



Easter - Sunday April 17th, 2022 *The Fig Tree Worship Resource*

We gather as God's Easter People

EASTER ACCLAMATION: - with joyful enthusiasm!

Alleluia !! Christ is risen !!

- He is risen indeed, Alleluia !

Alleluia !! Christ is risen !!

- He is risen indeed! Alleluia !!

Prayer

Surprising and life giving God,
our souls echo with the strains of Alleluia.
And, at the same time we are baffled by the
acclamation.

Your new life fits none of our categories;
we are stunned in shock,
or argue and try to explain;
while many, in their need and in their hope
cannot drink in enough of this newness.

Deliver us from our bafflement and our
self-serving explanations
and draw us into an Easter lost in joyful wonder
and praise. Amen!

Acknowledging



*Uniting Aboriginal and Islander
Christian Congress*

As we gather, we acknowledge the traditional
custodians of this land and these waters. We pay
respect to elders past, present and emerging. As
First and Second Peoples walking together, we
commit ourselves to be people of the covenant,
listening, truth telling and seeking justice for all.

Singing - TiS 156 Morning has broken



Prayer

Along with people of faith, from our near
neighbours to the millions across the world today,
we acclaim - God is good! All the time! And all
the time! God is good!

We give thanks to you, for you are good;
your love endures forever.

Let all people shout it from the rooftops,
"God's love endures forever!"

And so, on this day of resurrection,
we raise our voices to proclaim this timeless
truth:

**Christ has died. Christ is risen!
Christ will come again!**

In the brightness and the astounding joy of your
surprising reality we pray,
open us this day to newness of life;
open us to your all-encompassing love,
to your all-embracing acceptance,
to your forgiveness, to your much needed peace;

open us to one another,
give us the courage to pull back the curtains
of our fears and open the blinds of our reluctance
and be open to the bright new possibilities you
have in store for us.
Give us hope for the future and a passion for life
here and now.

We pray in the name of the One whose
nonviolent battle destroyed the power of death,
Jesus our Christ. Amen.



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Affirmation of Easter Faith

We believe in one God who created all the world, who will unite all things in Christ and who wants all people to live together in one family.

We believe in God the Son who became human: died and rose in triumph to reconcile all the world to God, to break down every separating barrier of race, culture or class and to unite all people into one body.

We believe in God the Spirit, the pledge of God's coming reign who gives the Church power to proclaim the good news to all the world, to love and serve all people, to strive for justice and peace: to warn that God judges both the individual and the nations; and to summon all the world to accept God's reign, here and now. Amen!

- from 'One Great Sunday of Sharing',
South Africa 2004

Listening

Read: Acts 10:34-43 &
John 20:1-18

For these words of faith and for Jesus the Word:
Thanks be to God.

Reflecting - Rev. Deacon Wendy Elson

I wonder where you are looking for the risen Jesus. This is a very stark image. These deeply committed but broken women had a sad job of farewell to do and were terrified to find that Jesus' body was no longer there. These words sit strongly with me, "He is not here, He is Risen". That which was rejected as women's nonsense became the best good news imaginable. All that was left in the gloomy tomb was the linen cloth.

Things had really changed overnight. In the words of the Psalm, this rejected cornerstone is now the main foundation, the main pivot point and stable

place from which to build a new beginning. Unbelievable! While it is rich in imagery the question for me is how this impacts here and now. There is a pattern set here which is the pattern of all of life. We hold, we let go and we are renewed. Life, death and resurrection, it is the pattern we celebrate and cherish, in the letting go there is rebirth.

This is the message of Peace, that all people are loved and cherished by God. No partiality. Oh dear, I do think we have got that a bit wrong. Seems to me that this message is one that the world needs to hear, this world with its privilege and its views of inferiority and superiority and struggles for power and preference. This world with its hierarchy, and patriarchy, and its class and race privileges needs to hear that God loves and cherishes us all the same. To hear that what God seeks is people who will build on this cornerstone, disciples who will share this great good news of healing and sharing and peace.

For the disciples in the early days who were discovering that all people were included, this was shocking. It still is! This is joyful and amazing news. It is radical and calls for us to be radical too. What would it look like for us to live this radical inclusion where none are privileged over others? What a message of Peace that would be.

This Gospel story is not based on a point of history, a one time event. This story is to be lived out in the life of the church, a welcoming in from the margins and the edges. It requires us to review our practices and check that, not only are we willing to welcome all people, but that we are finding ways to let people know that. It requires us to take a close look, to challenge ourselves and put aside our fears, to see that we are sharing the Good News of inclusion and healing and liberation in our communities. We are called to move our eyes from the linen cloths, the emptiness of the tomb and out into the light of the new morning.

I wonder again where you are looking for the Risen Jesus. And perhaps whether others can see

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this Risen Jesus in you. Throw wide the gates of righteousness and justice which welcome us home. Make the path open, for this is the day that the Lord hath made. Let's rejoice indeed.

Singing - TiS 382 Now the green blade rises

Responding:

Prayers for World & Community

God of incomprehensible mercy and love; we come from the regular pattern of our day to day lives, the ups and downs, the pains and the joys. We come to you in prayer with our hearts torn still by the brutality of war and the images of children bombed, lost and broken. Still grieving for our northern neighbours picking their lives up out of the mud once again.

We know, on this Easter Day that your love and mercy have survived the cross, the darkness and the pain and have found a way through to newness. Chart this same course for us and our world of pain. Restore lives and hopes, heal and comfort. Keep us out of the detours that hold onto grudges, that lead to revenge. Keep us out of the cul-de-sac of hate that's so hard to find the way out of. Help us to live towards making the new heavens in this old earth. Help us not just to celebrate resurrection today, but live consistently with it, for the good of others and the answering of our prayers.

So we join you in your concern to bannish the darkness and we pray for enlightened support for those struggling with disability and the red-tape of getting good care and for all suffering discrimination.

We join you in your concern to defeat death and ask for new successes dealing with the diseases that so many are suffering from and we pray for strength and inspiration for those who commit their lives to this work.

We join you in your concern to lift up those with no hope, those who've lost their way and those who struggle with addiction or abuse, asking that

the new hope of Easter continue to surprise and delight in unexpected ways.

We join you in your concern for people suffering conflict and the oppression of despots; the long suffering in Yemen and Sudan, the minorities of Myanmar and the brutalised of Ukraine. Let your risen life somehow find openings to light up new ways of peace and abundant life.

And for your church we pray, inspire us with this same Easter life, blow newness through the fabric of our being and make us reflect the brightness of your love, through Jesus, who calls us to pray:

The Lord's Prayer

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 forever. Amen.

Passing the peace

May the Peace of God dwell with you:
and also with you.

Offering

Renewing God, may what we offer be blessed and join with the whole of who we are through our risen Christ - to banish the darkness; to lift those without hope; to care for those who suffer; to bring about life in your name. Amen.

Notices

Uniting world invites us into a celebration of our global neighbours through 7 days of solidarity. You can check it out at:

<https://donate.unitingworld.org.au/7dos>

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Singing - TiS 380 Yours be the glory

Blessing

May the God who brings life from death,
enliven all your days.

Alleluia !! Christ is risen !!

May the God who shines as a light in the
darkness, bring you hope when all hope is gone.

He is risen indeed, Alleluia !

And may the God whom the tomb could not hold,
set you free for abundant, eternal life, today and
always.

Go in Easter faith to love and serve the Lord
In the name of the risen Christ. Amen.

*Where do you see signs of new life, hope,
unexpected grace. Where do you see the impact
or presence of the risen Christ?*

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