

April 4, 2021  
Easter Sunday

**We Gather In God's Presence**

**Lighting the Christ Candle**

**Gathering In Song MV 2** "Come All You People" (2 or 3 times)

Come all you people, come and praise your maker,  
Come all you people, come and praise your maker,  
Come all you people, come and praise your maker,  
Come now and worship the Lord.

**Birthdays, Celebrations, and Life and Work of the Congregation – see last page ...**

**Call to Worship**

This is the day:

**when tears are wiped away; shattered hearts are mended;  
fears are replaced with joy.**

This is the day the Lord:

**rolls away the stone of fear; throw's off death's clothes;  
goes ahead of us into God's future.**

This is the day the Lord has made:

**death has no fear for us; sin has lost its power over us;  
God opens the tombs of our hearts to fill us with life.**

This is the day - Easter Day!

**Christ is Risen! Hallelujah!**

**Hymn VU 157** "Christ the Lord Is Risen Today"

Christ the Lord is risen today, Hallelujah!  
all creation join to say; Hallelujah!  
raise your joys and triumphs high; Hallelujah!  
sing, O heavens, and earth reply: Hallelujah!

Love's redeeming work is done, Hallelujah!  
fought the fight, the battle won. Hallelujah!  
Lo, our sun's eclipse is o'er! Hallelujah!  
Lo, he dwells in death no more! Hallelujah!

Lives again our glorious King: Hallelujah!  
where, O death, is now your sting? Hallelujah!  
Once he died, our souls to save: Hallelujah!  
where your victory, O grave? Hallelujah!

Hail, the Lord of earth and heaven, Hallelujah!  
praise to you by both be given! Hallelujah!  
Every knee to you shall bow, Hallelujah!  
risen Christ, triumphant now. Hallelujah!

### Opening Prayer *(unison)*

Early in the morning, O Lord, you created all that is good and beautiful. Early in the morning, O Lord, a mother laid her newborn in a manger. Early in the morning, O Lord, good news was shared with frightened friends: Jesus is risen and alive in our midst. Early in the morning, O Lord, we confess our human failings and our sins. We haven't done any great evil, but we have failed to do good when we had the chance. We have not intentionally hurt anyone, but neither have we offered healing to the broken. We easily accept the witness of the angel in the tomb, but find it difficult to share this good news with our friends and neighbours. *(in silence we confess our individual sins...)* Forgive us, God. Bring us new life. Where we are tired and stressed, give us the energy to serve your creation; transform our hardened hearts into fountains of grace; forgive us of all the damage we have done, and fill us with the joy of your Spirit. In the name of Jesus Christ, who gives us new life, we pray.

### Words of Assurance

God, our Creator, gives us new life;  
Christ, our Redeemer, prepares a Table for us;  
The Holy Spirit, our Joy, calls us to service.  
This is the good news: the tomb is empty,  
Sin is powerless, death is defeated forever.  
On this very first day, and every day, we walk as God's people,  
forgiven and made whole. Thanks be to God.

### ***We Are Blessed By God***

Duet: Easter Hallelujah <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-j3NZEedHQal>

Responsive Reading: Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24

Let Israel now say:

**'God's love endures for ever.'**

Let the house of Aaron say:

**'God's love endures for ever.'**

Let those who fear God say:

**'God's love endures for ever.'**

God is my strength and my song; God has become my salvation.

**There are shouts of joy and deliverance  
in the tents of the righteous.**

The right hand of God does mighty things;  
the right hand of God raises up.

**The right hand of God does mighty things.**

I shall not die, but live; and I shall proclaim what God has done.

**God indeed punished me,  
but did not give me over to death.**

Open to me the gates of the temple,  
that I may enter and give thanks to God.

**This is the gate of God;  
through it the righteous shall enter.**

I thank you for you have answered me;  
you have become my salvation.

**The stone which the builders rejected  
has become the chief cornerstone.**

This is God's doing, marvellous in our eyes.

**This is the day that God has made,  
let us rejoice and be glad in it!**

**Scripture: Mark 16:1-8**

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.

*For those of you who are interested, the other readings for this week are: **Acts 10:34-43 OR Isaiah 25:6-9; 1 Corinthians 15:1-11; John 20:1-18.** You can look them up on [www.biblegateway.com](http://www.biblegateway.com) and search for the passage..... in any translation you prefer (ie. King James - KJV, NKJV, NRSV, etc.)*

**Meditation:** "The End?"

**Hymn VU 468** "Let Us Talents and Tongues Employ"

Let us talents and tongues employ,  
reaching out with a shout of joy:  
bread is broken, the wine is poured,  
Christ is spoken and seen and heard.

**Refrain:** Jesus lives again, earth can breathe again,  
pass the Word around: loaves abound!  
Jesus lives again, earth can breathe again,  
pass the Word around: loaves abound!

Christ is able to make us one,  
at the table he sets the tone,  
teaching people to live to bless,  
love in word and in deed express. **R**

Jesus calls us in, sends us out,  
bearing fruit in a world of doubt,  
gives us love to tell, bread to share:  
God (Immanuel) everywhere! **R**

## **Great Prayer of Thanksgiving**

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May the God of the resurrection be with you!

**And also with you!**

This is the day we offer ourselves to God.

**We open our hearts to the One who fills them with grace.**

Join in the glad songs of all creation this day.

**Our voices praise the One who opens wide the gates of life.**

When only emptiness and chaos stretched out, you spoke at that time, Joyous God, and goodness and beauty sprang forth: swallows darting in the skies, young rabbits scampering in the grass, hippos splashing in rivers. All this wonder and joy was your gift to your children created in your image, but we ran to play with death, when sin opened the gates of seduction. Time after time after time, you sent the prophets to remind us of your never-ending love, but we chose to remain in sin's tomb, the stone of our rebellion locking us away. So you sent your Hopeful heart, your grace made flesh so we might not be given over to death. With those who see and believe, with those who stand and question, we lift our Easter songs to you:

**Holy, holy, holy are you, God who has made this day!**

**All creation celebrates your constant love. Hosanna in the highest!**

**Blessed is the One who is revealed on this morning.**

**Hosanna in the highest!**

When he could have clung to your glory, God who alone is holy, Jesus chose to become human at that time, so we might be filled with your grace. When we stood against the wall wondering if anyone noticed us, he came to take us by the hand to teach us new dance steps. When our lives crumble around us and we lie scattered on the ground, he gathers us up, reshaping us into your beloved community. When we were unable to break the power of evil over us, he allowed sin to toss him aside like a pebble in a shoe, until he was raised from the tomb because you refuse to give us over to death. As we stand before the empty tomb, celebrating the great news of this day, we would have that faith which is a mystery:

**Christ died, so sin could not hold on to us;**

**Christ was raised, so death could not hold on to him;**

**Christ will come, to hold us in steadfast love and hope.**

At this time, wherever we find ourselves, at home, in apartments, or in care facilities, pour out your Spirit upon your people and on the gifts of the feast of the resurrection. May the bread which is broken open like the tomb, strengthen us so we may go to rebuild shattered hopes, to bind up the hurts of the world. May the cup which is filled with the fruits of your steadfast love, nourish us to leave the shadows of our fears and doubts to stand with the lonely and forgotten, to listen to the cries of the world.

Grant us wisdom to pray for the needs of the world, and courage to act to answer those needs.

Embolden Your church to act for justice and peace. Listen as we pray for the people of the Balkans - Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, and Slovenia. Comfort those who mourn, especially the friends and family of John Freymond, Gord Gurmin, and Sandy Wieczorek... Grant courage, strength and wholeness to all who are ill or dying, especially we think of Rob Ford, Roger Henry, Mary Kaiser, Bobby LaRush, Andy Linell, Lisa Sawyer, Phil Shelley, Marlene Smith and their loved ones and caregivers, and those known only in the silence of our own hearts.....(wait 30 seconds) And in that time to come, when we will be gathered with our sisters and brothers of every place and of every moment, we will sing your praises, God in Community, Holy in One, as we sing now:

(VU 959)

**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 as forever.**

### **Prayer Following Communion**

**Life-giving God, we give you thanks for the gift of our Saviour's presence in the simplicity and splendour of this holy meal. Unite us with all who are fed by the life of Christ that we may faithfully proclaim the Good News of your love and that your church may be a beacon of hope in an uncertain world; through Jesus Christ, our Risen Saviour. Amen.**

### **We Respond To God's Blessing**

**Minute for Mission**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kBOHYqYqVPY>

### **Invitation to Invest in God's Mission**

Easter changes everything;

We have moved from death and shadows into life and resurrection. The first believers were so changed that they gave all they possessed to sustain the needs of their community. In thankfulness we return to God, who gives us new life, a portion of the blessings God has lavished on us, and we pray:

You, O God, are the Easter One. You are the holy source of resurrection. You are the dancing spirit of life.

We offer our gifts in gratitude for hope returned, for the mystery of your grace, and for the promise of resurrection. Amen.

### **Hymn VU 352 "I Danced in the Morning"**

I danced in the morning when the world was begun,  
and I danced in the moon and the stars and the sun,  
and I came from heaven and I danced on the earth;  
at Bethlehem I had my birth.

**Refrain:** Dance, then, wherever you may be;  
I am the Lord of the dance, said he,  
and I'll lead you all, wherever you may be,  
and I'll lead you all in the dance, said he.

I danced for the scribe and the pharisee,  
but they would not dance and they would not follow me;  
I danced for the fishermen, for James and John;  
they came with me and the dance went on. **R**

I danced on the Sabbath and I cured the lame;  
the holy people said it was a shame;  
they whipped and they stripped and they hung me high,  
and left me there on a cross to die. **R**

I danced on a Friday when the sky turned black;  
it's hard to dance with the devil on your back;  
they buried my body and they thought I'd gone,  
but I am the dance and I still go on. **R**

They cut me down and I leap up high;  
I am the life that will never, never die;  
I'll live in you if you'll live in me;  
I am the Lord of the dance, said he. **R**

### **Commissioning and Benediction**

From this Easter festival we go forth to live resurrection:

**In the name of God who makes us,**

In the name of Jesus who makes us whole,

**In the name of the Holy Spirit who makes us one.**

Christ is risen!

**Christ is risen indeed!**

**Sung Response: VU 424** "May the God of Hope Go with Us" vs. 1

May the God of hope go with us every day,  
filling all our lives with love and joy and peace.

May the God of justice speed us on our way,  
bringing light and hope to every land and race.

Praying, let us work for peace,  
singing, share our joy with all,  
working for a world that's new,  
faithful when we hear Christ's call.

**Announcements.....**

**WARNING: Next Sunday, April 11, is the second Sunday in the Season of Easter.**

**It is also the day we celebrate Holy Humour Sunday. Beware!**

**It is Rev. Mark's favourite Sunday of the year!**

**No slight is intended, only laughter.**

**Only joyful Christians need attend. Dour ones can worship at either**

**The Church of the Holy Comforter, or St. Mattress by the Springs.**

**Scripture Lessons for next week:**

Acts 4:32-35; Psalm 133; 1 John 1:1 – 2:2; John 20:19-31