

Prayer of Approach

We have travelled a long way to come here
from many places, and through Holy Week and Easter.

Now we gather in God's name in God's place.

We have told the story of Jesus' suffering and death,
and remembered how the disciples were scattered in despair.

Now we celebrate Christ risen from the dead.

We have been silent in the face of failure and fear,
but now we have found our voices, know your hope.

Now we shout the good news, & sing alleluia. Amen.

Easter Morning Prayers

Lord God,
early in the morning,
when the world was young,
you made life in all its beauty;
you gave birth to all that we know.

Hallowed be your name.

Early in the morning,
a voice in a graveyard
and footsteps in the dew
proved that you had risen,
that you had come back
to those and for those
who had forgotten, denied and destroyed you.

Hallowed be your name.

This morning we celebrate
your creation, your life,
your death and resurrection,
your commitment to us;
so we pray:

**Lord, bring new life
where we are worn and tired;
new love
where we have become hard-hearted;
forgiveness
where we feel hurt
or where we have wounded;
and the joy and freedom
of your Holy Spirit
where we are prisoners of ourselves. Amen.**

Prayer of Confession

God, have mercy on us.
We thought we had heard it all,
we thought we knew.
The Bible stories; the words of our faith;
the rules for living
and the way to heaven;
we thought, dear God, we knew!
But here,
before the mystery again
of a grave that is empty
when it should have been filled
with a dead body,
we know now,
that we know nothing at all.
God have mercy on us.
We thought we had heard it all,
we thought we knew.
The great stories of the church;
the ebb and flow of the faith;
our place in the scheme of things;
we thought, dear God, we knew!
But here,
before the mystery again
of death defeated,
of broken folk made whole,
and mighty powers quite broken,
we know now,
that we know nothing at all.
God, have mercy on us.
We thought, we had heard it all,
we thought we knew.
The way of the world;
the powers that be and
the powers that would be;
the ebb and flow of armies
and international finance;
the endless tide of refugees
and the awfulness of hate;
we thought, dear God, we knew!
But here before the mystery again
of a word of love
in a quiet garden,
and the promise, suddenly,
of a new order of creation
in place of the old, tired, familiar scene,
we know now,
that we know nothing at all.
God have mercy on us.

Easter Intercessions

Leader: Jesus, we long to see you this day and every day.

As we wonder at your resurrection,
at the hope you have given us,
we remember
the appearances you made to those close to you,
and we pray that our eyes, too,
may be opened to your presence.

Women: We think of Mary,
who loved you so much
and took such risks to be close to you.
We think of how you recognised her need to see you –
and how you wiped away her tears
simply by speaking her name.
We bring before you
those we know to be in special need at this time –
those who are sick lonely and afraid.
Embrace them with your love and presence.
Be close to them.

Men: We think of Cleopas and his friend,
who walked their lonely road to Emmaus,
a journey of sadness
after all the events of Holy Week.
Yet you walked beside them
and shared with them –
opening their eyes to your presence
in the breaking of the bread at supper.
Journey alongside all those who are sad and mourning over losses.
Embrace them with your love and presence.
Be close to them.

**All: Open our eyes, Jesus.
We long to see you and be near you. Amen.**

Blessing

Imaginative God,
you smiled and the sun burst
through the shadows of chaos;
you laughed,
and all that is good and beautiful
was given shape by you.
Bless us now,
and send us out into the world
dancing with joy,
and with hallelujahs
ringing in our hearts,
to share your justice, your love, your peace, and your praise. **Amen.**