

# EASTER WORSHIP

April 12, 2020

## OPENING SENTENCES

PASTOR: Christ has risen! He has risen indeed.  
The night is over! The morning is here!  
Christ is risen, risen as he said!  
Sadness has vanished! Tears are no more!  
Death has fled! Life is victorious!

This is the day the Lord has made:  
Let us rejoice and be glad in it!

Come, assemble for the Feast of Life,  
The Feast of the Kingdom of God!  
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

PASTOR: Beloved in Christ, God's love pours out from the grave of despair. The Risen Christ comes with hands full of love. He greets us with a peace the world does not know, He give us a peace the world cannot give. Let us Pray:

PASTOR: Almighty God, who through Your Son overcame death and opened to us the gate of everlasting life, grant that we who celebrate our Lord's resurrection may arise from the death of our sin through the renewal of Your Holy Spirit and may hear and obey Your living Word of truth; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who now lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God forever and ever. Alleluia. AMEN!

## EASTER CONFESSION

PASTOR: On this Easter Sunday we join together in affirming our Easter faith, the faith in which we were baptized and, also, in confessing our sin. Good friends, since by his resurrection we have new life in Christ, let us live as new people, bound to each other by cords of compassion, attentive to the needs of our neighbors far and near, eager to serve and love one another. Let us affirm our faith this day, the faith in which we were baptized. I ask you:

PASTOR: Do you reject Satan?

**ALL: Yes, I do.**

PASTOR: And all his works?

**ALL: Yes, I do.**

PASTOR: And all his empty promises?

**ALL: Yes, I do.**

PASTOR: Do you believe that we are made intelligent and in the image and likeness of God?

**ALL: Yes, I do.**

PASTOR: Do you believe that God sent His beloved Son Jesus, to show us the depth of His love, and reveal to us how we become, in Him, fully human and alive as he was, by faith and in and through our loving and serving one another?

**ALL: Yes, I do.**

PASTOR: Do you believe that Jesus was raised by the Father and that he has brought life and love to us all?

**ALL: Yes, I do.**

PASTOR: Do you believe that the Holy Christian Church, which is the body of Christ, is the community of saints and the fellowship of believers?

**ALL: Yes, I do.**

PASTOR: Do you believe that the Spirit of God is alive and active in our world, challenging us to bring unity where there is division, healing where there is brokenness, calling us from selfishness and sin in order to renew the face of the earth?

**ALL: Yes, I do.**

PASTOR: If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. But if we confess our sins, God, who is faithful and just, will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. Let us then confess our sins to God our Father.

**ALL: Most merciful God, we confess that we are by nature sinful and unclean. We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We justly deserve your present and eternal punishment. For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ, have mercy on us, forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways to the glory of your holy name. Amen!**

PASTOR: Almighty God in His mercy has given His only Son to die for you and for His sake forgives you all your sins. As a called and ordained servant of Christ, and by his authority, I therefore you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**ALL: Amen.**

## **THE EASTER LITANY OF PRAISE**

This is a day for celebration. This is the day when Christ our Brother broke the chains of death and rose in triumph from the grave. He did this, not just for himself, but for all of us. He wants us to share in his victory over sin and death. Jesus is risen! Jesus is alive!

This is the day the Lord has made! Let us be glad and rejoice!

We celebrate Easter with deep joy. The same joy which transformed the dejected friends of Jesus and transformed their lives when they realized that he had overcome sin, death and the grave. Jesus Christ is alive. Alleluia!

### **What a Beautiful Name**

You were the Word at the beginning  
One with God the Lord Most High  
Your hidden glory in creation  
Now revealed in You our Christ

What a beautiful Name it is  
What a beautiful Name it is  
The Name of Jesus Christ my King  
What a beautiful Name it is  
Nothing compares to this  
What a beautiful Name it is  
The Name of Jesus

You didn't want heaven without us  
So Jesus You brought heaven down  
My sin was great Your love was greater  
What could separate us now

What a wonderful Name it is  
What a wonderful Name it is  
The Name of Jesus Christ my King  
What a wonderful Name it is  
Nothing compares to this  
What a wonderful Name it is  
The Name of Jesus  
What a wonderful Name it is  
The Name of Jesus

Death could not hold You  
The veil tore before You  
You silence the boast of sin and grave  
The heavens are roaring  
The praise of Your glory  
For You are raised to life again

You have no rival  
You have no equal  
Now and forever God You reign  
Yours is the kingdom  
Yours is the glory  
Yours is the Name above all names

What a powerful Name it is  
What a powerful Name it is  
The Name of Jesus Christ my King  
What a powerful Name it is  
Nothing can stand against  
What a powerful Name it is  
The Name of Jesus

What a wonderful Name it is  
The Name of Jesus  
What a beautiful Name it is  
The Name of Jesus

CCLI Song # 7068424  
Ben Fielding | Brooke Ligertwood  
© 2016 Hillsong Music Publishing Australia (Admin. by Capitol CMG Publishing)  
For use solely with the SongSelect®. Terms of Use. All rights reserved. www.ccli.com  
CCLI License # 38370

**SCRIPTURE READING: Acts 10:34-43**

“Peter opened his mouth and said: “Truly I understand that God shows no partiality, but in every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him. As for the word that he sent to Israel, preaching good news of peace through Jesus Christ (he is Lord of all), you yourselves know what happened throughout all Judea, beginning, from Galilee after the baptism that John proclaimed: how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power. He went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him. And we are witnesses of all that he did both in the country of the Jews and in Jerusalem. They put him to death by hanging him on a tree, but God raised him on the third day and made him to appear, not to all the people but to us who had been chosen by God as witnesses, who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead. And he commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one appointed by God to be judge of the living and the dead. To him all the prophet’s bear witness that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name.”

**SCRIPTURE READING: Colossians 3:1-4**

If then 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 appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.

### **SCRIPTURE READING: *Matthew 28:1-10***

Now after the Sabbath, toward the dawn of the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to see the tomb. And behold, there was a great earthquake, for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven and came and rolled back the stone and sat on it. His appearance was like lightning, and his clothing white as snow. And for fear of him the guards trembled and became like dead men. But the angel said to the women, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. He is not here, for he has risen, as he said. Come, see the place where he lay. Then go quickly and tell his disciples that he has risen from the dead, and behold, he is going before you to Galilee; there you will see him. See, I have told you." So they departed quickly from the tomb with fear and great joy, and ran to tell his disciples. And behold, Jesus met them and said, "Greetings!" And they came up and took hold of his feet and worshiped him. Then Jesus said to them, "Do not be afraid; go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee, and there they will see me."

### **I Know That My Redeemer Lives**

I know that my Redeemer lives;  
What comfort this sweet sentence gives!  
He lives, He lives, who once was dead;  
He lives, my ever-living head.

He lives triumphant from the grave;  
He lives eternally to save;  
He lives all-glorious in the sky;  
He lives exalted there on high.

He lives, all glory to His name!  
He lives, my Jesus, still the same;  
Oh, the sweet joy this sentence gives:  
I know that my Redeemer lives!

### **SERMON: *Jesus, the Resurrected King***

Every year thousands of people climb a mountain in the Italian Alps. Along the way they pass all the "stations of the cross." They end up standing before an outdoor crucifix. One tourist noticed a little trail that led beyond the cross. He walked through the woods. To his surprise he came upon another shrine. It depicted the empty tomb. It had been neglected. Weeds had grown up around it. **Almost everyone had gone as far as the cross, but stopped there.**

Far too many have gotten to the cross and stopped there. They have known the despair and heart-ache of this world. They have lived through hurt and pain. They have experienced loss and the fear of death. Far too few have moved beyond the cross to find the real message. The empty tomb.

The German theologian Jurgen Moltmann expresses in a single sentence the great span from Good Friday to Easter. It is, in fact, a summary of human history, past, present, and future: **God weeps with us so that we may someday laugh with Him.**

This past Friday we gathered in our homes. We gathered in humble amazement that Jesus would die on the cross for our sins. We stood in awe of the truth that He would take the punishment we deserve and die in our place.

Jesus came to die. He came to become the sacrificial, all-sufficient atonement for our sins. If Jesus didn't come to die, there's no purpose in the cross or the Resurrection. The New Testament consistently confronts us with this message: Christ died for us. Jesus came to willingly, freely take our sin upon Himself. If you are looking for forgiveness on the basis of your pleas, promises, and performance, then you will remain in your sins. Only if you accept His sacrifice will you open yourself to receiving the fullness of God's life-giving, forgiving, Spirit. That's why we celebrate today. This is Easter. It is Resurrection Sunday. It is the climax of our faith. It is the highest point. The pinnacle. It is the culmination of Jesus ministry. Now we celebrate! Now we rejoice together! Not just that Jesus came to earth. Not merely that He died. BUT that He rose from the dead! Triumphant over the grave. The one who has set us free from sin, self and the power of the Devil. BECAUSE HE LIVES, WE TOO-IN HIM- SHALL LIVE FOREVER.

If He had only died, He would merely have been a religious teacher like any other. Just another Buddha or Mohammed. But He didn't just come to earth. He didn't just die on a cross. He rose from the dead! This is the uniqueness of our faith! As the old hymn says:

**I serve a RISEN Savior, He's in the world today.**

I know that He is living, whatever men may say.

**I see His hand of mercy, I hear His voice of cheer,**

And just the time I need Him He is always near.

**He Lives, He lives, Christ Jesus lives today!**

He walks with me and talks with me along life's narrow way.

**He lives, He lives, salvation to impart!**

You ask me how I know He lives? He lives within my heart.

We've heard the story many times. We heard it read again this morning. I hope we never tire of hearing the words. He Is Risen! I hope we never cease to be amazed. He is risen! I hope we always remain awestruck at the incredible fact that death couldn't hold the Lord of Life. He is risen! And, most of all, I hope we never miss this simple fact Jesus is alive today. He is risen! If Easter says anything to us today, it says this: You can put truth in a grave, but it won't stay there. You can nail it to a cross, but it won't stay there. You can wrap it up in linen and it won't stay there. You can shut it up in a tomb, but it will rise.

The resurrection is not just something that happened at a moment in time. It is a daily reality. What we really mean is that He is Alive Today. Right now. At this very moment. And that changes everything. He lives in our hearts by faith. He shows himself in the lives we live and the love we share.

The Apostle Paul is clear in 1 Corinthians 15:14 when he writes, "**if Christ has not been raised, our preaching is useless and so is your faith.**"

What does it mean for us that Jesus is risen? Let me suggest 4 things I see in the resurrection:

**NUMBER ONE: *There is LOVE in the Resurrection.***

1 John 4:9 says, **“This is how God showed His love for us: He sent His one and only Son into the world that we might live through Him.”**

We see this love in a painful way on the cross. We see the extent of God’s love for us as we reflect on Jesus’s death. But it doesn’t end there! The love of God did not only send Jesus to the cross. It also raised Him back to life! The love of God did not leave Jesus in the tomb.

It did not leave us in despair. It raised Jesus back to life so we might live through him.

Love hates death. Love struggles against death. Love is in favor of life. In the resurrection of our Lord, love overcomes death. The love we find in the resurrection overflows from us to others.

1 John 3:14 says, **“We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love our brothers.”** We know that we participate in the resurrection life of Jesus because it spills over into our relationships with others. Even with those who are difficult to love. Jesus prayed that the world would know we were His disciples by the depth of our love for one another. This resurrection love needs to characterize all of our conversations. It needs to be the central part of all of our interactions with one another. God’s Kingdom cannot sustain harsh, critical, unloving words and spirits. They need to be replaced with the incredible love of God that raised Jesus.

The deepest longing of our hearts is to be loved. It is the first thing we find in the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. This is how God showed his love among us: **“He sent His one and only Son into the world that we might live through Him.” (1 John 4:9)**

If you are searching, striving, to be loved come to the empty tomb. Go first to the cross. See the love and forgiveness on the face of God. But don’t stay there. Come and meet the resurrected Jesus. Come and meet the God who is risen and is alive today. And you will discover true love.

**NUMBER TWO: *There is LIFE in the Resurrection.***

What would life be like if Jesus had not been raised from the dead? What would it be like to stand before a loved one as they are dying without any knowledge that there is life beyond the grave? I can’t imagine the desperation and I don’t even want to try! For there is life! There is victory! All because Jesus rose from the dead.

Romans 6:4-5 says, **“We were therefore buried with Him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life. For if we have been united with Him in a death like his, we will surely be united with him in a resurrection like his.”**

We will be united with Jesus in His resurrection life. That is exactly what happens at the moment we respond in faith to God. Jesus described it as a new birth. He says that if anyone is in Him, they are a new creation. The old has gone. The new has come!

Do you know that resurrection life? Romans 8:11 reads: **“And if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit, who lives in you”**.

That is what God freely offers to us. He offers us new life. He offers the chance for us to participate with Jesus in the life that comes through resurrection Jesus is alive today. He is here, right now, according to His promise. He brings with Him the gift of life. His hand is outstretched at this very moment offering it to you. He won't force it on you, but He will freely offer it. There is power in the presence of the risen Savior. Power to solve our difficulties. Power to remove our perplexities. Power to calm our fears. Power to ease our burdens. Power to dry our tears. Power to meet our every need. Power to settle our troubled minds. Power to satisfy every craving of our hearts.”

### **NUMBER THREE: *There is HOPE in the Resurrection.***

We have hope because Jesus rose from the dead. Because He lives, we can face tomorrow. We can face uncertain days because He lives. The resurrection gives us hope for today, hope for tomorrow, and hope for eternity. Hope that things can change. Hope that even if they don't change, God is with us. Hope that, even if the worst happens and death comes, that is not the end! There is more life after this one. Life that is a better life. A life without sickness or pain or tears. We will see Jesus with our eyes. We will touch Him with our hands. We will forever be at peace.

I know that for many of us, one thing we fear is death. We are afraid to die. It seems so final. So horrible. So unavoidable. But in the resurrection of Jesus we find hope. We hope for something greater, something better, something eternal. We know that because Jesus lives today, we too can live with Him. This hope effects how we live, and how we die.

And so, for each of us when the moment of death comes, we have hope. We can know that Jesus will be right there with us. His presence right at our side. We don't go through it alone. We go through it with Him. He is alive, and present with us. And then, when our turn comes to face death, we know that He will take us by the hand and leads us safely to the other side.

1 Peter 1:3 says, **“Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In His great mercy He has given us a new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.** Because He lives, we have hope.

### **NUMBER FOUR: *There is Power in the Resurrection.***

1 Cor. 6:14 tells us, **“By His power, God raised the Lord from the dead and He will raise us also.”**

Jesus is alive. He is alive right now. He is with us. He is walking beside us. He is Alive and with us through the power and presence of the Holy Spirit. His power is available to us. The same power that raised him from the dead. That same power we know will raise us.

That power is here for our daily lives. God desires us to experience it more deeply. It is there to enable us to have victory over sin. It is there to bring us hope and encouragement. It is there to shine through us to our world around us. It is there to enable us to worship and celebrate.

Jesus is alive: HE is here to enable us to have victory over sin. HE is here to bring us hope and encouragement. HE is here to shine through us to our world around us. HE is here to enable us to worship and celebrate.

This morning it is my prayer that you would know the Risen Lord Jesus. That you would know the love, the life, the hope, and the power of the Resurrection. That is the simple message of our faith. Jesus is Alive!

## **PRAYERS**

**PASTOR:** The Lord is risen! He is risen indeed! Hallelujah! Heaven Father, we worship You and adore You because You have raised Your son from the dead and made him to be Lord over all things in heaven and in earth. Fill us with confidence that in the risen Christ we can overcome all threats to the reality of Your love for us. Especially destroy in us the fear that death separates us from Your mercy.

Loving God we come before You today in the quietness of our own homes, able to envision all those years ago, when Your Son Jesus arose to the world, coming out of His quiet space on Easter Sunday bringing new life and a new reality to all.

**PASTOR:** It is hard for us to be joyful in our ones and twos at home when usually we are so glad to meet each other in worship and share our resurrection joy, singing heartily to joyful Easter music. This year it is different for us and yet we are reminded your love for us is no different. You are the same yesterday, today and forever.

**PASTOR:** As you brought a new reality to the world so long ago, today we face a new reality in our world. We are faced with:

- a global pandemic, where national and international leaders are scrambling to keep up with daily changes – may they have wisdom and genuine bi-partisan discussions to bring forward looking decisions to their countries:
- a health crisis – may our frontline health workers be provided with the personal protection they require and experience the presence of mind to be peaceful in their interactions with their patients:
- an economic crisis, where business owners face losses and employees face uncertain futures – may communication be deliberate between all parties as we face the future together:
- a loneliness crisis, for many a time of anxiety being forced on their own – help us to remember to love others and be kind, reaching out to 2 or 3 others each day through our various ways of communication.

**PASTOR:** We pray for open minds to be able to think differently in our new reality of life. Give us strength to do things differently and find joy in doing so.

PASTOR: Lord God, You loved this world so much that you gave your one and only Son, that we might be called your children. Lord, help us to live in the gladness and grace of Easter Sunday, every day. Let us have hearts of thankfulness for your sacrifice. Let us have eyes that look upon your grace and rejoice in our salvation.

**LORD'S PRAYER (spoken in unison)**

**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 and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.**

**BENEDICTION**

PASTOR: May the living God who raised Jesus from the dead bless you and keep you and make you shine with joy. May God raise up new life in you, and give you peace, for the sake of Jesus, Lord of Life! Christ is risen! Tell the world!

**ALL: He is Risen indeed! Alleluia!**

**POSTLUDE: *Allelu***