

twelvebaskets



EASTER SUNDAY C

A complete Sunday service ready to use
for worship and inspire ideas in your church

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Easter Sunday - Year C
17th April 2022



Order of Service

Call to worship

Hymn:

148 STF – Come, let us with our Lord arise OR

295 STF – Alleluia, alleluia, give thanks to the risen Lord

Opening Prayers

The Lord's Prayer

All Age Talk

Hymn:

298 STF – Christ the Lord is risen today; Alleluia! OR

309 STF – See, what a morning, gloriously bright

Readings: Isaiah 65:17-25; 1 Corinthians 15:19-26; John 20:1-18

Hymn:

151 STF – This is the day the Lord has made OR

305 STF – Low in the grave he lay

Reflections on the readings

Hymn:

293 STF – All heaven declares the glory of the risen Lord OR

345 STF – And can it be that I should gain?

Intercessions

Offering / collection

Blessing the offering

Hymn:

297 STF – Christ is alive! Let Christians sing OR

313 STF – Thine be the glory

Blessing

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Call to worship

Resurrection is here, all around us.
The resurrection of Jesus, the story we cling to,
Is made real in the flower buds, the hatching, the birthing,
The simple butterfly.

Resurrection is here, all around us.
This day, as we worship, Lord, show us how to make the resurrection real in our own
lives, and the lives of those around us.

Amen.¹

Hymn:

148 STF – Come, let us with our Lord arise OR

295 STF – Alleluia, alleluia, give thanks to the risen Lord

Opening Prayers

Resurrection God,
Roll away the stone in my heart,
That the light of your life might stream in.

Resurrection God,
Open my eyes that I might see the angles sitting before me,
Telling your story,
Showing me your love,
Inviting me to share the hope in my heart with the world around me.

Resurrection God,
Open my mind that I might recognise the empty tomb as a symbol of new life and
new opportunity,
Of the possibility that every person's potential can be fulfilled,
And that the worst thing is never the last thing.

Resurrection God,
Give me the strength to run the road before me,
Like Cleopas and his companion sprinting back to Jerusalem.
Give me the courage to bring the good news of your resurrection joy to those I meet,
And to live out the principle of resurrection in the places where I am known.

Resurrection God,
Call my name in the garden,
That I might know you are close,
That I might know that you are calling me to follow you afresh, afresh, afresh.

Amen.²

¹ Call to Worship written by Tim Baker

² Opening prayers written by Tim Baker

We say together the Lord's Prayer

All Age Talk

Today is the day of 'yes'. Today is the day that God says 'yes' to new life, today 'yes' triumphs over 'no', the impossible becomes possible, the opportunity for new life becomes a reality, the potential is fulfilled.

Today, we say 'yes'!

It can often feel like the world we live in is full of 'no', can't it? It seems that every place and event has rules and regulations about what you cannot do, about the things that are forbidden – how many of us (either as children or now as adults) have been frustrated by a 'keep off the grass' sign?! And this pandemic has also left us with new sets of rules for us to navigate, about social norms, what is okay and what is not.

Of course, 'keep off' and 'stay safe' signs are there for a good reason, and we are not suggesting that rules should be undermined – indeed rules and guidance have been essential to keeping us safe over the last two years. Risk assessments and health and safety regulations are vital – but what effect do they have on our outlook? It is easy for us to start to think negatively, with all these 'nos' around us. We can begin to think that there is no chance of change or of a new way of looking at the world. We become stuck in a default mode of 'no'.

Young parents discover something of this – as the inquisitiveness of a child grows, it can become increasingly easy to default to saying 'no' to them all the time. The same is true if you are trying to house-train a dog, deal with a particularly rebellious young person in your class or youth group, trying to encourage a colleague to focus at work.

I wonder if you have stories from your life where you have become trapped into a negative way of looking at the world, where your default position is 'no'.

On this Easter Sunday we celebrate the miracle of resurrection – the story from the New Testament where Jesus returns from death and proves that our God is a God of 'yes'! That nothing is impossible...

That is our challenge today, to live as an Easter people, a people who believe that new life is always possible, who are interested in bringing dead and dying things and places back to life. Can we commit again to our families, our neighbourhoods, our communities and our world, to commit to bringing life into the places where there is currently pain, absence or death? Can we rebuild broken relationships, offer hope to despairing people, reach out to those experiencing loneliness, creating new opportunities for people and places who are being left behind by the system?

This morning, as we celebrate the resurrection, we are challenged to live out the truth of resurrection today: this is so much more than a story, this is an invitation into a way of living.³

Hymn:

298 STF – Christ the Lord is risen today; Alleluia! OR

309 STF – See, what a morning, gloriously bright

Readings: Isaiah 65:17-25; 1 Corinthians 15:19-26; John 20:1-18

Hymn:

151 STF – This is the day the Lord has made OR

305 STF – Low in the grave he lay

Reflections on the reading

Today, on this Easter Sunday, our message comes in the form of a spoken word poem:

The Spirit sings over everything,
Humming a tune that brings
All people and all things into closer unity.
A melodic community:
Pushing against the discord,
The bored tweeters, and racist, trolling bleaters
Who try to tell us it's over,
It's meaningless, it's broken.
But the Spirit takes the smallest token of your faith,
The little tuneful ache that makes your body ache,
Aching for a little more music-making,
For someone to dance with,
Take a chance with,
Explore God's wide expanse with.

The Spirit leads you on,
Marching out a two-step beyond all hope of positivity,
On and on into infinity.
Thy Kingdom Come, O God,
And make this place your home, O God.
Show me how to play the tune, O God,
Others are coming dancing soon, O God,
And the Spirit is here,
She's free and easy,
Throwing shapes to the beat of heavenly mix tapes,
As we find the rhythm of resurrection.

³ All Age Talk written by Tim Baker

Even after all the cost,
After all we've lost,
After all the PPE we've tossed away,
The beat of the Spirit goes on,
Her musical invitation stands,
And her hands stretch out in a shout of praise.

So, get with the beat,
Let's get out on the streets, happy
Because we are dancing in the open air.
Because we've got good news to share,
Because something happens when we gather in prayer.
And the Spirit comes,
Amongst us, bringing hope of something higher,
A leaping, twirling, spinning kind-of-desire,
The Spirit sways with the songs of the heavenly choir,
And dances, like fire, higher and higher.
New life is possible, and here.
Right here.

[Pause].

There is a lot of grief in the air, this Easter Sunday. We carry stories of death and pain and bereavement with us, don't we?

The Coronavirus pandemic is far from over, particularly in some parts of the world where there has not been the same access to vaccines, and many of us still carry stories of grief from the people we have lost during the pandemic, or the long-term effects on our mental health from the dramatic change in how our society functioned over the last few years. We have pandemic grief.

Then there has been the impact on church-life. Many of our chapels around the country have closed. Many of our members are not well enough to be able to return to worship, and others are choosing not to. Our churches are more stretched and more tired than ever. We are carrying church grief.

And, of course, there is war too. From those fateful days in early March where Russian troops descended on Ukraine, many of us can still picture the images of grief and pain, and there are many other conflicts and the fall-out from conflicts happening around the world today. We are carrying war grief.

Amongst all this grief, perhaps we can relate to the disciples, gathered in their upper room, with the door locked.

And perhaps, too, we can look to the resurrection story as our inspiration, as it was for them. Jesus' resurrection change that group of frightened men into the founders of the early church, without whom we certainly wouldn't be here today...

So, for the next few minutes, let's just use this space to think a little about how resurrection is at work in our lives. You may want to break into groups of two or three people and ask each other these questions.

If it's helpful, you could end your conversation by praying together, for each other, for the things you've discussed, for the next steps you must take in your walk with God.

Questions for discussion:

- What kind of grief are you carrying? Perhaps one or more of the ones mentioned, but maybe you also have your own... If you feel comfortable, you can share some of the details, but it may be helpful simply to acknowledge that you are carrying grief of one kind or another.
- Where do you look for signs of hope at the moment?
- Are there ways you can practice 'resurrection' – seeing the possibility for new life amongst things that are broken or dying? What do you need to do to make that possible?⁴

Hymn:

293 STF – All heaven declares the glory of the risen Lord OR

345 STF – And can it be that I should gain?

Prayers of intercession

During these prayers, I will invite you to join in with the response 'He is risen indeed, Hallelujah'. So, when I say 'Hallelujah, He is risen', will you respond with, 'He is risen indeed Hallelujah'.

Let us pray.

Hallelujah, He is risen,

All: He is risen indeed Hallelujah

God of peace and protection – in the light of your resurrection we pray for our world. The world is a place of darkness and hurt for so many, we pray specifically this morning for those whose lives have been displaced by war. God bring your peace to the divides created by our greed, pride and love for power. Wrap your protection and comfort around those fleeing from violence, may they find a place of welcome and support in the arms of your people.

Hallelujah, He is risen,

All: He is risen indeed Hallelujah

God of love and life – in the light of your resurrection we pray for our communities. You call us to do life with others, we pray specifically this morning for those in our communities who feel alone. For those we meet in our day to day lives who are felling alone, isolated, lost and abandoned. We pray that you would draw close, that they would know your presence in a real and tangible way. Enable us to become a community that loves and welcomes everyone the way you love and welcome us.

Hallelujah, He is risen,

All: He is risen indeed Hallelujah

⁴ Reflection written by Tim Baker

God of forgiveness and mercy – in the light of your resurrection we pray for ourselves. Through your love you offer us an eternity spent with you as co-heirs to the kingdom of Heaven, this day as we celebrate you triumphing over death we know that there have been times when we have not lived the way you would want us to, where our words, thoughts and actions have not glorified you, and we are sorry. So today, we ask for your forgiveness and we thank you for your mercy.

Hallelujah, He is risen,

All: He is risen indeed Hallelujah

Amen.⁵

We will now take up the offering.

Blessing the offering

Easter God, today we celebrate the miracle of resurrection, and we recognise the need for new life in the world around us.

We are your people Lord, the people of new life – help us to use our gifts to inspire new life, to enable resurrection, by the Spirit of the living God.

Amen.⁶

Hymn:

297 STF – Christ is alive! Let Christians sing OR

313 STF – Thine be the glory

Blessing

Go out into a world in need, and bring new life.

Go out into a world of conflict and division and bring peace.

Go out into a world of hatred and greed, and bring love.

Go out in Jesus' name and in the power of the Spirit, a resurrection people.

Amen.⁷

⁵ Prayers of intercession by Lauren Brabbs

⁶ Additional prayers by Tim Baker

⁷ Additional prayers by Tim Baker