

Order of Service – April 7 Easter 2B

GATHERING

Here, we cross a threshold – we move into a sacred space, and a sacred time, a space and time ‘set apart’ for the purpose of communal prayer.

During the service the congregation is invited to stand and sit for different parts of the service, however you are welcome to stay seated if you wish.

A quiet retreat room is available for those who need it.

The worship area is wheelchair accessible.

There is a children’s corner with books and activities.

Opening verse:

How very good and pleasant it is when kindred live together in unity! Psalm 133:1

Greeting and Call to Worship

Natalie

The leader greets the people in God’s name and calls us into a worshipful space and state.

The bible is carried in by the first reader and Christ Candle lit by the person bringing the reflection – we usually stand (if we are able and comfortable to do so) while this happens.

Come, with all that you have and all that you are.

Bring your whole selves, to this place and this time,

Bring your questions and doubts,

Bring your grief and your sadness,

Bring your hopes and dreams for a better world,

Let us join, as faithful people together,

To worship, to learn, and to support each other

Let us continue to share the joyful message of Easter...

Christ is risen

He is risen indeed

And now, let us stand and sing of the risen Christ...

Song of Praise

Natalie to announce

We usually stand during the songs.

TiS 380 Thine be the glory risen conquering Son (Edmond Budry) because it’s still Easter.

*1. Yours be the glory, risen, conquering Son,
endless is the victory over death you’ve won;
angels in bright raiment rolled the stone away,
kept the folded grave-clothes, where your body lay.*

*Yours be the glory, risen, conquering Son,
endless is the victory, over death you’ve won.*

*2. See, 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 the Lord is living, death has lost its sting.*

*3. No more we doubt you, glorious Prince of life;
life is naught without you: aid us in our strife;*

*make us more than conquerors through your deathless love;
bring us safe though Jordan to your home above.*

*Yours be the glory, by Edmund Louis Budry, from Together in Song, Harper Collins Religious,
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Acknowledgement of Country

Natalie or an older child

We acknowledge the people of the land on which we worship

We acknowledge and respect the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people of the Kulin nation, the traditional custodians of this land since time immemorial.

We are learning that the land is not ours to own, but to look after; and that if we listen, we may hear in it the calling of the eternal Spirit.

**Responding to this call, we commit ourselves
to work for justice, reconciliation,
and care of the earth.**

Welcome and Introduction

Natalie

People are welcomed, those present and those online. The themes of the service are laid out.

Welcome to worship, whether you are here in person or joining us online. My name is Natalie, and I will be helping lead you through the service. I especially welcome Rev David Anderson who will bring us our reflection today. David is a retired minister, and knows us well from being on the joint nominating committee that called Cath James to join us. David is also Lyn's brother-in-law!

Today we continue to celebrate Easter – not just one day – but a celebration of 50 days as we lead towards Pentecost. We hear of the radical shared economy of the early church, the story of Doubting Thomas, and will reflect on the Psalm that celebrates the joy of being in unity with one another.

If you need to move about during the service, to stretch your legs, or just explore a different part of the space, whether you are an adult or a child, feel free to do so. We want you to feel at home here. After the service, please join us for morning tea through this door and into the hall after worship so we can get to know you better.

Prayers of Adoration and Confession & Word of Grace

Natalie

We pray in adoration, praising and adoring God for being God; and in confession, bringing before God the incompleteness and brokenness of the world and our lives. In response we hear God's word of healing grace.

During our prayers of Adoration I will read the Psalm for today, Psalm 133, which is an expression of the joy of living together in unity. Let us pray.

Eternal God, Resurrected Christ, Spirit of Unity,
We give thanks for your power over all that is broken in this world.
We praise you

for creating a world of justice and equality,
for living within and speaking against a world of suffering,
for dwelling among us as we inhabit the world today.

We give thanks for the joy that we share in our common life as a community of faith.
In the words of the Psalmist:

How very good and pleasant it is
when kindred live together in unity!
It is like the precious oil on the head,
running down upon the beard,

on the beard of Aaron,
 running down over the collar of his robes.
It is like the dew of Hermon,
 which falls on the mountains of Zion.
For there the LORD ordained a blessing,
 life forevermore.

God we give you thanks for this image of abundance:
 scented oil on warm skin,
 dew on mountain tops.

We give thanks for the joy we experience in friendships, in our church life,
in our workplaces, with our neighbours, and in our global community.

Eternal God, Resurrected Christ, Spirit of Unity,
We confess that, as individuals, we fall short of the communal love you call us to,
We take friends, partners, and family members for granted,
We hold grudges, and speak thoughtlessly to and about neighbours and colleagues,
We fail to share what we have with those who have little.
Forgive us.

We confess that, as a nation, we fall short of acknowledging our common humanity,
We exploit workers overseas in our consumption of goods,
We fail to give refugees a fair chance at starting a new life,
We value the lives of people from our nation over those in other countries.
Forgive us.

Eternal God, Resurrected Christ, Spirit of Unity,
We long for our relationships to reflect your love. To be like oil on Aaron's beard,
and dew on the mountains of Zion.
Forgive us and restore us.
Help us to dwell in Unity.
Amen.

Siblings in Christ, God's love for you does not depend on your good behaviour.
God loves us each, as we are, and fills us with the Spirit, calling us to new life in Christ.
Through Christ, In Christ, and because of Christ, our sin is forgiven.
Thanks be to God.

HEARING AND RESPONDING

We hear the story of Jesus, Wisdom Incarnate (in the gospels); the story of God's dealings with Israel (in the Old/First Testament); and the story of God's people through history (in Acts and the New Testament letters). As we hear this story, we are reshaped and formed by an alternative perspective on life – the perspective of the gospel, the good news. The story is told through proclamation, which may include reading the Scriptures, reflection on Scripture, symbolic action, art, music, multimedia resources and silence. Hearing the story requires a response. We respond by making an offering (of ourselves, our gifts, our money, and our prayers for others).

Bible Reading - Acts 4:32-35

Jacob

³² Now the whole group of those who believed were of one heart and soul, and no one claimed private ownership of any possessions, but everything they owned was held in common. ³³ With great power the apostles gave their testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all. ³⁴ There was not a needy person among them, for as many as owned

lands or houses sold them and brought the proceeds of what was sold. ³⁵ They laid it at the apostles' feet, and it was distributed to each as any had need.

For these words of witness and for Christ the Word

Thanks be to God

Early Word - "Whoever you are"

Kerry

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W8BtVuY02VU>

Kerrie will also have a copy of the book to read from.

Song

Kerry to announce

TiS 720 Halle halle hallelujah

This is a song from another part of the world, where there are people just like us celebrating Easter. This one is from the Caribbean.

Halle, halle, hallelujah!
Halle, halle, hallelujah! (Hallelujah!)
Halle, halle, hallelujah!
Hallelujah, hallelujah! (Halleluja!)

Halle, halle, halle, Tune Caribbean traditional. Words: traditional liturgical text, from Together in Song, Harper Collins *Religious*, PUBLIC DOMAIN

Bible Reading - John 20:19-31

Julie

¹⁹ When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors were locked where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." ²⁰ After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. ²¹ Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you." ²² When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. ²³ If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained."

²⁴ But Thomas (who was called the Twin), one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. ²⁵ So the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord." But he said to them, "Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands and put my finger in the mark of the nails and my hand in his side, I will not believe."

²⁶ A week later his disciples were again in the house, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were shut, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." ²⁷ Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here and see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it in my side. Do not doubt but believe." ²⁸ Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God!" ²⁹ Jesus said to him, "Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe."

³⁰ Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples that are not written in this book. ³¹ But these are written so that you may continue to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through believing you may have life in his name.

For these words of witness and for Christ the Word

Thanks be to God

Reflection

David

Offering with Song

Natalie

We usually remain seated for the singing of the offering song, standing together when the offering is carried forward.

ATFG561 / Tune In Part of a family interconnected / Community (Dave Brown)

As well as offering money to support this congregation and the wider church, we offer our time to each other and to the community of which we're a part.

*1. Part of a family, interconnected, this is community
Welcoming strangers, visiting neighbours, this gives us dignity
Care for the earth and sea, we need to keep them free,
So we care for the earth and sea
Care for the ones we meet, love is the face we see,
When we care for the ones we meet*

*2. Part of a family, interconnected, this is community
Welcoming strangers, visiting neighbours, this gives us dignity
Sharing our joy and pain, praying and keeping faith
By sharing our joy and pain
Singing a song of rights, imaging God in life,
By singing a song of rights.*

*3. Part of a family, interconnected, this is community
Welcoming strangers, visiting neighbours, this gives us dignity.
Talk to the lonely, bind up the broken, this makes community
A glass of water shared with the thirsty, this makes for dignity
This makes for dignity, this is community*

Community, by David Brown, © 2004, from *Tune In*, Brunswick UC,
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Offering Prayer

Natalie

Eternal God, Resurrected Christ, Spirit of Unity,
Take these gifts that we offer: gifts of money, gifts of time, gifts of ourselves.
May they be used to bring hope to the despairing, joy to the grieving,
peace to the broken, and food to the hungry.
In Jesus' name, we pray. **Amen.**

(thanks to Thom Shuman for some of the words in this prayer)

Prayers of the People

Jim

We offer prayers for the world, for Christ's people in the world, and for those in need. After the prayer the Christ Candle is taken to the chapel space where people are invited to light a taper for their own prayers at the end of the service.

Loving God, reborn in a new season.

We pray for the World.

We pray for a world that needs leadership. We pray that ordinary people in Ukraine, the Middle East and everywhere else there is war, feel supported in their struggles. May suffering people everywhere find strength.

In your mercy, hear our prayers.

We've heard you are reborn. Help us to dwell together in unity.

We pray for the Church.

May the Uniting Church remember the symbol of the dove of peace. May we feel the gentle strength of the symbol. May the church engage, advocate, act. May the church stand for renewal in the lives of others. May Christians everywhere find inspiration.

In your mercy, hear our prayers.

We've heard you are reborn. Help us to dwell together in unity.

We pray for those in need.

We pray for loved-ones in hospital during Easter: may they feel loved. We pray for those watching online: may they feel included. May we reach out to others, offering love. May suffering people everywhere find hope.

In your mercy, hear our prayers.

We've heard you are reborn. Help us to dwell together in unity.

In the name of Christ reborn, calling us.

Praise,

Amen.

BEING FED

We are invited to Christ's table to reunite ourselves with him and one another in the sharing of bread and wine. We honour God for all that God is, and give thanks for all that God has done in the work of creation and salvation. We serve gluten free bread and non-alcoholic grape juice.

Communion Song

Natalie

ATAR658 Jesus, you are the bread we long for (Bernadette Farrell)

Invite the congregation to join in on the chorus and to just listen to the verses. We have used it a lot during distribution, but not sung often as a congregational song.

*Jesus, you are the bread we long for.
Jesus, you are the word we need.
Jesus, here in your gathered people today,
you live to show us the way.*

*1. For those who starve you become bread,
For those who thirst you become wine,
Do this in memory of me.*

*2. For those in need you became poor.
For those in shame your love is sure.
Do this in memory of me.*

*3. For those who weep your arms are wide.
Those who are lost you sit beside.
Do this in memory of me*

*4. For those alone you speak your word.
For those oppressed your cry is heard.
Do this in memory of me.*

*5. King of all Kings, choosing to serve.
To the world's eyes failed and absurd.
Do this in memory of me*

David and all servers to come to front during the last verse of the song.

Holy Communion

David

Leader: The Lord be with you

All: And also with you

Leader: Lift up your hearts

All: We lift them up to the Lord

Leader: Let us give thanks to God

All: It is right to give our thanks and praise

Leader: We are richly blessed, Lord God our maker and liberator,
For you made the world and all that is in it,
You sent your child, Jesus, to be our teacher and guide.
When we failed to understand him,
When, fearing what he could represent, we killed him.
Even when you reached for all of us in love.
We found his tomb empty on Easter morning.
We learned the good news that Jesus was alive.
Not even his death could break your love for us.
You raise him to new life and promise new life for us all.

Leader: We join with heaven and earth singing:

All: Christ is risen from the dead! Hallelujah!

Leader: On the night before he died, Jesus ate supper with his friends –
He took the bread, gave you thanks, and broke it saying,
“Take this and eat it: this bread is my body, which I give for you.
Whenever you gather, do this and remember me.”

All: Hallelujah! Hallelujah! Hallelujah!

Leader: Jesus took the cup of wine, gave you thanks,
and give it to his friends, Saying:
“Drink this everyone, this wine is my blood,
which I give for you and for everyone.
Whenever you share this cup of wine,
do this and remember me.”

All: Hallelujah! Hallelujah! Hallelujah!

Leader: And so we praise you with the song of angels:

*Holy (Holy), holy, (holy)
holy Lord of power and might.
Heaven (Heaven), earth (earth)
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
All glory to your name. (All glory to your name.)
All glory to your name. (All glory to your name.)
Blessed (Blessed), blessed (blessed)
is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Blessed (Blessed), blessed (blessed)
is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest. (Hosanna in the highest.)
Hosanna in the highest. (Hosanna in the highest.)*

Leader: Great God of all,
Jesus' self-giving shows us that death has no final power.
You raised him to new life:
you give us everlasting life.
Therefore we know:
Christ has died,
Christ has risen,
Christ will come again.

All: Hallelujah! Hallelujah! Hallelujah!

Leader: And so we ask that you send your Holy Spirit upon us
and upon this bread and wine,
so that everyone who comes to this table may become
One body, one flesh, and one spirit.
One with Christ,
Through Christ,
And in Christ,
Forever and ever. Amen.

**All: Christ is risen from the dead, hallelujah!
Christ is risen, hallelujah!**

The Lord's Prayer

**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 forever.
Amen.**

Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world

Have mercy on us

Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world

Have mercy on us

Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world

Grant us peace.

BEING SENT

Having heard the word and shared the meal together, we are sent forth on God's mission of love. We are again on a threshold, encouraged to go into the world to continue the worship of God in our daily living.

Notices

Natalie

We share the life and work of our community with each other as we prepare to be sent out.

*When the carpenter's son
Went to the Jordan, was baptised by John
You came down
In the form of a dove
"This is my son" said a voice from above
After you blessed him, you drove him and tested him
Forty days wandering far from the town
Would he seek power and fame? Would he just play the game?
Trusting in your word he stared temptation down...*

*So drive us out of our safe little spaces
Lead us to wisdom in wilderness places
Burn like a flame in our stony cold hearts
Blow through the walls of our fear that keep us apart
Oh-oh, oh-oh*

*Then he spread the good news:
God's reign approaching, for Gentiles and Jews:
"Follow me"
Both women and men;
Children and sinners and outcasts his friends
Your love flowed out from him, healing, forgiving sin
Challenging rules that kept people apart
Your holy fire drove him, clearing the Temple den
Making a house for true prayer would need a new start*

*So drive us out of our safe little spaces
Lead us to wisdom in wilderness places
Burn like a flame in our stony cold hearts
Blow through the walls of our fear that keep us apart
Oh-oh, oh-oh*

*When Jesus had gone
Died and then risen, then lifted beyond
You came down
Like a great rushing wind
Set them afire, your church to begin
Give us the words to say here in our world today
Just like the twelve in Jerusalem then
Advocate for us now, guide us and show us how
Help us witness to Love, again and again*

*So drive us out of our safe little spaces
Lead us to wisdom in wilderness places
Burn like a flame in our stony cold hearts
Blow through the walls of our fear that keep us apart
Oh-oh, oh-oh
(Repeat)*

David to come forward during the last verse.

Blessing and Sending

David

The leader gives a blessing to the people for the next stage of the journey.

Thank yous

Thank you for joining us, and thank you to...

Liturgist:

Natalie Sims

Bible readers:

Julie McKinnon

Jacob Delbridge

Early Word:

Kerrie Pierce

Reflection:

David Anderson

Prayers of the People:

Jim Kilpatrick

Musicians:

Alistair Hunter

(co-ordinator)

Michael Cameron

Glenice Cook

Mikul Denison

Matthew Lees

Bronte Potter

Kate Scull

Images:

Kirsty Bennett

Saide Cameron

Mal Rowe

Postlude Song:: Halle,

halle, halle, words:

traditional liturgical text,

from Together in Song,

Harper Collins Religious,

PUBLIC DOMAIN

Musicians: Elaine Potter,

Julia Potter, Shawn

Whelan

Editing / Production:

Ray Cameron

Saide Cameron

Shawn Whelan

Alistair Hunter

Fiona MacDowall

Closing verse:

With great power the apostles gave their testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus,
and great grace was upon them all. Acts 4:33