



AT HOME SERVICE

Sunday 20th April 2025 - Easter Sunday

*compiled by Michael Winter - Local Preacher &
Anglican Lay Minister*

So the women hurried away from the tomb, afraid yet filled with joy, and ran to tell his disciples.
(Matthew 28:8)

With Fear and Great Joy

In the shadow of a lie, we
Know the truth: The tomb was empty,
Yet we join the women at dawn
Knowing joy, but holding fear on
Hearts that know of resurrection,
But embrace death's dark direction.
Run! Let's live in power, going
Forward in that sacred knowing. (Poem by Michele Morin)

Hymn STF 298

1] Christ the Lord is risen today, Alleluia!
All creation joins to say, Alleluia!
Raise your joys and triumphs high, Alleluia!
Sing, you heavens, let earth reply, Alleluia

2] Love's redeeming work is done, Alleluia!
Fought the fight, the battle won, Alleluia!
Vain the stone, the watch, the seal; Alleluia!
Christ has burst the gates of hell: Alleluia!

3] Lives again our glorious King, Alleluia!
Where, O death, is now your sting? Alleluia!
Once he died our souls to save, Alleluia!
Where's your victory, boasting grave? Alleluia!

4] Soar we now where Christ has led, Alleluia!
Following our exalted Head, Alleluia!
Made like him, like him we rise, Alleluia!
Ours the cross, the grave, the skies, Alleluia!

5] King of Glory! Soul of bliss! Alleluia!
Everlasting life is this, Alleluia!
You to know, your power to prove, Alleluia!
Thus to sing, and this to love: Alleluia!

Charles Wesley (1707-1788)

Prayers

Loving God, we confess that at times we do not share in the joy of the resurrection but are caught in the worries of the world. We confess that we do not always live in the spirit of new life but remain discontented, grumbling and anxious. Forgive us for not sharing in the Good News. Forgive us when we find it more comfortable to worry and complain than to risk the joy and encouragement of new life in Christ. Call us back to Your ways, O God, to seek hope and reconciliation, restoration and peace.

In the name of the Risen Christ, we pray. Amen

God of Life, who for our redemption gave your only-begotten Son to the death of the cross, and by his glorious resurrection have delivered us from the power of our enemy: grant us so to die daily to sin, that we may evermore live with him in the joy of his risen life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

We pray for all who believe in the Resurrection: that through our sharing in the life of the Risen Lord, this Easter time may mark for us a new beginning in our life of faith.

Lord in your mercy: Hear our prayer.

We pray for peace in our world: that the peace promised by the Lord will become a reality for all people. Lord in your mercy: Hear our prayer.

We pray for all who have recently come to faith in the Risen Lord that they may continue to grow in faith & love of God.

Lord in your mercy: Hear our prayer.

We pray that people of every nation may come to share the joy of Easter, and that the Good news of the death and Resurrection of Christ may gladden the hearts of all.

Lord in your mercy: Hear our prayer.

We pray for all whose lifelong vigil for the Lord has ended and who now sleep in death, that they may live forever in Christ who has destroyed the power of death and opened the gates of heaven to all.

Lord in your mercy: Hear our prayer.

God our Father, through the Risen Christ you have made us your daughters and sons. We pray for the grace to accept and live to the full the new life you have given us. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen

The Lord's Prayer

Reading: John 20 vv1-18

Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene went to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the entrance. So she came running to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one Jesus loved, and said, "They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we don't know where they have put him!" So Peter and the other disciple started for the tomb. Both were running, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. He bent over and looked in at the strips of linen lying there but did not go in. Then Simon Peter came along behind him and went straight into the tomb. He saw the strips of linen lying there, as well as the cloth that had been wrapped around Jesus' head. The cloth was still lying in its place, separate from the linen. Finally the other disciple, who had reached the tomb first, also went inside. He saw and believed. (They still did not understand from Scripture that Jesus had to rise from the dead.) Then the disciples went back to where they were staying. Now Mary stood outside the tomb crying. As she wept, she bent over to look into the tomb and saw two angels in white, seated where Jesus' body had been, one at the head and the other at the foot. They asked her, "Woman, why are you crying?" "They have taken my Lord away," she said, "and I don't know where they have put him." At this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not realize that it was Jesus. He asked her, "Woman, why are you crying? Who is it you are looking for?" Thinking he was the gardener, she said, "Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have put him, and I will get him." Jesus said to her, "Mary." She turned toward him and cried out in Aramaic, "Rabboni!" (which means "Teacher"). Jesus said, "Do not hold on to me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father. Go instead to my brothers and tell them, 'I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.'" Mary Magdalene went to the disciples with the news: "I have seen the Lord!" And she told them that he had said these things to her.

Mark 16 vv1-8

When the Sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices, so that they might go and anoint him. And very early on the first day of the week, when the sun had risen, they went to the tomb. And they were saying to one another, "Who will roll away the stone for us from the entrance of

the tomb?" And looking up, they saw that the stone had been rolled back - it was very large. And entering the tomb, they saw a young man sitting on the right side, dressed in a white robe, and they were alarmed. And he said to them, "Do not be alarmed. You seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has risen; he is not here. See the place where they laid him. But go, tell his disciples and Peter that he is going before you to Galilee. There you will see him, just as he told you." And they went out and fled from the tomb, for trembling and astonishment had seized them, and they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid.

Hymn STF 312

1] The head that once was crowned with thorns
is crowned with glory now;
a royal diadem adorns
the mighty Victor's brow.

2] The highest place that Heaven affords
is his, is his by right,
the King of kings, and Lord of lords,
and Heaven's eternal Light.

3] The joy of all who dwell above,
the joy of all below;
to whom he manifests his love
and grants his name to know.

4] To them the cross, with all its shame,
with all its grace is given;
their name, an everlasting name,
their joy, the joy of Heaven.

5] They suffer with their Lord below,
they reign with him above;
their profit and their joy to know
the mystery of his love.

6] The cross he bore is life and health,
though shame and death to him;
his people's hope, his people's wealth,
their everlasting theme.

Thomas Kelly (1769-1855)

Reflection

Karl Rahner is a 20th century German theologian who said: "we must avoid the misunderstanding that resurrection is a return to life and existence in time and space as we know it." In other words, Resurrection changes things. For Mary at the tomb, this was a lot to wrap her mind around. When the women left their homes early that morning, it was almost as if they already expected defeat. The gospel of Mark tells us that as they made their way to the tomb, they asked each other, "who will roll away the stone for us?" It's almost as if they were just going through the motions - still numb with grief, going to the tomb to anoint the body because they knew they should, but half expecting to have to turn around and go home once they got there because they would be unable to gain access to the body. But then the women encountered something at the tomb they did not expect. And as it turns out, they weren't actually prepared for the stone to be rolled away. Perhaps they didn't really want it to be. And who can blame them for that, really? They weren't prepared for their lives to be turned upside down-- yet again. They weren't prepared for the kind of change that resurrection inevitably brings with it. And so they fled in fear, unsure of what to do or how to react.

Isn't that sometimes how it goes with us as well? Do we sometimes encounter the possibility for something new in our lives, but we aren't ready for it, and so we run from it in fear? We look the other way, or head the opposite direction. We aren't ready to let go of what was in order to accept what may be - to roll back the stone and discover what's inside-- because we cling to what is familiar, even if what is familiar doesn't always serve us very well. Resurrection changes things. And so the question all of us have to ask ourselves this Easter is where are the stones that need to be rolled away in our own lives? What do we need to let go of-- what are we afraid to let go of-- in order for resurrection to occur? In order for God's light and new life to break through-- in order to follow where the risen Christ is leading us here and now?

Here is the thing. If you are sitting there in your pew this morning, and you aren't really sure what you think of this whole resurrection business-- if you are fearful of what all this resurrection talk might really mean-- or if you are sceptical about whether or not there really is new life to be found for you or for this world-- well that's

okay. It's okay to be afraid. It's okay to be uncertain. As long as at some point we are willing to step out of our fear-- to encounter what is in the tomb in order to see what lies beyond it. And when we are finally ready to roll the stone away, to believe in the resurrection power of our God and follow where God wishes to lead us, we may just find-- like Mary at the tomb-- that God has already rolled back the stone for us. The women arrive at the tomb that morning to find that even in the midst of, and even in spite of their doubt and fear, God had already been at work. In spite of our frailty, our weakness, our fear, our sinfulness, and in spite of our inability to roll away the stone on our own, resurrection happens. We don't have to make it happen, will it to happen, or force it to happen. God does that. And then, when we are ready, we can look beyond the stone that God has already rolled back for us, and see what new life waits for us there beyond it.

The Collect

Lord of all life and power,
who through the mighty resurrection of your Son
overcame the old order of sin and death
to make all things new in him:
grant that we, being dead to sin
and alive to you in Jesus Christ,
may reign with him in glory;
to whom with you and the Holy Spirit
be praise and honour, glory and might,
now and in all eternity. Amen

Hymn STF 594

1] Lord Jesus Christ
You have come to us
You are one with us
Mary's Son
Cleansing our souls from all their sin
Pouring Your love and goodness in
Jesus, our love for you we sing
Living Lord.

2] Lord Jesus Christ
Now and every day
Teach us how to pray
Son of God
You have commanded us to do
This in remembrance Lord of you
Into our lives your power breaks through
Living Lord.

3] Lord Jesus Christ
You have come to us
Born as one with us
Mary's Son
Led out to die on Calvary
Risen from death to set us free
Living Lord Jesus, help us see
You are Lord.

4] Lord Jesus Christ
I would come to you
live my life for you
Son of God
All your commands I know are true
Your many gifts will make me new
Into my life your power breaks through
Living Lord.

Patrick Appleford (1925-2018)

And now, may the God of peace,
who brought back again from the dead our Lord Jesus,
equip you with all you need for doing his will.
May he produce in you,
through the power of Jesus Christ,
all this is pleasing to him.
To him be glory forever and ever. Amen

Songs published under CCLI No 558764