

Christ is Risen! Is Risen Indeed!



Christos Anesti! Alethos Anesti!

Dearly Beloved Friends,

Grace and peace to you from God our Creator and from God's child Jesus, the Christ, who is and was and will be forevermore. May the Spirit of Love be in your hearts and homes this Easter Sunday, as we send our songs and praises from wherever we are. Though we may be scattered by necessity, we are together in faith; our prayers go up to heaven on the wings of many doves, to be gathered in the Cosmic Christ.

This is the strangest Easter most of us have ever known, not unlike the original Easter, when the reality of Jesus' resurrection became known, even in the midst of terrible tragedy. Locked in their rooms for fear of persecution, Jesus' followers watched and listened and prayed for any sign that might portend relief and comfort. Locked in our rooms, with faith alone to sustain our spirits, we have never been closer to them than we are now.

Each of us will find our own way to keep holy this Sabbath of all Sabbaths. What follows is an assembly of readings, prayers, music and images that may help embrace the greatest truth of all, that *Christ is Risen*, even in these days when the weight of earthly matters is as great as it has ever been. At the end of this missive, you will find links to a variety of celebratory liturgies and musical offerings from various sources, The Episcopal Diocese of El Camino Real among them. At 10 o'clock a.m. on Easter morning, a diocese-wide Easter service will be streamed, with a downloadable bulletin available.

Most of these links – when clicked, or double-clicked upon, will lead you straight to the liturgies and music. Let us begin with this one:



The Lighting of the Paschal Candle

In the darkness, fire is kindled... On this most holy night, in which our Lord Jesus passed over from death to life, the Church invites all the faithful, dispersed throughout the world, to gather in vigil and prayer. For this is the Passover of the Lord, in which, by hearing God's Word and celebrating the Holy Sacraments, we share in Christ's victory over death.

Let us pray. O God, through your Son you have bestowed upon your people the brightness of your light: Sanctify this new fire, and grant that in this Paschal feast we may so burn with heavenly desires, that with pure minds we may attain to the festival of everlasting light; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

The light of Christ. Thanks be to God!

Hymn 460

Alleluia! sing to Jesus! his the scepter, his the throne.

Alleluia! his the triumph, his the victory alone.

Hark! the songs of peaceful Zion thunder like a mighty flood;
Jesus out of every nation hath redeemed us by his blood.

Alleluia! not as orphans are we left in sorrow now.

Alleluia! he is near us, faith believes, nor questions how.

Though the cloud from sight received him, when the forty days were o'er,
Shall our hearts forget his promise, "I am with you evermore"?

Alleluia! Bread of Heaven, thou on earth our food, our stay.

Alleluia! here the sinful flee to thee from day to day.

Intercessor, friend of sinners, earth's Redeemer, plead for me,
Where the songs of all the sinless sweep across the crystal sea.

Alleluia! King eternal, thee the Lord of lords we own.

Alleluia! born of Mary, earth thy footstool, heaven thy throne.

Thou within the veil hast entered, robed in flesh, our great High Priest:
Thou on earth both Priest and Victim in the eucharistic feast.

A Reading from the Prophecy of Jeremiah

At that time, says the Lord, "I will be the God of all the families of Israel, and they shall be my people. Thus says the Lord: The people who survived the sword

found grace in the wilderness; when Israel sought for rest, the Lord appeared to her from far away. I have loved you with an everlasting love; therefore I have continued my faithfulness to you. Again I will build you, and you shall be built, O best beloved! Again you shall take your tambourines, and go forth in the dance of the merry-makers. Again you shall plant vineyards on the mountains of Samaria; the planters shall plant, and shall enjoy the fruit. For there shall be a day when sentinels will call in the hill country of Ephraim: "Come, let us go up to Zion, to the Lord our God."

Here is the message all of us are waiting for. Jeremiah bears witness that, even in the most difficult and daunting of times, the Lord of Hosts is with us, the God of Jacob is our stronghold. We will meet again and have cause to celebrate.

Psalm 118

O give thanks to the Lord, who is good; God's steadfast love endures forever!

Out of my distress I called on the Lord; the Lord answered me and set me in a broad place.

With the Lord on my side I do not fear. What can this world do to me?

The Lord is on my side to help me; I shall look in triumph on every threat.

O give thanks to the Lord, who is good; God's steadfast love endures forever!

It is better to take refuge in the Lord than to put confidence in mortals.

It is better to take refuge in the Lord than to put confidence in princes.

All troubles surrounded me; in the name of the Lord I overcame them!

O give thanks to the Lord, who is good; God's steadfast love endures forever!

I was pushed hard, so that I was falling, but the Lord helped me.

The Lord is my strength and my might; he has become my salvation.

I shall not die, but I shall live, and recount the deeds of the Lord.

The Lord has punished me severely, but he did not give me over to death.

O give thanks to the Lord, who is good; God's steadfast love endures forever!

Open to me the gates of righteousness, that I may enter through them and give thanks to the Lord.

This is the gate of the Lord; the righteous shall enter through it.

I thank you that you have answered me and have become my salvation.

O give thanks to the Lord, who is good; God's steadfast love endures forever!

The stone that the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone.

This is the Lord's doing; it is marvelous in our eyes.

This is the day that the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it.

O give thanks to the Lord, who is good; God's steadfast love endures forever!

A Reading from the Acts of the Apostles

Peter began to speak to them: "I understand that God shows no partiality; in every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to God. The message he sent to the people of Israel: preaching peace by Jesus Christ—who is Lord of all. That message spread throughout Judea, beginning in Galilee after the baptism by John: how God anointed Jesus with the Holy Spirit and with power; how he went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him. We are witnesses to all that he did both in Judea and in Jerusalem. They put him to death by hanging him on a tree; but God raised him on the third day and allowed him to appear, not to all the people but to us few who were chosen as witnesses, and who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead. He commanded us to preach peace to all the people and to testify that Christ is the one ordained by God as judge, both of the living and of the dead. Therefore, all the prophets testify that everyone may receive forgiveness of their sins through the name of Christ."

From the beginnings of Christian witness, in those frightening days, the message was clear: Peace is the answer. All sins are forgivable except the one that says there is no forgiveness. Whatever devils oppress and divide us, the wounds they inflict will be remedied by the Spirit, alive in the hearts and hands of all who call themselves peacemakers and healers.

Hymn 773

Heal me, hands of Jesus, and search out all my pain:
restore my hope, remove my fear and bring me peace again.

Cleanse me, blood of Jesus, take bitterness away;
let me forgive as one forgiven and bring me peace today.

Know me, mind of Jesus, and show me all my sin;
dispel the memories of guilt, and bring me peace within.

Fill me, joy of Jesus: anxiety shall cease
and heaven's serenity be mine, for Jesus brings me peace!

The Holy Gospel according to Matthew

After the sabbath, as the first day of the week was dawning, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to see the tomb. And suddenly there was a great earthquake; for an angel of the Lord, descending from heaven, came and rolled back the stone and sat on it. His appearance was like lightning, and his clothing white as snow. For fear of him the guards shook and became like dead men. But the angel said to the women, "Do not be afraid; I know that you are looking for Jesus who was crucified. He is not here; for he has been raised, as he said. Come, see the place where he lay. Then go quickly and tell his disciples, 'He has been raised from the dead, and indeed he is going ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see him.' This is my message for you." So they left the tomb quickly with fear and great joy, and ran to tell his disciples. Suddenly Jesus met them and said, "Greetings!" And they came to him, took hold of his feet, and worshiped him. Then Jesus said to them, "Do not be afraid; go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee; there they will see me."

Do not be afraid. He has been raised. Greetings! Go and tell them. Do not be afraid. It is no wonder that the Bible contains some 365 admonitions against fear. Fear not! We are told, because God knows that fear, the unnecessary kind, is the cause of all that goes wrong in human affairs. In the Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous, one reads: "Fear -- this short word somehow touches about every aspect of our lives. For us was an evil and corroding thread; the fabric of our existence was shot through with it. It set in motion trains of circumstances which brought us misfortune we felt we didn't deserve..." Of course, we should be afraid of what might happen if we stand in front of a speeding locomotive, unless we're Clark Kent, or get in a cage with a tiger, unless we're making a documentary for Netflix, or of our vulnerability if we ignore the corona virus. Of those we should be very afraid. But what we must not fear is the power of God's love to transform us for the better when we allow and embrace it. It is because we now know that death has no dominion over us, that we can become healers and peacemakers ourselves, each in our own way, without worrying about who comes out ahead, or who is great.

Amy Crumpton writes, "Saying I'm 'overwhelmed' makes me sound busy and sophisticated when sometimes what I really want to do is crawl under my covers and hide. I sat down with a pen and paper to see why. What I found was a nest of sneaky lies slithering around in the shadows of my thoughts, hissing and making me feel small, helpless, and alone. They probably aren't that much different than your lies -- the good old standbys -- 'Your work isn't good enough. He/she is smarter, better, more productive (fill in the blank) than you. You're naïve. You're lazy. Etc.'"

"I *know* they aren't true, but still they spew. And fill me up with poison sometimes. Then suddenly, *I am very afraid*. So this morning, I prayed. "Jesus, I'm afraid. Apparently there is a "fear not" for each day of the year, but I need one for each minute, please.

"This is what I heard: Fear is a cause to pause. An invitation to stop and seek *My* way forward. The Lord says, "fear not" at pivotal times when the people have paused to ask for direction and courage. They are taking big risks; facing their giants; going into battle; saying unpopular things; traveling into uncharted territory; being persecuted for their

faith. Their fear makes them stop and ask, “Lord, before we press on, is this *really* from You?” 365 times they hear, “Yes. It’s me.” Or more precisely, “Fear not, I’m with you.”

“In and of itself, fear is not something to be ashamed of, ignored, or condemned. Rather it’s a healthy emotion created by God. When we are scared, we slow down, become cautious, pay attention. It’s the *perfect* time to pray. “Lord, is this thought *true*? Is it loving; is it You? Is it helping me or hurting me? Is it saving my skin or stopping me from stepping my very best life? Is this You or is this the enemy?” The enemy wants to do a perverted whack job on anything God means for our good. So... can fear become distorted and disruptive and destructive? *Hell, yes.*

“That’s exactly why we need to seek God vigilantly in our fear to learn *where* it’s coming from. Because to fear *nothing*, to have no *cause for a pause* to consider what God might be showing us, to never humble our hearts looks like a big, ugly ego. Haughtiness. Pride. Arrogance. It’s a good thing if you and I don’t have to worry about that, right? Because we are scared sometimes. And that’s a *good* thing- a cause for a pause. A prayer. A humbling of *our* hearts. A seeking of God’s will and making that our own.”

Our prayers and our fears all go up to Heaven this day, on the wings of a thousand doves. What Easter tells us is that we are heard; we are held; we are helped. Whether we live or die, and whenever we fear: we are not alone, and we are loved.

Prayer Amid an Epidemic by Kerry Weber

Jesus Christ, you traveled through towns and villages “curing every disease and illness.” At your command, the sick were made well. Come to our aid now, in the midst of the global spread of the coronavirus, that we may experience your healing love.

Heal those who are sick with the virus. May they regain their strength and health through quality medical care.

Heal us from our fear, which prevents nations from working together and neighbors from helping one another.

Heal us from our pride, which can make us claim invulnerability to a disease that knows no borders. Jesus Christ, healer of all, stay by our side in this time of uncertainty and sorrow.

Be with those who have died from the virus. May they be at rest with you in your eternal peace.

Be with the families of those who are sick or have died. As they worry and grieve, defend them from illness and despair. May they know your peace.

Be with the doctors, nurses, researchers and all medical professionals who seek to heal and help those affected and who put themselves at risk in the process. May they know your protection and peace.

Be with the leaders of all nations. Give them the foresight to act with charity and true concern for the well-being of the people they are meant to serve. Give them the wisdom to invest in long-term solutions that will help prepare for or prevent future outbreaks. May they know your peace, as they work together to achieve it on earth. Whether we are home or abroad, surrounded by many people suffering from this illness or only a few, Jesus Christ, stay with us as we endure and mourn, persist and prepare. In place of our anxiety, give us your peace. Jesus Christ, heal us.

Hymn 207

Jesus Christ is risen today, Alleluia! our triumphant holy day, Alleluia!
Who did once, upon the cross, Alleluia! suffer to redeem our loss, Alleluia!

Hymns of praise then let us sing, Alleluia! unto Christ, our heavenly King, Alleluia!
Who endured the cross and grave, Alleluia! sinners to redeem and save, Alleluia!

But the pains which he endured, Alleluia! our salvation have procured, Alleluia!
Now above the sky he's king, Alleluia! where the angels ever sing, Alleluia!

Sing we to our God above, Alleluia! praise eternal as his love, Alleluia!
Praise him, all ye heavenly host, Alleluia! Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, Alleluia!

A healthy and happy Easter to you, may God bless and keep you and your loved ones this day and always. May we go forward – if not forth – in peace and love, to follow the risen Christ. Amen. Alleluia! Alleluia!



photo is of Lelia Symington who, with Chase Mullins performs *Hymn 376* (above link)



FRANCO ORIGLIA WireImage

AN EASTER TREAT LIVE FROM ITALY: ANDREA BOCELLI

The opera legend will be in concert Sunday in the historic Duomo cathedral in Milan. It will be live-streamed exclusively on Bocelli's YouTube channel. The cathedral is closed to the public amid the COVID-19 pandemic, so Bocelli will be performing to an empty venue. Cathedral organist Emanuele Gianelli will be Bocelli's sole accompaniment, and they'll perform spiritual songs such as "Ave Maria" and "Sancta Maria." "Bocelli: Music for Hope" is set for 7 p.m. in Italy, which is 10 a.m. Pacific.

find Bocelli's concert here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p5n8yLSGFps>



[Episcopal Diocese of El Camino Real](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v7V4E-R38o4&feature=youtu.be)

See a sneak preview of the first-ever Diocese of El Camino Real Easter Sunday service! On Sunday, April 12 at 10:00 am, all are invited to join the diocesan-wide service posted on El Camino Real's YouTube channel. The mosaic of the Easter Sunday service will be presented in multiple cultures and languages from around the diocese. Bishop Lucinda is the preacher and presider with many participants. Two versions of the service will be available, one with a sermon in English and the other Spanish. He is risen!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v7V4E-R38o4&feature=youtu.be>

Links announced to view Diocesan Easter service

Available at the following links beginning at 10 am on Sunday, April 12:

[Service with English sermon](#) [Service with Spanish sermon](#)

[View and download the Easter Sunday Service Bulletin here.](#)

Problems accessing links? [Visit the diocesan YouTube page here.](#)

All Saints Church, Pasadena

<https://allsaints-pas.org/live-stream/>

Church of the Incarnation – Dallas

<https://incarnation.org/digital-worship/>

Scotland Highlands Hallelujah Celtic Thunder Celtic Angels

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

Trinity Church, Wall Street

<https://www.trinitywallstreet.org/blogs/watching-trinity-live-streamed-worship-services>



the guarding of the vestments