



## AN INTERGENERATIONAL WORSHIP RESOURCE FOR EASTER

Easter is a celebration of the Good News of God's love, demonstrated in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

These worship planning notes are prepared to coincide with the Easter 2012 postcard campaign of the Uniting Church SA.

## Notes

### ALL AGE WORSHIP

All-age (intergenerational) worship is, first and foremost, worship — an encounter between God and God's people; a dialogue in which God speaks and people respond, both in the worship service and in their lives.

Intentionally *intergenerational* worship

- allows this dialogue to take place in a variety of ways, engaging several senses
- focuses on a clear theme and connects that theme with the lives of the worshipers
- provides worshipers (young and old) with an experience they can remember and talk about in their homes
- encourages interaction and dialogue among people of the various generations
- takes seriously the understanding that people of all ages worship together in the body of Christ. People of all ages can also

plan worship, invite people to worship, and lead worship

- recognises and values the children present in the worshipping congregation and 'the child within' each adult.

## USING THIS WORSHIP RESOURCE

These notes have been prepared by the Children and Family Team of Mission Resourcing SA to help congregations plan Easter worship involving children and families as well as youth, young adults, middle-aged and older people.

You may make as many copies of the notes as needed for your worship planners and leaders. The use of music and other copyright elements is not covered in this permission.

Read through all the material. Discuss it as a planning team. You may use any of the ideas that are appropriate in your situation or the entire sample service.

If you use the resource, we would appreciate your letting us know what you do. Send a brief email to [children@sa.uca.org.au](mailto:children@sa.uca.org.au).

Bible quotations, unless otherwise noted, are from the New International Readers Version.

For other intergenerational worship ideas see: [mrn.sa.uca.org.au/childrens-ministry/all-age-worship](http://mrn.sa.uca.org.au/childrens-ministry/all-age-worship)

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### BIBLE TEXTS

The Revised Common Lectionary texts for Easter Sunday 2012 are:

- Psalm 118:1,2, 14–24 — The Lord is always merciful
- Isaiah 25:6–9 — Prophecy: Let's celebrate that the Lord has saved us
- Mark 16:1–8 — the events of Easter morning
- John 20:1–18 — the events of Easter morning
- Acts 10:34–43 — Peter tells Cornelius that he was a witness to the events of Easter
- 1 Corinthians 15:1–11 — Paul writes to the people of Corinth about seeing the risen Jesus

These passages tell the good news of Easter from several different points of view. Several other themes run through the texts:

- **Joy:** Isaiah 25:7,8,9; Psalm 118:15,25
- **Forgiveness/salvation:** Isaiah 25:9; Psalm 118:14,17,21; Acts 10:43
- **Witnessing:** Psalm 118:17; Acts 10:42; 1 Corinthians 15:3,11

And there is the theme of **God's love:**

- In Psalm 118: God's love continues forever
- In Isaiah 25: God's love destroys sadness, shame and death.
- In Acts 10: God's love accepts all people and gives them the good news of peace through Jesus Christ
- In 1 Corinthians 15: God's love that Christ died for our sins.

### THEME

The worship theme: **Love is...** relates to the 2012 Easter postcard produced by Uniting Church SA.



The postcard theme **Love is Pain** explained:

Sometimes it is difficult to talk about pain. But pain, particularly, the pain of love is something we all understand — in one way or another.

Often when we seek to share the good news of the Easter story we go straight to the sunrise on Easter Sunday, the hope of life eternal. We skim over the hours of darkness, the agony of the nails and the finality of Jesus' cry, 'It is finished'.

What we encounter on Good Friday though is the triumph of death. It is evidenced in blood and shouted by a dark sky. And it is in entering into this darkness, that we realise just how powerful the dawn of Easter Sunday is.

In our Easter postcard campaign this year we are bringing people face-to-face with the Easter story — both the dark and light.

The image pictured above is deliberately dark and starkly stylised. This is the image of Good Friday on the front of the Easter postcard. Overleaf, the sunrise of Sunday is pictured, accompanied by the words, "Love is pain."

Love is never simple and neither are the sacrifices. A loving relationship takes a great deal of selfless give and take.

The gospel story is both easy and difficult to tell. The importance is not just in the life and all the hope that the dawning represents. There is gravitas in the death also.

These postcards start a conversation about God's love. The rest of the story is up to you to tell.

Postcards cost \$65 per 1000. Order online [sa.uca.org.au/postcards](http://sa.uca.org.au/postcards). Registrations close 22 February. Enquiries to the Communications Unit (08) 8236 4249 or email [communications@sa.uca.org.au](mailto:communications@sa.uca.org.au).

Having said that, these notes are for an all age celebration of Jesus' resurrection — the resurrection that followed the pain and that has little significance without Jesus' pain and his death.

The stark pains of the crucifixion — as the ultimate expression of God's love — is not ignored, but it is not the main emphasis of these notes, because:

- the service is planned for Easter Sunday, not Good Friday
- the service is planned for people of all ages. That includes children, who may be unprepared to cope with the darkness and despair of the crucifixion, as well as parents and grandparents who do not want young children exposed to it.

## PLANNING

It's good to have an intergenerational team to plan an intergenerational worship event. A team of at least three people, representing the youngest, the middle and the oldest thirds of the congregation can work with the pastor/minister/priest or lay ministry team.

The team may also draw on people who have special abilities, eg in the areas of hospitality, music, drama, visual arts and technology.

Planning as an intergenerational team can be a valuable experience for all involved.

Suggested planning steps:

1. Begin with prayer, and trust God's Spirit to guide your planning.
2. Look through these notes to see how they can help in planning the service God is leading you to hold.
3. Use your regular worship plan together with these notes and other resources to develop a worship outline.
4. Flesh out the outline, considering your own people, traditions and facilities.
5. Work with worship leaders to plan details: who does what, when and how.

## INVITATION AND ADVERTISING

The first people to notify about your service are the members of your congregation. Begin early to let them in on the excitement of what is being planned. Encourage them to catch the vision of a deliberately multi-generational Easter experience.

You may use the UCA's Easter 'Love is pain' postcard in your promotion. Encourage members to use the back of the postcard to write a personal invitation to family members or others in the community.

Also consider using an enlargement of the postcard as a printed notice in a local gathering place (eg a shopping centre) or on a signboard in front of your church.

Members of your congregation can invite others in their extended families, or friends and neighbours. Children can invite older people. Older people can invite children — particularly those who do not worship regularly.

The service has the potential of helping people to re-connect with Jesus and his church.

## HOSPITALITY

Hospitality is the responsibility of all members of the congregation.

Those people who invite and bring other people to the service have the primary responsibility for looking after their special guests.

A designated **HOSPITALITY TEAM** may have special responsibility for:

- being aware of the safety aspects of the worship space, eg location of alternate exits, location of first aid equipment, identity of people with first aid training
  - greeting people as they arrive
  - helping people to get settled
- Pay special attention to the very young, the very old and people with physical disabilities. Seat them where they will be able to see/hear, but not feel conspicuous
- being alert to needs of people during the service, and assisting as required.

In a service like this one with special emphasis on worshipping as family groups, your hospitality team (also your planning team) needs to be aware of the people who may be marginalised by this approach: some teens and young adults, singles, families with no children, people who are experiencing family problems and people who worship alone.

## WORSHIP SPACE & VISUALS

A clean, tidy and attractive worship area can help guests and regular worshipers feel that this is an inviting place to be.

Many people who worship with you are visual thinkers; they take in information and express themselves more easily with images than with words. So make sure that you use imagery that they can respond to. Involve people with artistic talent and your technology team (if you project images electronically) in creating memorable visual impact for all worshipers.

The two images from the post card can be a starting point. In line with the postcard images, you may want to experiment with darkness and light, black and white, in your visuals.

## MUSIC

Most of the music in the service is congregational singing that allows the participation of all worshipers. However, remember that visitors may not be familiar with — or comfortable with — congregational

singing. Invite people to sing when they are comfortable doing so, or to just listen.

Your regular instrumentalists (organist, band) lead/accompany singing. Display song words in your usual manner.

Small congregations, or congregations that do not have strong musical leadership, may choose to have the congregation sing with CDs or other electronic music.

Include traditional hymns as well as more contemporary songs and songs written with children in mind.

With more adult songs, explain or illustrate briefly any obscure images or language. Consider ways of involving children who are too young to read or sing the words, eg

- teach Auslan symbols or other actions for some key words in the song and ask everyone to do the actions when they come to the words in the song
- teach one or two lines that are repeated in the chorus and give a cue when everyone can sing the lines they know
- give children a percussion instrument they can play during some songs.

## SONG SUGGESTIONS

Use at least one of the stirring old Easter hymns such as:

- *Christ the Lord is risen today* (Wesley)
- *He is risen, he is risen* (Alexander)
- *I know that my Redeemer lives* (Medley)
- *Jesus Christ is risen today, Alleluia* (Arnold)
- *Christ arose* (Lowry)
- *Now the green blade rises* (Crum)
- *Yours (Thine) is the glory* (Budry)

Some more contemporary Easter songs to consider:

- *Because he lives* (Gaither)
- *He is Lord, he is Lord* (Mann)
- *I know he rescued my soul / My redeemer lives* (Morgan)
- *Resurrection Shout* (Mann)
- *The stone's been rolled away* (Bullock)
- *The victory dance* (Ylvisaker)
- *You rescued me* (Bullock)

Some Easter songs for children:

- *God's love (that he sent us his Son)*
- *I'm happy on the inside* (Reichelt)  
We welcome glad Easter (unknown)
- *Don't you know that Jesus died?*  
(‘Katie’) sung to the tune *Do-Re-Mi* from ‘The Sound of Music’
- *Jesus is alive today, sung to the tune of ‘Mary had a little lamb’*

The last two, see [www.perputualpreschool.com](http://www.perputualpreschool.com)

Some songs on the theme of God's love:

- As we lift our hands to worship you (G Bullock)
- Because of your love (R Fragar)
- Deeper and deeper (G Bullock)
- Forever loved by you (G Bullock)
- Jesus dying on the cross (G Simpson)
- Jesus, fill me with your love (G Bullock)
- Jesus, no one loves me more (S Tzeegenkoff)
- Lord I come to you (G Bullock)
- The steadfast love of the Lord (J&D Makedonez)
- What wondrous love is this (Folk hymn)
- You placed your love (G Bullock)
- Your love is higher than the mountains (G Bullock)
- Your love keeps following me (R Fragar)
- Your love surrounds me (R Mann)

## WORSHIP LEADERS

One person (or a pair of people) will be the overall worship leader for the service. Worshipers (particularly guests) will recognise this person as the host/compeer who is responsible for the overall flow of the service.

Several other people (of different ages) can each lead different segments of worship. For example, the sample service may have

- a hospitality team
- an activity coordinating team
- a music team: instrumentalists and vocalists
- a technology/projectionist team
- two worship leaders (male and female) sharing the role
- two Bible readers
- four actors: Mary, two angels, Peter
- a sermon presenter
- prayer leaders.

## SERMON

In an all-age worship service the sermon should be an all-age sermon. This means it's short and simple.

If the sermon is for 'adults only', provide a theme-related activity for children to do during

the sermon, either sitting with their families in the worship area or in a special children's area.

If children do a separate activity, allow a time for them to share what they have done with the older worshipers.

Starting points for a *Love is . . .* sermon can be found in the texts and or on pages 7 and 8.

## UPSIZING & DOWNSIZING

The *Love is . . .* service can be used in large or small congregations and can be adapted for use in a home setting.

Each planning group will need to adapt the ideas to suit their own particular situation: the number of people and the size and layout of the facilities.

## REHEARSAL

God, whom you worship, and the families who worship with you deserve an Easter worship experience that is the best you can make it. This requires careful planning. It may also require rehearsal.

A complete walk-through will pinpoint any logistical problems, allow the worship leader/s to fine-tune instructions for the worshipers and ensure that the service itself runs smoothly.

Use rehearsal time as an opportunity to pray together.

- Praise God for the amazing good news of Easter. That he demonstrated his love for us and his power through the death and resurrection of Jesus.
- Thank God that you, as a team, have the privilege of leading people in Easter worship.
- Ask God to bring people to worship who are eager to hear and share the good news of Easter — and people who may come reluctantly, but need to hear the good news.
- Ask God to accept your planning and worship leading as acts of love and service to him.
- Ask God to bless your efforts and work through what you do and say — for his glory and the benefit of all worshipers.

# Darkness and light imagery

## POSTCARD IMAGES

You might have a large poster of the crucifixion image, covering a similar size poster of the sunrise image. Arrange this so that the crucifixion image (white on black) can be removed (torn down) revealing the sunrise (possibly painted in bright colour).

Alternatively use PowerPoint slides of the two images.

## LIGHT BOX

Consider using a light box and a scratch technique to demonstrate the contrasting images and moods.

Enlist a carpenter (handy person) to build a box frame that will hold a sheet of clear Perspex (or glass) in an upright position so the congregation can see it. Place a light bulb, in the box frame, to light the Perspex.

On one side of the Perspex, an artist paints a colourful sunrise.

Cover the other side with black paint that can be scratched off. When placed in the frame, the sunrise is to the back while the black faces the congregation.

The artist may use pencil to roughly mark the outlines of a crucifixion picture (either the one from the postcard or another) on the black.

During the service, as you consider the suffering and death of Jesus, the artist scrapes away black paint to reveal the crucifixion image. It will appear as coloured light on the black background.

Later in the service, several people assist the artist in scraping off more of the black paint (begin at the center and work outward in a starburst pattern) to reveal more and more of the sunrise on the back of the Perspex, lit from behind.

## BLACK YOKES OF PAIN

Ask people to wear white or bright colours to the service.

As they arrive, give each person a black yoke/collar/stole. These can be made of black paper or fabric (inexpensive non-woven inner facing would work well).

Have available crayons or other markers that will work on the paper or fabric you have chosen.

On the yoke people write words (or draw pictures) representing their pains and/or things that cause them pain.

Around the room in which this activity is done, you may have words that can help people think about their pain:

ache	apprehension
betrayal	mistakes
breakdown	death
disappointment	disloyalty
distress	failure
fear	frustration
hurt	injury
offense	'owie'
regret	rejection
sickness	suffer
tears	trouble
worry	wound

Give each person a safety pin or paper clip to fasten the yoke around their neck. They wear the yokes during the first part of the service. The church will have a somber feel with the sea of black.

During the service, when you speak of Jesus death destroying our pain, people can remove their collars.

They may tear them into little pieces, scatter them or scrunch them up.

# What is love?

## IN LANGUAGE

The word 'love' in English refers to a wide range of feelings and actions, all of which — except perhaps for the tennis score — originate in God.

*Dictionary.com* lists these meanings of love:

1. a profoundly tender, passionate affection for another person
2. a feeling of warm personal attachment or deep affection, as for a parent, child, or friend
3. sexual passion or desire (eros)
4. sexual intercourse; copulation
5. affectionate concern for the well-being of others: *the love of one's neighbour*
6. strong predilection, enthusiasm, or liking for anything: *her love of books*
7. the benevolent affection of God for His creatures, or the reverent affection due from them to God (agape)
8. to have a strong liking for; take great pleasure in: *to love music*
9. to need or require; benefit greatly from: *Plants love sunlight*

In our worship service we focus on number seven: God's amazing, unconditional love for us and our response of love to God and to other people.

## IN POPULAR CULTURE

Sexual and romantic love is a main theme in popular music, films and literature.

'Girlie' fiction abounds with characters who are afraid to love again because of pain from previous relationships.

Country music, particularly, is often a celebration heartbreak: love as pain.

Sometimes we see instances of profound friendships eg

- Tintin and Captain Haddock in *Tintin: Secret of the Unicorn*
- Hugo and Isabelle in *Hugo*.

In *War Horse*, Joey (the horse) brings together several stories of self-sacrificing love: the French grandfather and the German brothers.

The 2004 film *The Passion of the Christ* depicts Love as Pain in the final 12 hours of Jesus' life beginning with the Garden of Gethsemane and ending with a brief depiction of his resurrection. Flashbacks of Jesus earlier life are included.

## IN CARTOONS

For more than 40 years people have chuckled over 'Love is . . .' newspaper cartoons.

Love is...



the reason we're here on earth.

In the 1960s, New Zealand cartoonist Kim Casali (née Grove) drew a series of 'love is ...' notes for her future husband, Roberto. These were later syndicated worldwide by Tribune Media Services.

In 1975, when Roberto was diagnosed with terminal cancer, Kim stopped working on the cartoon. British cartoonist Bill Asprey took over writing and drawing the daily cartoon.

Love is . . . cartoons celebrate romantic love in many manifestations. There is sometimes pain underlying the sentiment in cartoons like:

Love is . . .

- . . . a sigh.
- . . . not letting her down.
- . . . sitting up all night with a sick child.
- . . . bringing out the best in each other.
- . . . parenthood.
- . . . washing his sports togs.
- . . . finding strength in each other when disaster strikes.
- . . . contagious.
- . . . letting him be the greedy one.
- . . . not trying to impose your ideas on others.
- . . . cleaning the bath-tub after you've used it.
- . . . not being jealous when she spends time with the children.
- . . . going sailing with him even if you don't like to.
- . . . quitting smoking before the baby is born.
- . . . letting him tell the story the way he remembers it.
- . . . forgiving even if you are really angry.
- . . . being able to say 'this is our son' not only when he sits quietly but also when he is naughty.
- . . . counting to ten instead of shouting.
- . . . sometimes just not meant to be.

# What is love?

## IN THE BIBLE

Hear, O Israel! The Lord our God, the Lord is One! And **you shall love** the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. (Deuteronomy 6:4-5 and quoted by Jesus in Mark 12:29-31)

Lord, **your love is great**. So forgive the sin of these people. Forgive them just as you have done from the time they left Egypt until now. (Numbers 14:19)

**Your love** is always with me.  
I have always lived by your truth. (Psalm 26:3)

Lord, **your love** is as high as the heavens. Your faithful **love** reaches up to the skies.  
(Psalm 36:5)

**Your love** is better than life.  
I will bring glory to you with my lips. (Psalm 63:3)

**His great love** is new every morning.

Lord, how faithful you are!  
(Lamentations 3:23)

**God loved the world** so much that he gave his one and only Son. Anyone who believes in him will not die but will have eternal life. (John 3:16)

Jesus said: 'Here is my command. Love each other, just as I have loved you. **No one has greater love** than the one who gives his life for his friends. You are my friends if you do what I command.' (John 15:12-14)

**Love** is patient.

**Love** is kind.

It does not want what belongs to others.

It does not brag.

It is not proud.

It is not rude.

It does not look out for its own interests.

It does not easily become angry.

It does not keep track of other people's wrongs.

**Love** is not happy with evil.

But it is full of joy when the truth is spoken.

It always protects.

It always trusts.

It always hopes.

It never gives up.

**Love** never fails.

(1 Corinthians 13:4-8)

**Love does no wrong to a neighbour;**  
love therefore is the fulfillment of the law.  
(Romans 13:10)

Love is the purpose of my command. **Love comes from a pure heart**. It comes from a good sense of what is right and wrong. It comes from faith that is honest and true. (1 Timothy 1:5)

No one has ever seen God. But if we **love** one another, God lives in us. His **love** is made complete in us. (1 John 4:12)

The following is from 1 John 4:7-21:

Dear friends, let us love one another, because **love comes from God**.

Everyone who loves has been born again because of what God has done. That person knows God. Anyone who does not love does not know God, because **God is love**.

**How did God show his love for us?** He sent his one and only Son into the world. He sent him so we could receive life through him.

**What is love?** It is not that we loved God. It is that he **loved us** and sent his Son to give his life to pay for our sins.

Dear friends, since God loved us that much, we should also love one another. No one has ever seen God. But if we love one another, God lives in us. His love is made complete in us.

... **God is love**. Anyone who leads a life of love shows that he is joined to God. And God is joined to him. So love is made complete among us. We will be bold on the day God judges us. That's because in this world we love as Jesus did.

**There is no fear in love**. Instead, perfect love drives fear away. Fear has to do with being punished. The one who fears does not have perfect love.

**We love because he loved us first**. Anyone who says he loves God but in fact hates his brother or sister is a liar. He doesn't love his brother or sister, whom he has seen. So he can't love God, whom he has not seen. Here is the command God has given us. Anyone who loves God must also love his brothers and sisters.



**We know what love is because Jesus Christ gave his life for us.**

**So we should give our lives for our brothers and sisters.**

(1 John 3:16)

# Easter prayers

O Lord Jesus Christ, you conquered death and rose from the dead and are alive for evermore.

Help us never to forget your loving presence with us.

Help us to remember

- that you are with us in every time of perplexity to guide and to direct us
- that you are with us in every time of sorrow to comfort and counsel us
- that you are with us in every time of temptation to strengthen and to inspire us
- that you are with us in every time of loneliness to cheer and befriend us.
- that you are with us even in death to bring us to the glory on the other side.

We ask this for your love's sake. Amen.

(based on Barclay)

## Children's prayer

**(A)** Lord Jesus, thank you for the glad news of Easter.

**(B)** You are our living Lord.

**(A)** You have conquered sin.

**(B)** Make our faith strong so that we are sure that our sins truly are forgiven.

**(A)** You have conquered death.

**(B)** Help us not to be scared of dying. Help us trust your promise that you will take us to heaven and give us eternal life.

**(A)** You have conquered Satan.

**(B)** Help us to believe that you are always with us, keeping us safe from all harm and danger.

**(A)** Make us glad that we share in your victory.

**(B)** Help us each day to live for your praise and glory.

**(A)** Hear us, loving Saviour, our victorious Lord.

**(B)** Amen.

(based on *Sing to Jesus*)

## The Lord's Prayer meditation

Our Father in Heaven, hallowed be your name

On the cross, while he was dying, Jesus called out to his Father in Heaven. We too can call out to Him any time: when we are feeling pain or feeling joy.

That's something to rejoice about!

Your kingdom come.

When he was dying on the cross, he told one of the thieves being punished with him: Today you will be with me in paradise. He gives us the same promise that his kingdom comes to us and we come into his kingdom.

That's something to rejoice about!

Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

God wants us all to live with him forever. Jesus death and resurrection was the way he chose to have that happen. We now can choose to believe it and to obey him here on earth.

That's something to rejoice about!

Give us today our daily bread.

God gives us everything we need. That includes family and friends to love us.

That's something to rejoice about!

Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.

Peter tells us: *that all who believe in Jesus — his love and power; his death and life — have their sins forgiven through his name.*

That's something to rejoice about!

Do not bring us to the test, but deliver us from evil.

Our pains are a sign of the evil in our lives and our world. Jesus, through his death and life has delivered us from all evil.

That's something to rejoice about!

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

And that's something to be joyful about at Easter time and always!

Amen.



## SAMPLE WORSHIP PLAN

Suggested wording for some sections is printed in *italics*.

### 1. ARRIVAL, BEFORE WORSHIP

**HOSPITALITY TEAM** greets people as they arrive and directs them to the hall or another area where they can make and put on black stoles.

**A SPECIAL GROUP OF HELPERS** assists people in making stoles (see page 6) and encourages families and small groups to talk together about their hurts and pains while they are working.

**MUSIC TEAM** may play quietly the songs that will be used in worship.

### 2. PROCESSION

**HOSPITALITY TEAM** helps people assemble for a procession into the church.

When they are assembled, two **WORSHIP LEADERS** (male and female) open the door to the worship space and announce:

- (A) This is the day that the Lord has made.
- (B) We will rejoice and be glad in it.
- (A) *Jesus said: "Come to me, all of you who are tired and are carrying heavy loads.*
- (B) *I will give you rest.*
- (A) *Become my servants and learn from me.*
- (B) *I am gentle and free of pride.*
- (A) *You will find rest for your souls.*
- (B) *Serving me is easy, and my load is light.'*  
(Matthew 11:28–30)

(A) *Come in, everything is ready.*

**MUSIC TEAM** plays the tune of *Were you there when they crucified my Lord?* with a strong marching beat as.

**HOSPITALITY TEAM** leads people into the worship space and helps them get seated.

Make arrangements for the elderly and anyone with mobility problems to be appropriately escorted.

**TECH TEAM** may show a slide of a tomb or a cemetery.

### 3. WELCOME AND INVITATION TO WORSHIP

**WORSHIP LEADER:** *Welcome to [Name of church]. You're looking very black today. Black can be a solemn, sad colour that represents pain and death.*

*Two days before the first Easter was a solemn, sad day. God's Son, Jesus, whom we have gathered here to worship, was hung on a cross, died and was buried.*

*Let's join in singing about it:*

## 4. OPENING SONG

**TECH TEAM** may display a slide with the words of the song, while

**MUSIC TEAM** leads the congregation in singing *Were you there when they crucified my Lord?*  
Four verses: Were you there —

- when they crucified my lord?
- when they nailed him to the cross?
- when they pierced him in the side?
- when they laid him in the tomb?

## 5. *Love is pain*

**TECH TEAM** may show again the slide of a tomb or a cemetery.

**THREE ACTORS** (Mary and two angels) enter.

**WORSHIP LEADER:** *On the first Easter morning, Mary stood outside the tomb crying. As she cried, she bent over to look into the tomb. She saw two angels dressed in white. They were seated where Jesus' body had been.*

**ANGEL 1:** *Woman, why are you crying?*

**MARY:** *They have taken my Lord away. I don't know where they have put him.*

**WORSHIP LEADER** (to Mary): *We've all been talking about the pains in our lives. You're obviously feeling pain right now, Mary. Would you be willing to tell us about it?*

**MARY** [In this dialogue, Mary speaks with great feeling]: *Jesus was my Lord, my teacher and my friend. He's dead.*

**ANGEL 2:** *She's feeling sad and alone, like some of you are feeling.*

[As they speak the angels move to comfort Mary.]

**MARY:** *I couldn't do anything to stop it. And now, I can't even take care of his body.*

**ANGEL 2:** *She's feeling helpless and frustrated, like some of you are feeling.*

**MARY:** *I don't know where he is!*

**ANGEL 1:** *She's feeling lost and afraid ...*

**ANGEL 2:** *... like some of you are feeling.*

**WORSHIP LEADER:** *Why does this cause you so much pain, Mary?*

**MARY:** *Because I loved him.*

**ANGEL 1:** *Because she loves him.*

**WORSHIP LEADER:** *To acknowledge pain is to acknowledge love. We don't hurt if we don't care. Love is pain.*

**TECH TEAM** may show a slide of the crucifixion (from the postcard or another.)

**WORSHIP LEADER:** *The greatest love, and the greatest pain ever was demonstrated when Jesus, God's Son, suffered and died for us.*

*But there's more to the story.*

## 6. FIRST READING (John 20:14-18)

**MARY:** *I turned around and saw a gardener.*

**ANGEL 1:** *She didn't realize that it was Jesus.*

**ANGEL 2:** *'Woman,' he said, 'why are you crying? Who are you looking for?'*

**MARY:** *Sir, did you carry him away? Tell me where you put him. Then I will go and get him.*

**ANGEL 1:** *Jesus said to her, 'Mary.'*

**MARY:** *I knew then that it was the teacher and I ran to him.*

**ANGEL 2:** *Jesus said: 'Do not hold on to me. Instead, go to those who believe in me. Tell them I am returning to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.'*

**MARY:** *I went to the disciples with the news. I have seen the Lord! He's alive! And I told them what he had said.*

## 7. EASTER SONG

**TECH TEAM** may show a slide with the words of the song while

**MUSIC TEAM** leads the congregation in singing the last verse of *Were you there when they crucified my Lord?* Were you there —

- when he rose up from the tomb?

## 8. SECOND READING (Acts 10:34-43)

**WORSHIP LEADER:** *When Mary told Jesus' friends that Jesus is alive, one of the people who heard her was Peter. Some time later, Peter told some other people all about it.*

**READER 1** reads Acts 10:34-43

OR an actor, **PETER**, invites children to come sit near him as he repeats part of the story conversationally.

*... You know how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power. Jesus went around doing good. He healed all who were under the devil's power. God was with him.*

*We saw everything he did in the land of the Jews...*

*They killed him by nailing him to a cross. But on the third day God raised him from the dead.*

*God allowed Jesus to be seen. But he wasn't seen by all the people, ... only by us... We ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead.*

*Jesus told us to preach to the people... To say that all who believe in him have their sins forgiven through his name.*

## 9. CHILDREN'S SONG

**TECH TEAM** may display a slide with the words of the song, while

**MUSIC TEAM** leads the congregation in singing: a children's Easter song, eg *Don't you know that Jesus died?*

## 10. *Love is forgiveness*

**WORSHIP LEADER:** 'All who believe in Jesus have their sins forgiven through his name.'

Do you know what forgiven means?

It means saying something like, 'You've done something that hurt me, but I'm not going to hurt you back' or 'I will keep on loving you, anyway.'

**MARY:** While Jesus was in such pain and dying on the cross, he said 'Father, forgive them'.

**ANGEL 1:** He was talking about all the people who hurt him.

**ANGEL 2:** The soldiers who were giving him physical pain right then, and everyone who gives his heart pain today by not believing and trusting and obeying him.

## 11. CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

**WORSHIP LEADER:** We've all written some words (or drawn pictures) about our pains on our black stoles.

Will you take off your stole and look at what you put on it. (Remove own stole.)

Some pains are things that people did to us.

Think about your pains. Are any of them pains that people did to you? Maybe you could forgive them and ask God to heal your pain.

[You may allow some time for people to think about or discuss this.]

Some of our pains are things we did ourselves and we feel bad about doing them.

Think about your pains. Are any of them this kind of pain? Maybe you could ask that person to forgive you and some of your pain would go away.

[You may allow some time for people to think about or discuss this.]

Some of our pains are things that just happen and we don't understand why. Are any of your pains that kind of pain?

We just have to keep trusting that God loves us and takes care of us no matter what happens.

[You may allow some time for people to think about or discuss this.]

We're going to hand over our pains to Jesus now and take the forgiveness that he won for us when he died on the cross.

**READER 2:** *Isaiah the prophet wrote about God's forgiveness. [Read from Isaiah 25:6-9] The Lord will destroy the veil of sadness that covers all of the nations.*

**WORSHIP LEADER:** *Please make a tear in your black stole of pain to show that God is destroying your veil of sadness.*

**READER 2:** *He will destroy the gloom that is spread over everyone.*

**WORSHIP LEADER:** *Please make another tear in your stole.*

**READER 2:** *He will swallow up death forever.*

**WORSHIP LEADER:** *Please make another tear in your stole.*

**READER 2:** *The Lord and King will wipe away the tears from everyone's face.*

**WORSHIP LEADER:** *Please make tears in your black stole to show that God is wiping away your tears.*

**READER 2:** *He will remove the shame of his people from the whole earth.*

**WORSHIP LEADER:** *Make a tear to show that God takes away your shame.*

**READER 1 (or PETER):** *All who believe in Jesus have their sins forgiven through his name.*

**WORSHIP LEADER:** *Now make one last tear to show that you are no longer going to wear a black stole of pain and death and sadness and guilt and shame. You are forgiven in Jesus name!*

While we sing the next song, the ushers will come around with baskets to collect the pieces of your black stoles

## 12. PRAISE SONG

**TECH TEAM** may display a slide with the words of the song, while

**MUSIC TEAM** leads the congregation in singing a song rejoicing in God's forgiveness, eg *You rescued me* (Bullock)

**USHERS** collect torn stoles in baskets and place the baskets on the altar or near a cross or crucifix

### 13. SERMON: *Love is joy*

**PREACHER:** speaks briefly on the theme of Love is . . . (see pages 7 and 8) for some starting points. Lead to the conclusion that Love is joy!

### 14. PRAISE SONG

**TECH TEAM** may display a slide with the words of the song, while

**MUSIC TEAM** leads the congregation in singing a song about Easter joy, eg *This is the day*.

### 15. ANNOUNCEMENTS

**WORSHIP LEADER** makes any necessary brief announcements. Include

- invitation to after-service activities or refreshments
- invitation to further activities and services of the congregation, including prayers for individuals after the service
- explanation of the way the offering will be collected and used.

### 16. OFFERING

The offering is collected in your usual manner.

### 17. SONG DURING OR AFTER THE OFFERING

**TECH TEAM** may display a slide/s showing blades of grass sprouting and growing while

**MUSIC TEAM** performs *Now the green blade rises* (Crum)

### 18. PRAYERS

**PRAYER LEADER/s** lead worshipers in general prayers for themselves and others.

And/or a special Easter prayer (see page 9)

And/or The Lord's Prayer.

**TECH TEAM** may display words of any prayers people are to join in.

### 19. SENDING AND BLESSING

**WORSHIP LEADER:** *Easter is about God's love. Love is pain; love is also forgiveness and joy.*

*In this service we have thought about pain: our pain and Jesus pain.*

*We have also received God's forgiveness and joy.*

*Go now, take that love, forgiveness and joy into your life, your family and your world.*

### 20. CLOSING SONG

**TECH TEAM** may display a slide with the words of the song, while

**MUSIC TEAM** leads the congregation in singing a joyful Easter song, eg *I know he rescued my soul / My redeemer lives* (Morgan) or *Yours (Thine) is the glory* (Budry)

### 21. AFTER WORSHIP

Worshipers are invited to the room where tea, coffee and fruit cordial are available along with some Easter cake or hot cross buns.

You may organise an Easter egg hunt or other games for children (and adults!)