**COCU33C.Easter 3C.2013**

**Welcome and greeting**

Christine Sine: The Jewish philosopher Abraham Heschel said that the Jews regarded Sabbath as a glimpse into the eternal world. I realized that my Sunday practices looked nothing like what I hope God’s eternal world will look like. So I started to try and realign my Sunday activities to reflect more of what my vision of God’s future eternal, shalom filled world will look like.

The Easter season is a time for celebrating our restored relationship to God, our reconciliation to our neighbours, our renewed responsibility to steward God’s creation. Thinking of the resurrection makes it easy to reflect on my images of God’s eternal world – a world in which the language is love and the culture centres on mutuality and generosity. A country where there is no more crying or oppression or pain, a place where justice will come for the poor and the sick will be healed, a place where God’s creation is restored and there is abundance and prosperity for all. Let us turn our lives again to the things of God.

**Call to worship**

God of all life and longing,    
We give thanks for this day and everything that has brought us here.  
Share with us your Spirit that nourishes our longing for life in its fullness.  
Leave us open to the ways of your Wisdom,  
and generous to the promptings of your Love.   
Breathe on us, breathe in us, breathe through us: Fill us with resurrection life. Amen.

**Hymn**: Come O God of all the earth/Sing out earth and skies TiS 181

In the safety of this sacred place we are invited into a time of gratitude and awe. In your own way and without the necessity of words, find yourself in a space where you can offer praise to God. The breathing prayer may assist when words are not required, using the word YAH/WEH. Breathe in deeply on ‘yah’ and breathe out on ‘weh’. Each breath is not just a miracle from God but a reminder that we are part of God’s new creation, filled with the love, compassion and tenderness of the eternal One.

Breathe in the breath of God,   
Breathe out your cares and concerns.   
Breathe in the love of God,   
Breathe out your doubts and despairs.   
Breathe in the life of God,   
Breathe out your fears and frustrations.

We sit quietly before the One who gives life and love to all creation.   
We sit in awe of the One who formed us in our mother’s womb.   
  
We sit at peace surrounded by the One who fills every fibre of our being. Praise be. In such a place, we may have the confidence to know ourselves as God knows us. In the company of God, we offer our prayers of confession. *A time of silence is kept.*

**Words of assurance**  
Children of God, the Gospel has not offered you more anxiety and shame, but grace, peace, and joy.  Accept the gifts of God, and live with the freedom and resilience of those who are destined for the highest service.

**Amen! Thanks be to God!**

**Reading**: Psalm 30

An account attributed to David of God’s help in times of trouble, and of David’s praise for God.

**Readings**: Acts 9: 1-20; John 21:1-19

*Confidence in what has been known, and encountering what is being revealed in new ways*

*"Faith is different from theology because theology is reasoned, systematic, and orderly, whereas faith is disorderly, intermittent, and full of surprises.... Faith is homesickness. Faith is a lump in the throat. Faith is less a position on than a movement toward, less a sure thing than a hunch. Faith is waiting." (Frederick Buechner)*

**Witness**

**Hymn**:

**Prayers for others**

Lord may we be messengers of Easter hope to those in need by our word and deed.

May we be your Easter people bringing restoration and justice to this hurting world.

Spirit of God, may we breathe in and hold your love within us.  
**May we breathe out and share it with the world.**   
Spirit of God, may we breathe in and hold your peace within us.   
**May we breathe out and share it with the world.**   
Spirit of God, may we breathe in and hold your life within us.   
**May we breathe out and share it with the world. Amen.**

God, we are your Easter people living in the hope of resurrection. Yet, we live in a world that is increasingly more difficult to live in. We need hope, and we need to share that hope with others. Come, Risen One ... **hear our prayer**

We pray for the world, where people hunger after justice, long for freedom, crave for peace. In the midst of tensions, conflict and war, there are also voices of reason and peace; perhaps they speak in whispers, but they speak nonetheless. May those whispers rise to shouts that proclaim the way forward with words and not weapons. As the machines of greed and war trample the world and its peoples, we remember and give thanks that there are seeds of justice and love and goodness and grace that are planted and watered every moment of every day.

Lord, help us to feed your lambs ...

*A silence is kept*

Come, Risen One ... **hear our prayer**

We pray for humankind, for those who are ill in body or mind, anxious and afraid, depressed and despairing, for those who are grieving, lonely, abused. We pray for people who are hungry, homeless, destitute. Sustain them with your loving care and surround them with your peace and faithfulness.

Lord, help us to tend your sheep ...

*A silence is kept*

Come, Risen One….**hear our prayer**  
We pray for ourselves, your followers and friends, asking that we may be filled with your Holy Spirit and given those things that we need to feed the physical, spiritual and emotional hungers of the world around us.

Lord, help us to feed your sheep ...

*A silence is kept*

Come, Risen One ... **hear our prayer**

We pray in the name of Jesus Christ who taught us to pray:

**LORD’S PRAYER**

Communion

*The 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 the Lord our God.  
I**t is right to give our thanks and praise.**  
  
It is indeed right to give you our thanks and praise, O God…..

In beginning, your Spirit hovered over creation, and you breathed life into living things. The breath of life, filled with love and overflowing with tenderness, mercy and compassion. Each breath we take reminds us of that love. But we know, like our ancestors of old, that we have not always recognized that it is your breathing presence that sustains life, and we have sometimes found ourselves distant from you, living God. But you have sent prophets and leaders to guide us back to your ways. And in the life of Jesus we are drawn into the mystery of love once again, expressed in the self-giving love of Jesus who gave his life for others until he breathed his last. We celebrate that in his risen life, Jesus breathed onto his disciples, and blessed them with peace.   
So, we lift our voices, filled with joy, joining them with the glad songs of every place and generation, all creation praising your name:

**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.**

Prayer of consecration

Presentation of the bread and cup

Prayer after communion  
  
Blessing

Let us live today in Christ’s resurrection light. Let us live by God’s law of love: extending mercy, compassion and joy. Let us share the gifts God has given, practicing generosity, hospitality and love. Let us live as Christ would have us live, bringing freedom, justice and hope. Amen.