



Easter - April 5th, 2026 The Fig Tree Worship Resource

Call to worship & Lighting the Candle

Christ is risen!
He is risen indeed, Hallelujah!
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He is risen indeed, Hallelujah!
Christ is risen!
He is risen indeed, Hallelujah!

Light the Christ candle

**The light shines in the darkness
and the darkness cannot overcome it.**

On this day of great celebration,
we greet you, God of life,
with dew on our feet, and wonder in our hearts.

Gather us in, from the long night of loss,
from the confusion and grief,
from our scattered lives.
Gather us in and stay with us.

May the emptiness of the tomb,
hold the fullness of your love
in this time, and for all time,
for us and for all creation. Amen.

Acknowledging



*Uniting Aboriginal and Islander
Christian Congress*

The Ancient of Days breathed life into this land and her peoples. From time beyond our reckoning the *(please name the people on whose land you gather)* People, the Traditional Custodians, have blessed this place through their law and customs, their care and life. We pay respects to their Elders and leaders past and present, and pray for the future of their people and communities. May we walk gently and respectfully on this Land.

Singing - Christ the Lord is risen today TiS 370

OR: The day of resurrection TiS 361



Prayer

God of the cross and the empty tomb,
you sent Jesus to show us the way to life,
and we praise you,
knowing the heavy and deep cost you paid
for coming among us in Jesus.

In the place where his body lay
we sense unparalleled mystery
and unending possibility,
guarded by angels, unbounded by death,
released into life eternal.

In the freshness of the morning,
when we expect death
you meet us and call our name.

Coming to you with hands full of herbs
and hearts full of grief,
you send us on our way with nothing
but an outrageous message of hope
to share, if we dare.

Bless you, for filling us with hope
that transcends any of our expectations.
Bless you, for coming to meet us
for moving in alongside us,
for forgiving our fear and calling us back.

So, in the quiet we come to you,
inexplicable Spirit of life,
bringing what we need to lay down
so that we might live ...
(silence)

Sisters and brothers, hear this;
we don't need anyone to roll away
the stone of our faults and failings
we don't need to carry ointments
to anoint the body of our guilt and shame.

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The stone is rolled away.
The body has been lifted up.
We are forgiven, released,
set free into resurrection life.

Thanks be to God, Amen.

Before we pass the peace to each other, I invite you to join me in a call to prayer from the UCA Assembly, for peace in the Middle East: <https://uniting.church/a-call-to-prayer-for-peace-in-the-middle-east/>

Prayer for Peace

**God of Abraham and Sarah,
God of Hagar and Ishmael,
God of Isaac and Rebekah,
God revealed to us in Jesus Christ,
We bring before you the lands
where our faith was born,
now shaken by escalating violence
and deep uncertainty.**

**We pray for the people of Iran,
for the people of Israel,
and for all across the region
living tonight with fear.**

**We pray for children woken by sirens,
for families seeking safety,
for those carrying grief, anger and anxiety.**

**Prince of Peace,
interrupt the cycle of violence.
Protect civilian life on every side.
Grant leaders wisdom and restraint.
Turn hearts from further destruction
toward dialogue and de-escalation.
Call all nations to act with responsibility,
with care for human life,
and with respect for the obligations
of international law.
Spirit of the Living God,
comfort those in Australia
whose loved ones are in harm's way.**

**Strengthen Jewish, Muslim, Iranian,
Arab and Christian communities
who may feel vulnerable or unsettled.**

**Guard us from antisemitism,
from Islamophobia,
and from every form of hatred
that rises in times of conflict.**

**Make your Church a place of safety, compassion
and steady hope.**

May fear give way to understanding.

May violence give way to courage for peace.

May justice and mercy meet.

In the name of Christ, who is our peace. Amen.

Passing the peace

May the Peace of God dwell with you:
and also with you.

Listening

Read: John 20: 1-18

For these words of faith and for Jesus the Word
Thanks be to God.

Reflecting - Rev Salesi Faupula

Peace in a Fractured Room

An Easter reflection from the Moderator

This Easter, many of us come carrying more than we expected.

Summer fires have left deep impact across our Victorian rural communities, and recovery will take time. Our public life has also felt strained: immigration protests, hate speech, and language that turns people into categories rather than neighbours. Tension lingers around 26 January - Australia Day for some, Invasion Day for others, often with more certainty than listening, and with First Peoples' pain too easily pushed aside. And there is a growing concern: when Christianity is blended with nationalism, faith can become a badge of belonging rather than a life shaped by Jesus.

Some of us are grieving. Some are worn out. Some are quietly steady, doing what needs to be



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done. Many are simply trying to make sense of things.

So what does Easter say to us in a season like this?

John tells us that on the evening of the first Easter Day the disciples were together “with the doors locked” because they were afraid (John 20:19). That detail matters. The first Easter was not a victory moment for people who felt strong. It began with ordinary people who felt exposed, uncertain, and unsure what would come next.

And it was into that room that Jesus entered.

He didn’t begin with a rebuke. His first words were: “Peace be with you” (John 20:19). Not peace as avoidance, and not peace as a quick fix. But the peace of Christ, spoken into the real circumstances of real people.

Then Jesus showed them his hands and his side (John 20:20). Even risen, the marks remained. The Gospel doesn’t ask us to pretend suffering does not matter. The cross was not brushed aside on Easter Day; it was carried into Easter. The risen Lord still bore the wounds of Good Friday.

That is part of the steadiness of Christian hope. Healing does not come by God standing back from what is broken, but by God entering it. In Jesus, God takes suffering seriously. The cross tells the truth about sin and violence and human failure, personal and public. The resurrection does not deny that truth; it answers it, declaring that God’s life and love are stronger than the powers that try to close the story.

Back in that locked room, Jesus spoke peace again, and then he breathed on them: “Receive the Holy Spirit” (John 20:22). Easter is not only reassurance; it is new breath, strength for people who feel spent. God gives himself to his people, not because they have performed well, but because Christ remains faithful.

And then Jesus said, “As the Father has sent me, so I send you” (John 20:21). Notice the shape: presence, peace, wounds acknowledged, Spirit given, then sending. Jesus met them where they were, and then he drew them forward.

This is where the cross and resurrection meet our present moment. The risen Christ sends us to live his way: to love God and neighbour; to seek truth without cruelty; to resist hatred; to honour the dignity of each person; to pursue justice with humility; and to do the slow work of repair and reconciliation. When public debate becomes harsher, Easter calls us back to the pattern of Christ: truthful, patient, and merciful.

For some, the next faithful step is practical: checking on a neighbour, supporting a community recovering from fire, offering hospitality, helping without needing credit. For others, it is relational: listening more carefully, seeking forgiveness, choosing words that build rather than wound. And for many, it is spiritual: returning to prayer, worship, and Scripture, especially when feelings are hard to name. Quiet faithfulness is not small; it is often how resurrection life takes shape among us.

Easter does not promise that life will be simple. But it does promise that God acts decisively in Jesus Christ: in the cross, God faces the worst of our world; in the resurrection, God opens a future we could not open for ourselves. The empty tomb is not an escape from reality, it is the beginning of renewal within it.

So this Easter, hear the Gospel: Christ crucified and risen, present among ordinary people, speaking peace. Deep joy not forced positivity, but joy grounded in the faithfulness of God. And courage, not loud bravado, but steady strength for the next step of love.

Singing - At the dawning of salvation ***TiS 392***

OR: Jesus is Lord of all the earth TiS 390

OR: Now the green blade rises TiS 382



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Offering

God of sunrise surprises, bless these offerings from our hearts and hands. Use them for good, to bring life, healing and hope. Amen.

Prayers for World & Community

Resurrection God, We pray for a world full of confusion and disbelief. What we expect often does not happen, and what often happens is what we least expect. We pray for these places and people in the world.

Come with the power of your Holy Spirit, to bless, to release and to bring peace:

We pray for the people in all countries currently at war or in turmoil. (*You might want to invite people to say the names of these countries out loud*). In the words of Pope Leo; "this is the peace of the risen Christ – a peace that is unarmed and disarming, humble and persevering. It comes from you, God, who loves us all unconditionally."

Come with the power of your Holy Spirit, to bless, to release and to bring peace.

We pray for people and our planet affected by issues of social justice:

Human rights abuses, climate justice, lack of adequate healthcare, refugee crisis, racial injustice, economic disparity, gun violence, hunger and food insecurity, gender and family violence.

Come with the power of your Holy Spirit, to bless, to release and to bring peace

We pray for people caught in situations of struggle and pain:

drug, alcohol, gambling and other addictions, diseases of mind, body and spirit, homelessness and hunger, broken homes, relationships and lives, unemployment, those in prisons, or isolated and alone.

Come with the power of your Holy Spirit, to bless, to release and to bring peace.

We pray for the church, celebrating this holy day. Use us to spread your message of hope. Help us to see where you are and join in. Renew us with love, make and remake us until we share your shape and conform to your likeness.

Come with the power of your Holy Spirit, to bless, to release and to bring peace,

We pray together then as Jesus taught us:

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.

Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil.

For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.

Singing - Yours be the glory, TiS 380 vv 1 & 2

OR: I danced in the morning / Lord of the Dance, TiS 242

Blessing

Living Jesus, send us out with hope. Put your words into our mouths and your Spirit into our souls so that we might shine with your eternal light.

Go knowing that the God who calls you by name when the dew is fresh on the grass, is the same God who is with you all the days of your life, and evermore. Amen.

Singing - Yours be the glory, TiS 380 v3

OR: May the feet of God walk with you. TiS 779

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