



'Worship at home' Easter Day 2022



On the first day of the week, very early in the morning, the women took the spices they had prepared and went to the tomb. They found the stone rolled away from the tomb, but when they entered, they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus. While they were wondering about this, suddenly two men in clothes that gleamed like lightning stood beside them. In their fright the women bowed down with their faces to the ground, but the men said to them, "Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here; he has risen! Luke 24:1-4

Light a white candle to celebrate the light of Christ bringing hope to our world on this Easter morning.

Opening

We come with eager anticipation, to experience for ourselves the risen Christ; to be greeted by Jesus affirming who we are, and calling us to be part of God's great story of love and life and new beginnings. Out of the shadows of grief and despair comes a message of hope.

A new day is dawning.

Alleluia! Christ is risen!

Christ is risen indeed!



The dawning of a new day brings with it a sense of hope and expectation: what might the day bring? As the women went to the tomb at dawn on that first Easter morning, to prepare Jesus' body for burial, we can imagine them feeling grief, sorrow, confusion, doubt and fear. In the darkness, they didn't see what they expected. Imagine their surprise and sense of hope and expectation to find the stone rolled away and the body gone! The events of Easter very powerfully show God at work transforming our world.

Easter very powerfully reminds us of who we truly are. In times of struggle and despair, we are people who can find the hope of new opportunities. In Christ's resurrection, we experience the power of God and the truth that life is stronger than death; love is greater than hate; forgiveness overcomes judgement; and that the fear and pain of our lives are transient and do not represent the final reality. Easter brings the promise of new beginnings.

Where do you see new possibilities and new beginnings?

**What might be the new things God is about to do?
In your life? In your community? In our church?**

Isaiah 65:17-25

"See, I will create new heavens and a new earth. The former things will not be remembered, nor will they come to mind. But be glad and rejoice forever in what I will create, for I will create Jerusalem to be a delight and its people a joy. I will rejoice over Jerusalem and take delight in my people; the sound of weeping and of crying will be heard in it no more. "Never again will there be in it an infant who lives but a few days, or an old man who does not live out his years; the one who dies at a hundred will be thought a mere child; the one who fails to reach a hundred will be considered accursed. They will build houses and dwell in them; they will plant vineyards and eat their

fruit. No longer will they build houses and others live in them, or plant and others eat. For as the days of a tree, so will be the days of my people; my chosen ones will long enjoy the work of their hands. They will not labour in vain, nor will they bear children doomed to misfortune; for they will be a people blessed by the LORD, they and their descendants with them. Before they call I will answer; while they are still speaking I will hear. The wolf and the lamb will feed together, and the lion will eat straw like the ox, and dust will be the serpent's food. They will neither harm nor destroy on all my holy mountain," says the LORD.

New International Version

Reflect on the situations of darkness, conflict and pain you see around you.

Hold these images before God, praying that God will transform these struggles with the promise of peace, justice and love.

Easter reminds us that God is the God of new beginnings, bringing hope and light to us all. God is yet to do new things amongst us and within us. A new day is dawning, and over the shadow of darkness comes a glimmer of light, reaching over the horizon in an ever-spreading blaze of warmth and radiance, bringing hope to our world. A time is coming when conflict, brokenness and illness will not define who we are; a time is coming when the earth will flourish and there will be plenty for all; a time is coming when we will live together in peace, all creation reconciled, one in Christ; a time is coming when death will give way to new life, darkness will turn to light, and grief will be transformed to joy. As the people of God, this brings us hope, and an assurance of who we are, and who we can be, redeemed in Christ.

A time is coming:

a new day is dawning.

A time is coming:

when light will transform our darkness.

A time is coming:

when joy will ease the pain of grief.

A time is coming:

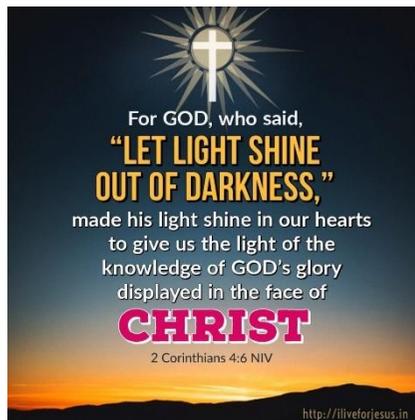
when new life will spring forth from death.

A time is coming:

**when the earth will flourish
and all will be reconciled in Christ.**

A new day is dawning: Alleluia! Christ is risen!

Christ is risen indeed!



**The dawning of a new day brings with it
a sense of hope and expectation:**

- what might this day bring for you?



Prayer

Gracious and glorious God, we praise and thank you on this Easter day, for new beginnings you have set before us – new opportunities, new adventures, new relationships, and new joys. In your resurrection, you call us from darkness to light, from despair to joy, from death to life. And everything is transformed, the promise of life made new. We give thanks that Christ is risen, and this does indeed make a difference to our lives and our world. We ask that in darkness, in sickness, in pain, all might know your presence and hear your voice. We pray that when we struggle, we may not allow fear and despair and suffering to take hold of who we are, but that we may be renewed in our strength, and find in you the hope and promise of eternal life. We pray in the name of the Risen Christ. Amen.

Closing

We have been called
from darkness and despair to hope and joy.

We have been offered new life.

Go forth to witness
and to proclaim the good news of God's grace.

**We are God's people,
redeemed in Christ.**

A new day is dawning.
Alleluia! Christ is risen!
Christ is risen indeed!

**A new day is dawning:
what might the day
bring now?**

