

Morning Worship

WITH SPIRITUAL COMMUNION

EASTER DAY

WWW.CHWCHURCHES.CO.UK

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to our Morning Worship on Easter day! As we cannot gather together to share in the Eucharist on this most glorious of days this service is a service of Spiritual Communion. The Book of Common Prayer highlights that it is possible to receive the grace of communion even when it was impossible to receive the sacrament itself, in line with the teaching of St Thomas Aquinas.

Spiritual Communion is not the normative way of receiving communion – which is to receive the sacrament with God's people when they are gathered for that purpose. However, it is a valid means of receiving the grace of the sacrament, in special circumstances, when gathering for communion is rendered impossible, and where the believer is desirous to partake of it.

It is suggested that alongside this liturgy you have a means to listen to the suggested hymns which have links to videos with lyrics within this document.

The service is designed to be used easily by one person. If there is more than one person participating, either one can lead with others joining in with the responses in **bold** OR everyone present may join in with all the words.

The sections in *red italics* are rubrics: these explain what needs to happen at various points.

Materials in this booklet are drawn from *Common Worship: Times and Seasons* which is copyright © The Archbishop's Council of the Church of England 2006; the liturgy for the spiritual communion was compiled by Revd Paul Roberts, 2020; other liturgy was adapted from Thom M. Shuman *Easter Worship in a time of pandemic*, © 2020.

MORNING WORSHIP

GREETING

May the God of the resurrection be with you!

And also with you!

This is the day to offer ourselves to the Lord.

We open our hearts to the one who fills them with grace.

CALL TO WORSHIP

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 are not gathering 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.

HYMN: JESUS CHRIST IS RISEN TODAY

[Listen here](#)

CONFESSION AND WORDS OF COMFORT

We find ourselves living in the shadows these days, afraid to follow the light.

We wander in our backyards alone,
looking for God in these days.

Yet we are still, and we will be again, and will always be Easter people!
Let us speak of our fears of having the resurrection promise wiped away by the virus of fear and panic, as we pray together, saying

**Unable to gather together on this day,
as we walk through the shadows of our lives,
we come to you, God who dispels our fears.**

**Too often, we believe our foolishness is hidden from you;
too often, we stand before the open door of hope,
wondering if we dare enter.**

**Uncertain of the good news offered to us,
we would rather return to the comfort of our familiar ways
rather than trusting in you.**

**Yet you come, as persistent as Mary at the tomb,
joy of our hearts,
to open the gates of hope,
so we might walk in the gardens of hope;
you come, to open the gates of grace,
so we might plant peace in the wilderness of the world;
you come, to open the gates of resurrection,
so we might know our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.**

A period of silent reflection follows

Hear the words of comfort, our Saviour Christ says to all who truly turn to him:

*For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son,
that whoever believes in him should not perish
but have eternal life.*

John 3:16

THE EASTER ACCLAMATION

Alleluia. Christ is risen.

He is risen indeed. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

HYMN: IN CHRIST ALONE

[Listen here](#)

COLLECT

Let us pray that we may reign with the risen Christ in glory.

A period of silent prayer is kept.

God of glory,
by the raising of your Son
you have broken the chains of death and hell:
fill your Church with faith and hope;
for a new day has dawned
and the way to life stands open
in our saviour Jesus Christ.

Amen.

THE WORD OF GOD

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew.

Glory to you, O Lord.

28 *Now after the Sabbath, toward the dawn of the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to see the tomb. ² And behold, there was a great earthquake, for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven and came and rolled back the stone and sat on it. ³ His appearance was like lightning, and his clothing white as snow. ⁴ And for fear of him the guards trembled and became like dead men. ⁵ But the angel said to the women, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. ⁶ He is not here, for he has risen, as he said. Come, see the place where he lay. ⁷ Then go quickly and tell*

his disciples that he has risen from the dead, and behold, he is going before you to Galilee; there you will see him. See, I have told you.”⁸ So they departed quickly from the tomb with fear and great joy, and ran to tell his disciples.⁹ And behold, Jesus met them and said, “Greetings!” And they came up and took hold of his feet and worshipped him.¹⁰ Then Jesus said to them, “Do not be afraid; go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee, and there they will see me.”

THE SERMON

[Read Revd Guy's sermon here.](#)

HYMN: COME THOU FOUNT OF EVERY BLESSING

[Listen here.](#)

A GREAT PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

When only emptiness stretched out,
you spoke at that time, Joyous God,
and goodness and beauty sprang forth:
swallows darting in the skies,
young rabbits scampering in the grass,
hippos splashing in rivers.
All this wonder and joy was your gift
to your children created in your image,
but we ran to play with death,
when sin opened the gates of seduction.
Time after time after time,
you sent the prophets to remind us
of your never-ending love, but
we chose to remain in sin's tomb,
the stone of our rebellion locking us away.
So you sent your Hopeful heart,
your grace made flesh,
so we might not be given over to death.

With those who see and believe,
with those who stand and question,
we lift our Easter songs to you:

Holy, holy, holy are you, God who has made this day!
All creation celebrates your constant love.
Hosanna in the highest!

Blessed is the One who is revealed on this morning.
Hosanna in the highest!

When he could have clung to your glory,
God who alone is holy,
Jesus chose to become human at that time,
so we might be filled with your grace.

When we stood against the wall
wondering if anyone noticed us,
he came to take us by the hand
to teach us new dance steps.

When our lives crumble around us
and we lie scattered on the ground,
he gathers us up, reshaping us
into your beloved community.

When we were unable to break
the power of evil over us,
he allowed sin to toss him
aside like a pebble in a shoe,
until he was raised from the tomb
because you refuse to give us
over to death.

As we stand before the empty tomb,
celebrating the great news of this day,
we would have that faith which is a mystery:

Christ died, so sin could not hold on to us;
Christ was raised, so death could not hold on to us;

Christ will come, to hold us in steadfast love and hope.

At this time, wherever we find ourselves,
at home, in apartments, in care facilities,

pour out your Spirit upon your people
and on the gifts of the feast of the resurrection.
May the bread which is broken open like the tomb,
strengthen us so we may go
to rebuild shattered hopes,
to bind up the hurts of the world.
May the cup which is filled
with the fruits of your steadfast love,
nourish us to leave the shadows
of our fears and doubts
to stand with the lonely and forgotten,
to listen to the cries of the world.

And in that time to come,
when we will be gathered
with our sisters and brothers
of every place and of every moment,
we will sing your praises,
God in Community, Holy in One,
as you hold on to us forever.

Amen.

SPIRITUAL COMMUNION

*Where can I go from your spirit?
Or where can I flee from your presence?
If I ascend to heaven, you are there;
if I make my bed in the grave, you are there.*

*If I take the wings of the morning
and settle at the farthest limits of the sea,
even there your hand shall lead me,
and your right hand shall hold me fast.*

Psalms 139.7-10

*Jesus says,
Listen! I am standing at the door, knocking;
if you hear my voice and open the door,
I will come in to you and eat with you,
and you with me.*

Revelation 3.20

Lord our God
you prepare a table before us
and, although we cannot be present at your Holy Eucharist,
by your grace, open our hearts to receive
the gift of your Son, the Word made flesh:

who, on the night that he was betrayed
took bread, and gave it to his disciples, saying
take, eat, this is my body which is given for you,
do this in remembrance of me.

In the same way after supper, he took the cup
he gave it to them saying,
drink this all of you, this is my blood of the new covenant
which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins,
do this in remembrance of me.

Send your Holy Spirit upon us
that, though separated by distance,
we may still, through faith, be partakers in the benefits
of Christ's offering of his body and his blood.
This we ask, through the same Jesus Christ our Saviour.

Amen.

*A time of silence follows, as each person present makes their own
spiritual communion with God. The period of spiritual
communion concludes by saying*

As Jesus has taught us, so we say with confidence:

Our Father, who art in heaven
hallowed be thy name
thy kingdom come
thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven;
give us this day our daily bread
and forgive us our trespasses
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation;
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
the power and the glory,
for ever and ever. Amen.

The following prayer may also be said

Father of all,
we give you thanks and praise,
that when we were still far off
you met us in your Son and brought us home.
Dying and living, he declared your love,
gave us grace, and opened the gate of glory.
May we who share Christ's body live his risen life;
we who drink his cup bring life to others;
we whom the Spirit lights give light to the world.
Keep us firm in the hope you have set before us,
so we and all your children shall be free,
and the whole earth live to praise your name;
through Christ our Lord,
Amen.

HYMN: TO GOD BE THE GLORY GREAT THINGS HE HATH DONE

[Listen here.](#)

DISMISSAL

*'Remember, I am with you
to the end of the age,' says the Lord.*

Matthew 28.20

Scattered from one another,
we can still go with God into the world.

**We will offer healing and hope to all
who wander in the shadows of life.**

Separated from one another,
we can still go with Jesus to serve others.

**We will listen to the ignored;
we will speak out for the forgotten.**

Alone, stranded wherever we live,
we can still join the Holy Spirit in offering steadfast love.

**We will hold on to the fallen;
we will rebuild shattered communities.**

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ
and the love of God
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit
be with us all, evermore. Amen.

With the risen life of Christ within us,
we go in the peace of Christ. Alleluia, alleluia!

Thanks be to God. Alleluia, alleluia!