

Dear Ones,

Once again this year our beautiful little church is closed to in-person worship due to the ongoing high rate of community spread of COVID-19 in Ocean and Monmouth Counties. The Vestry and I are watching these numbers very carefully and we are hoping to be able to reopen for in-person worship sometime in late spring/early summer, with an indoor service at 8 am and an outdoor service at 10 am (which will move indoors for inclement weather). Even just the thought of this has me feeling VERY hopeful, and joyful and excited!



As was the case last year, I have put together some simple services that you can use to celebrate the sacred mysteries of Christ on the days of Holy Week at home, either alone or with others. Each service has some music, which can be found in our hymnals or online. Each also offers prayers (mostly from the BCP), a reading from scripture and a simple ritual, to help us engage the Divine Presence that lives in the depth dimension of our lives, always moving silently just beneath the surface of our more superficial reality. I invite you to use these as you see fit, and I pray that they will bless you and yours with a deeper understanding of, and love for, our crucified and risen Lord Christ.

I will lead our usual Sunday Home Church gatherings on Zoom and FaceBook Live on Palm Sunday and Easter at 10 am. And we will share the Good Friday Service from the BCP on Zoom and FaceBook Live on Good Friday at 12 noon. I hope you can join us ... it's certainly not the same as being together in church, it IS really wonderful to be able to "see" one another and pray together, even in this way.

**"Alleluia, Christ is risen!" ... "The Lord is risen indeed! Alleluia!"**

These words have been triumphantly proclaimed by the followers of Christ for more than two thousand years now. And this year will be no exception. In fact, no year will be an exception. Through all the ups and downs, tears and heartache, challenges and travails of human history, there is no exception to the joyful, hope-filled proclamation of God's Holy Church and People that proclaims the resurrection of Jesus the Christ!

COVID-19 has taken much from us but, by the grace of God, we will RISE again! We will rise again, just as we have for thousands of years now ... from war, and plague, and famine, and disaster, and suffering, and death. All kinds of death. We will rise! In, and with, and through, and AS Christ!

The mysteries of Holy Week await. Please be assured of my love, blessing and prayers for you and yours.

**Alleluia, Christ is risen! The Lord is risen indeed! Alleluia!**

With Love & Prayers,

*Victoria*+

## Holy Week Home Worship

### **Palm Sunday (Service Live on Zoom & FaceBook at 10 am)**

Song: All Glory, Laud and Honor

Prayer

Scripture Reading: Jesus' Entry into Jerusalem

Ritual: Procession with Palms

Prayer & Blessing

### **Maundy Thursday**

Song: I Am the Bread of Life

Prayer

Scripture Reading: The Last Supper

Ritual: Blessing and Sharing of Food AND Hand or Foot Washing

Prayer & Blessing

### **Good Friday (Service live on Zoom & FaceBook Live at 12 noon)**

Song: Were You There

Prayer

Scripture Reading: The Suffering and Death of Jesus

Ritual: Veneration of the Cross

Prayer & Blessing

### **Holy Saturday**

Song: Abide With Me

Prayer

Scripture Reading: Jesus' Burial

Ritual: Waiting in Silence, silent meditation

Prayer & Blessing

### **Easter Sunday (Service Live on Zoom & FaceBook Live at 10 am)**

Song: Jesus Christ is Risen Today or any Joyful Easter Song!

Prayer

Scripture Reading: The Resurrection of Christ

Ritual: Rise Up! In song, dance, poetry, painting, plant a flower or tree, etc.

Prayer & Blessing

## **Palm Sunday Home Worship**

**What You Will Need:** Any small branches from your yard.

**Song:** All Glory, Laud and Honor. Hymnal # 154

**Prayer:** It is right to praise you, Almighty God, for the acts of love by which you have redeemed us through your Son Jesus Christ our Lord. On this day he entered the holy city of Jerusalem in triumph, and was proclaimed as King of kings by those who spread their garments and branches of palm along his way. Let these branches be for us signs of his victory, and grant that we who bear them in his name may ever hail him as our King, and follow him in the way that leads to eternal life; who lives and reigns in glory with you and the Holy Spirit, now and forever. Amen.

### **Scripture Reading: Matthew 21:1-11**

When they had come near Jerusalem and had reached Bethpage, at the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples, saying to them, 'Go into the village ahead of you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied, and a colt with her; untie them and bring them to me. If anyone says anything to you, just say this, "The Lord needs them." And he will send them immediately.' This took place to fulfil what had been spoken through the prophet, saying, 'Tell the daughter of Zion, Look, your king is coming to you, humble, and mounted on a donkey, and on a colt, the foal of a donkey.'

The disciples went and did as Jesus had directed them; they brought the donkey and the colt, and put their cloaks on them, and he sat on them. A very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road, and others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. The crowds that went ahead of him and that followed were shouting, 'Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest heaven!' When he entered Jerusalem, the whole city was in turmoil, asking, 'Who is this?' The crowds were saying, 'This is the prophet Jesus from Nazareth in Galilee.'

### **Ritual: Procession with Palms or Branches**

As you wish and as you are able, walk around your home, room, or yard, waving your palms or branches. Sing some words from the opening song or simply call out, "Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna!"

**Prayer:** Almighty and ever-living God, in your tender love for the human race you sent your Son our Savior Jesus Christ to take upon himself our nature, and to suffer death upon the cross, giving us the example of his great humility: Mercifully grant that we may walk in the way of his suffering, and also share in his resurrection; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

~ **Conclude with a prayer or blessing in your own words for yourself or for one another.** ~

## Maundy Thursday Home Worship

**What You Will Need:** Food & drink; wash basin or sink, water, towels.

**Song:** I Am The Bread of Life. Hymnal # 335

**Prayer:** Almighty Father, whose dear Son, on the night before he suffered, instituted the Sacrament of his Body and Blood: Mercifully grant that we may receive it thankfully in remembrance of Jesus Christ our Lord, who in these holy mysteries gives us a pledge of eternal life; and who now lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

### **Scripture Reading: John 13:1-15**

Now before the festival of the Passover, Jesus knew that his hour had come to depart from this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end. The devil had already put it into the heart of Judas son of Simon Iscariot to betray him. And during supper Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he had come from God and was going to God, got up from the table, took off his outer robe, and tied a towel around himself. Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel that was tied around him.

He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, "Lord, are you going to wash my feet?" Jesus answered, "You do not know now what I am doing, but later you will understand." Peter said to him, "You will never wash my feet." Jesus answered, "Unless I wash you, you have no share with me." Simon Peter said to him, "Lord, not my feet only but also my hands and my head!" Jesus said to him, "One who has bathed does not need to wash, except for the feet, but is entirely clean. And you are clean, though not all of you." For he knew who was to betray him; for this reason he said, "Not all of you are clean."

After he had washed their feet, had put on his robe, and had returned to the table, he said to them, "Do you know what I have done to you? You call me Teacher and Lord – and you are right, for that is what I am. So if I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have set you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you.

**Ritual:** Using your own words, bless your food & drink at the supper table tonight.  
AND wash your own and/or another's hands or feet before or after your meal.

**Prayer:** Dear God, Our Lord Jesus, after he had supped with his disciples and had washed their feet, said to them, "Do you know what I, your Lord and Master, have done to you? I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done." Help us to love and care for one another, as you love and care for all of us, through Christ, Our Lord. Amen.

~ Conclude with a prayer or blessing in your own words for yourself or for one another. ~

## Good Friday Home Worship

**What you will need:** A cross or crucifix from your home, or make one.

**Song:** Were You There When They Crucified My Lord. Hymnal # 172

**Prayer:** Almighty God, we pray you graciously to behold this your family, for whom our Lord Jesus Christ was willing to be betrayed, and given into the hands of sinners, and to suffer death upon the cross; who now lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

**Scripture:** John 19:1-37. (Read this alone, silently or aloud, or share the reading aloud among those who are present, either taking parts or reading paragraphs by turn.)

Then Pilate took Jesus and had him flogged. And the soldiers wove a crown of thorns and put it on his head, and they dressed him in a purple robe. They kept coming up to him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" and striking him on the face. Pilate went out again and said to them, "Look, I am bringing him out to you to let you know that I find no case against him." So Jesus came out, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. Pilate said to them, "Here is the man!" When the chief priests and the police saw him, they shouted, "Crucify him! Crucify him!" Pilate said to them, "Take him yourselves and crucify him; I find no case against him." They answered him, "We have a law, and according to that law he ought to die because he has claimed to be the Son of God."

Now when Pilate heard this, he was more afraid than ever. He entered his headquarters again and asked Jesus, "Where are you from?" But Jesus gave him no answer. Pilate therefore said to him, "Do you refuse to speak to me? Do you not know that I have power to release you, and power to crucify you?" Jesus answered him, "You would have no power over me unless it had been given you from above; therefor the one who handed me over to you is guilty of a greater sin."

From then on Pilate tried to release him, but the people cried out, "If you release this man, you are no friend of the emperor. Everyone who claims to be a king sets himself against the emperor." When Pilate heard these words, he brought Jesus outside and sat on the judge's bench at a place called The Stone Pavement, or in Hebrew Gabbatha. Now it was the day of Preparation for the Passover; and it was about noon. He said to the people, "Here is your King!" They cried out, "Away with him! Away with him! Crucify him!" Pilate asked them, "Shall I crucify your King?" The chief priests answered, "We have no king but the emperor."

Then he handed him over to them to be crucified. So they took Jesus; and carrying the cross by himself, he went out to what is called The Place of the Skull, which in Hebrew is called Golgotha. There they crucified him, and with him two others, one on either side, with Jesus between them. Pilate also had an inscription written and put on the cross. It read, "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews."

Many of the people read this inscription, because the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city; and it was written in Hebrew, in Latin, and in Greek. Then the chief priests of the Jews said to Pilate, "Do not write, 'The King of the Jews,' but, 'This man said, I am King of the Jews.'" Pilate answered, "What I have written I have written."

When the soldiers had crucified Jesus, they took his clothes and divided them into four parts, one for each soldier. They also took his tunic; now the tunic was seamless, woven in one piece from the top. So they said to one another, "Let us not tear it, but cast lots for it to see who will get it." This was to fulfill what the scripture says, "They divided my clothes among themselves, and for my clothing they cast lots." And that is what the soldiers did.

Meanwhile, standing near the cross of Jesus were his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing beside her, he said to his mother, "Woman, here is your son." Then he said to the disciple, "Here is your mother." And from that hour the disciple took her into his own home. After this, when Jesus knew that all was now finished, he said (in order to fulfill the scripture), "I am thirsty." A jar full of sour wine was standing there. So they put a sponge full of the wine on a branch of hyssop and held it to his mouth. When Jesus had received the wine, he said, "It is finished." Then he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

Since it was the day of Preparation, the religious leaders did not want the bodies left on the cross during the Sabbath, especially because that Sabbath was a day of great solemnity. So they asked Pilate to have the legs of the crucified men broken and the bodies removed. Then the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first and of the other who had been crucified with him. But when they came to Jesus and saw that he was already dead, they did not break his legs. Instead, one of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear, and at once blood and water came out. (He who saw this has testified so that you also may believe. His testimony is true, and he knows that he tells the truth.) These things occurred so that the scripture might be fulfilled, "None of his bones shall be broken." And again another passage of scripture says, "They will look on the one whom they have pierced."

**Ritual:** Veneration of the Cross. In whatever way seems good to you ... using words, gestures, or both ... express your love and gratitude for the cross of Christ, for God's solidarity with us in our suffering and death.

**Prayer:** O God of unchangeable power and eternal light: Look favorably on your whole Church, that wonderful and sacred mystery; by the effectual working of your providence, carry out in tranquility the plan of salvation; let the whole world see and know that things which were cast down are being raised up, and things which had grown old are being made new, and that all things are being brought to their perfection by him through whom all things were made, your Son Jesus Christ our Lord; who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

~ **Conclude with a prayer or blessing in your own words for yourself or for one another.** ~

## Holy Saturday Home Worship

**What you will need:** A quiet place to be still for a while, either alone or together.

**Song:** Abide With Me. Hymnal # 662

**Prayer:** O God, Creator of heaven and earth: Grant that, as the crucified body of your dear Son was laid in the tomb and rested on this holy Sabbath, so we may await with him the coming of the third day, and rise with him to newness of life; who now lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

**Scripture:** John 19:38-42

After these things, Joseph of Arimathea, who was a disciple of Jesus, though a secret one because of his fear of the religious authorities, asked Pilate to let him take away the body of Jesus. Pilate gave him permission; so he came and removed his body. Nicodemus, who had at first come to Jesus by night, also came, bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, weighing about a hundred pounds.

They took the body of Jesus and wrapped it with the spices in linen cloths, according to the burial custom of the Jews. Now there was a garden in the place where he was crucified, and in the garden there was a new tomb in which no one had ever been laid. And so, because it was the Jewish day of Preparation, and the tomb was nearby, they laid Jesus there.

**Ritual:** Waiting in Silence. Sit in stillness, in silent meditation. Using words or images or neither or both, reflect upon and wonder about the time that Jesus lay silent in the tomb, awaiting resurrection.

**Prayer:** Keep watch, dear Lord, with those who work, or watch, or weep this night, and give your angels charge over those who sleep. Tend the sick, Lord Christ; give rest to the weary, bless the dying, soothe the suffering, pity the afflicted, shield the joyous; and all for your love's sake. *Amen.*

~ **Conclude with a prayer or blessing in your own words for yourself or for one another.** ~

## Easter Sunday Home Worship

**What You Will Need:** Faith, Hope & Love. And a willingness to be raised with Christ, and to allow Christ to rise in you!

**Song:** Jesus Christ is Risen Today. Hymnal # 207

**Prayer:** Almighty God, who through your only-begotten Son Jesus Christ overcame death and opened to us the gate of everlasting life: Grant that we, who celebrate with joy the day of the Lord's resurrection, may also be raised from death by your life-giving Spirit; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

**Scripture: John 20:1-18**

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."

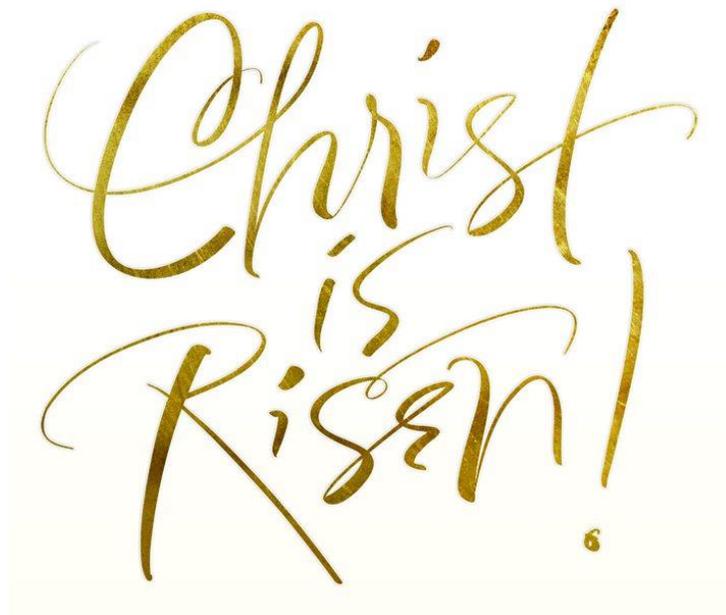
When she had said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not know that it was Jesus. Jesus said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you looking for?" Supposing him to be the gardener, she said to him, "Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have laid 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.

**Ritual:** Rise Up! Express resurrection joy ... in song, dance, poetry, painting, plant a flower or tree, share a special meal, etc. Celebrate new life in Christ!

**Prayer:** O God, who by the glorious resurrection of your Son Jesus Christ destroyed death and brought life and immortality to light: Grant that we, who have been raised with him, may abide in his presence and rejoice in the hope of eternal glory; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be dominion and praise for ever and ever. Amen.

~ Conclude with a prayer or blessing in your own words for yourself or for one another. ~



Christ  
is  
Risen!