



Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> April – Bulwell United Reformed Church

*Today's worship for Easter Sunday is based on the account from John's Gospel.*

### **Prayers of Approach and Confession; words of forgiveness**

God of resurrection, lit by your love and warmed by your life, we come to praise you. Today we touch once more the mystery that life is strong, that love is eternal, that death is defeated, the darkness scattered by the dawn and sorrow transfigured by joy.

Risen Lord, we praise you at this moment of new beginning, and we welcome with open hearts this great and irresistible hope. Whatever our sorrow however profound our struggle and even if grief and death are with us we welcome the gift of life with which you bless us.

May we know your risen presence with us today as we open the scriptures and break the bread. May we walk out of our own tombs and receive new life. May we trust your loving hand that reaches into any Hell to draw us up to Heaven.

Forgive us our sins. Restore our strength. Tread down any evil in us and confirm in us everything that is good.

Let the heavens echo earth's praise as we rejoice that you forgive us that death is defeated that the night has given way to the dawn that Christ is risen and all shall be well for evermore, **Amen.**

***Our Father .....***

**Song            You're alive (Led like a lamb) Lyric Video - Easter Worship Graham Kendrick**

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Tf\\_gYmJaig](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Tf_gYmJaig)

### **John 20: 1-18 - The empty tomb**

**20** Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene went to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the entrance. <sup>2</sup> So she came running to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one Jesus loved, and said, 'They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we don't know where they have put him!'

<sup>3</sup> So Peter and the other disciple started for the tomb. <sup>4</sup> Both were running, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. <sup>5</sup> He bent over and looked in at the strips of linen lying there but did not go in. <sup>6</sup> Then Simon Peter came along behind him and went straight into the tomb. He saw the strips of linen lying there, <sup>7</sup> as well as the cloth that had been wrapped round Jesus' head. The cloth was still lying in its place, separate from the linen. <sup>8</sup> Finally the other disciple, who had reached the tomb first, also went inside. He saw and believed. <sup>9</sup> (They still did not understand from Scripture that Jesus had to rise from the dead.) <sup>10</sup> Then the disciples went back to where they were staying.

### **Jesus appears to Mary Magdalene**

<sup>11</sup> Now Mary stood outside the tomb crying. As she wept, she bent over to look into the tomb <sup>12</sup> and saw two angels in white, seated where Jesus' body had been, one at the head and the other at the foot.

<sup>13</sup> They asked her, 'Woman, why are you crying?'

'They have taken my Lord away,' she said, 'and I don't know where they have put him.' <sup>14</sup> At this, she turned round and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not realise that it was Jesus.

<sup>15</sup> He asked her, 'Woman, why are you crying? Who is it you are looking for?'

Thinking he was the gardener, she said, 'Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have put him, and I will get him.'

<sup>16</sup> Jesus said to her, 'Mary.'

She turned towards him and cried out in Aramaic, 'Rabboni!' (which means 'Teacher').

<sup>17</sup> Jesus said, 'Do not hold on to me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father. Go instead to my brothers and tell them, "I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God."' "

<sup>18</sup> Mary Magdalene went to the disciples with the news: 'I have seen the Lord!' And she told them that he had said these things to her. (*NIVUK*)

### **Meditation (Simon Peter) – One look, that's all it took!**

One look, that's all it took! One look, and I knew beyond all doubt that God was at work, That Jesus was alive! I should have known it sooner, of course, for he'd told us what to expect often enough, but when the hammer blow fell we simply couldn't see beyond it, tears blinding our minds as well as our eyes.

It was when Mary came bursting in, beside herself with excitement, that the mist started to clear, that his words about death and resurrection came flooding back, rekindling a flame that had all but been extinguished. I ran then as I'd never ran before, hope lending wings to my feet, heart pounding within me, not just from exertion but from the emotion that had taken hold of me, the curious mixture of fear and exhilaration.

I wanted so much to believe it was true, only I was afraid it might be some cruel hoax or fancy of my imagination, a trick of the mind, or worse still, of our enemies. But when I went into the tomb and found the abandoned graveclothes, then I knew, and my spirit soared in jubilation.

He was not there: he had risen just as he had promised, death not able to have the final word. And suddenly everything fitted into place, the heartache, the hurt, the humiliation – it was all meant to be, all part of God's sovereign purpose!

Where there had been darkness, he had v brought light! Where there had been death, now there was life! Everything was turned around, transformed, renewed, sharing in the wonder of the resurrection. One look, that's all it took – one look, and life was changed forever!

*From No Ordinary Man Book 2 – Nick Fawcett*

## Prayers of intercession

Lord, we hear of so many things that frighten us,  
including the current coronavirus outbreak  
and we experience our own moments of deep sadness.

We pray for the world – our world and your world.  
Hold back the hands of hate,  
and establish peace in our hearts:  
where there is terror, may your comfort reign;  
where there is mourning, may hope rise again.

There are many places in the world  
where people are crying out in pain and fear:  
*God of resurrection glory, draw near.*

There are many people who are struggling  
with illness or sadness, with loss or worry:  
*God of resurrection glory, draw near.*

There are many times when we are perplexed and fearful  
because we cannot see what happens next:  
*God of resurrection glory, draw near.*

May we know the reality of Easter hope in our lives today.  
May we know the healing power of the Holy Spirit,  
and may we live in the power of that Spirit today and always.  
In the name of the risen Christ.

**Amen.**

*Please add your prayers for others you wish to pray for today . . .*

Hymn            Thine be the glory – from Spring Harvest

[\(434\) Thine Be The Glory \(with Lyrics\) - YouTube](#)

## **Holy Communion - Resurrection Morning**

Let us lift up our hearts.

.....***We lift them to the Lord.***

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

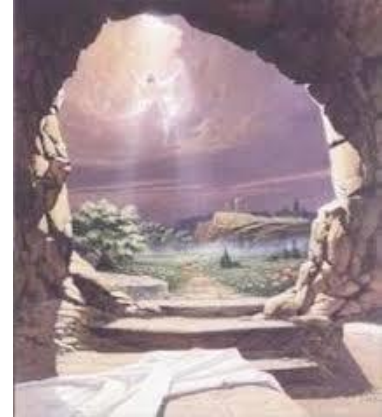
.....***It is right to give our thanks and praise.***

It is indeed right to give you our thanks and praise, O God,  
for you have raised Jesus Christ from the dead  
and swallowed up death forever.



You made the world and all that is in it;  
you made this day and we will be glad and rejoice in it!  
For this is the day your prophets testified about  
when you destroy the shroud of death  
and open the gates of salvation to all who believe.

You sent your Son, Jesus, among us,  
anointed with your Holy Spirit and power  
to preach peace and heal all who were oppressed,  
When he was put to death and buried,  
you broke open the tomb and raised him on this day.  
Now we need never again search for him  
in the places of buried dreams,  
for he is alive and reaches out to us,  
wiping away our tears and calling us by name.



***Therefore, with our hearts lifted high,  
we offer you thanks and praise at all times  
through Jesus Christ our Lord,  
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,  
one God, for ever and ever.  
Amen.***

### **The Breaking of the Bread and Pouring of the Wine**

Christ our Passover has been sacrificed for us. Therefore let us keep the feast.  
I Corinthians 5:7

### **The Sharing of the Bread and the Wine**

*Behold the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world.  
Blessed are those who are called to the wedding feast of the Lamb. Alleluia.*

Take, eat; this is the body of Christ, broken for you. Do this in remembrance of him.

This cup is the new covenant in the blood of Christ, shed for you and for all, for the forgiveness of sin. Drink of it, all of you, in remembrance of him.

### **Prayer after Communion**

God of a love stronger than death, you have given us new birth into a living hope through the gift of your Son.

God with us, you have fed us with yourself and strengthened us for journeying ahead.

God of truth and power, you take our weakness and our sin and refashion us by grace.

### **Blessing**

May the God who has conquered death  
bless you with life and joy  
this Easter and always,  
And the blessing of God;  
Creator, Christ and Comforter,  
be with you. **Amen**



