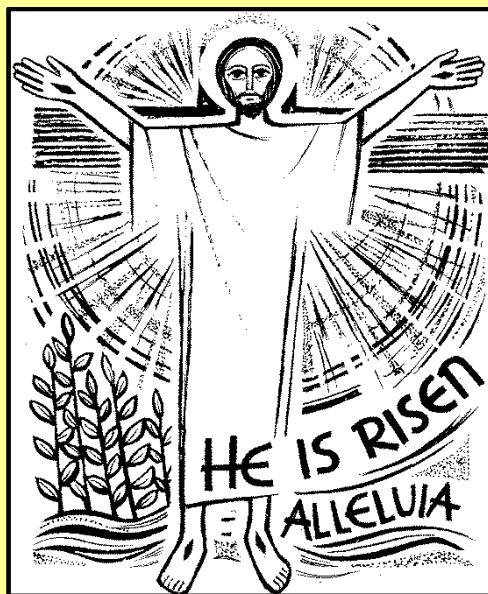


The Methodist Church

Welshpool & Bro Hafren Methodist Circuit

Home Worship Sheet – Easter Sunday, 12th April

This short act of worship has been prepared and written for you by Rev Marian Jones.



**Alleluia! Christ is risen!
He is risen indeed! Alleluia!**

Hymn: Christ the Lord is risen today

To listen to this hymn in a new tab: press Shift and Ctrl together and click [here](#).
Close the tab after the hymn.

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| 1 | Christ the Lord is risen today,
Sons of men and angels say,
Raise your joys and triumphs high,
Sing, ye heavens, thou earth, reply, | <i>Alleluia!</i>
<i>Alleluia!</i>
<i>Alleluia!</i>
<i>Alleluia!</i> |
| 2 | Love's redeeming work is done,
Fought the fight, the battle won,
Vain the sun the watch has been,
Christ has burst the gates of hell, | <i>Alleluia!</i>
<i>Alleluia!</i>
<i>Alleluia!</i>
<i>Alleluia!</i> |

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| 3 | Lives again our glorious King,
Where, O death, is now thy sting?
Once He died our souls to save,
Where's thy vict'ry, boasting grave? | <i>Alleluia!</i>
<i>Alleluia!</i>
<i>Alleluia!</i>
<i>Alleluia!</i> |
| 4 | Soar we now where Christ hath led,
Following our exalted Head,
Made like Him, like Him we rise
Ours the cross, the grave, the skies, | <i>Alleluia!</i>
<i>Alleluia!</i>
<i>Alleluia!</i>
<i>Alleluia!</i> |
| 5 | King of Glory, Soul of bliss,
Everlasting life is this,
Thee to know, Thy power to prove,
Thus to sing and thus to love, | <i>Alleluia!</i>
<i>Alleluia!</i>
<i>Alleluia!</i>
<i>Alleluia!</i> |

Charles Wesley (1707–1788)
Reproduced from Gallery Hymns and Carols from the 18th & 19th Centuries

Opening Prayer

Gracious God,

**on this Easter Day,
with members of your family throughout the world,
and especially with our own church family,
we come to worship you
and to celebrate the resurrection of your Son, Jesus Christ.**

**As we worship,
give us ears to hear your word,
minds to understand your truth,
and hearts to feel your love.**

**We pray in the power of your Spirit
and in the name of your Son, Jesus Christ.**

Amen.

Colossians 3: 1 – 4

So if you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth, for you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ who is your life is revealed, then you also will be revealed with him in glory.

John 20: 1 – 18

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.

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.'

Then Peter and the other disciple set out and went towards the tomb. The two were running together, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. He bent down to look in and saw the linen wrappings lying there, but he did not go in.

Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb. He saw the linen wrappings lying there, and the cloth that had been on Jesus' head, not lying with the linen wrappings but rolled up in a place by itself. Then the other disciple, who reached the tomb first, also went in, and he saw and believed; for as yet they did not understand the scripture, that he must rise from the dead. Then the disciples returned to their homes.

But Mary stood weeping outside the tomb. As she wept, she bent over to look into the tomb; 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. 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.'

When she had said this, she turned round and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not know that it was Jesus. 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.' Jesus said to her, 'Mary!' She turned and said to him in Hebrew, 'Rabbouni!' (which means Teacher). 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." '

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.

Reflection

Staying in behind locked doors, fearful and uncertain, the disciples of Jesus must have wondered how long they would need to keep their heads down, to stay in isolation, to maintain social distance. Their leader, the one in whom they trusted, had been killed. Were their lives in danger too?

We're learning, most of us, about isolation and social distancing. Each day, I've been walking around the garden – the front is grass, the back is only pocket handkerchief size yet, in that small patch I've noticed changes that I've overlooked before. My beautiful blue anemones (called Marianne!) have been in flower all year round, the chionodoxa seem so delicate and fragile but they're so tough, the hellebores are still in flower, the white narcissi are coming to an end along with the purple and white crocus and the purple knight tulips are almost ready to open. That's what I can see – there's so much life hidden, waiting for the moment burst into life.

Paul, perhaps dictating to Timothy, writes from prison to the Christian community in Colossae, and to us – 'your life is hidden with Christ in God'.

Wandering around the garden set me thinking of other gardens and, firstly, the story of creation. The Lord God saw all that he had made and it was very good. The story presents an image of the way our relationship with God was meant to be – Adam was to tend the garden, to look after it, just as we, Adam's successors, are to be stewards of creation (Genesis 2.15). Eve was appointed helper and companion.

We know the story!

'They heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden at the time of the evening breeze . . .'

and things fell apart.

Don't tell anyone but, in my garden, I have an olive tree growing from a small twig that I tore off an olive tree growing in another garden – a place where some of you have walked – the garden of Gethsemane. It's where Jesus struggled with his fears and where his closest friends failed to stay awake and keep watch as he'd asked them to. I like to think he was arguing with God, desperately looking for another way, a different way. Through the blood, sweat and tears, he realised that he had to keep faith with all he had taught and practised, he had to keep faith with God. Unlike that first Adam in another garden, Jesus chose to remain faithful to God – a second Adam, doing things differently.

And we know where it led . . .

Today, we can picture another garden, the one belonging to Joseph of Arimathea; a garden with a cave that would serve as a family tomb when the time came, a tomb where, in the hurry to bury him before the Sabbath, the body of Jesus was laid. Because his body hadn't been anointed between death and burial, Mary Magdalen and the other women came along in the morning while it was still dark to perform this labour of love. The stone sealing the entrance to the tomb had been rolled away, I can't begin to imagine what she would have felt. Blind panic, maybe. She ran

to fetch Peter and John and they came back with her. They looked and went back behind their locked door.

Beside herself, weeping, someone spoke to her. Remember the Lord God walking in that first garden at the time of the evening breeze? Now it's a new dawn; a new beginning; a new day; a new creation – and Mary heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day. More than that, he called her name and invited her to share the news of his presence with the others.

In the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem, the church that covers the sites of the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus, there's a modern bronze art work that I love –



to me it says: 'Come and join the dance!' although, of course, it's 'Do not touch me!'

It's about joy and movement, Jesus pointing beyond himself to something, someone, higher, bigger, greater.

I love the Father Brown stories so I've read other things by G.K. Chesterton. In 'The Everlasting Man' he wrote:

'On the third day, the friends of Christ, coming at daybreak to the place, found the grave empty and the stone rolled away. In varying ways they realised . . . that the world had died in the night. What they were looking at was the first day of a new creation, with a new heaven and a new earth; and in a semblance of the gardener God walked again in the garden, in the cool not of the evening but the dawn'.

Rising above the restrictions placed on us, may you know the joy of Easter and may God bless you as you reflect on the story.

Prayers for the world, the church, for others and for ourselves

**Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the living God,
with your death on the cross
your disciples were broken,
their hopes and dreams shattered,
and their faith died.
With your resurrection came new life for them,
their vision was reborn,
their faith rekindled
and their hope restored.
Come to us
where love has died,
where hope has faded,
where faith has grown cold;
breathe new life into us,
lead us to your truth
and keep us in your love.**

Lord of life, [hear us in your love.](#)

**We pray for an increase of hope in our broken world:
that people may see signs of new life beyond the immediate horizons
of struggle, deprivation and violence;
we pray for those who work for peace within and between the nations,
for those who seek justice and freedom for the oppressed,
and for all who feel forgotten.**

Lord of life, [hear us in your love.](#)

**We pray for our own communities
that they may be places of care
where the sorrowing find comfort,
the lonely find friendship
and all are respected.
We remember those who are ill or grieving,
those who, in this period of isolation, feel very alone**

. . .

**and we give thanks for all who are working at this time,
especially those who have face to face contact with others,
in health and social care,
in the emergency services,
in shops, banks and Post Offices;**

for funeral directors,
scientists searching for a vaccine,
industrialists changing their manufacturing systems to aid healthcare.

Lord of life, **hear us in your love.**

We pray for members of your church throughout the world,
held together in love yet separated at this time;
and we remember the whole company of heaven
who join with us in our worship.
May we receive from God the strength we need
to maintain our hope,
to grow in faith
and to trust in his unending love

Lord of life, **hear us in your love.**

We pray to the Father, in the power of the Spirit
and in your name, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

*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.*

Hymn: Thine be the glory

To listen to this hymn in a new tab: press Shift and Ctrl together and click [here](#).
Close the tab after the hymn.

1 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.

2 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:

3 No more we doubt thee, glorious Prince of Life;
life is naught 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:

Edmond Budry (1854–1932)
translated by Richard Birch Hoyle (1875–1939)
Reproduced from Singing the Faith Electronic Words Edition, number 313

The Blessing

God the Father,
by whose glory Christ was raised from the dead,
strengthen us
to walk with him in his risen life;
and may almighty God bless us, and those whom we love,
today and always.

Amen.

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