

THIRD SUNDAY OF EASTER - 26th April 2020

A short act of worship for use in people's homes while churches are closed,
provided by Mrs. Marilyn Britt.

Alleluia! Christ has risen. He has risen indeed. Alleluia!

1 Peter 1: 20-21. He was chosen before the creation of the world, but was revealed in these last times for your sake. Through him you believe in God, who raised him from the dead and glorified him, and so your faith and hope are in God.

Hymn: STF 353 ¹ [WITH VOCAL ACCOMPANIMENT](#) OR [ORGAN](#)

Jesus is Lord! Creation's voice proclaims it,
For by His power each tree and flower was planned and made.
Jesus is Lord! The universe declares it;
Sun, moon and stars in heaven cry; Jesus is Lord!
Jesus is Lord! Jesus is Lord!
Praise Him with Hallelujahs, for Jesus is Lord!

Jesus is Lord! Yet from His throne eternal
In flesh He came to die in pain on Calvary's tree.
Jesus is Lord! From Him all life proceeding -
Yet gave His life a ransom, thus setting us free.

Jesus is Lord! O'er sin the mighty conqueror,
From death He rose, and all His foes shall own His name
Jesus is Lord! God sends His Holy Spirit
To show by works of power that Jesus is Lord.

David John Mansell (b1936) © 1980 Authentic Publishing (Admin. by Integrity Music)

Prayer:

Sovereign God, we your people are scattered yet we are gathered as one in your Name.

All powerful God, I come in assurance of your love and constant goodness.

Creator God, I look out of the window and see your world in colour, shape and form and I know it is good.

Faithful God of everlasting hope I come to you with my praise and adoration for your greatness and constant love for me.

Gracious Lord, I know I don't always say and do what I ought and I am sorry.

Lamb of God, you overcame death for our salvation and gave hope for the future.

Risen Christ, in your mercy, I am assured my sins are forgiven.

I offer my praise and adoration. Amen.

The Lord's Prayer said slowly and thoughtfully.

Reading. Luke 24: 13-35. The Road to Emmaus ² [READING FROM 1:34 TO 4:30](#)

¹³ Now that same day two of them were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem. ¹⁴ They were talking with each other about everything that had happened. ¹⁵ As they talked and discussed these things with each other, Jesus himself came up and walked along with them; ¹⁶ but they were kept from recognizing him. ¹⁷ He asked them, "What are you discussing together as you walk along?"

They stood still, their faces downcast. ¹⁸ One of them, named Cleopas, asked him, "Are you the only one visiting Jerusalem who does not know the things that have happened there in these days?" ¹⁹ "What things?" he asked. "About Jesus of Nazareth," they replied. "He was a prophet, powerful in word and deed before God and all the people. ²⁰ The chief priests and our rulers handed him over to be sentenced to death, and they crucified him; ²¹ but we had hoped that he was the one who was going to redeem Israel. And what is more, it is the third day since all this took place. ²² In addition, some of our women amazed us. They went to the tomb early this morning ²³ but didn't find his body. They came and told us that they had seen a vision of angels, who said he was alive. ²⁴ Then some of our companions went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said, but they did not see Jesus."

²⁵ He said to them, "How foolish you are, and how slow to believe all that the prophets have spoken! ²⁶ Did not the Messiah have to suffer these things and then enter his glory?" ²⁷ And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he explained to them what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself.

²⁸ As they approached the village to which they were going, Jesus continued on as if he were going farther. ²⁹ But they urged him strongly, "Stay with us, for it is nearly evening; the day is almost over." So he went in to stay with them. ³⁰ When he was at the table with them, he took bread, gave thanks, broke it and began to give it to them. ³¹ Then their eyes were opened and they recognized him, and he disappeared from their sight. ³² They asked each other, "Were not our hearts burning within us while he talked with us on the road and opened the Scriptures to us?" ³³ They got up and returned at once to Jerusalem. There they found the Eleven and those with them, assembled together ³⁴ and saying, "It is true! The Lord has risen and has appeared to Simon." ³⁵ Then the two told what had happened on the way, and how Jesus was recognized by them when he broke the bread.

Reflection

Have you seen any rainbow pictures lately? Children have been drawing rainbows during the last couple of weeks showing support for the NHS. There will be some in almost every street in Britain. Rainbows are a sign of hope – remember Noah's rainbow and God's covenant.

I wonder if these two disciples had lost hope. They were doing a lot of talking and emotions were running high. Thinking about today, it wouldn't have been allowed. The two disciples were going for a long walk (about 7 miles, so more than an hour) talking together and then being joined by a stranger! The disciples probably had many of the emotions we may be feeling at the moment. Maybe they had panicked – which is why they had left Jerusalem. They were sad, pre-occupied, and feeling the pain of loss and grief. They, like us, may have been very anxious about what was happening around them.

So when the stranger joined them, the two were astounded that he had not heard of the events in Jerusalem. It had been the Festival of Passover and pilgrims were visiting the city from all over the Roman Empire. This was a huge event – it not only affected the disciples, the whole nation was interested. The disciples had expected Jesus to redeem Israel to rescue the nation from its enemies. Most Jews believed that the Old Testament prophecies pointed to a military and political Messiah. They didn't realise that the Messiah had come to redeem people from slavery to sin. The disciples had lost hope – they hadn't understood yet that Jesus' death offered the greatest hope possible. The stranger admonished them for being foolish and not understanding that the crucifixion of Jesus had been part of God's plan. He spoke to them about the scriptures and how the prophets had foretold many of the events about Jesus. He reminded them about Jesus' ministry to all – how he had been challenged by many. The two disciples listened. They hadn't understood and this man seemed to know.

When they arrived at Emmaus, the 2 disciples asked the stranger to stay and have supper with them. It was in the act of breaking bread that the disciples suddenly recognised who the stranger was - Jesus - and suddenly they knew and understood. Jesus disappeared. With excitement and energy, they returned quickly to Jerusalem, to the other disciples - their friends and believers - and spoke to them about their meeting with Jesus. 'It is true! The Lord has risen'

Sometimes we struggle to understand what is going on and feel that everybody else does know. We do need to be able to talk to others; to share our thoughts and understanding or misunderstanding. We also need time to think it through. So it was with these disciples – they needed to find time, listen and ask questions. But only when the bread was broken did they recognise the truth.

From then on the disciples went out and spoke to many – sometimes large crowds, about the Risen Jesus – about his life, death and resurrection. In these difficult days and always, Jesus is walking alongside each one of us – we only have to recognise Him.

Prayers of Intercession.

Eternal God – in a new way of living - I turn to you – as Saviour and Redeemer. Make your presence known in these difficult times and circle us with your love and protection.

I pray for my family and friends – both near and far away.....

I pray for those living in confined spaces unable to get out

And for those not in a safe space whether it be inside or in outside camps

I pray for those who are ill

And for those who mourn.....

I pray for those working in all the caring professions.....

I pray for those keeping us well and supplying daily needs

I pray not just for the keyworkers but for the new volunteers helping to keep us safe.

I pray for all those making the decisions and those who supply the information to keep us safe now and plan for the future.

I pray for myself. I pray for your peace in my heart and your courage in my life as I walk alongside you. I pray my future will come alive with the hope of the Risen Christ and through the power of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Hymn: **STF 351 In Christ Alone, my hope is found,** ³ [Kristyn Getty \(looking younger!\)](#) OR [Virtual choir](#) OR [ORGAN](#)

In Christ alone my hope is found,
He is my light, my strength, my song;
This Cornerstone, this solid Ground,
Firm through the fiercest drought and storm.
What heights of love, what depths of peace,
When fears are stilled, when strivings cease!
My Comforter, my All in All,
Here in the love of Christ I stand.

In Christ alone! - who took on flesh,
Fullness of God in helpless babe!
This gift of love and righteousness,
Scorned by the ones He came to save:
Till on that cross as Jesus died,
The wrath of God was satisfied –
For every sin on Him was laid;
Here in the death of Christ I live.

There in the ground His body lay,
Light of the world by darkness slain:
Then bursting forth in glorious Day
Up from the grave He rose again!
And as He stands in victory
Sin's curse has lost its grip on me,
For I am His and He is mine –
Bought with the precious blood of Christ.

No guilt in life, no fear in death,
This is the power of Christ in me;
From life's first cry to final breath,
Jesus commands my destiny.
No power of hell, no scheme of man,
Can ever pluck me from His hand;
Till He returns or calls me home,
Here in the power of Christ I'll stand!

Keith Getty (b1974) and Stuart Townend (b1963)
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Blessing

As we walk together on our journey, may the peace and blessing of God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit be with us now and always. Amen.

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