



## EASTER SUNDAY AROUND CABARRUS COUNTY

*This service is designed for use by a small gatherings of God's people outside of the assembly of the full community. It draws from the Eucharistic tradition, but it is not a sacramental meal. All Christians are called to bless, and this includes blessings of food and drink shared and the people gathered. The people assemble with greetings and conversation. Candles are lit by individuals as they arrive, accompanied by a moment of silent prayer. One person acts as the leader to keep the flow of the worship moving. Prayers and readings are divided among the rest of the group.*

*The leader opens with Call to Worship*

### **Call to Worship**

*One* On this day the Lord has acted;  
we will rejoice and be glad in it.

– Psalm 118:24

### **Opening Prayer**

*An appropriate prayer is offered to set the tone for worship. Collects from The Book of Common Prayer, especially the collect appointed for the day, are always appropriate.*

### **Music Offering**

*Please feel free to hum along! Singing in a mask is discouraged by health officials due to concerns for higher CO2 rebreathing when singing.*

### **The First Reading:**

#### **Acts 10:34-43**

*One* Peter began to speak to Cornelius and the other Gentiles: "I truly understand that God shows no partiality, but in every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him. You know the message he sent

to the people of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ – he is Lord of all. That message spread throughout Judea, beginning in Galilee after the baptism that John announced: how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power; how he went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him. We are witnesses to all that he did both in Judea and in Jerusalem. They put him to death by hanging him on a tree; but God raised him on the third day and allowed him to appear, not to all the people but to us who were chosen by God as witnesses, and who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead. He commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one ordained by God as judge of the living and the dead. All the prophets testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name."

### **The Second Reading:**

#### **John 20:1-18**

*One* Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the tomb. So she ran and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus

loved, and said to them, "They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him." Then Peter and the other disciple set out and went toward the tomb. The two were running together, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. He bent down to look in and saw the linen wrappings lying there, but he did not go in. Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb. He saw the linen wrappings lying there, and the cloth that had been on Jesus' head, not lying with the linen wrappings but rolled up in a place by itself. Then the other disciple, who reached the tomb first, also went in, and he saw and believed; for as yet they did not understand the scripture, that he must rise from the dead. Then the disciples returned to their homes.

But Mary stood weeping outside the tomb. As she wept, she bent over to look into the tomb; and she saw two angels in white, sitting where the body of Jesus had been lying, one at the head and the other at the feet. They said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping?" She said to them, "They have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid him." When she had said this, she turned around and saw Jesus

standing there, but she did not know that it was Jesus. Jesus said to her, “Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you looking for?” Supposing him to be the gardener, she said to him, “Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away.” Jesus said to her, “Mary!” She turned and said to him in Hebrew, “Rabbouni!” (which means Teacher). Jesus said to her, “Do not hold on to me, because I have not yet ascended to the Father. But go to my brothers and say to them, ‘I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.’” Mary Magdalene went and announced to the disciples, “I have seen the Lord”; and she told them that he had said these things to her.

## Teaching

*In small groups of approximately three, remaining at appropriate physical distance, choose questions to discuss for approximately twenty minutes.*

In Acts 10:34-43, Peter’s testimony of the Easter story to outsiders underscores the universality of the Gospel message. It is to be proclaimed to all.

- Are there ways in which we limit the message of the Gospel in our own time? Are there people to whom we

fail to preach?

- What might we learn if we were to see ourselves not as Peter but as Cornelius, not as the confident witness to Jesus’s life and resurrection, but as the outsider seeking to understand God’s ways?
- In verse 39, Paul makes the claim that “we are witnesses to all that he did, both in Judea and in Jerusalem.” How are you a witness to Christ? Do you live your life believing that you are a witness? If not, why not? If so, how?

In John 20, when Jesus calls Mary’s name, she knows him as her teacher, and seeks to hold on to him. And he sends her out to proclaim the news of his resurrection.

- Have you ever experienced Christ’s presence in an unexpected face?
- Jesus calls Mary’s name and she recognizes him in that instant. How can we recognize the moments when God calls our own names?
- The “Beloved Disciple,” or “The disciple whom Jesus loved,” plays a crucial role in the first part of this

story (verses 2-10). No one knows exactly who the Beloved Disciple was or what his exact relationship to Christ was, although there's been much written about his identity. In this story, the Beloved Disciple is the first believer in Jesus' resurrection when he outruns Simon Peter to see the linen shrouds that Jesus had worn (verse 8). What are some of your reactions to the role of the Beloved Disciple? One theory people have is that the Beloved Disciple is there to get the reader to engage more deeply in the text. Can you read yourself into that role? Why or why not?

### Prayer of Blessing

*Before leaving your small groups, standing and remaining at appropriate physical distance, spend approximately five minutes praying for one another in turn. Begin by asking what each person would like prayers for and then have the other members of the group lift them to God.*

### Prayers of the People

*The whole group gathers for prayer. Prayers may be formal and prepared ahead of time, or come forth from the group at the time of worship.*

*Prayers are always offered for:*

- *The Universal Church, its members, and its mission*
- *The Nation and all in authority*

- *The welfare of the world*
- *The concerns of the local community*
- *Those who suffer and those in any trouble*
- *Those who have died*

*One* Jesus Christ is risen today, our triumphant holy day. Alleluia! So let us pray to our Lord, saying, "Risen Christ, to you we give undying praise."

Heavenly King, for us you endured the cross and the grave. When we were yet sinners, you redeemed and saved us. May we sing your eternal praises everywhere we go. *Silence.*

Risen Christ,

*All* **To you we give undying praise.**

*One* Paschal victim, where your blood is poured, death's dark angel sheathes his sword. Placing our hope in you, we pray for an end to violence and war. *Silence.*

Risen Christ,

*All* **To you we give undying praise.**

*One* Author of Life, you are the ruler of creation. All things created on earth sing to your glory. From the death of winter, raise the fair beauty of earth. *Silence.*

Risen Christ,

*All* **To you we give undying praise.**

*One* Resurrected One, bring our neighbors from sadness into joy. Where they live in darkness, brighten their lives with your splendor and give to all that peace that passes human knowing.

Risen Christ,

*All* **To you we give undying praise.**

*One* Jesus the health of the world, pour out your balm on our souls and the souls of all in pain or sorrow. Be the source of life for all people. *The people are invited to add their thanksgivings and petitions, followed by silence.*

Risen Christ,

*All* **To you we give undying praise.**

*One* Living Christ, nothing in this world can sever us from your love. May we follow where you have gone before us: to rest and reign with you in heaven. Bless and keep the dying and the dead.

*Silence.*

Risen Christ,

*All* **To you we give undying praise.**

## Confession

*One* Let us confess our sins against God and one another.

*All* **Most merciful God, we confess that we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done, and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We are truly sorry and we humbly repent. For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ, have mercy on us and forgive us; that we may delight in your will, and walk in your ways, to the glory of your Name. Amen.**

*One* Almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us all our sins through our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen us in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep us in eternal life. **Amen.**

## The Lord's Prayer

*All* **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 for  
ever. Amen.**

### **Blessing of the Meal**

*This portion of the service follows the shape of the Last Supper, and therefore may sound familiar and much like the Eucharist. However the elements are not consecrated, they are blessed, something all Christians are called to do. In times of pandemic, each person brings their own bread and wine. It is the time of prayer together that is shared, not the food. Begin by having the person who will lead the prayer over the bread to invite each person to make ready the food they brought. When all are ready, the prayers are offered.*

*One* On the last night that Jesus gathered with his friends he took bread and he blessed it and shared it with his friends, for God who loves us, feeds us. As God's people ate manna in the wilderness and were satisfied, so we share this bread with Christ, and with one another. May it be for us bread from heaven, strength for our bodies, balm for our souls, and may it empower us to be Christ's body in this world. *Silence.*

*One* On the last night that Jesus gathered with his friends, he took wine

and he blessed it and shared it with them. God who made us delights in us, and gives us good gifts to delight our tongues, and give joy to our souls. As Jesus offered the Samaritan woman water that would not fail, so Jesus offers us the same. May this wine be for us the holy drink of heaven, and may quench the thirst of our souls.

*All* **Holy and life-giving God, we thank you for the bounty of your Creation laid before us. We ask you to bless it, that it may be to us a holy meal. We give thanks for all those who labored so that it might sustain us. Through it may you give us the strength to be your good stewards; to care and tend your creation, and to care especially for our siblings – all the people of this world. We ask these things by the grace of Jesus Christ and in power of the Holy Spirit. Amen.**

*The gathered join in eating. As this requires removing mask, care must be taken to ensure proper physical distancing continues. Music may be appropriate.*

### **Music Offering During the Meal**

*Please feel free to hum along!*

## **Sending Blessing**

*One person offers a blessing on the group gathered as they are sent into the world to do the work God has given each to do.*

*All*    **Amen.**

*One*    Go in peace to love and serve the  
          Lord

*All*    **Amen.**

*This service includes the work of The Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music, The Rev. Josephine Robertson, All Saints Episcopal Church, Bellevue, WA and Renew Community House Church.*