

Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> April 2021

**Rev'd Tony Morling – "RESURRECTION - EASTER DAY"**

*This short act of worship has been prepared for you to use whilst we are unable to use Methodist Church premises. We invite you to spend a few moments with God, knowing that other people are sharing this act of worship with you.*

**Opening Prayer**

In silence, read mark 16:1-8  
then pray quietly,  
with growing confidence:

After the agony of the cross, Lord  
Jesus you are here. After the  
desolation of the grave, Lord Jesus  
you are here. After your triumphant  
bursting from the tomb,  
Lord Jesus you are here.  
Alleluia! Christ is risen!  
He is risen indeed! Alleluia!

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!

Soar we now where Christ has led,  
Alleluia!

**Hymn:**

**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!

Following our exalted Head;  
Alleluia!  
Made like him, like him we rise;  
Alleluia!  
Ours the cross, the grave, the skies:  
Alleluia!

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!

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

*Charles Wesley (1707-1788)*

## Let us pray together.

O Lord God, Eternal Creator,  
you dwell in the hearts of all who  
worship you today. We praise and  
thank you for raising Jesus from the  
dead and setting us free to worship  
and adore you.

To you belongs all the honour!

Jesus Christ, Merciful Saviour, you  
meet us when we turn to you. On  
that first Easter morning you rose  
from the grave to conquer sin and  
death for ever.

To you belongs all the glory!

Holy Spirit, Divine Presence, you are  
the very Breath of Life. We receive  
the peace of the risen Christ as did  
those first disciples in the Upper  
Room.

To you belongs all the praise!

Pause

O God, the Three-in-One, we  
confess that our lives have been full  
of death and hate instead of life and  
love. Forgive us our sins, and  
strengthen in us all that is good.

Pause

As we receive your assurance of  
forgiveness, you fill us afresh with  
love and life, compelling us to pour  
them out into the lives of others.  
Amen.

## Today's Reading from the Book of

**Acts: 10:34-43**

Then Peter began to speak to them:

"I truly understand that God shows  
no partiality, but in every nation  
anyone who fears him and does  
what is right is acceptable to him.

You know the message he sent to  
the people of Israel, preaching  
peace by Jesus Christ—he is Lord of  
all. That message spread throughout  
Judea, beginning in Galilee after the  
baptism that John announced: how  
God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with  
the Holy Spirit and with power; how  
he went about doing good and  
healing all who were oppressed by  
the devil, for God was with him.

We are witnesses to all that he did  
both in Judea and in Jerusalem.  
They put him to death by hanging  
him on a tree; but God raised him  
on the third day and allowed him to  
appear, not to all the people but to  
us who were chosen by God as  
witnesses, and who ate and drank  
with him after he rose from the  
dead. He commanded us to preach  
to the people and to testify that he  
is the one ordained by God as judge  
of the living and the dead.

All the prophets testify about him  
that everyone who believes in him  
receives forgiveness of sins through  
his name."

## Today's Gospel Reading:

### Mark 16:1-8

When the Sabbath was over, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices so that they might go to anoint Jesus' body. Very early on the first day of the week, just after sunrise, they were on their way to the tomb and they asked each other, "Who will roll the stone away from the entrance of the tomb?"

But when they looked up, they saw that the stone, which was very large, had been rolled away. As they entered the tomb, they saw a young man dressed in a white robe sitting on the right side, and they were alarmed.

"Don't be alarmed," he said. "You are looking for Jesus the Nazarene, who was crucified. He has risen! He is not here. See the place where they laid him. But go, tell his disciples and Peter, 'He is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see him, just as he told you.'"

8 Trembling and bewildered, the women went out and fled from the tomb. They said nothing to anyone, because they were afraid.

Original Materials by Stephen Froggatt  
All Hymns reproduced under CCLi 1144191.

Local Churches please insert CCLi 4163  
Some Prayers are from "The Act of Prayer",  
John Birch - Other Resources from  
Roots Magazine on the Web

## Time to Reflect

All four Gospels lead to the wonderful news of resurrection. Interestingly, they also emphasise the disciple's surprise, astonishment, fear and confusion. None of them describe the moment of resurrection. That part of the narrative for them and for us is suspense. Rather, as in this passage, they raise awareness that something very unusual has occurred- culminating in the three women fleeing from the tomb in terror and amazement.

Charles Moule was a leading scholar of the New Testament at Cambridge University. At the end of a lecture an undergraduate publicly asked him, "Professor, do you believe in the Resurrection." After a pause he replied, "In my experience the size of the crater is proportionate to the force of the impact. Look at how many people follow Jesus today".

Today hundreds of millions find themselves deeply influenced by the force of Easter's impact. The energy of that moment continues to create an ever-enlarging crater whose centre is of the first disciples fleeing from the empty tomb.

Many 21st Christians find these Gospel accounts continue to have a compelling, curious ring of truth. Not because they always harmonise, but because they honestly struggle to find the language to express

resurrection faith: that after the cross there was life; after the tomb there was a rolled stone; after darkness there was light, and after hatred there was love.

Today, we are all invited to discover Easter's resurrection 'force and impact', and with countless millions declare, "Alleluia, Christ is Alive!"

### **A time of prayer**

Thine be the glory,  
risen conquering Son;  
Endless is the victory  
thou o'er death hast won.

On this Easter Day, we remember those who have gone before us to glory. May we, like them, inherit your eternal kingdom.

We pray for all who are fearful today: people living alone; people who have endured great trials; people who are scared for each new day. Come among them and breathe your resurrection peace.

We pray for your worldwide church, united today in joyful acclamation of the risen Christ. May we, your church, daily witness to the life of the risen Christ in our own lives through our love for God, self and neighbour.

We pray for the leaders of the world, and for the people they govern. Endue them with wisdom and justice, so that they might govern all people with equity.

Finally we pray for ourselves. In Christ we are indeed more than conquerors. May Alleluia! be our triumphant song today and always.  
**Amen.**

### **The Lord's Prayer**

Our Father .....

**Hymn: (Graham Kendrick)**

### **Led like a lamb to the slaughter**

In silence and shame,  
There on Your back  
You carried a world  
Of violence and pain.  
Bleeding, dying, bleeding, dying.

*You're alive, You're alive,  
You have risen, Alleluia!  
And the power and the glory is  
given, Alleluia, Jesus, to You.*

At break of dawn, poor Mary,  
Still weeping she came,  
When through her grief she heard  
Your voice  
Now speaking her name.  
Mary, Master, Mary, Master!

At the right hand of the Father  
Now seated on high  
You have begun Your eternal reign  
Of justice and joy.  
Glory, glory, glory, glory.

### **A prayer of blessing**

God the Father, by whose glory  
Christ was raised from the dead,  
strengthen us to walk with him in  
his risen life; and may almighty God  
bless us, the Father, the Son and the  
Holy Spirit. **Amen**