**Easter 2C A liturgy by Thom Shuman**

Texts: Acts 5:27-32; Psalm 150; Revelation 1:4-8; John 20:19-31

**Call to Worship**

Praise God with clapping hands;

praise God with hands comforting a child.

**Praise God with silent hearts;**

**praise God with hearts broken for the world.**

Praise God with electric guitars;

praise God with soft piano chords.

**Praise God with be-bop and hip-hop;**

**praise God with rhythms that don't stop.**

Praise God with a hallelujah chorus;

praise God with a Gregorian chant.

**Praise God with dancing steps;**

**praise God with feet walking for justice.**

**Prayer of the Day**

Holy God, Lover of your children:

the tomb has been opened,

and we dance into your future.

Your life has dawned on us,

and we surround you with our praise.

You reach out your hand, and lead us into joy.

Jesus Christ, Faithful Witness:

you pick open the locked doors

of our hearts

and come in to be with us forever.

You breathe peace into our souls,

so we may bring healing to a troubled world.

Holy Spirit, Breath of Peace:

you show us our hearts,

so we may give love to others.

You show us our hands,

sending us to serve the needy.

You show us your hope, so we may live in your joy.

God in Community, Holy in One,

who is, who was, and who is to come,

hear us as we pray as you have taught us,

(The Lord's Prayer)

**Call to Reconciliation**

When we keep our faults and failures locked safely away, we have no need to confess. But God comes into our hearts when we least expect, so we can be filled with forgiveness, with hope, with peace.  Please join me as we pray together, saying,

**Unison Prayer for Forgiveness**

God of empty tombs and emptier people:

when we hesitate to speak of your hope,

**forgive us, and give us a voice.**

When we find it difficult to love one another,

**forgive us, and give us fresh compassion.**

When we want to stand with the high and mighty,

**forgive us, and seat us next to the poor and oppressed.**

When we stay locked behind our fears and doubts,

**forgive us, and send us out to share you grace.**

When we cannot believe your Word of new life,

**forgive us, and fill us with your joy.**

*Silence is kept*

**Assurance of Pardon**

Christ comes into every shadowed corner of our lives with the light of Easter. Christ comes into the locked rooms of our faults and gifts us with grace and hope.

**Christ comes to fill us with peace, so we may proclaim the good news of mercy and forgiveness for all. Thanks be to God. Amen.**

**Prayer of Dedication/Offering**

We could keep our treasures locked up where they never see the light of your love, or we can offer them back to you so that those who live in the shadows of poverty might be fed, those who walk the streets of loneliness find a community, and those who long for peace will bind an end to the violence in their lives.  And so we open our hearts and our gifts in joyous praise to you.  Amen.

**Great Prayer of Thanksgiving**

May the God of resounding joy be with you!

**And also with you!**

Easter people, may your hearts be filled with joy!

**May God fill our emptiness with the carols of angels!**

Children of the resurrection, lift your praises to God!

**We join with all creation in shouting our praise to the One who loves us!**

From the rubble of chaos, you shaped a sanctuary for creation,

Surpassing God:

trumpeter swans glided gracefully across lakes,

tall trees waltzed across green fields,

stars piped choruses of joy in the night.

Having formed us in your image,

your Spirit breathed peace into us,

inviting us to wander the gardens of wander.

But we chose to hide ourselves behind

the locked doors of sin and death.

Prophets came, to witness about your

willingness to forgive us and

to take our fears away from us.

When we would not respond

to your gracious invitations,

Jesus came, to free us from all sin.

With our ancestors in the faith,

with our children and grandchildren,

with everyone who sees you coming,

we sing our glad praise to you:

**Holy, holy, holy, God of surpassing greatness.**

**Everything that breathes praises you.**

**Hosanna in the highest!**

**Blessed is the One who you exalt.**

**Hosanna in the highest!**

Holy are you, God of our ancestors,

and blessed is Jesus Christ, the first and last.

Co-creator of all that is around us,

he came to bear witness of your promises.

Our Lord as well as our God,

he blesses all who believe in him

whether or not they have seen him.

Serving you in life as well as death,

he became the first-born of the dead,

so we might be your children through eternity.

As we remember all he did and taught,

as we celebrate the wonder of his resurrection,

we sing of that mystery we call faith:

**Christ was the One who died for us;**

**Christ is the One who is risen for us;**

**Christ is the One who will come for us.**

Send your Spirit of holiness

to transform these simple gifts

into your grace surpassing all fear,

and to bear witness of your enduring love.

Through the bread which is broken,

we are made whole once again,

so we might minister to those

who live behind the locked doors of oppression.

By the cup which is shared,

we are able to believe,

even when we cannot see,

that your peace is coming to everyone.

And when our lives have ended,

when we are gathered in grace and peace

with our sisters and brothers from all time,

we will join our hearts in praising you,

God in Community, Holy in One,

who was. who is, and who is to come. Amen.

**Sending**

God sends us forth with songs of joy in our hearts.

**We will go to sing of wonder to all who are empty of life**

**even as we gather them close to our hearts.**

Jesus calls us to step out of our fears into lives of witness.

**We will go to breathe peace into all the broken places around us.**

The Spirit teaches us new dance steps of grace.

**We will go to take our sisters and brothers by the hand**

**to dance in the streets of the kingdom.**

(c) 2016 Thom M. Shuman