



Easter Day

Broadway United Reformed Church

Minister : Diana

12th April 2020

Dear Friends, at this time of social distancing and self isolation, we must be church in different ways. On Easter Day we would usually meet together to celebrate the resurrection of our Lord. I invite you, at 10.30am, to sit in your favourite chair and imagine the dear faces of your friends from Broadway around you and share in worship.

The Lord is Risen. He is risen indeed. Alleluia!

Welcome to worship this Easter Morning. Let us worship God.

HYMN (*organ accompaniment available via buttons  on the webpage*)

Christ the Lord is risen today, *Alleluia!*
Let creation join to say: *Alleluia!*
Raise your joys and triumphs high, *Alleluia!*
sing, ye heavens; thou earth, reply: *Alleluia!*

Lives again our glorious King: *Alleluia!*
Where, O death, is now thy sting? *Alleluia!*
Dying once, he all doth save; *Alleluia!*
Where's thy vict'ry, boasting grave? *Alleluia!*

Soar we now where Christ hath led, *Alleluia!*
Following our exalted Head; *Alleluia!*
Made like him, like him we rise: *Alleluia!*
Ours the cross, the grave, the skies. *Alleluia!*

Hail the Lord of earth and heaven! *Alleluia!*
Praise to thee by both be given: *Alleluia!*
Thee we greet triumphant now, *Alleluia!*
Hail, the Resurrection Thou! *Alleluia!*

Charles Wesley. (1770 - 88)

Let us pray.

Glorious and Everlasting God
Our hearts are full of amazement and wonder this Easter morning.
Now we understand more clearly your Way.
Now we glimpse more nearly your Truth.
Now we know more dearly your Life.
This is a day of unutterable joy!
The day that Love defeats death!
The day of your Rising!
Today you have given us new Life.
Today you have given us new Hope and new Beginnings.
Today you invite us to decide again
that we will live our lives following you.
Today we proclaim, "You are our Lord, our Risen Saviour. Alleluia!" Amen.

John 20 verses 11 - 18

Mary stood crying outside the tomb. While she was still crying, she bent over and looked into the tomb and saw two angels in there dressed in white, sitting where the body of Jesus had been, one at the head and one at the feet.

"Woman, why are you crying?" they asked her.

She answered, "They have taken my Lord away, and I do not know where they have put him."

Then she turned round and saw Jesus standing there; but she did not know that it was Jesus.

"Woman, why are you crying?" Jesus asked her, "Who is it that you are looking for?"

She thought he was the gardener, so she said to him,

"If you took him away, tell me where you have put him, and I will go and get him."

Jesus said to her, "Mary!"

She turned towards him and said in Hebrew, 'Rabboni !' (This means "Teacher")

"Do not hold on to me," Jesus told her, "because I have not yet gone back up to the Father.

But go to my brothers and tell them that I am returning to him who is my Father and their Father, my God and their God."

So Mary Magdalene went and told the disciples that she had seen the Lord and related to them what he had told them.

Thanks be to God for this reading from his Word.

Mary stands at the mouth of the tomb overwhelmed by her grief, blinded by her tears, all hope is gone, the man she loves more than life itself has died and now she is denied even the last farewell. His body is gone.

And then the Easter moment; the recognition; the impossible truth.

Mary hears the beloved voice and through her distorting tears she sees Jesus.

In shock and joy and disbelief she cries. "Rabboni, my Teacher", and reaches out to touch him.

And he says, "Do not hold onto me." (In many translations it reads 'do not touch me').

This is one of those readings that Christians have tried to understand but with no clear answer. Why does Jesus tell Mary not to touch him? Surely every part of her being would want the re-assurance of touching him. In this current time of 'social distancing' and 'self isolation' we can understand all too well our human need for the physical re-assuring presence of our friends and loved ones.

But Mary accepts what he says. The realisation of Jesus' very real presence in her life is enough.

Just a few moments before, hope and love had gone, the uncertain future was full of fear, and death had had the final say.

In that Easter Moment Love filled her very being; Hope sang in her heart; the future, with Jesus, was no longer to be feared and death had been defeated.

Mary shows us that we do not need to have the physical presence of Jesus in our lives, but we can have his very real presence in our lives - our Easter Moment. The moment we realise the seemingly impossible truth, the unutterable joy that Jesus is Risen. With our Easter Moment we know that Love fills our very being; that Hope sings in our hearts; that the future with Jesus is no longer to be feared and that death has been defeated.

This Easter Sunday, when the pandemic brings grief and fear to the world, may you know your Easter Moment.

May you know the real presence of the the Risen Jesus in your life - his Love and Hope and Joy. May we walk together into the future, unafraid, with Jesus beside us.

HYMN (*organ accompaniment available via buttons  on the webpage*)

In heavenly love abiding,
no change my heart shall fear;
and safe is such confiding,
for nothing changes here:
the storm may roar without me,
my heart may low be laid,
but God is round about me,
and can I be dismayed?

Wherever he may guide me,
no want shall turn me back;
my Shepherd is beside me,
and nothing can I lack:
his wisdom ever waketh,
his sight is never dim;
he knows the way he taketh,
and I will walk with him.

Green pastures are before me,
Which yet I have not see;
Bright skies will soon be o'er me,
Where darkening clouds have been
My hope I cannot measure,
My path to life is free;
My Saviour has my treasure,
And he will walk with me.

Anna L Waring

Let us pray -

Gracious and Loving God, we come to you in prayer.

We give you Thanks this Easter morning; for Love and Life, for Joy and Hope given to us by the resurrection of your son Jesus.

We thank you for sins forgiven, for new beginnings, for death defeated.

Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer.

We hold before you our world battered by the corona virus pandemic.

We pray for wisdom for political leaders and all who make decisions for their people.

We pray for inspiration for all who work for a cure.

We pray for courage for all who care for those who are ill.

We pray for healing for those who are ill.

We pray for comfort for the dying and the bereaved.

We pray for patience and understanding, kindness and forbearance, hope and generosity in all your people.

Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer.

We pray in a time of quiet for the people who we are especially thinking about today.

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Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer.

We offer all our prayers in the name of Jesus Christ, our Risen Saviour. Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

HYMN (*organ accompaniment available via buttons  on the webpage*)

The head that once was crowned with thorns Is crowned with glory now:
A royal diadem adorns the mighty victor's brow.

The highest place that heaven affords Is his, is his by right;
The King of kings and Lord of lords, And heaven's eternal light.

The joy of all who dwell above, the joy of all below
To whom he manifests his love, and grants his name to know.

To them, the cross, with all its shame, with all its grace is given;
Their name an everlasting name, their joy, the joy of heaven.

They suffer with their Lord below; they reign with him above;
Their profit and their joy to know the mystery of his love.

The cross he bore is life and health, though shame and death to him;
His people's hope, his people's wealth, their everlasting theme.

Thomas Kelly

Jesus, our Risen Saviour, give us your Hope, your Joy, your Love and your Life.
Give us confident voices to tell others the Good News of your Easter.

The Blessing of God our Creator,
Of Jesus our Saviour,
Of the Inspiring Spirit,
Be with us now and always. Amen.

