

CALL TO WORSHIP

We gather as friends and as the family of God.
We celebrate redemption and resurrection,
forgiveness and renewal.

Easter has come! Alleluia!

Jesus stands among us, offering his peace.

What does this mean, that Jesus greets us in peace?

How then shall we live?

Where do we go?

Come friends, let us worship and pray,
as we listen to God's word, present today.

PRAYER OF INVOCATION

Gentle Spirit, come to us, for we need your presence.
We sorrow and grieve, worry, and remain anxious.
Yet, you Spirit of God, breathe the soothing breeze
that refreshes and restores our soul.

Come, Spirit of Life, breathe into our lives.

Fill us with your peace.

Surround us with your compassion.

Hold us with your grace.

Come, Spirit of Life.

Amen.

OPENING HYMN: The history of Finlandia and two verses of one of the hymns written to this inspiring music

1 We rest on thee, our Shield and our Defender!
We go not forth alone against the foe;
strong in thy strength, safe in thy keeping tender,
we rest on thee, and in thy name we go;
strong in thy strength, safe in thy keeping tender,
we rest on thee, and in thy name we go.

3 We go in faith, our own great weakness feeling,
and needing more each day thy grace to know:
yet from our hearts a song of triumph pealing,
"We rest on thee, and in thy name we go";
yet from our hearts a song of triumph pealing,
"We rest on thee, and in thy name we go."

H.W. Finlandia can be heard with great visuals at:

https://youtu.be/F5zg_af9b8c

FIRST BIBLE READING: Psalm 118:14–29

- 14 The Lord is my strength and my might;
he has become my salvation.
- 15 There are glad songs of victory in the tents of the righteous:
'The right hand of the Lord does valiantly;
16 the right hand of the Lord is exalted;
the right hand of the Lord does valiantly.'
- 17 I shall not die, but I shall live,
and recount the deeds of the Lord.
- 18 The Lord has punished me severely,
but he did not give me over to death.
- 19 Open to me the gates of righteousness,
that I may enter through them and give thanks to the Lord.
- 20 This is the gate of the Lord; the righteous shall enter through it.
- 21 I thank you that you have answered me and have become my salvation.
- 22 The stone that the builders rejected
has become the chief cornerstone.
- 23 This is the Lord's doing; it is marvellous in our eyes.
- 24 This is the day that the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it.
- 25 Save us, we beseech you, O Lord!
O Lord, we beseech you, give us success!
- 26 Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord.
We bless you from the house of the Lord.
- 27 The Lord is God, and he has given us light.
Bind the festal procession with branches, up to the horns of the altar.
- 28 You are my God, and I will give thanks to you;
you are my God, I will extol you.
- 29 O give thanks to the Lord, for he is good,
for his steadfast love endures for ever.

KIDS' TALK - Lyn

SONG:

This is the day, this is the day
That the Lord has made, that the Lord has made
We will rejoice, (we will rejoice)
And be glad in it (and be glad in it)

This is the day that the Lord has made
We will rejoice and be glad in it
This is the day, this is the day
That the Lord has made.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TXZwW0D2OZ4>

SECOND AND THIRD BIBLE READINGS:

John 20:19–31 Jesus Appears to the Disciples

19 When 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.'

Jesus and Thomas

24 But 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.'

26 A 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.'

30 Now 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.

Acts 5:27–32

27 When they had brought them, they had them stand before the council. The high priest questioned them, ²⁸saying, 'We gave you strict orders not to teach in this name, yet here you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching and you are determined to bring this man's blood on us.' ²⁹But Peter and the apostles answered, 'We must obey God rather than any human authority. ³⁰The God of our ancestors raised up Jesus, whom you had killed by hanging him on a tree. ³¹God exalted him at his right hand as Leader and Saviour, so that he might give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins. ³²And we are witnesses to these things, and so is the Holy Spirit whom God has given to those who obey him.'

SERMON: Paul

PRAYER OF ADORATION AND THANKSGIVING

God of the dawning and evening,
Revealing our way with light, shining brightly to focus our way,
we thank you for your constant presence.
When we wander away or are distracted in our sorrowing,
you are there if we turn to you.
In our confusion and uncertainty
when doubt questions faith, like the gloaming of our souls,
you are there, beyond shadowlands.
For you, Jesus, stand amongst us.
For you, Spirit, breathe warming life into us.
For you, God of all, have always been, are now
and will be before the future is revealed.
We give thanks and praise you, everlasting One.
Amen.

OFFERTORY Let us offer our gifts to further our community's faith and ministry life.

Generous God, we offer you our life to service and love. May we listen to your call to act with justice in our mission and kindly peace in our ministry, to further your presence in this world.

PRAYER OF INTERCESSION

Peacemaking Jesus,
Our heart aches for those affected by injustice and violence.
We pray for the dispossessed who find no place to call home.
Grow in us the wisdom and skills to address injustice in the community.
Raise in us the action and words that will restore peace in your world.
Empower us to create a safe space and a centre of peace,
where we offer a healing space for those who are affected by violence.

Our souls ache for those who can find no peace within.
God of the wounded, show us where we can act
and offer your peace-filled healing presence.
Strengthen our voices to raise awareness within our wider society,
so that healing and hope are revealed to all.
May we never hush the cries of these your people,
who seek to be heard and supported.

We offer these prayers and concerns so your will may be done.

COMMISSIONING AND BENEDICTION

Take heart, people of God.
Eternal God, who is and who was and who is to come, is with us.
Jesus stands amongst us and journeys with us.
The Spirit of Love and Wisdom breathes deeply through our souls.

CLOSING HYMN - The Seekers, - You're My Spirit

You're my spirit you're my guiding light
You're my comfort through the darkest night
When I'm troubled there's one thing I'm certain of
You're my spirit you're the one I love

You're my vision you're what life should be
In your arms I'm safe and sheltered from the stormy sea
Lifted up and carried over every burden every care
There's no mountain I can't conquer
just as long as you are there

Cold and lonely as the road may be
At the end of every journey it's your light I see
There's no doubt or desperation no uncertainty or fear
When you share your love with someone and
that spirit bids you clear

Well I don't need a witness and I don't need persuasion
Just send me the power of your salvation

You're my spirit you're my guiding light
You're my comfort through the darkest night
When I'm troubled there's one thing I'm certain of
You're my spirit you're the one I love

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<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I8Qfkd2WgNk>