

**Earlsdon Methodist Church  
Easter Sunday Worship  
4<sup>th</sup> April 2021**



**Theme: The Risen Lord**



Alleluia! Christ is risen!

**He is risen indeed! Alleluia**

**Hymn: Jesus Christ is Risen Today**



**Let us pray:**

**Prayer of Adoration**

Glory to you, O God: You raised Jesus from the grave, bringing us victory over death and giving eternal life.

Glory to You, O Christ: for us and for our salvation you overcame death and opened the gate to everlasting life. Glory to You, O Holy Spirit: You lead us into the truth and breathe new life into us.

Glory to you, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit now and forever more.

**Prayer of Confession**

If we have fallen into despair,

**Lord, forgive us.**

If we have failed to hope in you,

**Lord, forgive us.**

If we have been fearful of death,

**Lord, forgive us.**

If we have forgotten the victory of Christ,

**Lord, forgive us.**

**Prayer of Thanksgiving**

Almighty creator God, we thank you for this season of rebirth: We thank you for Jesus, your Son, given to us, made like us to live like

us, but whose life of service and love led to his suffering and death on the cross. With the gratitude of our hearts, knowing that he rose again to conquer life and death, we dedicate ourselves to you, that in the power of your Spirit, we may be strengthened to serve you in the Church and in the world.

In the name of Jesus Christ, our risen Lord and Saviour. **Amen**

**Silence**

**The Collect:**

Lord of all life and power, who through the mighty resurrection of your Son overcame  
..... Amen.

**Glory to God in the highest**

**Glory to God in the highest, and peace to His people on earth. Lord God, heavenly King, Almighty God and Father, we worship You, we give You thanks, we praise You for Your glory. Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father, Lord God, Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world: have mercy on us; You are seated at the right hand of the Father: receive our prayer. For You alone are the Holy One, You alone are the Lord, You alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of the Father. Amen.**

## Hymn 293 StF: All Heaven Declares



### **Scripture Readings**

#### **Isaiah 25: 6-9 and Gospel: John 20:1-18**

A reading from the Gospel according to **John 20:1-18**  
**Glory to Christ our Saviour. Alleluia**

The Gospel is read.

Alleluia! This is the Gospel of Christ.  
**Praise to Christ our Lord. Alleluia!**

### **Reflection: The Resurrection of Jesus Christ**

This familiar passage recounts the joy and mystery of the first Easter morning. It happens at a time of great uncertainty for the followers of Jesus, with their teacher dead the disciples must have felt adrift. In their grief, three visit Jesus' tomb and find him gone. Two leave, believing the body has been taken, but Mary Magdalene stayed behind.

This Easter story is the manifestation of God's plan for redemption of all of humanity as was prophesied through the ages for example, **Isaiah 26:19** and **Acts 24:15**. What the Easter story needed was a witness to evangelise the 'Good News' that **Jesus Christ is risen indeed!**

To be a witness to the 'Good News' one has to be committed to Jesus Christ and be spiritually matured to handle the mysteries of the faith. Mary Magdalene was committed to Jesus – she was equally devoted just like the other disciples. Such dedication and love instilled in her a deeper sense of servitude to Jesus even in His death.

Little wonder that Mary Magdalene was the first to visit Jesus' tomb early in the morning whilst it was still dark to anoint his body and found the stone used to seal the tomb has been rolled away and she was shocked and distraught – thinking His body has been stolen.

#### **Question: Have you been shocked or confused over a situation and how did you deal with it?**

Mary Magdalene worried Jesus' body had been stolen, ran to Simon Peter and as the scripture says and 'the other one whom Jesus loved' inviting them to come and confirm she was not imagining things. They rushed to the tomb and even though the other disciple outran Simon Peter and arrived at the tomb ahead of Simon Peter, yet he did not go into the tomb; he only looked in and saw the linen wrappings.

#### **Eyewitness Accounts**

Simon Peter, arriving later, went straight into the tomb and what he saw was quite different! He saw the linen wrapping and separated from it, was the cloth used to wrap Jesus' head. Simon Peter had a fuller understanding about the enormity of what they were witnessing as he carried Jesus' prophecy to be the foundation of Jesus' Church. This led the other disciple to go into the tomb to witness the fulfilment of the scriptures that – '**Jesus must rise from the dead**'; and then the disciples returned to their homes.

The hymn '**O Love That Will Not Let Me Go**'(StF-636) comes to mind. Whilst the disciples returned to their homes, Mary Magdalene consumed in grief stayed behind weeping, longing and yearning for Jesus. Looking in the tomb again, she saw two angels sitting at the head and foot positions of where Jesus' body was laid. She engaged in a dialogue with the angels, persisting on enquire about the whereabouts of Jesus' body. It was at this point that Jesus revealed Himself to Mary asking "woman, why are you

weeping? For whom are you weeping?" Mary at first mistook Jesus for the gardener-again insisting on knowing the whereabouts of Jesus' body but when Jesus called out her name - "Mary!" Mary immediately recognised Jesus and called Him in her familiar terms - "Rabbouni"! (Teacher). This was a divine encounter for the purpose of a divine revelation!

### **The Joy of Easter**

Jesus commissioned Mary Magdalene with the Good News of the joy of Easter. It was important for Jesus' disciples and the world to know that death had no hold on Him and His ascension to His Father was certain. Mary went about announcing to the disciples that she had seen the Lord and told them everything Jesus has told her.

The joy of Easter is the belief that after three days, Jesus rose from the dead that is why Jesus warned Mary Magdalene not to hold on to Him but to release Him as He is yet to be ascended to His Father. Jesus Christ however appointed Mary Magdalene Evangelist and disciple - a true Believer - "my Father and your Father, My God, and your God" (**Vs 17**).

Easter is one of the times during the year when, through our church communities, we have an opportunity to reach out to many people. It is a touching point between the secular (social, commercial) and sacred worlds. It offers a chance to step into the Easter story, and to explore the truth of this wonderful mystery that is at the very heart of the Christian story.

Easter joy for an Easter people in a world full tribulation! A year one in a global pandemic, death and illness, loneliness, unemployment, mental illness is more prevalent amongst young people, racial, sexual and other forms of abuse and discriminations; the Church reimagining her identity and purpose going forward.

### **Good News**

**Christ is risen. He is risen indeed. Alleluia!** Jesus Christ has paid the ultimate price with His life so that we become new creation through Him and be reconciled to God our heavenly Father. Death and Sin has no hold over us; guilt and shame are condemned by His blood and the enemy is put to flight at the mention of His name.

The resurrected Christ brings us hope in times of despair. His birth, life, death and resurrection are blessed assurance that the battle is fought and won, and we are not alone. The Spirit of the Lord is with us, weeping with us, rejoicing with us, guiding us to Himself saying 'come unto me all who labour, and I will give you rest'. (**Matthew 11:28**)

The Prophet Isaiah draws a distinction between those who gave refuge to the poor and needy, and those who were ruthless (vv.4-5). For the former (the poor and needy included) there will be an opportunity to embrace a new life, portrayed as a great banquet. Grief will be a thing of the past: God will wipe away every tear (**Revelation 21.4**).

Finally, beloved, this day, 'if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come, the old has gone, the new is here! (**2 Cors 5:17**). Alleluia, for a new beginning concerning all things in heaven and on earth through Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

**Hymn 295 StF: Alleluia, Alleluia, Give Thanks to the Risen Lord**



**Earlsdon Methodist Church Welcomes Colin and Rosie**



**A Prayer of Spiritual Communion**

Longing for the time when we can truly share bread and wine together, we pray, loving God, that Jesus meets us now, in this time and this place. Though we cannot receive you in bread and wine, through your Holy Spirit come into our hearts. By your love assure us of your risen life within us even in the darkest times. Make us one with you and with each other as we remember we are part of your body. And as your body equip us still to serve you and minister your grace in new ways to your hurting world. **Amen.** *(Birmingham District Synod Worship)*



Gracious God, whose Spirit helps us in our weakness and guides us in our prayers, we pray for the Church and for the world in the name of Jesus Christ.

Renew the life and faith of the Church; strengthen our witness; .....  
Lord, in your mercy,  
**hear our prayer.**

Guide the nations in the ways of justice, liberty and peace; .....  
Give to all in authority wisdom to know and strength to do what is right.  
Lord, in your mercy,  
**hear our prayer.**

Comfort those in sorrow; heal the sick in body or in mind and deliver the oppressed .....  
And help us to carry one another's burdens .....  
Lord, in your mercy,  
**hear our prayer.**

Receive our thanks and praise for all who have served you faithfully here on earth, .....  
May we and all people share the life and joy of your Kingdom; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**



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 313 StF: Thine Be the Glory**



God of new life and new beginnings, we have been drawn here today to encounter again the mysterious story of life everlasting. Help us, like Mary Magdalene, to stay close to this mystery, to embrace our emotions, to hear you when you call us by name, and to experience new wonders. **Amen.**

© ROOTS for Churches Ltd ([www.rootsontheweb.com](http://www.rootsontheweb.com)).