

WELCOME

Jesus our Risen King welcomes us to worship today with the words, *“I am the Resurrection and the Life. Those who believe in me will live, even though they die and all those who live and believe in me will never die.” (John 11:25)* Jesus coming to earth as a human being, his death as a human being and His rising to a new life are central pillars of our Christian faith. We come to worship the One who died yet rose again.

HYMN 405 We sing the praise of Him who died

We sing the praise of him who died
Of him who died upon the cross
The sinner's hope let men deride
For this we count the world but loss

Inscribed upon the cross we see
In shining letters God is love
He bears our sins upon the tree
He brings us mercy from above

The cross it takes our guilt away
It holds the fainting spirit up
It cheers with hope the gloomy day
And sweetens every bitter cup

It makes the coward spirit brave
And nerves the feeble arm for fight
It takes its terror from the grave
And gilds the bed of death with light

The balm of life the cure of woe
The measure and the pledge of love
The sinner's refuge here below
The angels theme in heaven above

Thomas Kelly (1769 – 1855)

PRAYER OF ADORATION AND CONFESSION

O Lord our God, how great Thou art! When we look up at the stars on a clear, dark night and see the vastness of space and realise You made and designed all that, we see something of Your greatness and awesome power. When we see the clear blue sky on an autumns day, bright sunshine showing everything in glorious technicolour and realise You made and designed all of it, we see something of Your greatness and skill in creation.

When we remember that You gave Your Son, Your nearest and dearest, to die for us on the cross to take away our sin, we see something of Your greatness and love for us.

O Lord our God, how great Thou art. How we praise You, worship and adore You!

We confess that although Your greatness and power and love can be seen all around us, so often we don't see it. Often we tend to see the bad rather than the good, the negatives rather than the positives, the problems rather than the way forward, the things that pull us down rather than what lifts us up.

We can let our troubles, fears and doubts take over and stop looking to You, floundering in the dark rather than walking in the light, being led and guided by You. So often we can let life get on top of us instead of sharing it all with You, looking to You to lead us through it.

We come to say sorry, Lord. Please forgive us and come work in us through Your Holy Spirit. Speak to us through Your word. Open our hearts and minds to You and to what You can do in us and through us when we love You, trust You and follow You. Meet with us now we pray for we ask this for Your glory and praise. We give you ourselves anew – please take and bless us and the offering of our time, talents and money which we lay before You.

Our Father who art in Heaven Hallowed be Thy name, Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done On earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom the power and the glory forever.

Amen

READING *Luke 22:39-45, John 20:1-9*

Read by Harry Dooley

Jesus Prays on the Mount of Olives

³⁹ Jesus left the city and went, as he usually did, to the Mount of Olives; and the disciples went with him. ⁴⁰ When he arrived at the place, he said to them, “Pray that you will not fall into temptation.”

⁴¹ Then he went off from them about the distance of a stone's throw and knelt down and prayed. ⁴² “Father,” he said, “if you will, take this cup of suffering away from me. Not my will, however, but your will be done.” ⁴³ An angel from heaven appeared to him and strengthened him. ⁴⁴ In great anguish he prayed even more fervently; his sweat was like drops of blood falling to the ground.^[a]

⁴⁵ Rising from his prayer, he went back to the disciples and found them asleep, worn out by their grief.

The Empty Tomb

20 Early on Sunday morning, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene went to the tomb and saw that the stone had been taken away from the entrance. ² She went running to Simon Peter and the other disciple, whom Jesus loved, and told them, “They have taken the Lord from the tomb, and we don't know where they have put him!”

³ Then Peter and the other disciple went to the tomb. ⁴ The two of them were running, but the other disciple ran faster than Peter and reached the tomb first. ⁵ He bent over and saw the linen cloths, but he did not go in. ⁶ Behind him came Simon Peter, and he went straight into the tomb. He saw the linen cloths lying there ⁷ and the cloth which had been around Jesus' head. It was not lying with the linen cloths but was rolled up by itself. ⁸ Then the other disciple, who had reached the tomb first, also went in; he saw and believed. (⁹ They still did not understand the scripture which said that he must rise from death.)

REFLECTION

After the meal Jesus and his friends went out to a **garden where they used to meet very often**. As I was reading and re reading this I noted the phrase – where they used to meet very often. It set me thinking about gardens in the Bible. Gardens where different things happened, gardens where different emotions came into play. Gardens which play a huge part in the story of God's dealings with us His people, His love for creation and people everywhere, gardens which remind us of the story of God's love for us right from the very beginning which of course if you are Sound of Music fans is a very good place to start.

We all know the first garden – the Garden of Eden

1. A GARDEN OF NEARNESS The garden of life – God created life, the garden of work – not strenuous, back breaking toil, but work, creative work, work with a purpose. He made the garden a place of provision, protection and absolute freedom. It was here that the Tree of Life is first mentioned. A garden of un- interrupted relationships – perfect love, perfect harmony between people and God – close communion. How perfect must have been Adam and Eve's daily existence – God walking with them through Eden But then of course there was the break as they chose to go their own way. But then sin spoilt it. And folk were banished from God's closest presence for their own good.

2. A GARDEN OF HEAVINESS

The Second Garden is the **Garden of Gethsemane**, the one of which Harry read. Jesus was familiar with this garden by going there both with his disciples and also in his “alone” times with the Father. It was in this garden where Jesus had his greatest struggle.

Matthew's gospel tell us that *Jesus took Peter, James and John with him and then grief, anguish overcame him – He said to them the sorrow in my heart is so great that it almost crushes me. Stay here keep watch with me (Matthew 26:37)*. Almost crushed by our sin weighing down upon Him.

Gethsemane means oil press. Just like the beam with ever increasing weight being forced down on the olives so our sin crushes and crushes the life blood out of Jesus.

Jesus had a real battle on his hands – He knew that he could walk away from death, He knew that one word to God and angels would come and whisk him away. I wonder if you’ve ever had a battle where you really wanted to give up but knew that you mustn’t. It’s very lonely and for Jesus it was especially so as the disciples fell asleep and gave Him no support whatsoever. We can never know how much it cost Jesus that night in Gethsemane to finally utter the words, ***“Please take this cup of suffering from me...BUT not my will but yours O God.”***

But He did and He chose the cross so that we might be set free to live our lives knowing the love of God at work in our lives, the power of God at work in our lives once more.

3a . A GARDEN OF DEATH, DESTRUCTION, DESPAIR

John tells us that there was a garden in the place where Jesus was crucified – Golgotha and in the garden was a new tomb – one that had never been used, a tomb that was close and available.

That same garden though became the Garden of NEW LIFE.

3b A GARDEN OF JOYFULNESS

We read of the joy of the disciples when they knew Christ was alive - ***Matthew 28:8 & Luke 24:41+52.*** Death defeated, new life, new growth, new purpose.

The Christian faith is all about the way in which God acts to help His people back into a close harmonious loving relationship with Himself – back to what it was like in the first garden.

Put simply God loves us and in the beginning we loved Him. We chose by our wrong actions to break that relationship. God loves us so much that Jesus was sent to take the punishment for the wrong that we do, so enabling us to be forgiven and in our forgiven state we are brought back into God’s loving Presence forever. A Presence that will help us, guide us, comfort us and strengthen us until life here in the garden of earth is over.

4. The Final Garden is in HEAVEN - the **Glorious of God**. This garden is in Revelation 22. We see again that the tree of life is mentioned alongside the new Heaven. The Tree of Life was in the first Garden of Eden and now it is in Glory! God’s innermost, intimate Presence, we will see and experience. When people were removed from the garden it was because of the connection with the Tree of Life. When we read in Revelation 22, we see the Tree of Life on both sides of the “River of the Water of Life” bearing twelve crops of fruit one for every month, pointing again to God’s continual provision for us. The leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations, showing that God’s love is for all people everywhere. God is a God of restoration, renewal, refreshment for all His creation.

In the first garden, we lost the face to face, intimate closeness with God, but we will have that face to face relationship again. Fully restored!

Every garden represents a stage in life and God is in every garden. Because of the Resurrection, we have the hope of being restored right now in a personal relationship with Jesus and we can follow Him as Lord until we return to the future hope of seeing Jesus face to face.

Now here in the garden that Easter Sunday morning Jesus - alive appears to one of his friends, Mary and she mistakes him for the gardener. I think we often miss the relevance of this as we seek to go straight to the fact that it was Jesus not the gardener.

What do gardeners do? They **prepare the soil** making it ready for growth, for new life to come. That's what Jesus did on the cross as he defeated death allowing new life to come into being.

Gardeners **plant seeds so that new life will flourish**. Jesus as gardener does just that, planting seeds of life into our lives. Physically we cannot make ourselves breathe, God does that at the beginning of our physical lives, he keeps us breathing throughout our lives here on earth and when our final breath comes it is He who decided the time. It is His **power which brings life** to our souls too.

Gardeners **prune bushes, enabling new growth to appear taking the dead wood away at the same time**. Jesus is willing through His Spirit to prune the wrong things from our lives. Those of you who are gardeners know that to get the best growth, the most prolific and beautiful blooms pruning is a necessity and done in the right manner produces growth and beauty for years to come.

I think Mary was quite right to think of Jesus as a gardener though not in quite the right way.

Let us remind ourselves of the life, the death, the resurrection of Jesus and let us remind ourselves of the wonder of this new life that is available for us today and on into the future. I think it is such good news and can transform our lives in such a miraculous way that it's news that we must share. Amen

HYMN 416 Christ is alive let Christians sing

Christ is alive ! Let Christians sing.
The cross stands empty to the sky.
Let streets and homes with praises ring.
Love, drowned in death, shall never die.

Christ is alive ! No longer bound
to distant years in Palestine,
but saving, healing, here and now,
and touching every place and time.

In every insult, rift, and war,
where colour, scorn, or wealth divide,
Christ suffers still, yet loves the more,
and lives, where even hope has died.

Women and men, in age and youth,
can feel the Spirit, hear the call,
and find the way, the life, the truth,
revealed in Jesus, freed for all.

Christ is alive, and comes to bring
good news to this and every age,

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till earth and sky and ocean ring
with joy, with justice, love, and praise.

Brian Wren (b.1936)

PRAYER OF INTERCESSION

Myra Ward

“Christ is alive, and comes to bring
Good news to this and every age,
Till earth and sky and ocean ring
With joy, with justice, love and praise.”

We sing these words from our hearts. Lord we want all of this for our communities, our country and our world.

We pray that the living Christ might be made known in and through all His people across the globe; that we may all be gradually transformed into His likeness and live the lives He wants for us.

We ask your blessing on all who preach, teach and live to bring the good news of Jesus in this age and to this generation; for all living sacrificially in hard places here in the UK and around the world. We remember in particular the work in Guatemala amongst impoverished indigenous families and those caught up in violent and terrifying gang culture. Please keep our friends Ignacio, Sandra, Jackie and Nehemias safe and well. Touch and transform the lives of those amongst whom they work and bless them with encouragement and a fruitful ministry.

We pray that earth and sky and ocean will ring with joy and not be spoiled by our actions and choices. We are reminded again by this song that our planet is God’s gift to us and shares in our journey towards wholeness; we pray for ourselves, our world, our attitudes and actions; help us make good personal choices for our earth and sky and oceans. Be with those preparing for the Cop 26 Glasgow meetings and open minds, hearts and wallets in collective responsibility.

Joy ... Lord how we want this for our young people and their families living in challenging times. Thank you for their resilience and patience in these days as the goal posts at school and in society shift constantly. Inspire and energise those who work with them and may good decisions be made to help and guide them. Especially be with kids who despair about the impact of climate change on their future. Open doors for Scripture Union and others who are passionate about sharing the good news of Jesus with young people

that they might experience the peace that passes all understanding and the joy of a living relationship with Him. We pray for all our own ones in a moment of silence.

Justice ... Lord we see injustice every day. "But life isn't fair" a phrase we hear and use ourselves but which might let us ignore the wrongs in our society. Where we can make a difference open our eyes to befriend, donate or advocate, sign a petition, speak up for an individual or a group. Help us see Your face in those who need justice.

We pray for a fair distribution of vaccine across the world.

We pray for a fair distribution of wealth, food and health care.

We pray for fair trading practices.

We pray for compassion and love to be our beating heart as a nation. Soften the hearts of those in power towards those over whom they wield power; the unemployed, homeless, locked away; refugees, those living on the margins of society and those bound by addictions or overwhelmed by ill health. Strengthen the Church to speak truth to power, to challenge injustice and to offer a different way ahead for those for whom life isn't fair but should be.

Praise We ask Lord that we might all be transformed into a people of praise, directing our thanks to you and drawing others into this life of faith which offers much peace and joy deep in our beings. We pray that we might be people of encouragement and praise, bringing joy to our families, friends and communities. Help us in our weakness. We pray that none will miss out on knowing You through our indifference. Please come and fill us again with Your spirit that we might hear your voice and follow.

All these prayers we ask in the name of Jesus.

Amen

ADMISSION OF NEW MEMBERS - Selkirk

The Kirk Session has resolved to admit to the communicant membership of the Church Lita McHale and Tracy Brown. They became members of the Church family when they was baptised. They now seek to become full members, taking their place within the family, ready to worship, work, give and pray for God's glory and for the good of His church. It is a special privilege for us to witness Lita and Tracy coming by their own choice to confirm the promises made on their behalf by their parents at their baptism. In baptism we become heirs of the covenant of grace which God has made with us in Jesus Christ. We are brought into the church and promised the gift of the Holy Spirit. It is through the prompting of the Holy Spirit that

Lita and Tracy come now to acknowledge this covenant of grace, to confess publicly their own faith in the Lord Jesus and to receive the strengthening of the Holy Spirit.

Let us pray

Lord Jesus Christ we remember today how you chose twelve ordinary people to be your disciples, calling them to follow you, entrusting them with the message of your gospel, expecting them to make your love known to all people. We remember how across the centuries you have chosen people to serve you from all walks of life, from different cultures and background, with contrasting characters, temperament and gifts. Time and again you have chosen the most unlikely people to be your church. Lord today we thank you that you have chosen us to be your people to be your children, your disciples. Loving God we praise you for your call. We thank you that you have prompted Lita and Tracy to come now into full membership of your church. In Jesus name we pray amen.

Congregation stand

Lita and Tracy, do you reject sin and profess your faith in God the Father who has created you, Jesus Christ the Son who died that you might live and the Holy Spirit who has called you to trust wholly in the grace, the free mercy and the love of God through Jesus Christ . **I do**

Jesus said, “Whoever acknowledges me before others, I will acknowledge before my Father in Heaven.”

Congregation sit

Lita and Tracy having proclaimed that you believe in one God Father, Son and Holy Spirit and having confessed Jesus Christ as your Saviour and Lord and having recognised the Holy Spirit’s power to be at work in your life do you now promise to join regularly with your fellow Christians in worship on The Lord’s Day? **I do**

Do you promise to nourish your faith by studying God’s Word, the Bible, and through prayer, both privately and in the church. **I do**

Do you promise to give a fitting proportion of your time,talents and money for the church’s work in the world? **I do**

Do you promise depending on the grace of God and with the help of His Holy Spirit to profess publicly your loyalty to Jesus Christ, to serve Him in your daily work and to walk in His way all the days of your life? **I do**

Let us pray

Lord God we praise you that you have called Lita McHale and Tracy Brown, into the life of your church, to be part of the great company of saints here on earth and in heaven. May they never cease to wonder at what you have done for them. Fill them with your Holy Spirit, equip them for service, inspire them with vision, nurture their faith and guide them always in your ways. In Jesus name we pray Amen.

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Lita and Tracy, In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, the King and the Head of the Church and by authority of the Kirk Session I welcome and receive you into full membership of the church and admit you to the full privileges of the children of God and to the responsibilities of membership within this congregation. May your sharing in our life together bring blessing to you and to us all.

HYMN 796 The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord bless you and keep you

The Lord make His face to shine upon you and be gracious unto you

The Lord lift up His countenance upon you

And give you peace

Music Lowell Mason (1792 – 1872)

Lita The Book of Proverbs says this, “Trust in the Lord with all your heart. Never rely on what you think you know. Remember the Lord in everything you do and He will show you the right way.” In showing you the right way to live God promises to be with you, to strengthen you and to let you experience more and more of His life changing love. Allow Him to do that.

Tracy Peter tells us that God's divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of him who called us. You are His child. Allow His power to work in your life changing you, challenging you, comforting you with His power known to us through the presence of the Holy Spirit.

Congregation stands

I charge you the people of this congregation, to love, encourage and support Lita and Tracy in faith that they may continue to grow in the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the knowledge and love of God

With God's help we will live out our baptism as a loving community in Christ, nurturing one another in faith, upholding one another in prayer and encouraging one another in service.

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen

MEDITATION – Ashkirk and Ettrick & Yarrow

from Encounters Eddie Askew 2004 The Leprosy Mission International page 111

I stand like Mary, Lord before the empty tomb and questions come unbidden.

I do not, cannot, know the how and the why.

This is your doing and I can only stand in awe and wait

and hope that when you call my name as you called hers,

I'll recognise the voice and know I'm known by You.

Come and reveal your self – as gardener if you will.
Dig, plant and prune my life until it fruits in recognition of your presence,
the door-stone of my fears rolled back, my life renewed.

I wish that I could see you as she did, but though I cannot see you with my eyes
I hear the whispers of your presence everywhere.
Earth is alive with echoes of your love, your rainbowed beauty's treasures far and near.
Hints of your glory spread in children's innocence, in lovers' joy, in lives lived well, in those who fight for
justice and for truth.
And in the distance Lord I think I see the garden gates of Eden open once again
and you are there to welcome. Alleluia.

HYMN 419 Thine be the glory

Thine be the glory, risen, conquering Son,
Endless is the victory Thou o'er death has won;
Angels in bright raiment rolled the stone away,
Kept the folded grave clothes where Thy body lay
Thine be the glory, risen, conquering Son
Endless is the victory Thou o'er death hast won.

Lo! Jesus meets us risen from the tomb;
Lovingly He greets us, scatters fear and gloom;
Let the church with gladness hymns of triumph sing,
For her Lord now liveth; death hath lost its sting
Thine be the glory risen conquering Son

No more we doubt Thee, glorious Prince of Life;
Life is naught without: Thee aid us in our strife;
Make us more than conquerors, through
Thy deathless love
Bring us safe through Jordan to Thy home above

Edmond Budry (1854 – 1932)

Translated Richard Birch Hoyle (1875 – 1939)

BENEDICTION

Go rejoicing for Christ is risen – He seeks you to rise with Him
In Him is your hope: in life, in death and in all eternity.
May His living, vibrant Presence bring you peace and power to live your life for Him day by day.
The blessing of the Presence of God, Father, Son and Spirit be yours today and everyday Amen