

Call to Worship

Christ is risen! **He is risen indeed, Alleluia!**

Prayer of Adoration, Confession, and Assurance of Pardon

God of all life, all joy, all hope,
we come to worship you, with hearts full of praise
that your love is stronger than death and that Jesus is alive.

We know that Jesus gave his life to set us free,
and that you raised him from death so that we can know peace beyond measure –
life in all its fullness.

We praise you that we may know the love of God our Father,
the healing of God the Son and the power of God the Holy Spirit:
love, healing and power made real for us today.

We confess to you that we stand in constant need
of your love, healing and power each and every day:
to forgive us when we fail you;
to strengthen us when we are weak;
to help us begin again when all seems lost.

Thank you, loving God, that the good news of Easter
is that the worst that sin can do is no match for the depth of your loving mercy.

As you raised Jesus, so raise us up,
so that we may walk your ways as your forgiven children.
Here we pray the words Jesus himself taught his disciples: *Our Father...*

All Age Talk

Today we will say and sing the word 'Alleluia' over and over again. But what does it mean? The 'yah' bit is a name for God – and the allelu part means 'praise' Allelu Yah

= praise to God. Why are we praising God so much today? Because Jesus is alive. What else would you like to praise God for today?

Responses from the congregation.

Now the good news is that I have been able to find a box of Alleuias (*a re-labelled large box of chocolates!*).

You can use these to count how many times in our Easter worship today we say or sing Alleluia. Every time you hear one, move a special alleluia chocolate from the box to this basket – and let's see if by the end we have enough Alleuias for everyone here to have one!

Let's start the count by saying again what we said at the start of our worship:

Christ is risen **He is risen indeed, Alleluia!**

Readings

Psalm 118: 1-2, 14-24 | St Luke 24: 1-12

Sermon Notes

Psalm 118: 1-2, 14-24

There are many echoes between this psalm of triumph and rejoicing and the triumph of Easter Day. The refrain 'God's mercy endures forever' reminds us that God does not act only to resurrect Jesus, but has been active throughout history, saving, guiding and restoring the people God loves.

In a local church you could reflect on the ways on which God's saving hand has been known in the life of the congregation. What are the 'cornerstones' of your church or chapel (both physically and metaphorically)?

What does it mean for you, today, to remember that the God who has done all this has shown the astounding power of his love in the resurrection of Jesus.

The mercy of God is for us, for here and now, and the promise of life eternal is for us all.

1 Corinthians 15: 19-26

Paul wants his readers to know that being a follower of Jesus in order to make this life better is not enough. We do not just follow Christ to the grave, and sleep in peace. Christ is risen – and we will be too.

Like Adam, we are human and die, but like Christ we are risen from death by the power of God the Father.

In God's time, Christ will come to fully establish the kingdom, and death which is overcome by Christ's resurrection, will be eliminated forever.

We can preach hope to people this Easter, however hard life might be, because following Christ ultimately means following him to the side of God the Father; we need not fear death.

St Luke 14: 1-12

All the accounts of the resurrection are well-known, but it might be worth helping people to focus on some of the details of this account.

Who sees what?

Who tells what to whom?

What do people do as a result?

This is the start of the story which will race around the world and change millions of lives, but it starts in a small, almost faltering way. We should not be ashamed if we struggle to believe, but trust that we can continue to listen for the truth and gather our own evidence that Jesus is alive.

What evidence can you give people, what signs can you point to for them, that show God's eternal love present in our world today?

Whatever you preach, make it deeply joyous – it is Easter Sunday: love wins – death is dead!

Statement of Faith

If it is for this life only we have hoped in Christ, we are of all people most to be pitied. But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who have died. **Alleluia – Christ is risen**

For since death came through a human being, the resurrection of the dead has also come through a human being; for as all die in Adam, so all will be made alive in

Christ. **Alleluia – we shall be raised**

But each in its own order: Christ the first fruits, then at his coming those who belong to Christ. Then comes the end, when he hands over the kingdom to God the Father, after he has destroyed every ruler and every authority and power. **Alleluia – God's love will reign forever**

For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. The last enemy to be destroyed is death. **Alleluia – death is dead**

based on 1 Corinthians 15: 19-26

Offertory

This Easter Day we celebrate that God has given us the gift of victory over death. In response to all God's gifts, we bring our gifts and ourselves...

Holy Communion

Invitation

Jesus was often a guest. He shared many meals with his friends, and they long remembered his words at the table. Though some disapproved of the company he kept, Jesus ate and drank with all kinds of people and showed everyone the love of God. Wherever people met together Jesus was glad to be welcomed and to be fed. Today, we are the guests of Jesus. He welcomes us, whoever we are and whatever we bring, and he will feed us at his table. Old or young, rich or poor, joyful or in sorrow, Jesus invites us to share bread and wine with him, to remember the story of his life and death, and resurrection and to celebrate his presence with us today. On the night before he died, Jesus shared a meal with twelve of his disciples in an upstairs room in Jerusalem. The Gospel writer tells us what happened that night.

While they were eating, he took a loaf of bread, and after blessing it he broke it, gave it to them, and said, 'Take; this is my body.'

Then he took a cup, and after giving thanks he gave it to them, and all of them drank from it. He said to them, 'This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many. Truly, I tell you, I will never again drink the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God.'

St Mark 14:22-25

from URC Worship book 'Second order of Holy Communion'

Alleluia. The risen Christ is with us. **Alleluia! Alleluia!**

Lift up your 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.**

We give thanks to you, O God,
because this day we learn that death is dead and Christ's love is eternal.
We praise you for your work of creation – in all its beauty and diversity
for your teaching through the law and the prophets –
through which you reach out to humankind,
for your coming to us in Jesus Christ – the word made flesh, full of grace and truth;
for his rising from the grave to live with us now and forever;
for your moving among us in the Holy Spirit, growing faith where there was doubt.

Therefore we join with all your people in heaven and earth
to raise the hymn of your glory

**Holy, holy, holy Lord,
God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.**

We praise you that Jesus preached good news that the kingdom has come
so that we may know the truth of your love with us forever.
The life and death and rising of Jesus Christ
all show us the astonishing extent of your mercy to us.
We remember, and we praise you with our lives
and with these gifts of bread and wine,
proclaiming with one voice the mystery of faith:

Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

Come upon these gifts, Holy Spirit,
make them for us Christ's body, Christ's blood.

Come upon us, Holy Spirit,
make us one body in Christ, enlivened by his gift of life.

Come among us Holy Spirit,
take our prayers and transform our world,
as we pray for..... *(pray here for the needs of the world at this time)*

Come and fill this feast, Holy Spirit, this day, and every day
until that day when we eat it in the beauty of heaven
and our Easter Alleluias shall know no end.

All blessing, honour, glory and power
be yours, Holy Triune God, now and forever. **Amen**

Breaking and sharing

This is the body of Christ broken for you, Eat and be very thankful.
This is the blood of Christ given for you, Drink and be very thankful. Amen.

Prayer after Communion

Loving God,
you have fed us generously at this table,
as we have remembered Jesus and rejoiced that he is with us today.
We are ready now to follow him,
and to be your people in the world.
May your Holy Spirit shine on us to show us the way,
make us holy and fill us with love. Amen.

from URC Second order of Holy Communion

Blessing

May God bless you and keep you;
may God make eternal life dawn upon you and be gracious to you;
may God fill you with abundant love that nothing on earth can conquer
and give you peace now and always. Amen.

Hymn Suggestions				
	RS	CH4	StF	MP
Christ the Lord is risen today	232	410	298	76
Lord of the dance	195	404	247	
Led like a lamb	241			402
Let all mortal flesh keep silence	454	666	591	
See what a morning			309	
Too early for the blackbird	249			
This joyful Eastertide	248	415	314	
Now the green blade rises	243	417	306	
Good Christians all, rejoice & sing	238			
Come ye faithful, raise the strain	236	414		
Alleluia, alleluia, give thanks to the risen Lord	234		295	30
Christ is alive, let Christians sing	260	416	297	
At dawn the women made their way		408		
The strife is o'er the battle done	240	412		670
Christ is alive, and the universe must celebrate		422		
All heaven declares the glory of the risen Lord		426	293	14
Thine be the glory	247	419	313	689

RS – Rejoice & Sing | CH4 – Church Hymnary 4 | StF – Singing the Faith | MP – Mission Praise