

# Easter Sunday

Sunday 28 March 2021

## Call to Worship

*Isaiah 25*

On this mountain the LORD of hosts will make for all peoples

**a feast of rich food, a feast of well-aged wines,**

And he will destroy on this mountain

the shroud that is cast over all peoples,

**he will swallow up death forever.**

Then He will wipe away the tears from all faces,

**and the disgrace of his people he will take away from all the earth,**

This is the LORD for whom we have waited;

**let us be glad and rejoice in his salvation.**

**Reading** 1 Corinthians 5:3-8, 11

<sup>3</sup> For I handed on to you as of first importance what I in turn had received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the scriptures, <sup>4</sup> and that he was buried, and that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the scriptures, <sup>5</sup> and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. <sup>6</sup> Then he appeared to more than five hundred brothers and sisters at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have died. <sup>7</sup> Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles. <sup>8</sup> Last of all, as to one untimely born, he appeared also to me.

<sup>11</sup> Whether then it was I or they, so we proclaim and so you have come to believe.

## Prayer of Adoration and Confession

Hope Through the Cross – Meg Bucher

Father, We praise You for sending Your Son to abide with us and be with us.

Life can feel lonely, but the fact is...we are never alone. That is a truth we can cling to during the ugliest breakdowns. Thank You for giving us the grace to release our failed efforts and bottled up emotions to You, free of judgment and full of healing love.

Forgive us for walking through life without the joy that Jesus died to fill our hearts with. Help us to find You in the hard moments of life, and remember the comfort and truth of Your promises during seasons of suffering.

Jesus, You never leave us, and always guide us. Who we are becoming is no secret to You, You who formed us in our mother's womb. You came down to

earth to save us, love us, and show us how to live. May we chase after You all of our days, and experience the rich and irreplaceable Peace that allows us to overcome...to walk victorious...and to hold onto hope.

In Jesus' Name, Amen

## The Peace

### He Arose

Low in the grave He lay,  
Jesus, my Saviour,  
Waiting the coming day,  
Jesus, my Lord!

Up from the grave He arose,  
With a mighty triumph o'er His foes,  
He arose a Victor from the dark domain,  
And He lives forever, with His saints to reign.  
He arose! He arose!  
Hallelujah! Christ arose!

Vainly they watch His bed,  
Jesus, my Saviour;  
Vainly they seal the dead,  
Jesus, my Lord!

Death cannot keep his Prey,  
Jesus, my Saviour;  
He tore the bars away,  
Jesus, my Lord!

### Reading John 12:12-19

#### *The Resurrection of Jesus*

When the sabbath was over, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices, so that they might go and anoint him. <sup>2</sup> And very early on the first day of the week, when the sun had risen, they went to the tomb. <sup>3</sup> They had been saying to one another, "Who will roll away the stone for us from the entrance to the tomb?" <sup>4</sup> When they looked up, they saw that the stone, which was very large, had already been rolled back. <sup>5</sup> As they entered the tomb, they saw a young man, dressed in a white robe, sitting on the right side; and they were alarmed. <sup>6</sup> But he said to them, "Do not be alarmed; you are looking for Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has been raised; he is

not here. Look, there is the place they laid him.<sup>7</sup> But go, tell his disciples and Peter that he is going ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see him, just as he told you.”<sup>8</sup> So they went out and fled from the tomb, for terror and amazement had seized them; and they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid.

Message          Easter Sunday

### One Step in Front

It was dark as we were getting ready. The three of us had managed to get to the market the night before, just before everyone closed up for the night. We chipped in together and were able to what we needed. It was an expensive trip, but we had to do what we could. We had worked part of the night putting things together and getting everything ready for the morning. I don't think any of us wanted to sleep in case we dreamed of the awfulness of the day. It had been like a living nightmare. What were they thinking? He had done nothing wrong. All he ever did was help people. How could it be wrong to make sick people well and free people from burdens they had carried their whole lives?

He was gone now. And the chasm was opened in our hearts. A great, yawning gap where he had been. It is like we were only just getting to know him and then it was over leaving emptiness and sorrow. My eyes were red from weeping, my throat aching from crying out my despair. Each of us, united in our grief, yet isolated in our particular pain.

And so it was that as the sun came up we made our way to the tomb. We'd not been there before and had to ask directions a couple of times. As we walked we wondered aloud how we were going to get the stone moved. They weren't made to be moved easily and none of us were overly strong. Perhaps there would be some men around who would help us, even some of the disciples.

But as we got closer it seemed as if the stone had already been moved. Maybe Peter and the others had got there before us and were already with him.

Then as we walked in we were astonished to see a young man, in beautiful white robes, sitting where he would have been laid. But no sign of him. I confess that I just gaped at him. I didn't know what to say. As I looked at the scene I felt icy fingers of fear begin to rise in me. There was something terribly wrong. I was sure we were in the right place. But this is not how it should have been. My mouth was opening with the beginning of a scream when the young man spoke. Somehow, even before I comprehended the words, I began to feel less afraid. Yet, he told us the strangest thing. "Do not be alarmed; you are

looking for Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has been raised; he is not here. Look, there is the place they laid him.”

Now most of that we had already worked out for ourselves. I mean, we’re women, but we’re not stupid. We already knew Jesus had been crucified – that’s why we were here in the first place. And we could see plainly that he wasn’t there. The young man was sitting on the resting mat. It was the phrase in the middle that made no sense. Raised? What did that mean? Had they put him in a different part of the cemetery? Did someone steal the body? What was going on? Where was he?

But then the young man gave us the strangest instruction. ‘Go and tell the disciples and Peter that he is going ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see him, just as he told you.’ Now I can’t speak for the others, but when he had told us he would rise again I had just thought that would be at the end of the world. The very idea of rising again just didn’t make sense, although thinking about it later he had brought several people back to life after they had died. And look at Lazarus – he had been well gone – I don’t know how he could have stood the smell, standing there in all those bandages, as large as life and smelling of everything a living person shouldn’t. But no, it couldn’t be right. There was something very wrong about all of this. Almost at the same moment, all three of us turned and ran. Terrified at what we had seen. Amazed at what we had seen. I confess that none of us went to tell the disciples. We were afraid they would think us mad. So we kept it to ourselves until Peter and John came back and told us what they had seen. With that we told our story and all of us hurriedly gathered our things and headed back to Galilee. We still weren’t sure of what was going on, but we were certain we wanted to see this through.

I don’t think I have any way to describe how I felt when I saw him. There he was, as large as life. I could tell it was him because when I looked in his eyes he saw me. It wasn’t the casual glance of a stranger. It was that light that said, ‘I see you, I know you, I accept you, I love you,’ all without a word spoken. And as I looked at him, I knew that he had that same light for every person he saw. He’s gone now. But he’s still here, with me. I don’t know how to explain it, but I know that I am seen, known, accepted and loved. And you are too. He is risen, he has gone ahead, and he is waiting for you. Seen, known, accepted, loved.

## We Pray

### In Christ Alone

In Christ alone my hope is found,  
He is my light, my strength, my song;  
This Cornerstone, this solid Ground,  
Firm through the fiercest drought and storm.  
What heights of love, what depths of peace,  
When fears are stilled, when strivings cease!  
My Comforter, my All in All,  
Here in the love of Christ I stand.

In Christ alone! – who took on flesh,  
Fullness of God in helpless babe.  
This gift of love and righteousness,  
Scorned by the ones He came to save:  
Till on that cross as Jesus died,  
The wrath of God was satisfied –  
For every sin on Him was laid;  
Here in the death of Christ I live.

There in the ground His body lay,  
Light of the world by darkness slain:  
Then bursting forth in glorious day  
Up from the grave He rose again!  
And as He stands in victory  
Sin's curse has lost its grip on me,  
For I am His and He is mine –  
Bought with the precious blood of Christ.

No guilt in life, no fear in death,  
This is the power of Christ in me;  
From life's first cry to final breath,  
Jesus commands my destiny.  
No power of hell, no scheme of man,  
Can ever pluck me from His hand:  
Till He returns or calls me home,  
Here in the power of Christ I'll stand.

## Offering

### Prayer for Ourselves and Others

Christ our Lord, who in his love for us died for us that we might live, we pray for all people in all places and in all kinds of need. Christ is risen!

He is risen indeed, alleluia!

Lord our Father, we pray for all people who make up the church, both leaders and congregations. We pray for unity among all people of faith throughout the world that they may respect one another and celebrate what they have in common. Christ is risen!

He is risen indeed, alleluia!

Risen Lord, we pray for people who are suffering as a result of all kinds of disaster, especially the people of New South Wales. With over 3 feet of rain in places, hundreds of homes have been flooded. May the risen Christ lead them from despair into hope. Christ is risen!

He is risen indeed, alleluia!

Lord of love, we pray for all who suffer in mind or body and for those who care for them. We pray for the sick; for those who mourn; for those without faith, hope or love. We pray for any known to us who are in special need of our prayers at this time, especially those known personally to us. We remember them now in a moment of silence .... Christ is risen!

He is risen indeed, alleluia!

The risen Christ is the light of the world, a light which no darkness can quench. We remember before God those who have died and are reminded that the light of Christ eternally shines and brings hope. We remember You turn our darkness into light: in your light shall we see light.

Merciful Father, accept these prayers for the sake of your Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.

We say together the prayer that Jesus taught us.

### The Lord's Prayer

Our Father in Heaven, holy 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

### Jesus Christ is Risen Today

Jesus Christ is ris'n today, Alleluia!

our triumphant holy day, Alleluia!

who did once upon the cross Alleluia!

suffer to redeem our loss. Alleluia!

Hymns of praise then let us sing Alleluia!

unto Christ our heav'nly King, Alleluia!

who endured the cross and grave, Alleluia!

sinner to redeem and save. Alleluia!

But the pains which he endured, Alleluia!

our salvation have procured; Alleluia!

now above the sky he's King, Alleluia!

where the angels ever sing. Alleluia!

Sing we to our God above Alleluia!

praise eternal as his love; Alleluia!

praise him, all ye heav'nly host, Alleluia!

Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Alleluia!

### Benediction and Grace

May the Grace of the Lord Jesus Christ,

the Love of God,

and the Fellowship of the Holy Spirit

be with us all, now and forevermore. Amen.