



TETHERED
TO GOD:
WE CHOOSE LOVE

April 12th, 2020

Easter Sunday

Tethered to God: We Choose Love

Centre for
Music, Liturgy & the Arts



Preparing for worship

You may wish to find a comfortable space and light a candle to remember the presence of Christ this day. If you are worshipping with others you are encouraged to share the various parts of worship and read them aloud.

As you light the candle, affirm the presence of the resurrected Christ, saying:

Christ is Risen!

Christ is risen indeed!

Alleluia!

Call to Worship

A new day dawns and all creation sings:

Alleluia. Christ is risen!

Light shines in the darkness,
and even the deep darkness cannot overcome it.

Christ, the light of the world, is risen!

Alleluia. Christ is risen!

Come and see, our hope is not lost,
our connection is unbroken.

Christ lives among us.

Rejoice and sing, dance and be glad.

Alleluia. Christ is risen!

Hallelujah

[Click here](#) and add your voice to the Hallelujah's that echo around the world this Easter day. You might like to imagine the sun rising over the Pacific Ocean and as the sunrises progressively moves west and the globe spins, each nation adds voices as all creation sings Hallelujah!

Prayer of Thanksgiving

God of Easter morning,
you bring sunrise after the dark of night,
and in the quietness of fertile soil, you nurture seeds to grow.
From the silence of the tomb, you spring forth with new life.
Give us hope this Easter day.
Connect us to your life-giving ways.

God of connection,
for your faithful love and cord of hope that tethers us deeply to you,
we offer our thanks.
For your Spirit that enables us to gather as your people,
deeply weaving us as the body of Christ,
we offer our thanks.
For your call upon our lives and for your steadfast love,
we offer our thanks.

Holy God,
on this day we come with joyful hearts,
with hopefulness and faith,
listening for your call and responding in ways of love.
With joy and gratitude we pray, Amen.

Passing of the Peace

The peace of our God be with you.
And also with you.

Let us find ways to share peace and joy with one another. You might like to send a message to someone. You might want to make a phone call, play joyful music with your windows open or wave from your front porch to the neighbours walking past. Let us share Easter joy and love across the world this day.

Activities for the Whole Family

[Click here](#) to go to CMLA's website and find Easter morning colouring sheets to share joy this day.

Halle, Halle, Halle

[Click here](#) and sing Halle, Halle, Halle with people of all the world. This Hallelujah originated in the Caribbean.

Scripture Reading: 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. ²So 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.’ ³Then Peter and the other disciple set out and went towards the tomb. ⁴The two were running together, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. ⁵He bent down to look in and saw the linen wrappings lying there, but he did not go in. ⁶Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb. He saw the linen wrappings lying there, ⁷and the cloth that had been on Jesus’ head, not lying with the linen wrappings but rolled up in a place by itself. ⁸Then the other disciple, who reached the tomb first, also went in, and he saw and believed; ⁹for as yet they did not understand the scripture, that he must rise from the dead. ¹⁰Then the disciples returned to their homes.

¹¹ But Mary stood weeping outside the tomb. As she wept, she bent over to look into the tomb; ¹²and 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. ¹³They 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.’ ¹⁴When she had said this, she turned round and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not know that it was Jesus. ¹⁵Jesus 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.’ ¹⁶Jesus said to her, ‘Mary!’ She turned and said to him in Hebrew, ‘Rabbouni!’ (which means Teacher). ¹⁷Jesus 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.” ’

¹⁸Mary Magdalene went and announced to the disciples, 'I have seen the Lord'; and she told them that he had said these things to her.

The gospel of Christ, light of the world.

Thanks be to God.

Reflection on Scripture

On this day of Alleluias, help us listen for the still small voice among us.

On this day of Alleluias, help us listen for shouts of joy.

On this day of Alleluias, help us listen for the Word of the risen Christ, speaking to us, your Easter people.

On this day of Alleluias, help us listen for the echoes of love in our world and in our lives.

On this day of Alleluias, tune our ear to hear your voice, your message to each one of us.

Amen.

In Seminary you expect to hear really good call stories. Stories about being blinded by light, hearing your name called, the party animal turning their life around. There was a woman, a cellular biologist, who began seminary. Everyone was waiting to hear how this woman, with a successful career, two children, a happy marriage suddenly wound up in seminary of all places. How was it that her life had become so drastically different? When it came her turn to share her story she said. "The pastor asked me to read the Scripture one morning in church. At the end of the service, an older woman came up to me and said, "Dear, you read so well. You ought to think about becoming a pastor." That was all? Nothing more than "Dear you ought to be going to seminary?" "Well," she said, "you would have to know this woman. Our congregation had learned to trust her judgments".

The resurrection is an earth shattering moment. In the Gospel reading today the word tomb is used 9 times in the first 11 verses and then it is gone. It is replaced with the risen Christ in the garden. But the turning point isn't grand and spectacular. It is the simple calling of Mary's name. She doesn't get it, doesn't get it, doesn't get it, and then "Mary!" Jesus says. And then aha! It all turns and Mary becomes the first person to see

Jesus and the very first witness to the gospel. The very first call story is as simple as “Dear, you read so well. You ought to think about becoming a pastor.” The world turns on that simple word, “Mary!”.

Today as we worship, this tomb that was here on Good Friday has become a garden, a place of transformation. A place where we encounter the Risen Christ – where Christ speaks each of our names – inviting us into the life of hope, love and justice.

It is an invitation to a life that it is expansive and holds unlimited potential. It is an invitation to experience the great love of God that is boundless, growing and alive.

You Are Mine

[Click here](#) to hear the call of God in the song *You Are Mine* by David Haas, as sung at the Opening of the Assembly of the UCA.

Prayers of the People

God of light and life,
we pray for your world this day.

As the world responds to coronavirus we pray for the dying, the ill and the fragile. Bring your comfort, O God.

For those who are feeling overwhelmed or anxious, lonely and afraid.
Bring your peace, O God.

We pray for those whose needs have been overshadowed by the current crisis, but whose concerns remain – for the homeless, the grieving; for those struggling against addiction, or caught in cycles of violence; for the earth, for places where bushfires have brought devastation, or creatures suffer. Bring your presence, O God.

Open us as a global community to see the needs of one another. Guide us in paths of love and restore hope in us.

We pray for our communities this day – those who are close to us, whose lives we know intimately and whose struggles are upon our hearts.

Silence

Guide us in paths of love and restore hope in us.

We pray for ourselves this day. Strengthen our tethering to you that we might choose paths of love in our daily living – in our homes, in our workplaces, in our community.

When we choose love, anger shifts to be productive.

When we choose love there is comfort.

When we all choose love, the world changes for the better.

Shape our hearts, this day, O God.

Inspire our living that love might guide us.

And now with the global community of the children of God we pray:

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 in the time of trial

and deliver us from evil.

For the kingdom, the power

and the glory are yours

now and forever. Amen.

Lord of the Dance

[Click here](#) to listen and sing along with *Lord of the Dance*.

Sending Forth and Benediction

Go out into the world with a song in your heart,
and the joy of the risen Christ in your step.

Greet this new day with hope
choosing to love in every way possible.

For this day is God's day,
and all heaven and earth sing Hallelujah!

Hallelujah, amen.

Inspired by Christ, the Lord of the Dance, [Click here](#) to join in the dancing with Meghan Trainor.