

Easter

A feast and festival after 40 days of journey and a final week of torment. Come and join the celebration: God has brought peace to the pain and forgiveness in a broken world. Here are some Easter words to a well-known tune (Come and join the celebration R&S). Because of the tune it also links Christmas and Easter.

*Come and join the celebration
It's a very special day
Come and share the jubilation
Jesus Christ is risen today!*

See disciples, walking down on Easter morn:
See the tomb, and know that it is empty - Where is Jesus? *Come and join.....*

See disciples, walking down the road that night:
Filled with sadness - Jesus comes and joins them - He is risen! *Come and join.....*

Even Thomas, filled with doubt and wondering:
Meets with Jesus - knows that there is truth is all he's heard, so: *Come and join.....*

God is with us: round the world the message sing:
Always with us: Alleluia, join the celebrations! *Come and join.....*

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3 Easter liturgies from Greenbelt 2016

One of the URC activities at Greenbelt in 2016 was in 3 pop-up liturgies that happened around the Greenbelt site early on Saturday morning, at sun-set on Sunday and at brunch time on the Monday. Each one involved walking around the site as we took part in some of the journeys of the first Easter. You might worship in a setting where such movement can form part of worship, however you might not: if that is the case you can still use the themes, images and ideas from these 3 liturgies in other ways. Two of the liturgies use a singer and response method. To do this you need a strong singer who can sing each line and then encourage the congregation to join in. It is good to sing each verse more than once and the congregation don't really need to words to do this so you can add new ones or mix the verses up if you so wish. A simple tune is suggested for each of them, but you might want to create your own – see what's possible! None of these liturgies are long (max 20 mins, but can be as short as 10 mins) and they would work well in a very public setting (for instance a market place) but they need to have a group of people who are confident in what they are doing. At Greenbelt we had a sign post for each of the liturgies to draw people's attention and this would be good if you did do them in a public setting. The three signs were simply arrows on a stick with the word "Garden", "Emmaus" or "Beach" writ large. Feel free to use these liturgies as you wish – as a whole, or simply pick up parts of them if you feel that would work best in your setting.

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An early morning walk. [Garden]

You gather as the women did early in the morning to make their way to the garden to anoint the body of Jesus. You bring things, to honour the one who was your friend. At Greenbelt the 'garden' was made of bright cloths laid out with a dark centre to show the empty tomb, but there are many possibilities for the creative people in your church to explore. For this to work it is essential that you not only have a strong leader to take the people on the journey, but also 3 other strong readers to help with the words at the empty tomb.

As you travel to the garden you sing...

COME WALK WITH ME (EASTER MORNING GARDEN SONG)

A. S. SARDESOTI

PLODDING WALK, ACCOMPANIED BY A SIMPLE DRUM BEAT
SINGER AND RESPONSE (RESPONSE IN BOLD AND UNDERLINED)

COME WALK WITH ME COME WALK WITH ME TO THE GAR - DEN TO THE GAR - DEN
5
WHERE WE LAID HIM WHERE WE LAID HIM WHEN THEY KILLED HIM WHEN THEY KILLED HIM.

Singer and response.....

Come walk with me: **Come walk with me,**
to the garden: **to the garden,**
where we laid him: **where we laid him,**
when they killed him: **when they killed him.**

He was our friend: **He was our friend,**
but they took him: **but they took him,**
and they left him: **and they left him,**
where they killed him: **where they killed him.**

He was our friend: **He was our friend,**
but they took him: **but they took him,**
and they killed him: **and they killed him,**
though we loved him: **though we loved him.**

We bring flowers: **we bring flowers,**
to the garden: **to the garden,**
where we took him: **where we took him,**
When they killed him: **when they killed him.**

Repeat at least once

When you get to the garden you find the tomb is empty. The leader shows the shock and confusion and draws the congregation into the scene. Then they speak and 3 other voices echo around from the corners of the congregation, each putting their own meaning to the words:

4 voices echoing each line:

this isn't the right place.....
this can't be the right place.....
we left him here.....
here, in this place.....
safe, behind the stone.....
resting in the tomb.....
this tomb.....
we left him here.....
here, in this place.....
this isn't the right place.....
this can't be the right place.....

silence...

again, 4 voices echoing each line

perhaps.....
this is the right place.....
this can be the right place.....
perhaps "wrong" places can be right.....
and "right" places can be wrong.....
if we still ourselves enough.....
to listen.....
to notice.....
to wait.....
perhaps we will even hear our name
called.....
perhaps.....

These words can be repeated once or twice.

Finally the voices simply keep saying "perhaps" and walk away from the garden. Don't be afraid if people have a sense of discombobulation at the end. Try and resist the temptation to tie up the loose end.

An evening walk [Emmaus]

You are one of the two disciples who left Jerusalem to go to Emmaus after the women have told you of the empty tomb. If you can do this at sun set it is wonderful! Gather the people informally and tell them that you all know that Jesus is dead and you all feel lost and fearful. This is particularly so having heard from some of the women that his body was not at the tomb, with them saying that he had risen from the dead! Tell them you are on your journey away from Jerusalem and invite them to join you. Invite them, as they walk, to tell the stories of Jesus to each other that they remember best so that you can at least keep his memory alive. Carry with you a simply bag with some bread in. Go on your walk and after a while find a place to stop. You might already have a table to sit around, or you might create one where you stop (as we did at Greenbelt) out of a simply dark cloth in the ground in the middle to represent the table with pieces of cloth around to act as cushions. Invite people to stop their journey and join you at the table and ask them to share the stories they remembered. Then, after you have shared a while, open your bag and put your bread on the table. The song below is sung as you break the bread and share it with those around the table as the words indicate. After you have shared you clear the table and leave. As with the previous liturgy, don't be afraid of leaving people uncertain about what has happened.

EMMAUS

UNACCOMPANIED, FREE FLOWING

A S SARDESIO

VERSES 12 & 4...

FOR ALL THEIR WORDS, IT WAS A SIM- PLE SIGN: SOME BRO-KEN BEAD, PER- HAPS A GLASS OF WINE, REV-
10 VI- VING IN THEM WHAT THEY DARED HOPE TRUE: THAT THROUGH THIS PAIN GOD MAKES THERE SOME THING NEW LIFT-
18 UP YOUR HEARTS: WE LIFT THEM TO THE ONE WHO SOWS THE SEEDS FROM WHICH OUR LIFE DOES COME AND_
26 BRO - KEN BREAD (MADE FROM THOSE SEEDS LONG SOWN) IS HOW THIS PREC - IOUS GIFT IS FIN - LY KNOWN.

For all their words it was a simple sign:
some broken bread,
perhaps a glass of wine,
reviving in them
what they dared hope true:
that through this pain
God makes there something new.

In all our words we strive to work it out
some sense of truth
amidst our faith and doubt
but simple sign: bread broken,
cup held high:
is God with us:
this brokenness gives life.

Lift up your hearts:
we lift them to the one
who sows the seeds
from which our life does come,
and broken bread
(made from these seeds long sown)
is how this precious gift
is finally known.

So come, take bread
so precious, so divine,
and yet, at once, so human:
yours and mine.
Here know our holy God is truly found,
and dare take steps again,
on holy ground

Picnic on the Beach [Beach]

You are Peter. Gather people around you shout "I'm going fishing! Do you want to come with me?", and then start the drum beat for the song. The song needs to have a sea shanty style, and as you sing it show your anger and frustration: you suspect you have wasted 3 years of your life! Make your way to a 'beach'. At Greenbelt we made the 'beach' from sandy coloured cloth with blue cloth for the water. We added a boat and Peter carried a large fishing net as he walked to the beach. You might invite people to bring some picnic food with them to share later, or food might be provided for people to share at the picnic on the beach.

As you walk you sing.....

I WAS A FISHERMAN

A J SARDSON

WITH A STEADY PACE, ROUGH LIKE A SEA SHANTY, WITH A LIVELY DRUM BEAT. SINGER AND RESPONSE (RESPONSE IN BOLD AND UNDERLINED)

The musical score is written on two staves in 4/4 time. The first staff contains the melody for the first two lines of the song. The second staff contains the melody for the next two lines. The lyrics are written below the notes. The first line of lyrics is: "I WAS A FISH-ER-MAN WHEN HE SAW ME I WAS A FISH-ER-MAN WHEN HE SAW ME MY LIFE WAS BOATS AND FISH AND SEA MY LIFE WAS BOATS AND FISH AND SEA HE". The second line of lyrics is: "CALLED TO ME AND I WENT ALONG HE CALLED TO ME AND I WENT ALONG AND NOW THREE YEARS OF MY LIFE HAVE GONE! AND NOW THREE YEARS OF MY LIFE HAVE GONE!". The lyrics are written in a mix of bold and underlined text to indicate singer and response parts.

Singer and response.....

Oh I was a fisherman when he found me: **Oh I was a fisherman when he found me.**

My life was boats and fish and sea: **My life was boats and fish and sea.**

He called to me and I went along: **He called to me and I went along.**

And now 3 years of my life have gone: **And now 3 years of my life have gone!**

The things he did your never did see: **The things he did your never did see:**

Teaching, healing, setting free: **Teaching, healing, setting free!**

But they took him off and hung him on high: **But they took him off and hung him on high,**
and left him on a cross to die: **and left him on a cross to die!**

Spoken:

But something odd is happening,
something very strange.....
although we saw him die,
we think we've seen him once again!

So now it's back to the beach I go: **so now it's back to the beach I go,**

back to my boat and the things I know: **back to my boat and the things I know,**

back to the place that knows my name: **back to the place that knows my name,**

try and find my life again: **try and find my life again!**

Repeat verses 1 and 3 until you reach the 'beach'

When you get to the 'beach' you (Peter) are very excited. Show your joy and invite people to join in your joy at being back on your beach!

The next piece is for two voices – Peter and another story teller. Gather people on the beach, with Peter sitting somewhere among the group.

The storyteller starts:

This is a story of a time when everything had crumbled.
Self belief. self esteem, hope.
It's the end of one story and the beginning of a new one.
It's a story of Simon.
Jesus called him Peter – the rock. But even Peter the rock had crumbled.
Jesus was gone, or not, either way, it was confusing.
So he shouted "let's go fishing". Back to the known. The certain.
So off they went, Simon and his friends. Fishing.
All night. Fishing. But there were no fish. Peter thought:

Peter:

"I like things familiar: words, sounds, faces I know. I like the places that ring with the sounds that I remember. I like the familiar for then I don't need to ask questions. Everything is all I know it to be. My world. My tasks. My rewards.
I long for the familiar. Somewhere I can stop worrying.
Somewhere I can get on with doing what I do best.
My boat. My beach. My sea. My fish.
But now not even fish."

The story teller continues:

And then, as the sun started to burn the mist from the beach a shadowy figure appeared there. "Have you caught any fish?" he called.
They hadn't, of course. "throw your net the other side" said the shadow.
They did – with little hope and then they watched as the fish came.....
until the net was so full they could hardly pull it ashore.
It was Simon, Simon Peter who knew first. "It's Jesus!" he shouted
"it's Jesus! it's Jesus! it's Jesus!"
And he leapt into the water and waded to the shore.
And then the others came too, and they cooked the fish and they shared the food and they knew they had found Jesus.

Keep a few moments silence

After a few minutes, wither invite people to share the food they have brought with them, or bring out the food you are providing (or, if you have the facilities, cook some food on a camping stove there and then – if you do fish the smell is amazing!). Invite people, as they eat, to share they stories of how they have discovered the risen Christ with them in the lives when they thought all hope was lost.

After you've eaten invite people to repeat the following words after you:

We come: **we come,**

when we do not understand: **when we do not understand.**

We come: **we come,**

when we don't know what to do: **when we don't know what to do.**

We come: **we come,**

When all we used to know has disappeared: **when all we used to know has disappeared.**

We come: **we come,**

and find you: **and find you.**

welcoming us to a feast: **welcoming us to a feast.**

and a future: **and a future.**