
PARRAMATTA CITY UNITING CHURCH

EASTER DAY 9th April 2023



WELCOME

A warm welcome to Parramatta City Uniting Church on this special day. Over the past weeks we have journeyed through Lent. We have reflected quietly and deeply on the life and death of Jesus as he experienced betrayal denial and great suffering and then, on Good Friday, crucifixion on the cross. But today is different. Today is the day of resurrection. Today is the day when new life bursts forth. For this is a day of real joy. This is day of awesome celebration!

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

As we gather for worship, we are honoured to do so on the ancestral lands of the Burramattagal people of the Darug nation. We acknowledge First Australians as the traditional custodians of this land, whose cultures are among the oldest living cultures in human history.

We pay respect to the Elders of the community and extend our recognition to all their descendants. Further, we state our commitment to justice and to reconciliation so that a positive, inclusive future can be built together.

LIGHTING THE CHRIST CANDLE

On this Easter morning, on this day of joy and celebration, we light the Christ candle declaring that the light overcomes darkness, the sting of death is gone, love conquers all!

(the white Christ candle is lit)

RESPONSE:

Christ is Risen!

Christ is Risen Indeed!

Hallelujah!

On this day we celebrate resurrection.

The power of life has overcome the power of death. **Hallelujah!**

The light of love has shattered the darkness of fear. **Hallelujah!**

The way of peace has prevailed against the violence of empire. **Hallelujah!**

**We come to worship the God whose resurrection power lives on in the Christ we serve.
Hallelujah!**

(posted on Joanna Harader on her [Spacious Faith](#) blog)

SONG: “Christ the Lord is risen today” (TIS 370)

(YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZVIKjE4uIfI>)

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!

Love’s redeeming work is done, Hallelujah!
Fought the fight, the battle won, Hallelujah!
Vain the stone, the watch, the seal: Hallelujah!
Christ has burst the gates of hell, Hallelujah!

Lives again our glorious King, Hallelujah!
Where, O death, is now your sting? Hallelujah!
Once he died our souls 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!

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EASTER PRAISE

When everything was dark and it seemed that the sun would never shine again, your love broke through.

Your love was too strong, too wide, too deep for death to hold.

The sparks cast by your love dance and spread and burst forth with resurrection light.

Gracious God, we praise you for the light of new life made possible through Jesus.

We praise you for the light of new life that shone on the first witnesses of resurrection.

We praise you for the light of new life that continues to shine in our hearts today.

We pray that the Easter light of life, hope and joy, will live in us each day; and that we will be bearers of that light into the lives of others.

Amen.

(Michaela Youngson, Superintendent Minister of the Ealing Trinity Circuit, posted on The Methodist Church in Britain’s [Open to the World](#) website)

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Loving God, we confess that at times we do not share in the joy of the resurrection but are caught in the worries of the world. We confess that we do not always live in the spirit of new life but remain discontent, grumbling and anxious.

Forgive us for not sharing in the Good News. Forgive us when we find it more comfortable to worry and complain than to risk the joy and encouragement of new life in Christ.

Call us back to Your ways, O God, to seek hope and reconciliation, restoration and peace. In the name of the Risen Christ, we pray. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Christ is Risen! The stone is rolled away, the tomb found empty. Mary calls out, "I have seen the Lord!"

We have seen Christ, too, in every helping hand, in every heartfelt gift, in every choice to restore life in this world.

We are called to this new life, a life of forgiveness and reconciliation.

You are forgiven; accept your forgiveness and know that God loves you and desires great joy for your life.

Walk forward on this journey of faith, knowing your brothers and sisters are with you. Amen.

(Rev. Mindi Welton-Mitchell, and posted on her Rev-o-lution blog. <http://rev-o-lution.org/>)

THE PEACE

The peace of the Lord be always with you

And also with you

EASTER MESSAGE FROM THE UNITING CHURCH

(YouTube: <https://uniting.church/easter=message-2023/>)

ALL-AGE INTRODUCTION TO THE BIBLE READING

BIBLE READING: Matthew 28:1-10

After the sabbath, as the first day of the week was dawning, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to see the tomb. ²And suddenly there was a great earthquake; for an angel of the Lord, descending from heaven, came and rolled back the stone and sat on it. ³His appearance was like lightning, and his clothing white as snow. ⁴For fear of him the guards shook and became like dead men. ⁵But the angel said to the women, "Do not be afraid; I know that you are looking for Jesus who was crucified. ⁶He is not here; for he has been raised, as he said. Come, see the place where he lay.

⁷Then go quickly and tell his disciples, 'He has been raised from the dead, and indeed he is going ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see him.' This is my message for you." ⁸So they left the tomb quickly with fear and great joy, and ran to tell his disciples. ⁹Suddenly Jesus met them and said, "Greetings!" And they came to him, took hold of his feet, and worshiped him. ¹⁰Then Jesus said to them, "Do not be afraid; go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee; there they will see me."

For the word of God among us,

for the word of God within us:

We give thanks.

REFLECTION: "Why Galilee?"

SONG: "Alleluia, alleluia, give thanks to the risen Lord"

(TIS 390)

(YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FZcCnLfufQs>)

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.

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

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

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

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

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

God has proclaimed his gracious gift: Life eternal for all who believe.

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

Come, let us praise the living God, Joyfully sing to our Saviour.

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

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

OFFERING

Gracious God, we thank you for your faithfulness, that we can always trust you. You are an abundant, generous God, and out of your great mercy you have given us so much.

We present this offering to you today. With it we worship you and give our whole selves to you. Please receive these gifts and use them for your reign of justice and peace. Extend and multiply its reach and influence we pray. May these gifts be a great blessing to many.

We ask this in the name of Jesus our risen Saviour. Amen.

(<https://www.lords-prayer.com/prayers>)

EASTER INTERCESSIONS

O God, with faces touched by the light of a new day, and hearts warmed by the gift of new life, we come before you to pray for the needs of the world:

Into the light of this Easter morning, we raise before you those places in our world where war, violence, poverty, and need are the experiences of everyday life.

We particularly pray for Ukraine, Syria, Afghanistan, Yemen, Somalia, the Rohingya people of Myanmar and the Uyghurs of China.

May the light of Christ shine upon them.

Into the light of this Easter morning, we remember those who are so often overlooked, forgotten or marginalised.

We pray for women and men who suffer abuse at the hands of others, for those who because of disability, age, gender or cultural background have no voice or are ignored, and for those with no place to call home.

May the light of Christ shine upon them.

Into the light of this Easter morning, we pray for those who are lonely or distressed, for those who are ill or are facing death, for those facing financial stress, and those confronted with the breakdown of relationships.

May the light of Christ shine upon them.

And into the light of this Easter morning we bring before you ourselves, our personal struggles, our heart's yearnings, our hidden dreams, and unfulfilled potential.

May the light of Christ shine upon us. Amen.

(adapted from Ann Siddall, in Lent to Easter liturgies)

THE LORD'S PRAYER

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

**Give us this day our daily bread and 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.**

SONG: "I know that my Redeemer lives" (MHB 299)

Two verses only – tune: Church Triumphant

(YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?=4OLGaRVUNkc>)

I know that my Redeemer lives. What joy the blest assurance gives!
He lives, he lives, who once was dead. He lives, my ever-living Head.

He lives! all glory to his name! He lives, my Saviour, still the same.
What joy the blest assurance gives: I know that my Redeemer lives!

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BLESSING

Go out into the world as the people of God in this place, and may the God who raised Jesus from the dead grant you grace, the Son who gave his life for you give you peace, and the Spirit who is with you day by day, inspire you to greater service both now and forever more.

Amen.

(Rev Margaret Whyte - <http://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/>)

SONG: "Yours be the glory" (TIS 380)

(YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GaoV5w2Qfag>)

Yours be the glory, risen, conquering Son, endless is the victory over death you've won; angels in bright raiment rolled the stone away, kept the folded grave-clothes, where your body lay.

Yours be the glory, risen, conquering Son, endless is the victory over death you've won.

See, 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 the Lord is living, death has lost its sting. [Refrain]

Yours be the glory, risen, conquering Son, endless is the victory over death you've won.

No more we doubt you, glorious Prince of life; life is naught without you: aid us in our strife;

make us more than conquerors through your deathless love; bring us safe through Jordan to your home above.

[Refrain]

Yours be the glory, risen, conquering Son, endless is the victory over death you've won.

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