

Easter

Prayers and worship resources for the season of Easter – updated October 2017



Palm Sunday Dedication

Lord Jesus, we greet your coming,
pilgrim messiah, servant king, rejected saviour.
You trod the way of a pilgrim
and ascended the hill of the Lord;
you followed the path of your calling
even though Mount Zion gave way to the hill of
Calvary.

Lord Jesus,
help us to follow.

You rode into Jerusalem on a donkey,
symbol of humility and lowliness,
mocking our dream of pomp and glory,
demonstrating the foolishness of God before the
eyes of the world.

You have shown us the way of humble service,
the way of true greatness.

Lord Jesus,
help us to follow.

The cries of 'Hosanna' soon turned to 'Crucify'.
The acclamation of the crowds gave way to fear
and contempt.

You have shown us the cost of love
and you have called us to follow in your way:
pilgrims of the kingdom,
living out the foolishness of God,
and trusting only in your forgiving faithfulness.

Lord Jesus,
help us to follow.

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Palm Sunday Blessing

May the blessing of God
who resides in our hopes and our dreams
grant us peace.

May the blessing of Jesus
Who rides to wild acclaim and waving palm
branches
grant us peace.

May the blessing of the Spirit
Who holds us through our fears and our
nightmares

grant us peace...

...on this Palm Sunday
through the events of Holy Week
to the cross of Good Friday
and beyond
to look for the hopes and dreams
of the dawning of an Easter Morning.

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Maundy Thursday Communion Reflection

Invited to his table
Disciples of Jesus gathered

In the traditions of their ancestors
And the customs of their faith – they gathered

As soldiers reported for their watch
And religious leaders waited nervously – they
gathered

As temple traders sold their wares on rebuilt stalls
And dinner hosts spread banquets – they gathered

As the Roman governor attended to his dispatches
And clerks busied themselves in the waiting council
chamber – they gathered

As palace guards were posted, and angry mobs
were rallied
And servants lit the fire-pits in the High Priest's
courtyard – they gathered

As cross-beams were requisitioned
And the blacksmith's hammer beat nails from red
hot metal – they gathered

As hearts yearned for salvation
And God's purposes began to unveil
Those who Christ invited - were gathered

And so we come together
To share bread and wine
As generations before us have done.

We gather amidst a world
Where entrepreneurs and restaurateurs,
politicians, squaddies and servants
Pursue today's concerns and duties,
Daring to believe that God's purposes continue to
be found and fulfilled.

We gather, that as God's people we might be
better equipped
To live out this sacrament in the public square
Seeking to meet Christ afresh
That we might be renewed and strengthened in the
task that we share.

We gather amidst a world that is hurting and
fractured
Uncertain and confused
Declaring freedom yet constrained by fear
Longing for peace yet perpetuating violence
United in common humanity yet often divided by
religion

We gather, bearing its scars and sharing its fragility
To break bread at the table of its Saviour
Share wine at the bidding of its Healer
To offer ourselves and receive grace anew
And by his hand, be made ready to continue our
journey.
Confident not in our own understanding
But God's eternal wisdom
Certain not of the pathway ahead.
But that God will be with us as we trace its course.

*© Phil Jump, Regional Minister Team Leader,
North Western Baptist Association*

Scary God

*But he stands alone and who can dissuade him?
What he desires, that he does.
For he will complete what he appoints for me;
and many such things are in his mind.
Therefore I am terrified at his presence;
when I consider, I am in dread of him.
God has made my heart faint;
the Almighty has terrified me
Job 23:13-16*

Scary God
Of wrath and vengeance
Of battles and genocide
Not always an easy God to believe

Scary God
Of purity requirements and exile
Of the prophets and the marginalised
Not always an easy God to love

Scary God
Of earthquakes and judgement
of tables overturned and leaving family behind
Not always an easy God to hear

Scary God
Of narrow paths and thorns in sides, of crosses and
life denied
Not always an easy God to serve

And yet God.
Of untameable holiness
Of true righteousness
You are who you are
We fear you and we praise you.

© Elizabeth Allison

Easter Season

Lord God of life, we thank you for blessings you have poured out on each of us. We thank you for the gift in each day we see, the grace of every breath we draw, the opportunity in every moment we live. Thank you for creating us to live in this time and this space, and show us how to glorify you here and now.

During this Easter season, we reflect upon the fate of millions in our world who share the days in which we live on this earth.

We remember over a billion people living on less than one US Dollar a day;
We remember two billion who have no access to proper sanitation
We remember one hundred million children do not go to school;
We remember ten million children die before the age of 5 from preventable disease.

God of the poor and powerless, we stand before you as citizens of a wealthy and powerful nation, and ask that you would show us how to glorify you here.

We pray for justice and hope and grace, and ask that you would enable us to be agents of justice and hope in the time and the place where you have called us to represent you. By your grace, make us a holy people, attentive to you, that we may live the truth as well as speak the truth.

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Easter Prayer with Children

Dear Father,
this is the best day of the year –
the best day of all time.
For on Easter Day we find that Jesus, who was dead,
is alive again:
and we see his promise that those who put their trust in him
will not be swept away by death,
but shall have eternal life.

On this day of light and gladness,
help us to put darkness out of our lives.

Make us willing and able to change our ways of thinking and speaking and doing into Easter ways:
so that how we behave
may bear out what we believe,
and so that Christ's new creation
may become in us not just a hope but a fact;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

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A responsive prayer for Easter Day

Christ has died! - Christ is risen!

The Matthew 28 Easter morning reading concludes with the women being commissioned to tell the disciples to meet Jesus in Galilee. Jerusalem is the religious centre, Galilee is the centre of their everyday working lives. Like those early disciples, we who on Easter Day have encountered the risen Lord, are called not to the religious or spectacular, but to resume our everyday working lives transformed by the truth which we have re-embodied. This commission seeks to capture that reality:

The everyday and familiar invites our return
School runs, commuter routes, schedules and in-trays

e-mail; g-mail; voice-mail; snail-mail;

Response: Christ has died, Christ is risen

Appointments to keep, customers to satisfy

Orders to complete, mistakes to rectify

R: Christ has died, Christ is risen

Ends to make meet, uncertainties lurking

Tough decisions to make, dilemmas to ponder

R: Christ has died, Christ is risen

Aspirations to fulfil, careers to pursue

Skills to share, accomplishments to celebrate

R: Christ has died Christ is risen

Experiences await; unimagined, unforeseen
Dreamed-of, dreaded or simply routine

R: Christ has died, Christ is risen

Christ who is Lord of all things,
We have wept and shuddered at the foot of Your
cross;
Marvelled and rejoiced at Your empty tomb.
May we not return unchanged to that from
which we turned aside;
But ready to seek Your living presence in every
aspect of our being.

Amen

*© Phil Jump, Regional Minister Team Leader,
North Western Baptist Association*

Faith and Society Team, Baptist Union of Great Britain, Baptist House, PO Box 44, 129 Broadway, Didcot OX11 8RT
Tel: 01235 517700 Email: faithandsociety@baptist.org.uk Website: www.baptist.org.uk

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