



Leura Uniting Church

WORSHIP SERVICE - SUNDAY
12th April, 2020



aster



unday

Welcome: Whether this is your 'home-place' for worship, or if you are new or a visitor here, it is good to be together to worship God!

Coming Together To Worship

Welcome: To each Other. (Announcements)
To Worship.

Call to Worship

John 20:15–18 (NRSV)

¹⁵ Jesus said to her, “Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you looking for?” Supposing him to be the gardener, she said to him, “Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away.” ¹⁶ Jesus said to her, “Mary!” She turned and said to him in Hebrew, “Rabbouni!” (which means Teacher). ¹⁷ Jesus said to her, “Do not hold on to me, because I have not yet ascended to the Father. But go to my brothers and say to them, ‘I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.’ ” ¹⁸ Mary Magdalene went and announced to the disciples, “I have seen the Lord”; and she told them that he had said these things to her.

L: Christ is risen!

P: He is risen indeed!

L: The King of glory is among us:
He entered the gates of our humanity.

P: Who is the King of glory?

L: The Lord of the stable and the cross,
he is the King of glory!

P: Who is this King of glory?

L: Jesus, the Word made flesh,
he is the King of glory!
He came to dwell among us,

**P: And we saw his glory,
such glory as befits the Father's true Son,
full of grace and truth.**

L: Christ is risen!

P: He is risen indeed!

L: Let the people shout: Hallelujah!

P: Hallelujah! AMEN.

PRAYER OF INVOCATION:

Risen one, Spirit of new life, your presence is all around us,
in the air in which we move, in our every breath.

Nothing separates us from you.

Nothing.

Nothing we do or do not do, nothing we say or do not say,
nothing we believe or disbelieve.

Nothing takes us from your presence.

Nothing in the wide world, not even death,
and in this truth we worship. Amen.

Hymn 362 Jesus Christ is risen today

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Jesus Christ Is Risen Today

Verse 1

Jesus Christ is ris'n today

Alleluia

Our triumphant holy day

Alleluia

Who did once upon the cross

Suffer to redeem our loss

Alleluia

Verse 2

Sing we to our God above

Alleluia Alleluia

Praise eternal as His love

Alleluia Alleluia

Praise Him all ye heav'nly host

Father Son and Holy Ghost

Verse 3

But the pains that He endured
Our salvation have procured
Now above the sky He's King
Where the angels ever sing

CCLI Song # 5883640

Charles Wesley

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Prayer of Praise.

God, if we could only tune our ears we would hear the rocks of the earth
vibrate with praise to you:

the plants on the hillside and under the oceans and on the vast plains all move
and grow in praise to you.

Every creature, from the largest to the smallest lives out its life as praise to you.

We too, here, now, we too join in simple thanks.

You have made us to be like you, to reflect your love and joy,

your delight in your creation and in all its untold wonders.

With all your creation we sing songs of thanks and praise

and on this Easter Day, when your love fills the universe so fully.

On the first day of creation,

Imaginative God,

you planted those seeds of hope

death would never overcome;

you sang the new hymn of joy

composed by your Word.

On that first morning of Easter,

Christ our Reconciliation,
you ran out of death's shadows
to gather us up in your love;
you left behind grave's garments
to clothe us in your grace.

On this morning of celebration,
Spirit of wonder and laughter,
our worries are transformed
into wildflowers in our hearts;
our brokenness is made whole
at the Table of peace.

We sing our glad songs of praise to you, God in Community, Holy in One,
on this and in all the mornings to come.

Prayer of Confession

Eternal God,
today we confess that we can hardly believe our ears.
We hear in the words of scripture and in song that death is defeated
and a new world has begun and we have done nothing.
We have not trusted that our whole world has changed.
We have not trusted that our lives too have been resurrected.
We confess that we have not risen into each new day sure that we are
renewed,
sure too that each day is a new world opened to us through love.
We have not lived the great joy of our forgiven and
renewed hearts and minds.
We have not danced for joy in the morning
and been left speechless with gratitude in the evening.
We have missed completely the earth-shaking,
earth-sustaining, earth-renewing burst of love that comes to us
in the resurrection of Christ, and we are sorry.
Lead us to greater depths of life

and help us to live in the joy of resurrected life. Amen.

Assurance Of Forgiveness:

L: Hear this: Christ is risen!

P: Christ is risen!

Nothing separates us from God.

L: The universe is restored, forgiveness is given for all.

Love conquers death. Day banishes night. Laughter defies despair.

P: And all the earth sings for joy.

Christ is risen and we are free!

Thanks be to God.

We Listen For The "Word" Of God

Reading from John's account of the resurrection John: 20:1-18

20 Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the tomb. ² So she ran and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved, and said to them, "They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him." ³ Then Peter and the other disciple set out and went toward the tomb. ⁴ The two were running together, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. ⁵ He bent down to look in and saw the linen wrappings lying there, but he did not go in. ⁶ Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb. He saw the linen wrappings lying there, ⁷ and the cloth that had been on Jesus' head, not lying with the linen wrappings but rolled up in a place by itself. ⁸ Then the other disciple, who reached the tomb first, also went in, and he saw and believed; ⁹

for as yet they did not understand the scripture, that he must rise from the dead. ¹⁰ Then the disciples returned to their homes.

¹¹ But Mary stood weeping outside the tomb. As she wept, she bent over to look into the tomb; ¹² and she saw two angels in white, sitting where the body of Jesus had been lying, one at the head and the other at the feet. ¹³ They said to her, “Woman, why are you weeping?” She said to them, “They have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid him.” ¹⁴ When she had said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not know that it was Jesus. ¹⁵ Jesus said to her, “Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you looking for?” Supposing him to be the gardener, she said to him, “Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away.” ¹⁶ Jesus said to her, “Mary!” She turned and said to him in Hebrew, “Rabbouni!” (which means Teacher). ¹⁷ Jesus said to her, “Do not hold on to me, because I have not yet ascended to the Father. But go to my brothers and say to them, ‘I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.’ ” ¹⁸ Mary Magdalene went and announced to the disciples, “I have seen the Lord”; and she told them that he had said these things to her.

Hymn 242 I danced in the morning

I Danced In The Morning (Lord Of The Dance)

Verse 1

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 down from heaven
And I danced on the earth
At Bethlehem I had My birth

Chorus

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

Verse 2

I danced for the scribe
And the Pharisee
But they would not dance
And they wouldn't follow Me
I danced for the fishermen
For James and John
They came with Me
And the dance went on

Verse 3

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 on high
And they left Me there
On a Cross to die

Verse 4

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

Verse 5

They cut Me down
And I leapt up high
I am the life
That'll never never die
I'll live in you
If you'll live in Me
I am the Lord
Of the Dance said He

CCLI Song # 78529

Sydney Bertram Carter

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MEDITATION: "IN THE GARDEN . . . WITH MARY" – Morton Kelsey

I wish you could have heard the way she cried out: "Rabbouni!" Each syllable had a new quality. It was like a bird song. She had always called Him Rabbouni or Teacher. She wiped the rest of the tears from her face with one quick gesture and stretched out her arms to take hold of Him. The body that she had come to anoint in death was standing there before her, radiant in health, almost glowing in the rays of the rising sun.

Then Jesus spoke softly to her. "Not yet, Mary. Do not hold on to me, because I have not yet gone back up to my Father. But go to my brothers and sisters. Tell them for me what you have experience, and tell them that I

go back to Him who is my Father and your Father, my God and your God." Then he vanished from our sight.

And Mary threw back her head and sang, and almost danced down the hill. I went with her. She kept singing repeatedly . . . Rabbouni, Rabbouni . . . We knew that He was the Teacher, the Master, the Lord, the Conqueror. She had been right to let that voice break in to the sealed chamber of her heart. There was no meaning and hope and love . . . People did not just use one another. The universe did not just use people and cast them off. What a beautiful morning it was! The flowers were blooming in the garden . . . primrose and wild lilies, roses, red and white. How green the grass, how much a part of this new life we felt.

We found the disciples huddled with some of the others. Cleopas and a friend of his were there. We told them what we had seen, but they only smiled indulgent smiles. They were thinking to themselves that pain works in strange ways on some people's minds. There were courteous. They did not say that we had dreamed, but we could tell that they thought we had.

But it didn't bother us because we knew, we really knew. We knew He was alive and that there was nothing left for us to fear, not even death or grief or pain or anything!

I'm so grateful that I was there with Mary to share her grief and her joy, her agony and her transformation . . . And I tell this story so that others might know what it was like. I stood on the still point, the point upon which the whole world rests. I would like to share this place with you . . . I think that's why Jesus let me be with Mary as Eternal Love broke through and showed itself in time!

For me Easter is.....

5 people have been asked to comment on what Easter means for them or A significant Easter for me is.....

They have filmed their responses and they are contained on the Leura Uniting Church Web site <http://leura.unitingchurch.org.au/worship-resources/april-2020/> Easter Sunday Service. – As is the whole of this service.

Rev Paul Cameron

The tomb is empty for, “He is risen, he is not here!”

‘Why are you weeping?’ We hang now between the cold reality of death and the unknown of one who has risen and goes before us into the world. So we hang there with the women teetering on the abyss of our sadness wanting to believe that somehow in the grace of God’s goodness it is true, but afraid that it really is true - too good to be true.

With them we stand astonished peering into the empty tomb - afraid. Not astonished at a miracle. We know miracles. Miracles are a dime a dozen.

But, what we don’t expect is the grace of it all. That God, who was with us in this life and was rejected by this world would continue to love the world, would continue to go before us coaxing us out of our sadness and into joy, inviting us into a new beginning, a new way of being, a new life.

The empty tomb means only one thing: God isn't finished yet. They gave up on Jesus just as we give up on God when our cells divide uncontrollably in cancer’s grip, an infant’s breath is pulled from its tiny lungs, or the brutal tyranny of oppression and fascism claw at the freedom of life we yearn to know. We may give up, but God hasn't given up on us.

So the Christ invites us in a most lovely and beautiful way to meet him. To meet him in the daily activities of my life. Not just at Christmas Eve or Easter Sunday, not just in church or in a moment of quiet prayer, not just before the doctor comes in to give us the word or the funeral director asks us which minister we would prefer, but to leave that empty tomb and to meet the risen Christ in the hum of each day, throbbing with vitality and promise, with signs of growth and life.

That is the both the terror and the joy of this Easter, of every Easter and of every day. It is this strangely empty tomb. Nothing in all creation can stop God now from redeeming the world. Nothing in all creation can separate us from the love of God. The Christ who was and is and who continues to be rejected, betrayed, scorned, humiliated, and executed spreads his arms wide on the cross to embrace the cosmos, to surround the world, and to envelop you with forgiveness, acceptance and love and invites you to meet God in each new day, each occasion of experience.

“He is risen. He is not here,” challenges us to move, to speak, to say what we can know with our whole being, to know more than we can even say, to be a bridge for others who have not yet understood this kind of Messiah - one who does not protect us from the world, but empowers us to rage against the night. “Come, my friends,” writes Tennyson.

'Tis not too late to seek a newer world.
Push off, and sitting well in order smite
the sounding furrows; for my purpose holds
To sail beyond the sunset, and the baths
Of all the western stars, until I die...
Though much is taken, much abides; and though
We are not now that strength which in old days
Moved earth and heaven, that which we are, we are ---
One equal temper of heroic hearts,
Made weak by time and fate, but strong in will
To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield.

So we march with the women on this dark sad trail of tears to the tomb only to discover its emptiness holds our promise, our hope for a newer life, a newer world. Remember though that we cannot leave the tomb before we have experienced it. We cannot know that emptiness and its promise before we too die our own death within its cold walls. Then we, like them, are called out from the tomb to meet the risen Christ in this life where sadness turns to joy.

So, I invite you to go easy on this Easter. Go gently. Go in peace.

You may have to push forward, but you don't have to push so hard.

Go easy. Go gently. Go in peace.

Do not be in so much of a hurry. At no day, no hour, no time are you required to do much you can do in peace. Move, but move confidently, decisively, but deliberately in the plan of God.

Go easy. Go gently. Go in peace.

Do not be so harried. The rat race will kill you. Pursuing the urgent may cause you to overrun the essential...and the important. Do as much as you can, as faithfully as you can...but only what you can do in peace.

Go easy. Go gently. Go in peace.

The frantic, urgent, and stressed actions of uncontrolled urgency are not the foundation for life. Neither are they the pillars of enduring leadership. Nor does such anxiousness reflect the gracious guiding of God. Instead, the frantic and the urgent are simply the actions of the anxious, the fretting, and the desperate falling further away from the calming confidence of God's calling.

Go easy. Go gently. Go in peace.

Do not be in too much of a hurry to begin. Begin, but do not force the beginning if it is not time. The beginning God desires will arrive soon enough. Wait, watch, and be willing. The beginning will come. And it will come with joy, with opportunity, and with a peaceful flow of God's energy.

Go easy. Go gently. Go in peace.

When God's time has come, enjoy and relish the time, the experience, the reward. Bask in the thrill of effective implementation. Be absorbed in the joy of the working of God, a working of peace in God's time to change lives and bring lasting Hope. Be confirmed in the remembrance of God's

calling. You are God's instrument, God's renewed creation and chosen servant. Put away fear and anxiety. Allow your soul to be immersed in the joy of God's gracious working unfolding before you.

Go easy. Go gently. Go in peace.

Do not be in too much of a hurry to finish. Don't rush it! You may be almost done, but enjoy the final moments to the very end. Give yourself fully to those moments so that you may ponder the preciousness of all that God has intended. In those final moments treasure the greatest memories, recall the greatest joys, and in those precious moments lose yourself in the greatest peace. Let the pace flow naturally toward its unforgettable God-ordained end.

Go easy. Go gently. Go in peace.

Move forward. Then start. Keep moving forward. Then begin again. Do it gently, peacefully, as before. Do not rush it. Let the rhythm of the movement proceed, but let it reflect the soothing heartbeat of God's timing. Let the new harmonies grow into a greater harmony, a greater resounding than before. Or, if God so ordains, let the harmonies change to a new tempo, a new movement, or a new song of God's working...however painful it may be. Whatever God's working, let God work in you and you in God.

Go easy. Go gently. Go in peace.

Beginning or ending, planning or reflecting, hurting or healing, cherish each moment. Saviour God's guidance. Seek what's really important. Don't rush, don't hurry, don't scramble. Surrender your soul to the simple peace of God's leading and urging, to God's beginning and ending.

Go easy. Go gently. Go in peace.

Our Response To The "Word" ..

Hymn 278 O what a gift

(We do not have permission to print this song- Author Pat Uhl (Howard) Words by permission of American Catholic Press.) it appears in Together in Song so I invite you to look there for the full version. I print the Chorus only)

***O what a gift, what a wonderful gift!
Who can tell the wonders of the Lord?
Let us open our eyes, our ears, and our hearts;
It is Christ the Lord, it is he!***

Offering - money, selves, and our prayers.

Offertory Prayer

Prayers of the People : Carolyn Craig-Emilsen

When I say, or when you read, "Lord, in your compassion" I will wait a couple of seconds for you to respond "Hear my prayer".

Lord, on this Easter Sunday, we seek your embrace

For the pain and fear of the world from COVID-19 and other suffering

May we also remember this Easter Day you are risen

and have come to give us hope if we have the courage to trust in your love.

Lord in your compassion/Hear our prayer

Lord, we pray for all leaders in the world and here in Australia for strength, humanity and wisdom,

For vaccine scientists, doctors, nurses, pharmacists, teachers, carers, supermarket workers,

All who are working to offer support and risking their health to do so.

We pray for struggling families, those alone, sick or frail and safety for our Indigenous peoples

We think of our own communities in the Blue Mountains for the deep challenges so many have

In the wake of bushfires and now facing a new hurdle

and we give thanks for those leaders and workers dedicated to serving them.

Lord in your compassion/Hear our prayer

Lord, we pray for our Uniting Church, our President Deirdre Palmer, Synod Moderators

Presbytery officers and all in ministry in their challenges to comfort their people.

We ask for your courage for all our leaders of our Uniting Churches, other churches and other faiths

in sustaining spiritual wellbeing for our and their communities throughout this land.

Lord in your compassion/Hear our prayer

God in your infinite grace help us to witness and give thanks for your signs of hope

For the life-giving rain in the last few days to drought-stricken farmers

For the return of healed koalas, wombats and possums to the wild

For the green shoots and leaves sprouting from blackened gumtrees

For the numerous acts of human kindness by friends and strangers across our land

And throughout the world.

Lord in your compassion/Hear our prayer

And as we remember and care for our loved ones and those in our families, friends,

church and wider communities may we come into your presence, today risen Lord

and remember we are not alone.

This final prayer is by our late dearly beloved Jim Tulip.

I will leave a few seconds at the end of Jim's prayer and then offer you some brief final words.

What is Easter?

It is our season of reflectiveness.

It is our season of remembering.

It is our season of peace and tranquillity.

What is Easter?

*It is in Australia the season of Autumn.
It is in Europe the season of Spring.
It is for us both Autumn and Spring,
both death and resurrection.*

What is Easter?

*It is in Christian faith both loss and gain
both memory and desire
both penitence and promise
both pain and hope*

*O Lord Jesus Christ, be with us now as we experience in faith this
glorious morning of your rising from the dead...*

*I invite you to carry the light of Christ into the world and in the peace and
hope in your heart.*

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 for ever. Amen.

Hymn Tis 380 Yours be the glory

Chorus

Thine be the glory
Risen conquering Son
Endless is the victory
Thou o'er death hast won

Verse 1

Thine be the glory
Risen conquering Son
Endless is the victory
Thou o'er death hast won
Angels in bright raiment
Rolled the stone away
Kept the folded grave clothes
Where Thy body lay

Verse 2

Lo Jesus meets us
Risen from the tomb
Lovingly He greets us
Scatters fear and gloom
Let the church with gladness
Hymns of triumph sing
For her Lord now liveth
Death hath lost its sting

Verse 3

No more we doubt Thee
Glorious Prince of life
Life is nought without Thee
Aid us in our strife
Make us more than conquerors

Through Thy deathless love
Lead us in Thy triumph
To Thy home above

CCLI Song # 21837

Edmond Louis Budry | George Frideric Handel | Richard Birch Hoyle

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Benediction:

Sending

L: This is the day God gives us new life.

P: We will share it with everyone we meet.

L: This is the day of Jesus' resurrection.

P: We will tell this story over and over.

L: This is the day we are sent by the Holy Spirit.

P: We will go to share peace and grace with the world.

Sung: A----men A – men Amen, Amen



hrist is Risen



e is Risen indeed

