

In the evening of that first day, the disciples were locked in fear.
Quite literally locked in a room.
Jesus came and stood among them and said “peace be with you”
“As the Father has sent me, so I send you.”

Locked in fear.

Locked in.

Locked

In fear.

Fear



We come to worship, grateful of Easter mercies
We come to our dwelling tables, our dwelling chairs, our worship place
in gratefulness
For the mercies of God amongst us:
For the presence of Jesus:
The life of the Spirit:
With us
In our homes.

Opening Hymn of Praise TiS 381 This Joyful Easter Tide

This joyful Eastertide
away with sin and sorrow;
my love, the crucified
has sprung to life this morrow:

***had Christ, that once was slain
ne'er burst his three-day prison
our faith would be in vain
but now has Christ arisen
arisen, arisen, arisen.***

My flesh in hope shall rest
and for a season slumber
till trump from east and west
shall wake the dead in number:

had Christ, that once was slain...

Death's flood has lost its chill
since Jesus crossed the river.

Lover of souls, from ill
my passing soul deliver:

had Christ, that once was slain.

George Ratcliffe Woodward 1848-1934 alt. CCLI 241 739 CCLI 241 739 George Ratcliffe Woodward was an Anglican priest: he played the cello and the euphonium, (sometimes in processions?), and liked bell ringing and bee keeping. And he wrote poetry. This hymn is his most popular, but perhaps not so well known in Methodist traditions.

Acknowledgement to Country

The First peoples of this place know something that we, who came later, may not understand. We therefore open our doors to the Elders past and present of the First peoples, as an act of reconciliation and healing in our Nation.

Opening prayer

Present Jesus
In our homes, appear.
Present Jesus
In our Hearts, appear.
Present Jesus
Though our locked doors, appear.

We open our hearts and minds to trust you with our lives,
with all we hold dear.
We hold out our hands to you and open them,
releasing our fears and hopes into your great mercy and love.
We hold out our hands to you,
to be grasped by you and held within your great mercy and love.
We hold out our hands to you,
to be led by you in your ways of life and peace. Amen.

Prayer of confession

Present Jesus,
God of all Mercy,
Spirit of Life
For where we have locked our door: we are sorry
For where we have locked others out: we are sorry
For where we have locked ourselves in: we seek your presence.

Hear these Words of Resurrection

“Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you.”
“Reach out your hand and put it in my side, do not doubt but believe”
“Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe”

Sin is forgiven: Peace rests in Us, Thanks be to God.

**A week later his disciples were again in the house,
and Thomas was with them.
Although the doors were shut,
Jesus came and stood among them and said,
“peace be with you.”**

Psalm 16

Protect me, O God, for in you I take refuge.

*Reach out and wrap your arms around me God,
because I need to shelter from whatever threatens me.*

I feel secure and safe in your embrace.

I say to the Lord,

“You are my Lord; I have no good apart from you.”

**As for the holy ones in the land, they are the noble,
in whom is all my delight.**

I’m telling you; I belong to you and find your goodness in everything.

I can see the light of your life in those around me and that makes me smile.

**Those who choose another god multiply their sorrows; their drink offerings of blood I will
not pour out or take their names upon my lips.**

The Lord is my chosen portion and my cup; you hold my lot.

Other people turn in different directions for comfort and get into all sorts of trouble.

I won’t go there or do that.

I will hold fast to you with both hands; you provide all that I need.

The boundary lines have fallen for me in pleasant places;

I have a goodly heritage.

What a life I have received and lived already,

fenced and fed in the pleasant paddocks of your protection!

I bless the Lord who gives me counsel;

in the night also my heart instructs me.

I keep the Lord always before me;

because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved.

Therefore my heart is glad, and my soul rejoices;

my body also rests secure.

In the daytime you are my wise guide,

in the night you are steady, as close and constant as my heartbeat.

I follow you in all I do, you are my stable strength, and so...

my whole being dances with unrestrained delight, singing songs of celebration

and I sleep tight, safe in your shelter.

For you do not give me up to Sheol,

or let your faithful one see the Pit.

You show me the path of life.

In your presence there is fullness of joy;

in your right hand are pleasures forevermore.

You don’t let me go, you don’t abandon me to the deep darkness,

instead you light the way I walk, and are my constant companion on the track,

and that’s amazing, marvellous and miraculous, always and ever, Amen.

The Readings

- John 20: 19-31

For these words of Faith, and Jesus he Word
Thanks be to God

Reflection

Hymn 152 Joyful, Joyful

Joyful, joyful, we adore you,
God of glory, God of love;
hearts unfold like flowers before you
opening to the sun above.
Melt the clouds of sin and sadness,
drive the dark of doubt away;
giver of immortal gladness,
fill us with the light of day.

All your works with joy surround you,
earth and heav'n reflect your rays,
stars and angels sing around you,
centre of unbroken praise.
Field and forest, vale and mountain,
flowery meadow, flashing sea,
singing bird and flowing fountain
call to praise you joyfully.

You are giving and forgiving,
ever blessing, ever blest,
well-spring of the joy of living,
ocean-depth of happy rest.
You our Father, Christ our brother,
all are yours who live in love;
teach us how to love each other,
lift us to your joy above.-

Henry Van Dyke 1852-1933 alt.
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Prayers of the People

Think about what locks you might have keys to. What locks are there in your house and car?

On my key ring there are keys to various doors and my mailbox and my car. Think about what gets locked in and what gets locked out. Locks represent fear of some sort. Yet we are told not to be afraid, "Peace be with you". **Let us hold this image as we pray.**

My heart is bursting with thankfulness that Jesus is Risen and is present to me just as truly as he was present with his disciples in the early daysand forward through all generations.

We are called to love and follow you Jesus. What does that mean for right now? As you were sent, so we are sent. Here in this time of 'retreat', speak to my heart of your call on me. What is mine to do? How can I love you in Truth if I allow fear and doubt to stop me closely following your leading and your example?

Holy God, the Gospel today speaks of fear and of being locked in. We are so often locked in fear and inaction. I am mindful today of those who are shut down, closed, shuttered, some through fear and anxiety, others through loneliness and isolation. Some are locked in by living circumstances, others by violence or addiction. Some folks are powerless to change their lives and others make their decisions for them, sometimes for good but other times for ill. In particular today I pray for

God of Compassion hear my prayer:

Peace IS with us dear Holy Spirit. You dwell in me, in us. Sometimes I know the reality of this peace and other times you prickle me into action. The church looks quite different at this moment to how it did as we came into this New Year. Teach us how to be Peace in the midst of the turmoil...how to be Peace to our friends and neighbours while we are distanced. We are your flesh and blood Body in the place you have put us. Teach us Holy Spirit...teach us what is worth our holding tight to and what is worth us letting go. Teach us to more closely love one another, not holding onto the forms of worship but the worship itself.

In the pattern of Death and Resurrection,

The Crucified has sprung to life!

Liberating One, imagine all those locks in my life bursting open and creating freedom and releasing Life.

I pray this liberation for all people. Your Kingdom Come!

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.

Save us from the time of trial

and deliver us from evil.

For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours

now and for ever. Amen.

Offering

Open your hands before God. Let us pray together.

Lord, need surrounds us. There are so many people around us doing it tough. Take what we have to offer, our tithes and offerings, our hearts of love, our strengths and our challenges. Use us to bring your Kingdom, to bring justice and mercy to others.

Use whatever means you have chosen to gift your church and your community.

Notices

Our doors may be shut but our hearts are open for business!

Blessing

Peace be with you as you go into your day and into your week.

Be the KEY that unlocks, opens and releases.

Share your heart's liberation in whatever ways you can.

Remember to laugh and enjoy whatever you can of life's little moments.

Notice the little things and share them with others. Breathe peace and know joy in the celebration of LIFE, of LIGHT and of LOVE.

Today's service has been prepared by Rev Jennie Gordon, (Psalm), Rev. Deacon Wendy Elson, Prayers and Blessings, and Rev. Ian Turnnidge opening liturgy and reflection.