

Bolton United Church

Easter 2020

Words for meditation:

Today we will be celebrating the joys of Easter Day, it will be a different kind of celebration. Never in the history of the church has the doors to the buildings closed. Due to the Coronavirus Pandemic and for the safety of ourselves and others we cannot gather face to face. We will be celebrating the hope and the promises of Easter in a different way. We will celebrate the Easter story of God's love for humanity in a reflective and meaningful way.

Hymn: 155VU, Jesus Christ is Risen today

Opening Prayer

Easter God, you surprise us with your presence, you transcend the tomb and stand among us. The sparks cast by your love dances; they spread and burst forth with resurrection light illuminating our hearts and set us free to love you.

We are excited to be part of the Easter crowd; we forget that you defeat death and is alive among us. Today we are celebrating with joy, the empty tomb, the empty cross, and God's unconditional love and compassion for us.

Fill us with the joys of Easter and help us to experience the story of your victory over death. Christ is alive!
Alleluia! Alleluia! Amen

Special Music:

Scripture: 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. ²So 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!"

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

Jesus Appears to Mary Magdalene

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

¹³ 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.” ¹⁴ At this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not realize that it was Jesus.

¹⁵ 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.”

¹⁶ Jesus said to her, “Mary.”

She turned toward him and cried out in Aramaic, “Rabboni!” (which means “Teacher”).

¹⁷ 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.’”

¹⁸ 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.

Easter Reflection: “For Whom Are You Looking?” - see attached

The Lord’s Prayer

Our Father, which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy Name. Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

Hymn: VU # 158, Christ Is Alive

Easter Prayer (174) VU

God of resurrection,
You have rolled the stone away
And the tomb of our world has been opened wide.
With the dawn has come a new creation.
Let our celebration today Empty our tombs,
Renew our lives,
And release your power,
Thorough the risen Christ we pray. Amen!

Hymn: 155 VU Hymn Jesus Christ is Risen

Jesus Christ is risen today, Alleluia!
Our triumphant holy day, Alleluia!
Who did once, upon the cross, Alleluia!
Suffer to redeem our loss, Alleluia!
Hymns of praise then let us sing, Alleluia!
Unto Christ, our heavenly King, Alleluia!
Who endured the cross and grave, Alleluia!

Sinners to redeem and save, Alleluia!
But the pain which He endured, Alleluia!
Our salvation hath procured, Alleluia!
Now above the sky He's king, Alleluia!

Where the angels ever sing, Alleluia!
Sing we to our God above, Alleluia!
Praise eternal as His love, Alleluia!
Praise Him, all you heavenly host, Alleluia!
Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, Alleluia!

Hymn: 158 VU, Christ Is Alive

Christ is alive! Let Christians sing.
The cross stands empty to the sky.
Let streets and homes with praises ring.
Love, drowned in death, shall never die.

Christ is alive! No longer bound
to distant years in Palestine,
but saving, healing, here and now,
and touching every place and time.

In every insult, rift and war,
where color, scorn or wealth divide,
Christ suffers still, yet loves the more,
and lives, where even hope has died.

Women and men, in age and youth,
can feel the Spirit, hear the call,
and find the way, the life, the truth,
revealed in Jesus, freed for all.

Christ is alive, and comes to bring
good news to this and every age,
till earth and sky and ocean ring
with joy, with justice, love and praise.