

Order of service – 19th April 2020 The Second Sunday of Easter

Even though our ACC faith family may be scattered, even though we cannot meet at our church, we are thankful for all of God's blessings in our lives; and thankful for the hope that comes in the celebration of this Easter season. You are welcome to use this service in part or in whole. May God bless you today and in the days to come.

Susan Simonson and the Worship Committee

[A meditation with children: https://sermons4kids.com/checking_the_roll.htm]

Call to Worship

Christ is risen!

Christ is risen indeed!

Though we may be keeping ourselves isolated from others,
**yet, we would listen to the birds singing,
reminding us that the whole creation
rejoices in the love of our God.**

Though we cannot reach out and touch
our friends and neighbors,
**we would rejoice that Jesus is in our midst,
holding out hands of grace and hope to us!**

Though we have to stand at a safe distance from others,
**we know that the Spirit is all around us,
breathing peace on us in these moments,
surrounding us with grace and hope.**

Opening Hymn Alleluia, Alleluia, Give Thanks to the Risen Lord

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2U1MuOCHon4>

Opening prayer – using parts of the Psalm of the day – Psalm 16

¹ Keep me safe, my God,
for in you I take refuge.

² I say to the Lord, "You are my Lord;
apart from you I have no good thing."

⁵ Lord, you alone are my portion and my cup;
you make my lot secure.

⁷ I will praise the Lord, who counsels me;
even at night my heart instructs me.

⁸ I keep my eyes always on the Lord.
With him at my right hand, I will not be shaken.

⁹ Therefore my heart is glad and my tongue rejoices;
my body also will rest secure,

¹⁰ because you will not abandon me to the realm of the dead,
nor will you let your faithful^[b] one see decay.

¹¹ You make known to me the path of life;
you will fill me with joy in your presence,
with eternal pleasures at your right hand.

In you we rejoice, O Lord. Amen

Prayer of Confession *Coventry Cathedral Prayer*

The hatred which divides nation from nation, race from race, class from class, Father, forgive us.
The covetous desires of people and nations to possess what is not their own, Father, forgive us.
The greed which exploits the labours of men and lays waste the earth, Father, forgive us.
Our envy of the belongings and happiness of others, Father, forgive us.
Our indifference to the plight of the homeless and the refugee, Father, forgive us.
The pride which leads to trust in ourselves and not in God, Father, forgive us. Amen.

Absolution: God the Father of mercies, through the death and resurrection of his Son has reconciled the world to himself and sent the Holy Spirit among us for the forgiveness of sins. We give thanks for this.

Hymn of Praise **There Is A Redeemer**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JDgZ1v3l9go>

Readings

Acts 2: 14a, 22-32 <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Acts+2%3A+14a%2C+22-32&version=NIV>

1 Peter 1: 19-31 <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Peter+1%3A+3-9&version=NIV>

Gospel reading: John 20:19-31

Jesus Appears to His Disciples

¹⁹ On the evening of that first day of the week, when the disciples were together, with the doors locked for fear of the Jewish leaders, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you!" ²⁰ After he said this, he showed them his hands and side. The disciples were overjoyed when they saw the Lord.

²¹ Again Jesus said, "Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you." ²² And with that he breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit. ²³ If you forgive anyone's sins, their sins are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven."

Jesus Appears to Thomas

²⁴ Now Thomas (also known as Didymus^[a]), one of the Twelve, was not with the disciples when Jesus came. ²⁵ So the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord!"

But he said to them, "Unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe."

²⁶ A week later his disciples were in the house again, and Thomas was with them. Though the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you!" ²⁷ Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here; see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. Stop doubting and believe."

²⁸ Thomas said to him, “My Lord and my God!”

²⁹ Then Jesus told him, “Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.”

The Purpose of John’s Gospel

³⁰ Jesus performed many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book. ³¹ But these are written that you may believe^[b] that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

This is the Word of our Lord. Thanks be to God

Overcoming Fear. A meditation from Gerald Darring Catholic Studies Program at Saint Louis University

Jesus had been abandoned by his disciples at the time of his death. One of them had turned him over to the authorities. Another had denied he even knew Jesus. The others ran away, apparently in fear and horror.

That same fear still gripped the disciples as they stayed behind locked doors. The risen Jesus suddenly appears among them, and there is not a word about their betrayal, denial, and abandonment.

“Peace be with you,” he says, as though nothing had ever happened. They look at his wounds, and he repeats his remarkable greeting: “Peace be with you.”

If only we could follow in the footsteps of Christ and wish peace to everyone! If only we could forgive as he forgave! Where would be the wars? the discrimination? the hatred? They would go the way of death itself, conquered by the resurrection.

Jesus assures us that we have received the Holy Spirit. We have the power to release others of their wrongs against us, just as we have the power to keep them and ourselves bound. Our Easter faith that we have “become a new creation” should strengthen our resolve to forgive as Christ forgave.

We urge our brothers and sisters in Christ to remember the teaching of Jesus, who called us to be reconciled with those who have injured us and to pray for forgiveness for our sins “as we forgive those who have sinned against us.”

We call on you to contemplate the crucified Christ, who set us the supreme example of forgiveness and of the triumph of compassionate love.

Hymn of Affirmation: Be Thou My Vision

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5NZ7oEWu-18>

Prayers of the People. *Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.* Philippians 4:6

Gracious God, we pray:

For all who all who are ill, particularly those with Covid-19: that the Risen Lord will bring an end to the coronavirus and give hope, healing, and new life to those who are sick

For all who are frightened: that they may find Christ in their fear and darkness

For all who work in essential jobs: that God will protect them and their families from illness and give them strength to fulfill their duties

For all working to end the pandemic: that God inspire and give insight to all who are caring for the sick, developing treatments, or researching vaccines

For greater appreciation of creation: that as we experience the creator of all that exists, we may treat all of creation with a greater reverence as God's gift to us

[Please add in your own prayers if you wish]

O living Christ, in these days of upheaval, make us conscious now of Your healing nearness. Touch our eyes that we may see You; open our ears that we may hear Your voice; enter our hearts that we may know Your love. Overshadow our souls and bodies with Your presence, that we partake of Your strength, Your love, Your light and Your healing Life. **Amen.**

We Gather at the Lord's Table – a service of Holy Communion

Come, all you who are loved by God, Come to the table of the Lord, Come and eat food. Come and drink.

We come to eat, to drink, and our hearts are glad.

Yes, Dear Lord our God, Our hearts truly are glad, and we are filled with thankfulness, Because in Your great love You did not abandon us in the dark and fearful places of this world, But in Jesus, You came to us, to rescue us, to restore us, and to give us new life.

And all who are tired and burdened, all who are frightened and unsafe, all who are sick and broken, can come and find new life.

We remember the way that Jesus showed us His love: On the evening before He died, He had supper with His friends. During the meal, He took the loaf of bread, gave thanks for it, broke it and then passed it around with these words: **This is my body broken for you. Eat this and remember Me.** And, after the meal He took the cup of wine, gave thanks for it and then passed it around with these words: **This is my blood shed for you. Drink this and remember Me.**

And now, every time we eat bread like this, and every time we drink wine like this, We remember Jesus, and His everlasting love.

[serve ourselves or each other]

We Prepare to Go Back Into the World

Now come, all you who are loved by God, Hear His call to serve others as He has served you; Hear His invitation to be part of His plan to rescue the world; Join the community of those who walk in the footsteps of Jesus. **Lord God of World-Changing Love, We thank You for this meal, and for welcoming us to Your table. We remember that we are Your children, and that You have called us to share Your love with everyone we meet. Help us to receive Your life, walk in Your strength, and follow Your ways every moment of our lives.**

And now, may God's caring arms embrace us, Jesus' comforting words fill us, and the Holy Spirit's renewing Presence surround us today and ever more. **Amen**

The Lord's Prayer St. Francis of Assisi

Our Father.

Our Creator, Redeemer, Comforter and Savior.

Who art in heaven.

You are with the angels and the saints, bathing them in your light that they may be enlightened by your love, and dwelling within them that they may be filled with your joy. You are the supreme good, the eternal good, from whom comes all goodness, and without whom there is no goodness.

Hallowed be your name.

May our knowledge of you become ever clearer, that we may know the breadth of your blessings, the length of your promises, the height of your majesty, and the depth of your judgements.

Your kingdom come.

Rule in our hearts with your grace, that we may become fit subjects for your kingdom. We desire nothing more than to dwell in your kingdom, where we can watch you on your throne, and enjoy your perfect love.

Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.

May we love you with our whole heart by always thinking of you, with our whole soul by always desiring you, with our whole mind by directing all our intentions to you, and with our whole strength by spending all our energies in your service. And may we love our neighbors as ourselves, drawing them to your love, rejoicing in their good fortunes, and caring for them in their misfortunes.

Give us this day our daily bread.

In memory and understanding and reverence of the love which our Lord Jesus Christ has for us, revealed by his sacrifice for us on the cross, we ask for the perfect bread of his body.

And forgive us our trespasses.

We know that you forgive us, through the suffering and death of your beloved Son.

As we forgive those who trespass against us.

Enable us to forgive perfectly and without reserve any wrong that has been committed against us. And strengthen our hearts truly to love our enemies, praying for them and striving to serve them.

And lead us not into temptation.

Save us not only from obvious and persistent temptations, but also those that are hidden or come suddenly when our guard is lowered.

But deliver us from evil.

Protect us from past evil, protect us against present evil, and free us from future evil.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit;
As it was in the beginning, it is now, and will be forever. **Amen.**

Offertory: If you wish to give your offerings to ACC, you can use ACC **MPESA** number +255 755 992 394 in the name of Nasieku Mollel (ACC Administrator's last name).

Offertory hymn: Bwana Ni Mchungaji Wangu

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qyNBVARa7K8>

Prayer for Offering

Though alone, separated from others, we can still we offer our gifts on this joyous morning, praying that they may the bring light to those in the shadows, laughter to all who mourn, and hope to those longing for life anew. In Jesus' name, we pray. **Amen.**

Sending thought

This week we may be given, challenges instead of ease, courage instead of contentment, opportunities instead of rest.

But we have a Saviour who brings strength out of service, faith out of struggle, and victory out of defeat.

Go then, fearful of nothing, sure that in everything, we are held secure in the Master's steadfast love.

E. Lee Phillips

Benediction

The Lord Bless You and Keep You

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ICpxgEHqjFA>

A parting hymn

God be With You Till We Meet Again

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GZHrtHdbdOE&list=PLgFzpFx7s2zol884C38uNUUYfsDijiRvh&index=22>