

Easter Sunday – At-Home Worship

This order of worship is something that can be used for at-home worship or while following along with the video of Pastor Drew’s Easter message (www.adrianfumc.org/worship/sermon-podcasts/sermons-printable/). If used as part of at-home worship, the various elements can be read aloud by different persons in the household.

Call to Worship

Traditional type that can be used for at-home worship	Following along with Pastor Drew using the Video
L: Do not stand at the tomb and weep. Christ is risen! P: Do not let your hearts be in morning: Christ is risen! L: Run to tell others the great good news: Christ is risen! P: Believe the good news Christ is risen! HALLELUJAH!	<u>Pastor:</u> Today we find ourselves in a world where the <i>inevitable</i> , the <i>always is</i> no longer seems sure. Every aspect of daily life has been disrupted, and we wonder how it will be for the good. But then again, today, we celebrate the biggest disrupter of all: Jesus’ resurrection from the dead—and we call that good! So now we wonder what is made possible because of the resurrection: what walls will be broken and what darkness will be destroyed? At Easter, death is shown for what it is: the possibility for love to come again. Let us worship believing the good news that Christ is risen!

Special Music

Opening Prayer *(may be prayed aloud by everyone in unison or by one person on behalf of all)*

Living God, on this most joyous day we offer our thanks and praise to You; creator of heaven and earth, creator and lover of all humanity. We bless You for creating the whole world, for Your promises to Your people Israel, and for the life we know in Jesus Christ Your Son. Even when we turned away from You, You never rejected us. You spoke words of mercy and love through the prophets; promising to swallow up death forever and to host a banquet for all people; a feast of life-giving sustenance. We praise you for Christ Jesus, your Word Incarnate made flesh. Born of Mary, he shares our life. Eating with sinners, he welcomes us. Leading his followers, he guides us. Dying on the cross, he rescues us. Risen from the dead, he gives new life. Most resilient God, Source of all that is eternally raised up, we give you thanks for your unspeakable gift of Christ Jesus.

Prayer of Confession

However, merciful God, we also confess that like the disciples of old, we ran and hid, even if only in our hearts, from the terror and sadness of the crucifixion. We didn’t want to be there. We found ways of avoiding the scene and pretending that it was all a bad dream. But it wasn’t a dream. Jesus our Lord was crucified. That’s a fact. And we were numbed by the news. But now we have been given the most blessed gift of forgiveness for our stupidity and stubbornness; we have been given the gift of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. New Light has shined in our deep darkness. Restore us again to your presence. Soften our hard hearts. Brighten our spirits, for we ask this in the name of the Resurrected One, Jesus Christ.

All: Amen.

Words of Assurance

L: Do not fear. God has conquered death. Jesus Christ, who was crucified, is risen from the dead. Love has been poured out again for each one of us.

All: Alleluia! Amen!

Scripture Readings: Acts 10:34-43; Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24; Colossians 3:1-4; Matthew 28:1-10

[Below is a retelling of the Easter story. You might consider using this in the place of reading the lesson from Matthew's Gospel.]

How early it is! The sky is changing from deep darkness to the faded blue-gray of morning light. Now is her time to go to the tomb--in the dimness of early morning light, before the others awake--just to be there, near his tomb just one more time. And she runs to the place where he is buried, but the stone is rolled away. How can this be? This stone takes a number of strong workmen to put in place. It was guarded. But now no one is there and the stone is rolled away. She is frightened and runs back to tell Peter and the other disciples: "They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him." Peter and John run to the tomb. John reached the tomb first and looked in, and he did not see the body in the tomb; Peter went into the tomb and said that the body definitely was not there. He saw the linen wrappings lying there and the cloth that had been on Jesus' head, but it wasn't lying with the other linen wrappings; it was rolled up in a place by itself. John entered the tomb and was overwhelmed by the disappearance of Jesus. So they left the tomb and went back to their place of hiding.

But Mary stayed, stunned and fearful. As she wept, she bent over and looked in the tomb, and there she saw two angels in white, one at the place where Jesus' head had lain, and other at the place where the feet had been. "Woman, why are you weeping?" they asked her. "They have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid him," she responded. She turned around and saw someone whom she supposed to be the gardener, the one who attends to the burial sites. She did not know it was Jesus. "Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you looking for?" She was astonished at his words and through her tears implored him to tell her where the body had been taken. "Where has he been taken? If you tell me, I will go and take him away." And then she heard it, the sound that would ring in her ears and in her heart for the rest of her life: "Mary!" he said her name. "Mary!" and in an instant, she knew who he was. "Teacher," she cried and fell to her knees in front of him, seeking to embrace him. "Mary, 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.'" And with tears of joy, Mary ran from the place and went to the disciples, announcing, "I have seen the Lord"; and she told them that he had said these things to her.

Message *(if doing at-home worship and not listening to Pastor Drew's message, you may use the following questions as a way of creating your own lesson for the day.)*

1. All three persons—Mary, Peter, and John—were confused by the fact that Jesus' body was missing from the tomb. Describe a time when you were confused when something you expected to happen a certain way ended up happening in a different way.
2. Before Jesus spoke to Mary, do you think it occurred to her that Jesus might be alive?
3. Any confusion we have about God and Jesus Christ is normal. We don't have the ability to figure God out with our own intelligence. What do you think is John's point in 1:18 – "No one has ever seen God. But the unique One, who is himself God, is near to the Father's heart. He has revealed God to us."

Benediction

L: Alleluia! This is a day of new beginnings! This is the day of brightness and hope! For God has done wondrous things for us! Go in joyful peace and know that God's peace and love go with you always.

P: Alleluia! Amen.