

We are still isolated,
still feeling like we have been
left alone in a shadowed place,
but this is the day:

**hope tiptoes us awake;
light guides us through the shadows.**

We are keeping a safe distance from others,
we are quarantining ourselves,
we worship in separate places
yet are still gathered as God's people,
but this is the day the Lord:

**plants joy in our winter hearts;
drowns out despair's cries with laughter.**

This is a time of uncertainty and fear,
we wonder what today will bring,
we worry about the coming tomorrow,
but this is the day the Lord has made
**the day grace does cartwheels in graveyards;
resurrection wonder outshines the brightest sun;
an empty tomb fills us with good news.**

Alleluiah! Christ is risen!
He is risen indeed! Alleluiah!

Hymn:305 Low in the grave he lay

Prayers of Praise and Confession

Today we sing praises and glorify your Holy Name saying:

Glory to you, O God:

You raised Jesus from the grave,
bringing us victory over death
and giving us life eternal.

Glory to you, O Christ:

for us and for our salvation
you overcame death,
and opened the gate to everlasting life.

Glory to you, O Holy Spirit:

you lead us into the truth
and breathe new life into us.

**Glory to you, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,
now and forever. Amen**

Let us confess our sins:

Lord Jesus,
When our faith stands at the grave,
grieving
for a stone that's rolled away,
forgive us.

When our faith is short of understanding
though the truth is there to see,
forgive us.

When our faith beset by doubt,

sees no further,
than an empty tomb today,
forgive us.

Lord Jesus, Easter is not about a people,
but all peoples that you love,
and your salvation is for all who confess
with voices,
that the tomb is empty
because Jesus is risen.
Easter is for us that we might know forgiveness,
and that lives might be reborn
and your name glorified
now and for eternity.
And may we all know that Jesus in His own words says:
Your sins (and mine) are forgiven.
Amen. Thanks be to God.

Our Lord Jesus, we praise you for
when we walk in darkness and we kneel in weakness,
you are there with us.
We praise you for when we are feeling worthless,
and lost and alone,
you are there with us.
We praise you for when all hope is lost and we seek answers,
you are there with us.
We praise you Lord God,
Just as you ransomed your people from Egypt
and led them to their promised land,
you deliver us from the pain and sorrow that grips us today.
And you lead us to the joys and glory of your Son Jesus Christ.
Today you raise us from all that binds us
through the power of your life-giving spirit.
Receive our praise, in the Name of Jesus.
Our risen Lord and Saviour. **Amen**

Jeremiah 31: 1-6

At that time, says the Lord, I will be the God of all the families of Israel,
and they shall be my people.
Thus says the Lord:
The people who survived the sword
found grace in the wilderness;
when Israel sought for rest,
the Lord appeared to him from far away.
I have loved you with an everlasting love;
therefore I have continued my faithfulness to you.
Again I will build you, and you shall be built,
O virgin Israel!
Again you shall take your tambourines,
and go forth in the dance of the merrymakers.
Again you shall plant vineyards
on the mountains of Samaria;

the planters shall plant,
and shall enjoy the fruit.
For there shall be a day when sentinels will call
in the hill country of Ephraim:
'Come, let us go up to Zion,
to the Lord our God.'

Hymn 298 Christ the Lord is risen today

Reading: 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 towards 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.

Jesus Appears to Mary Magdalene

11 But Mary stood weeping outside the tomb. As she wept, she bent over to look^[a] 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 round and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not know that it was Jesus. **15** Jesus said to her, 'Woman, why are you weeping? For whom are you looking?' 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,^[b] '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.

Sermon

306 Now the green blade rises

Prayers of Intercession

In the power of the resurrection we offer our prayers to God.

Let us pray.

Remember, O Lord, in your love
the Church throughout the world . . .

those recently baptized and confirmed . . .

Those who have had to postpone baptisms and confirmations until we can meet together
again

those who minister to others . . .

Lemia

Rachel
Shirlyn
Yemi
Sue

All of our lay people

Silence

May your whole Church know your power and be a sign that Christ is risen.

Lord of life,

hear us in your love.

Remember in your love the world you have made . . .

those who seek a fair and proper use of the world's resources . . .

those who strive for justice and peace among the nations . . .

Those who lead or serve to bring recovery and release from Covid 19

Silence

May the whole earth be transformed by mercy and rejoice in hope.

Lord of life,

hear us in your love.

Remember in your love those who suffer . . .

the victims of violence and injustice . . .

Those who are ill, lonely or isolated

Families shut into small places for lockdown

those who mourn . . .

Silence

May all in need find comfort, strength and freedom in the living Christ.

Lord of life,

hear us in your love.

Remember in your love those who have died:

those who have confessed the faith

and those whose faith is known to you alone.

Silence

May all your children receive grace and light according to their needs

and come at last to share with all the saints in life eternal.

Lord of life,

hear us in your love.

Gracious God, we ask these prayers through Jesus Christ, our risen Lord and Saviour.

Amen.

Hymn: 313 Thine be the glory

The Blessing