*The church is fitted with a hearing loop which covers the body of the church. To receive most benefit, hearing aid wearers are advised to switch their hearing aid to T-setting.*

**Pilgrim Uniting Church**

**12 Flinders Street, Adelaide**

***9.30 COMMUNITY WORSHIP***

**Easter Sunday 20th April 2014**

**Introduction**

We are not eye-witnesses to an event, as were Mary and the disciples.
We have not journeyed through a dangerous city to seek answers or consolation.
We have not seen angels gathering at the rim of this day,
or wept in the garden this morning because we could not find Him.

But we are here to attest to a story that has not lost its power during twenty centuries of change and conflict.

We are here because those before us carried this story as if it were precious gold; cherished it as if it were the key to a hidden wisdom.

Sisters and brothers in Christ, take your places here today in celebration and in awe. What you are about to hear again, has the capacity to change the world. Your very presence attests to the rising up of life from the tomb of despair, and to the uncontrollable power of God.

It is Easter morning again: and we will celebrate.

*Ann Siddall, in Lent to Easter liturgies: Year C.*

**Acknowledgement of Country**
Imagine a sacred place that holds the greatest stories of your people. Today, here, we will hear one of our best stories. Today, here, this place could tell us so many stories of life and death and all the mysteries. We pay respect to the first storytellers of this place, the Kaurna people, and their elders past, present and future. May we hold each other’s sacred stories gracefully.

**Song**: Christ is alive (see insert)

**Welcome**

**Prayers of who we are**
Risen life is not what we expect in our world.

On the face of things, life seems to be under threat...

our earth is grieving, our families are fracturing,

and nations are at war within, and between each other.

The light of our hope grows dim.

**We need the heavy stone to be rolled away again.**

We acknowledge the ways we have failed
to honour and preserve life in all its diversity and glory

We acknowledge the ways we have allowed relationships
to become less important than riches or recognition
or the myriad of things that occupy our attention

We acknowledge the ways we have grown blind
to all the signs of risen life that beckon us still.

**We need the heavy stone to be rolled away again.**

Yet still, we long for risen life within us, and between us.

Yet still, we long for love to consume us again and enliven us.

Yet still, we long for hope to enable new possibilities wherever dying

and grief hold sway.
**We need the stone to be rolled away again**. *A silence is kept*

**Words of Assurance**

Like our spiritual ancestors and countless generations, we say, Christ is Risen! The stone is rolled away, the tomb found empty. Mary calls out,

“I have seen the Lord!”
We have seen Christ, too, in every helping hand, in every heartfelt gift, in every choice to restore life in this world. We are called to this new life, a life of forgiveness and reconciliation. We are renewed to go on, free of unnecessary burdens, our lives telling of love. Walk forward on this journey of faith, knowing you are not alone. The risen life of Christ remains with us.

**Thanks be to God! Amen.** *Mindi Welton-Mitchell,*

**Song SPG 58** Love has come again

## The Easter Story:

## Matthew 28: 1-10

After the sabbath, as the first day of the week was dawning, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to see the tomb. And suddenly there was a great earthquake; for an angel of the Lord, descending from heaven, came and rolled back the stone and sat on it. His appearance was like lightning, and his clothing white as snow. For fear of him the guards shook and became like dead men. But the angel said to the women, “Do not be afraid; I know that you are looking for Jesus who was crucified. He is not here; for he has been raised, as he said. Come, see the place where he lay. Then go quickly and tell his disciples, ‘He has been raised from the dead, and indeed he is going ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see him.’ This is my message for you.” So they left the tomb quickly with fear and great joy, and ran to tell his disciples. Suddenly Jesus met them and said, “Greetings!” And they came to him, took hold of his feet, and worshiped him. Then Jesus said to them, “Do not be afraid; go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee; there they will see me.”

**The Easter Affirmation**

**Song SPG 39** Jesus Christ our living Lord

**Holy Communion**

**The Invitation**

Christ is risen!

**He is risen indeedl**

Let us celebrate this irrepressible life;

Let us open our hearts to the joy and wonder of infinite possibility, of unquenched hope, of risen life.

**We celebrate, we raise our voices and our hearts**
**in worship and thanksgiving to the God who lives.**

Risen life happened because Christ was first prepared to die.

Defying death, he refused to release his hold on life and love.

So now, following his example, we choose to remember life and life in all its abundance.

At supper on the night before he died, Jesus took bread and blessed it. Then he broke it and gave it to his disciples saying: This is my body, broken, so you may know wholeness. Eat it, and remember me.

After the meal Jesus took wine and blessed it. Then he gave it to his disciples saying: This is my very life, poured out so you may be filled up. Drink from this cup, and remember me.

So now, Lord of life, we share in this meal, we celebrate together, and we remember you. And we will continue to do so until risen life has flooded the whole creation. **Amen.**

May this bread and this juice be for us the life of Christ.
**In all our diversity, may we who share this meal**
**be joined with Christ as one.**

THE DISTRIBUTION

*All are welcome to receive Holy Communion, which will be served at the front of the church. The common chalice contains wine and the individual glasses grape juice. Please come forward in double file down the centre aisle and return by the side aisles. If you are unable to come forward, please indicate to the ushers who will arrange for communion to be brought to you.*

*Communion is received.*

*During serving of communion, ‘Now let the heavens be joyful’ will be sung.*

**Prayer after Communion**
We thank you, O God, for your life, pulsing in creation, revealed in Jesus, renewed in risen life, and available to us now. Thank you for touching us again with your life through bread and juice; for joining our lives with yours through Jesus; and for renewing risen life through your Holy Spirit.

Filled with life, we now offer ourselves to be life-bringers in the world. Touched by risen life, we pledge to resist deathliness wherever we find it.
Filled with hope we embrace the promise of eternity,

and the call to make it known at every opportunity. **Amen**.

**Song** Easter Day (see insert)

 *(the offering will be collected during this song)*

**Prayer of Dedication**

**Words of mission and benediction**

Go now as light-bearers to a world in darkness.
Go now, as hope-carriers to a world in despair.
And as you go,
May God, who comes to us in the things of this world,
bless your eyes and be in your seeing.

May Christ, who looks upon you with deepest love,
bless your eyes and widen your gaze.

May the Spirit, who perceives what is and what may yet be,
bless your eyes and sharpen your vision.

May the Sacred Three bless your eyes and cause you to see.

Jan L. Richardson, *In the Sanctuary of Women*

**We go in the name of Christ, in the love of God**

**and in the power of the Spirit.** **Amen.**

**Passing of the peace**
God’s peace be with you/**And also with you.**

***This service was prepared by Sandy Boyce …..***

***Thanks to the musicians and all those who have contributed to the service.***

**Please join us after the service for morning tea/coffee**

**in the Hall.**