

Worship at Home

19th April 2026

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Welcome to a service in which we continue to celebrate Easter. We are in the period of 50 days of Eastertide from Easter Sunday to Pentecost Sunday.

Christ is Risen. Alleluia!

Opening Prayer

Like Mary at the empty tomb,
we fail to grasp the wonder of your presence.
Lord, have mercy.

Like the disciples behind locked doors,
we are afraid to be seen as your followers.
Christ, have mercy.

Like Thomas in the upper room,
we are slow to believe.
Lord, have mercy.

Amen

StF 298: Christ, the Lord, is risen today

'Christ, the Lord, is risen today!' *Alleluia!*
All creation join to say: *Alleluia!*
Raise your joys and triumphs high; *Alleluia!*
Sing, you heavens, and earth reply: *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!*

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!*
following our exalted Head; *Alleluia!*
made like him, like him we rise; *Alleluia!*
ours the cross, the grave, the skies: *Alleluia!*

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

Charles Wesley (1707- 1788)

Prayer of Confession

In baptism we died with Christ,
so that as Christ was raised from the dead,
we might walk in newness of life.
Let us receive new life in him
as we confess our sins in penitence and faith.

Jesus Christ, risen Master and triumphant Lord,
we come to you in sorrow for our sins,
and confess to you our weakness and unbelief.
We have lived by our own strength,
and not by the power of your resurrection.
In your mercy, forgive us.
Lord, hear us and help us.

We have lived by the light of our own eyes,
as faithless and not believing.

In your mercy, forgive us.
Lord, hear us and help us.

We have lived for this world alone,
and doubted our home in heaven.
In your mercy, forgive us.
Lord, hear us and help us. Amen

The Lord's Prayer

Reading: Luke 24: 13-35

Now that same day two of them were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem. They were talking with each other about everything that had happened. As they talked and discussed these things with each other, Jesus himself came up and walked along with them; but they were kept from recognizing him.

He asked them, "What are you discussing together as you walk along?"

They stood still, their faces downcast. One of them, named Cleopas, asked him, "Are you the only one visiting Jerusalem who does not know the things that have happened there in these days?"

"What things?" he asked. "About Jesus of Nazareth," they replied. "He was a prophet, powerful in word and deed before God and all the people. The chief priests and our rulers handed him over to be sentenced to death, and they crucified him; but we had hoped that he was the one who was going to redeem Israel. And what is more, it is the third day since all this took place. In addition, some of our women amazed us. They went to the tomb early this morning but didn't find his body. They came and told us that they had seen a vision of angels, who said he was alive. Then some of our companions went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said, but they did not see Jesus."

He said to them, "How foolish you are, and how slow to believe all that the prophets have spoken! Did not the Messiah have to suffer these things and then enter his glory?" And beginning with Moses and all

the Prophets, he explained to them what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself.

As they approached the village to which they were going, Jesus continued on as if he were going farther. But they urged him strongly, "Stay with us, for it is nearly evening; the day is almost over." So he went in to stay with them.

When he was at the table with them, he took bread, gave thanks, broke it and began to give it to them. Then their eyes were opened and they recognized him, and he disappeared from their sight. They asked each other, "Were not our hearts burning within us while he talked with us on the road and opened the Scriptures to us?"

They got up and returned at once to Jerusalem. There they found the Eleven and those with them, assembled together and saying, "It is true! The Lord has risen and has appeared to Simon." Then the two told what had happened on the way, and how Jesus was recognized by them when he broke the bread.

Reflection

Those with whom Jesus walked on the road to Emmaus referred back in their conversation with this stranger to the first Easter morning but they didn't quite tell the whole story. Not only had the women discovered the empty tomb and seen angels but one of them, Mary Magdalene, had also seen and spoken with the Risen Lord. And her step to belief in the Risen Lord was swift. A few words of recognition were sufficient and Mary's witness to the risen Christ had begun. And yet here we have some of the disciples still struggling to understand and Jesus having to explain. Lots of words it seems, on both sides, even so the disciples still did not grasp what was being said to them until revelation came in the simple act of breaking bread. Only then did the words make sense. In the case of Mary, all He had to do was to call her by name and she believed. Two immediate messages come from this. First, women often grasp things quicker than men! I'm not being entirely flippant here. It was Mary who saw the angels and encountered Christ first.

There is evidence that she became one of the most powerful and committed of the early leaders of the Church but, being a woman, her role was downplayed by some of the male leaders of the early church. Secondly, Christ comes to us not only in and through words. Touch and sight were important in the encounter with Mary, and in the breaking of bread, with all the associated ritual and symbolism, in the Emmaus road story.

We tend to be wordy in our faith and as one who has preached a great deal, not to mention having been an academic for 40 years and an avid reader, words are of huge importance to me. But the richness of our faith tradition and stories like this from the New Testament teach us we can often best understand words when they are brought home to us through other senses too, by sight and sound especially. It is hard to imagine worship without words, though there is a role for silence in worship too, but equally hard to imagine it without music and the sacrament of the breaking of the bread.

Risen from the grave, it was Mary to whom He first revealed Himself through her tears as she struggled to come to terms with the loss of the only one who had understood her, forgiven her, loved her, and then the remarkable realisation that He was risen. He is risen, His love for Mary and the other disciples is the same love as His love for us all – far reaching, transforming, resurrecting. A Joyous and Happy Easter.

The Collect

O God, whose blessed Son made himself known to his disciples in the breaking of bread: Open the eyes of our faith, that we may behold him in all his redeeming work; who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen

StF 313: Thine be the glory

**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.**

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

**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.**

Thine be the glory...

**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:
bring us safe through Jordan to thy home above.**

Thine be the glory...

Edmond Budry (1854-1939)

StF 314: This joyful Eastertide

**This joyful Eastertide
what need is there for grieving?
Cast all your cares aside
And be not unbelieving:**

*Come, share our Easter joy
that death could not imprison,
nor any power destroy,
our Christ, who is risen !*

**No work for him is vain,
No faith in him mistaken,
For Easter makes it plain
His kingdom is not shaken:
*Come, share our Easter joy...***

**Then put your trust in Christ,
In waking and in sleeping.
His grace on earth suffices;
he'll never quit his keeping:
*Come, share our Easter joy...***

Fred Pratt Green (1903-2000)