**Easter Day 31st March, 2013**

Resurrection starts with the cry of grief, an empty place, a familiar voice.

And then, the risen life of Christ is in our midst!

Waiting for us to take notice. Waiting for us to respond.

Christ has risen.
**Christ has risen indeed!**

Today we celebrate new life, new joy, new possibilities.
We look with trembling hope into the face of a love that is beyond understanding.

God has overcome all that would threaten life. Christ has entered every dark place and is now present amongst us, surrounded by the light of true life. This life will never be defeated by the betrayals or violence of humankind.

**For love is stronger than death and Christ is the source of our salvation.**

Come, Holy Spirit of Christ, come.

Be found alive among us here,

arising in our hearts with all your gifts

and inviting us to believe in a new day.

Come, Holy Spirit, come!

**Song**: 370 Christ the Lord is risen today

**Prayer of adoration**

Gracious God, we praise you for the light of new life made possible through Jesus.

When everything was dark and it seemed that the sun would never shine again,
your love broke through. Your love was too strong, too wide, too deep for death to hold.

We praise you for the light of new life
that shone on the first witnesses of resurrection.

We praise you for the light of new life
that continues to shine in our hearts today.

We pray that the Easter light of life, hope and joy,
will live in us each day;
and that we will be bearers of that light
into the lives of others. Amen. Michaela Youngson

**Prayers of confession**

Sometimes our hearts do shrink with fear.

We wonder if your living presence will ask more of us than we are able to give.
*Silent reflection*

Look upon us with your everlasting grace, Jesus Christ.

**Then call us to stand beside you**

**and lift up life around us, we pray.**

If we are tempted to stay looking into tombs of doubt,

finding it hard to believe that you have walked back into our lives:

**Set us free, Jesus Christ,**

**and say our names in your voice of love, we pray.**

When our own lives sink low and deathliness takes over

as we look into the future:

**Set us free, Jesus Christ,**

**and say our names in your voice of love, we pray.**

**For we long to be your people of faith.**

*A silence is kept*

**Words of Assurance**

Death has no power over God, who has shown us the breadth of love for the world, in the life of Jesus Christ. Our humanness is no barrier to this infinite grace. We are forgiven!
**Thanks be to God.**

**Prayer for illumination**

Living God, by your Holy Spirit, open our eyes to see the new light of this day;

Open our lips to tell of the empty tomb;

Open our hearts to believe the good news;

Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

**Readings**

Acts 10:34-43/ John 20:1-18

**Witness**

**Song:** 387 Christ is alive! Let Christians sing

**Offering prayer**

Bountiful God, we come with our offerings in response to your love. With the new life in Christ, we give ourselves in service to others. Receive the work we do, and the gifts we bring, that they may become a blessing in your sight. Stephen M Fearing

**Prayers of the People**

Help us to grasp resurrection;
to understand its power,
to see its force at work in our world,
overturning evil,
changing the hatred within us,
bending us towards love and truth.

We offer our prayers for others and for the world…..

This is my prayer/**This is our prayer.**

On this day of great gladness
empower us to be the good news in our own lives,
walking softly on this good earth caring gently for all people,
living hopefully into your kingdom.

We offer these prayers in the name of Jesus, who taught us to pray:

THE LORD'S PRAYER

**Our Father in heaven,**
**hallowed be your name.**
**Your Kingdom come,**
**your will be done,**
**on earth as in heaven**
**Give us today our daily bread.**
**Forgive us our sins,**
**as we forgive those who sin against us.**
**Lead us not into temptation,**
**but deliver us from evil.**
**For the kingdom,**
**the power and the glory are yours.**
**Now and for ever.**

**Amen.**

COMMUNION

**The invitation**

**The narrative**

**Great prayer of thanksgiving**

The Lord be with you. **And also with you**.
Lift up your hearts. **We lift them to the Lord.**
Let us give thanks to God.
**It is right to give God our thanks and praise.**

Living God, on this most joyous day we offer our thanks and praise to you……

You created the world by speaking life into being. You placed within us and within each plant and animal of your creation amazing abilities to form and nurture new life, so that your creation might be renewed, reborn, season by season, child by child.

You covenanted with your people and gave them Law that showed the way of Life–a path of peace, justice, mercy, reverence, love.

You provided wise men and women as judges for your people to show them the path to Life.

You called forth prophets who dared to speak the truth of Life to worldly powers that promoted death.

You sent Jesus, your Son, to walk in the way of Life—that we might follow. He suffered and died because of his refusal to participate in the death-dealing violence of the world. He rose again in victory because the powers of death cannot overcome the Divine power of Life.

…. And so, with all the company of heaven and earth we praise your holy name saying:
**Holy, holy, holy Lord,  God of  power and might,**

**heaven and earth are full of your glory.**

**Hosanna in the highest.**
**Blessed is the One who comes in the name of the Lord.**
**Hosanna in the highest**

**THE INSTITUTION**

On the night Jesus was betrayed,

Jesus took bread, gave thanks to you, broke the bread
gave it to his disciples, and said:
"Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you.
Do this in remembrance of me."

Likewise, when the supper was over, he took the cup,
gave thanks to you, gave it to his disciples, and said:
"Drink from this, all of you,
this is the cup of the new covenant,
poured out for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins.
Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me."

**THE CONSECRATION**

Come, Holy Spirit of Christ, come. Be found alive among us here, arising in our hearts with all your gifts and inviting us to believe in a new day.

Pour out your Holy Spirit upon us and upon these your gifts of bread and cup. By your Spirit unite us with the living Christ and with all who seek to follow in his life-giving way, that we may further your reign of peace and justice in every place.
Come, Holy Spirit, come!

**Amen.**

**The breaking of the bread**

The bread…..broken

The cup of salvation….God’s love poured out.

We break this bread and take this cup so that we might share in the life of Christ.

God’s gift for God’s people.

**The breaking of the bread**

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God’s gift for God’s people.

*Communion is shared*

**Prayer after communion**

Holy, gracious, God,
Here at this table your promise of life is made tangible.
We have rested in the depth of your love;
We have tasted your nourishing, nurturing presence;
We accept you into our bodies, into our lives.
Together, at this table, you have offered us life.
Together, by your grace, we accept the life you offer.
And we give you thanks. Amen. Joanna Harader

**Hymn**: We shall go out with hope of resurrection (*tune: Londonderry Air*)
We shall go out with hope of resurrection,
we shall go out, from strength to strength go on,
we shall go out and tell our stories boldly,
tales of a love that will not let us go.
We’ll sing our songs of wrongs that can be righted,
we’ll dream our dreams of hurts that can be healed,
we’ll weave a cloth of all the world united
within the vision of new life in Christ.

We’ll give a voice to those who have not spoken,
we’ll find the words for those whose lips are sealed,
we’ll make the tunes for those who sing no longer,
expressive love alive in every heart.
We’ll share our joy with those who still are weeping,
raise hymns of strength for hearts that break in grief,
we’ll leap and dance the resurrection story,
including all in circles of our love.

**Words of mission and Benediction**

On this day of resurrection joy, we have been fed and nourished with the life of Jesus, our crucified and risen Lord. May we go from here, refreshed and eager, to share that life with others.

And as we go, may we find Christ’s life at every turn of the road.

May God the Creator go on creating in us.

And may the Holy Spirit lift our hearts with a passion for

bringing Christ’s life to the world. Amen

May we be those who continue the ministry of Christ as peacemakers.

God’s peace be with you. and also with you.

*The peace is exchanged.*

