you bring.

To you,

you alone,

I give my life.

I know it is safe in the hands of a master who knows
no boundaries,

no endings,

no failure,

and no defeat.

I praise your mighty, risen and exalted name.

Now, and with gladness, for evermore.

Amen

John 21.3-11 as a Dismissal Gospel.

Resurrection Hymn:

See what a morning gloriously bright

With the dawning of hope in Jerusalem

See what a morning - Resurrection hymn - you may wish to download this song and listen to it
as the service ends.

HAPPY EASTER!!

JESUS IS RISEN!!

ALLELUIA!!