

INVITATION TO CONFESSION

When we keep our fears and faults locked up inside us, it is hard to be healed and receive new life. So let us open ourselves to God in confession, trusting the Lord's desire to give us peace.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

God of the empty tomb and of our empty hearts, when we are afraid to speak our faith in the world, forgive us and help us to find our voice. When we are afraid to forgive and to love again, forgive us and give us the power to forgive. When we are afraid to stand up to misguided authority, join with the weak to make us all strong. When we are confined by our hurts, touch us with your wounded hands and set us free. When we are locked behind our doubts and fears, pass through our barricades, open our hearts, and give us peace. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Christ comes with healing light into our locked places and broken lives, resurrecting our spirits and breathing new life into us. As God's own forgiven people, we rejoice and go into the world to share the good news. Thanks be to God!

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Living God, as the risen Christ came into the locked room of the first disciples, may your Word enter into us, by the power of your Holy Spirit, so that we who have not seen may yet believe. Amen.

SCRIPTURE READINGS

1 Peter 1:3-9

³Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! By his great mercy he has given us a new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, ⁴and into an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, ⁵who are being protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

⁶In this you rejoice, even if now for a little while you have had to suffer various trials, ⁷so that the genuineness of your faith—being more precious than gold that, though perishable, is tested by fire—may be found to result in praise and glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed. ⁸Although you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and rejoice with an indescribable and glorious joy, ⁹for you are receiving the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls.

Psalms 150 (read responsively)

¹Praise the LORD! Praise God in his sanctuary; praise him in his mighty firmament!

²**Praise him for his mighty deeds; praise him according to his surpassing greatness!**

³Praise him with trumpet sound; praise him with lute and harp!

⁴**Praise him with tambourine and dance; praise him with strings and pipe!**

⁵Praise him with clanging cymbals; praise him with loud clashing cymbals!
⁶**Let everything that breathes praise the LORD! Praise the LORD!**

John 20:19-31

¹⁹When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors of the house where the disciples had met were locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." ²⁰After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. ²¹Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you." ²²When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. ²³If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained." ²⁴But Thomas (who was called the Twin), one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. ²⁵So 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."

²⁶A 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." ²⁷Then 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." ²⁸Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God!" ²⁹Jesus said to him, "Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe." ³⁰Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book. ³¹But these are written so that you may come to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through believing you may have life in his name.

SERMON

PROOF

Rev. Dr. Nancy Young

HYMN 817

We Walk by Faith and Not by Sight

Henry Alford

**We walk by faith and not by sight; with gracious words draw near,
O Christ, who spoke as none e'er spoke: "My peace be with you here."**

**We may not touch your hands and side, nor follow where you trod;
But in your promise we rejoice and cry, "My Lord and God!"**

**Help then, O Lord our unbelief; and may our faith abound
To call on you when you are near and seek where you are found.**

**And when our life of faith is done, in realms of clearer light
May we behold you as you are, with full and endless sight.**

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

LORD'S PRAYER

HYMN 249

Because You Live, O Christ

Shirley Erena Murray

**Because you live, O Christ, the garden of the world has come to flower;
The darkness of the tomb is flooded with your resurrection power.
The stone has rolled away and death cannot imprison!
O song this Easter day, for Jesus Christ has risen, has risen, has risen!**

**Because you live, O Christ, the spirit bird of hope is freed for flying;
Our cages of despair no longer keep us closed and life-denying.
The stone has rolled away and death cannot imprison!
O song this Easter day, for Jesus Christ has risen, has risen, has risen!**

**Because you live, O Christ, the rainbow of your peace will span creation;
The colors of your love will draw all humankind to adoration.**

CHARGE AND BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

:Just a Closer Walk with Thee"

Traditional

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