

St. Andrew's by the Sea Uniting Church
Christian Community in the Heart of Glenelg
Rev. Christine Gilbert



First Sunday of Easter
4 April, 2021

“Every time we see Jesus where we did not recognise him before—
in the faces of the poor, in the love of the unloved,
in the revelatory moments of life—Jesus rises anew.”
—Joan Chittister

GATHERING

Preparing the Space and Our Hearts

Call to Worship verses from Psalm 118

O give thanks to God who is good;
God's steadfast love endures forever!

The stone that the builders rejected
has become the chief cornerstone.

This is God's doing;
it is marvellous in our eyes.

This is the day that God has made;
let us rejoice and be glad in it!

Christ is risen!
Christ is risen indeed!

Opening Prayer

Spirit Friend,
who freed Jesus from the chains of death,
who causes the moon to set and the sun to rise,
who renews all things
and fills our hearts with love overflowing:
Come to us with resurrection power,
turning our fear into courage,
our dullness into radiant light,
and our disbelief into a questing, yearning faith.
Hear us and come to us we pray.
Amen

Hymn

"Christ the Lord is risen today"

(TiS 370)

(Please remain seated for the singing of the hymns.)

Christ the Lord is risen today:
Hallelujah!
Let the whole creation say:
Hallelujah!
Raise your joys and triumphs high:
Hallelujah!
Sing now, heaven, and earth reply:
Hallelujah!

Lives again our glorious king;
Hallelujah!
where, O death, is now your sting?
Hallelujah!
Once he died our lives to save;
Hallelujah!
where your victory, O grave?
Hallelujah!

Soar we now where Christ has led,
Hallelujah!
following our exalted Head;
Hallelujah!
made like him, like him we rise:
Hallelujah!
ours the cross, the grave, the skies.
Hallelujah!

Words: Charles Wesley
Tune: EASTER HYMN

ENCOUNTERING**Scripture Reading**

Mark 16:1–8

Reflection on the Word**Hymn**

“Christ is alive! Let Christians sing”

(TiS 387)

Christ is alive! Let Christians sing.
The cross stands empty to the sky.
Let streets and homes with praises ring;
Love, drowned in death, shall never die.

Christ is alive! No longer bound
to distant years in Palestine,
but saving, healing, here and now,
and touching every place and time.

In every insult, rift and war,
where colour, scorn or wealth divide,
Christ suffers still, yet loves the more,
and lives, where even hope has died.

Women and men, in age and youth
can feel the Spirit, hear the call,
and find the way, the life, the truth,
revealed in Jesus, freed for all.

Christ is alive, and comes to bring
good news to this and every age,
till earth and sky and ocean ring
with joy, with justice, love, and praise.

RESPONDING

Affirmation of Faith

We believe in God, the wise Creator
who rules as does the sun by day
and moon by night;

***light to warm our skin,
radiance to calm all fears
and hope to move our hearts
in the ways of costly love.***

We believe in Jesus Christ, the wise Redeemer
who reigns not by force nor by might,
but who leads by example:

***the One who gives all
for the sake of a new world
in which justice and compassion
will finally heal the broken-hearted
and give rest to a weary world.***

And we believe in the Spirit, the wise Counselor
who draws us out of our diminished selves,

***speaking words of deep affirmation
and encouraging us forward
into the self-giving way and being of Christ.***

We are friends of God!

We are the Body of Christ!

We are people of the Spirit!

***We offer our hearts, minds and hands
to the new world of God's making. Amen.***

Prayers of the People

Jesus Christ our Friend and Saviour, thank you for your great love for us, for loving us so completely and wholly that we are renewed by our reception of it. As you were made alive in a new way by God, so we too live in hope that we will not be undone by the suffering we experience; we will not be overcome by the struggles we face. In trust, we raise our prayers into the light of your love.

Fill us with life. Lead us to love.

Enable us to believe in your resurrection *and ours*. Grow within us the first-hand, lived experience of endings leading to new beginnings, tears of grief transformed into compassion, and each letting go giving room for treasures that last.

Fill us with life. Lead us to love.

Give us the courage to move out of the shadows that keep us from proclaiming the good news of your love in word and deed. Remove our hesitancy and reticence. Take from us our fear of being misunderstood or rejected. Help us embody your Gospel with integrity, humility and the whole of our lives.

Fill us with life. Lead us to love.

We pray for places in your world that quake with violence, disease, poverty and the impacts of climate crisis. May we not be overwhelmed and shut down by the suffering around us, but stay awake with hearts soft and caring as we work and pray for justice and peace.

Fill us with life. Lead us to love.

Finally, we hold in the light of your love those in our hearts and minds this day...

Fill us with life. Lead us to love.

The Disciple's Prayer

*Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.*

Give us today our daily bread.

*Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.*

*Save us from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.*

*For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours,
now and forever. Amen.*

Hymn “Alleluia, alleluia, give thanks to the risen Lord” (TiS 390)

Refrain

Alleluia, alleluia, give thanks to the risen Lord,
alleluia, alleluia, give praise to his name.

Jesus is Lord of all the earth;
he is the king of creation.

Spread the good news o'er all the earth:
Jesus has died and has risen.

We have been crucified with Christ;
now we shall live for ever.

God has proclaimed a gracious gift:
New life for all! Alleluia!

Words: Donald Fishel
Tune: ALLELUIA! ALLELUIA!

Blessing

You had not imagined
that something so empty
could fill you
to overflowing,

and now you carry
the knowledge
like an awful treasure
or like a child
that roots itself
beneath your heart:

How the emptiness
will bear forth
a new world
that you cannot fathom
but on whose edge
you stand.

So why do you linger?
You have seen,
and so you are
already blessed.
You have been seen,
and so you are
the blessing.

There is no other word
you need.
There is simply
to go
and tell.
There is simply
to begin.

—Jan Richardson