

This short act of worship has been produced for you by The Revd Papa Owusu. If you are well enough and able, why not spend a few moments with God, perhaps at a time when you would normally be sharing with others in church - pray for them as they pray for you.

Welcome to our act of worship this morning on the Second Sunday after Easter

Alleluia! Christ is risen!
He is risen indeed! Alleluia

Call to Worship

You have turned our sadness into joy.

We worship you, O God.

You have restored us to life.

We worship you, O God.

You have turned our mourning into dancing.

We worship you, O God.

Hymn: All heaven declares the glory of the risen Lord (StF 293). Sing/Read/Pray/Proclaim the words

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kPkZAjA610k>

All heaven declares
the glory of the risen Lord;
who can compare

with the beauty of the Lord?
Forever he will be
the Lamb upon the throne;
I gladly bow the knee,
and worship Him alone.

I will proclaim
the glory of the risen Lord,
who once was slain
to reconcile man to God.
Forever you will be
the Lamb upon the throne;
I gladly bow the knee,
and worship You alone

*Noel Richards (b. 1955)
And Tricia Richards (b. 1960)*

Prayer

Let us pray

If we have fallen into despair,
Lord, forgive us.

If we have failed to hope in you,
Lord, forgive us.

If we have been fearful of death,
Lord, forgive us.

If we have forgotten the victory of Christ,
Lord, forgive us.

Silence

May the living God
raise you from despair,
give you victory over, sin
and set you free in Christ. **Amen**

The Collect

God of victory over death,
your son revealed himself again and again,
and convinced his followers of his glorious resurrection.
Grant that we may know his risen presence,
in love obediently feed his sheep,
and care for the lambs of his flock,
until we join the hosts of heaven in worshipping you and
praising him
who is worthy of blessing and honour, glory and power, forever
and ever. **Amen**

Today's reading: John 21: 1-19 (NRSVA)

Jesus Appears to Seven Disciples

After these things Jesus showed himself again to the disciples by the Sea of Tiberias; and he showed himself in this way. Gathered there together were Simon Peter, Thomas called the Twin, Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, the sons of Zebedee, and two others of his disciples. Simon Peter said to them, 'I am going fishing.' They said to him, 'We will go with you.' They went out and got into the boat, but that night they caught nothing.

Just after daybreak, Jesus stood on the beach; but the disciples did not know that it was Jesus. Jesus said to them, 'Children, you have no fish, have you?' They answered him, 'No.' He said to them, 'Cast the net to the right side of the boat, and you will find some.' So they cast it, and now they were not able to haul it in because there were so many fish. That disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, 'It is the Lord!' When Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he put on some clothes, for he was naked, and jumped into the lake. But the other disciples came in the boat, dragging the net full of fish, for they were not far from the land, only about a hundred yards off.

When they had gone ashore, they saw a charcoal fire there, with fish on it, and bread. Jesus said to them, 'Bring some of the fish that you have just caught.' So Simon Peter went aboard and hauled the net ashore, full of large fish, a hundred and fifty-

three of them; and though there were so many, the net was not torn. Jesus said to them, 'Come and have breakfast.' Now none of the disciples dared to ask him, 'Who are you?' because they knew it was the Lord. Jesus came and took the bread and gave it to them, and did the same with the fish. This was now the third time that Jesus appeared to the disciples after he was raised from the dead.

Jesus and Peter

When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, 'Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?' He said to him, 'Yes, Lord; you know that I love you.' Jesus said to him, 'Feed my lambs.' A second time he said to him, 'Simon son of John, do you love me?' He said to him, 'Yes, Lord; you know that I love you.' Jesus said to him, 'Tend my sheep.' He said to him the third time, 'Simon son of John, do you love me?' Peter felt hurt because he said to him the third time, 'Do you love me?' And he said to him, 'Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you.' Jesus said to him, 'Feed my sheep. Very truly, I tell you, when you were younger, you used to fasten your own belt and to go wherever you wished. But when you grow old, you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will fasten a belt around you and take you where you do not wish to go.' (He said this to indicate the kind of death by which he would glorify God.) After this he said to him, 'Follow me.'

Hymn: Thine be the glory (StF 313).

Read/Pray/Proclaim the words

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Tjz4yXUJrgU>

Thine be the glory,
risen, conquering Son,
endless is the victory
thou o'er death hast 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:

No more we doubt thee,
glorious Prince of Life;
life is nought 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 by Richard Birch Hoyle (1875-1939)*

Time to Reflect

Let us take a few minutes to reminisce about our lives where we lost someone closer to death or some form of terminal illness... Imagine being one of the disciples of our Lord Jesus Christ... You have surrendered your life to him and followed him everywhere he went... Imagine the very Messiah you followed being betrayed, nailed to the cross and buried... seemingly gone forever... In 24 hours, the hope you had placed your life upon has been dashed to pieces... what would you do?

Few, if any of us, can aptly envision the terror and the trepidation the disciples may have felt. The Messiah they had followed, the healer of the sick, the one who raises the dead, had been killed... it must have been devastating....

With so many things going on within their mindset, they even found it difficult to accept the resurrection as a fact. According to St Luke 24, ***when 'Mary Magdalene, Joanna, and Mary the mother of James, and the other women with them' went to tell the apostles, that Christ had risen from the dead, their 'words seemed to them an idle tale, and they did not believe them.'***

As of this time, Jesus had already visited the disciples twice – The 1st instance was when they had locked themselves in a house for fear of the Jewish authorities. Jesus came and stood among them to offer them peace, commission and empower them... the 2nd appearance was to prove to the doubting Thomas and probably all of them the reality of the resurrection...

Today, we hear from our gospel reading that Simon Peter had recruited six other disciples to go fishing with him in Lake Tiberias. Peter took the initiative, and they followed him... we are not told why he did that... Maybe they were still wallowing in their doubtfulness... maybe they needed a bit more time to be transformed from frightened disciples into bold apostles... But we know that through the direction of Jesus, they could catch some fish... Amid their unfruitfulness with their fishing expedition, the risen Lord appears; the powerful and the all-knowing Jesus comes to show them how to fish ...

In this same passage, we see Jesus leading Peter through an experience that removes the cloud of his denial. He may have felt worthless after disowning Jesus three times and probably needed special encouragement...Today Peter had to face his true feelings and motives when Jesus confronted him and when he finally encountered the risen Christ ...his identity changed from impetuous to 'rock'. His relationship with Jesus also changed- He was forgiven, and he eventually understood the significance of the cross...He became transformed by his encounter with the risen Lord, relying no longer on his ability to jump first...but instead relying on Christ.

The message here is that the risen Christ brings surprising changes into our lives... but the incredible changes cannot become a reality unless we encounter the risen Lord! I do not know where you are with the Lord, but I want to assure you that Christ does not see your shortcomings; he does not see our failures and sins...He sees us as God's treasured creation... He doesn't stop caring for us, nor does he leave us...

- Romans 5:8 'But God proves his love for us in that while we still were sinners Christ died for us.'
- Revelations 3:23 'Listen! I am standing at the door, knocking; if you hear my voice and open the door, I will come into you and eat with you, and you with me.'

- Psalm 55:22, 1 Peter 5:7 'Cast your burden upon the Lord and He will sustain you; He will never allow the righteous to be shaken.'

Maybe, you think your sins are too much to be forgiven...Maybe you think your situation is irredeemable; perhaps you think all is lost... No!!! The risen Lord can transform all conditions... In our reading from Act 9:1ff, we encounter Paul, who was fervent for God but was misdirected in his approach. Through his zealotry, he persecuted the church. His Damascus Road experience changes everything...his life eventually becomes transformed by his encounter with the risen Lord...it is never too late...I would like to end by re-echoing the two verses from the hymn written by J M Scriven (1820-86)

***Have we trials and temptations? Is there trouble anywhere?
We should never be discouraged; take it to the Lord in prayer.
Can we find a friend so faithful who will all our sorrows share?
Jesus knows our every weakness; take it to the Lord in prayer.***

***Are we weak and heavy laden, cumbered with a load of care?
Precious Saviour, still our refuge, take it to the Lord in prayer.
Do your friends despise, forsake you? Take it to the Lord in prayer!
In His arms He'll take and shield you; you will find a solace there.***

A time of prayer (trusting that others pray with us)

Loving God,
we pray for those who carry the burden of guilt,
and all who bear the weight of failure...

May Jesus turn their lives around.

We pray for all who are afraid of their past,
and all who are fearful of their future...

May Jesus turn their lives around.

We pray for those desperate for forgiveness,
and determined to begin again...

May Jesus turn their lives around.

We pray for those whose mistakes are public,
and for leaders who have misused their power...

May Jesus turn their lives around.

We pray for ourselves and one another.

May Jesus turn our lives around.

Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

Let us pray the prayer that the Lord Jesus taught his disciples
and us.

**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.
Lead us not into temptation
but deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours
now and forever. Amen.**

Hymn: Will you come and follow me (StF 673)

Read/Pray/Proclaim the words

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zK6IUaIJ3sk>

Will you come and follow me
if I but call your name?
Will you go where you don't know
and never be the same?
Will you let my love be shown,
will you let my name be known,
will you let my life be grown
in you and you in me?

Will you leave yourself behind
if I but call your name?
Will you care for cruel and kind
and never be the same?
Will you risk the hostile stare
should your life attract or scare,
will you let me answer prayer
in you and you in me?

Will you love the 'you' you hide
if I but call your name?
Will you quell the fear inside
and never be the same?

Will you use the faith you've found
to reshape the world around
through my sight and touch and sound
in you and you in me?

Lord, your summons echoes true
when you but call my name.
Let me turn and follow you
and never be the same.
In your company I'll go
where your love and footsteps show.
Thus I'll move and live and grow
in you and you in me.

John L. Bell (b. 1949) and Graham Maule (b. 1958)

Blessing

Send us out, Lord,
not perfect creations but always work in progress.
Keep before us the vision of heaven on earth.
Show us the way of life that is the pattern of Christ.
Fill our hearts with the hope and promise
of your ongoing work of transformation in our lives.
now and every day.

Amen.

The blessing of God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit be with you now and remain with you always. **Amen**

Alleluia!

Go in joy and peace to love and serve the Lord.

In the name of Christ. Alleluia

Some materials included in this service are copyright: The Methodist Worship Book © 1999 Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes; Singing the Faith © 2011 Trustees for Methodist Church Purpose; © ROOTS for Churches Limited. Common Worship: Festivals, the material included here, is copyright © The Archbishops' Council 2008 and published by Church House Publishing.

All songs covered by CCL (Europe) Ltd have been reproduced under CCL No. 674557