

## Resources for Easter Sunday

*References to additional resources in the Presbyterian Book of Common Worship (BCW) are provided at the right-hand margin. Prayers and other texts marked DPG are by David Gambrell.*

### ——— Gathering ———

#### CALL TO WORSHIP

Jesus said: “I am the resurrection and the life.  
Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live,  
and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die.”  
**Christ is risen! We have seen the glory of God.**

John 11:25-26, 40  
*see also BCW 315,  
316-317, or 323*

#### PRAYER OF THE DAY

Living God, through Jesus Christ  
you emptied the power of death  
and gave us the gift of life in fullness.  
Now fill us with the breath of your Spirit  
to tell the good news of the gospel:  
Jesus Christ is risen from the dead. **Amen.**

*DPG  
see also BCW 316, 317, or 323-324*

*or*

Living God, on the first day of the week  
you brought to birth a new creation  
through the glorious resurrection of Jesus Christ.  
Fill us with the hope and joy of new beginnings,  
so that we may share the good news  
of your liberating, life-giving power with all the world;  
through Christ our Savior, who is alive  
and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,  
now and always. **Amen.**

*DPG*

#### HYMN, PSALM, OR SPIRITUAL

*If the church was stripped at the conclusion of the Maundy Thursday service, it should be “dressed” during the opening hymn (or alternately, during a prelude or introit). A litany for the presentation of sacred symbols, designed for use with children, is provided below in the appendix.*

#### CALL TO CONFESSION

*Standing at the baptismal font, the minister speaks these words as a gracious invitation for all to reflect on their lives, to repent of their sins, and to receive God’s abundant mercy and love.*

The psalmist prayed: Open to me the gates of righteousness, O Lord,  
that I may enter through them and give thanks to you.

Psalm 118:19-23

We give thanks that God has answered us, and has become our salvation.  
The stone that the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone.  
This is the Lord’s doing; it is marvelous in our eyes.

With gratitude for God’s life-giving love, let us confess our sin.

CONFESSION OF SIN

*A time of silence for personal confession may be provided before, during, or after the prayer of confession.*

**Almighty God,  
in raising Jesus from the grave,  
you shattered the power of sin and death.  
We confess that we remain captive to doubt and fear,  
bound by the ways that lead to death.  
We overlook the poor and the hungry,  
and pass by those who mourn;  
we ignore the cries of the oppressed,  
and are indifferent to calls for peace;  
we despise the weak,  
and abuse the earth you made.**

*BCW 317-318, alt.*

**Forgive us, God of mercy.  
Help us to trust your power  
to change our lives and make us new,  
that we may know the joy of life abundant  
given in Jesus Christ, the risen Lord.**

DECLARATION OF FORGIVENESS

*Still standing at the baptismal font, the minister speaks these words with confidence and joy.  
At this sign \*, pour water generously, slowly, visibly, and audibly into the font.*

Hear the word of the Lord:  
I am about to create new heavens and a new earth: \*  
the former things shall not be remembered or come to mind.  
Be glad and rejoice forever in what I am creating;  
I will rejoice and delight in my people;  
no more shall the sound of weeping be heard.

*Isaiah 65:17-19*

Friends, hear and believe the good news of the gospel:  
In the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven.  
**Thanks be to God!**

*The sharing of signs of peace and reconciliation in Christ may follow.*

— — — **The Word** — — —

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Living God, with joy we celebrate  
the presence of your risen Word.  
Enliven our hearts by your Holy Spirit  
so that we may proclaim the good news  
of eternal and abundant life;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

*DPG*

FIRST READING

*Acts 10:34-43*

or Isaiah 65:17-25

PSALM

Psalms 118:1-2, 14-24

SECOND READING

1 Corinthians 15:19-26  
or Acts 10:34-43

GOSPEL READING

John 20:1-18  
or Luke 24:1-12

SERMON

INVITATION TO DISCIPLESHIP

*This invitation to discipleship is intended for use at the font or table. Pastors and/or elders should be prepared to meet with interested persons after the service.*

Come and share in the life of the risen Christ!  
We are a community of resurrection hope—  
born of water and the Spirit,  
nourished at the table that Christ prepares.  
Christ invites you; we welcome you in his name.

DPG

HYMN, PSALM, OR SPIRITUAL

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

*These intercessions for the church and world are inspired by the lectionary texts for Easter Sunday. A variety of congregational responses, spoken (Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer, e.g.) or sung (Kyrie eleison, e.g.), may be inserted after each petition.*

God of endless life and new beginnings,  
we give thanks for your goodness and steadfast love.  
Hear now our prayers:

DPG

For the church throughout the world,  
that we may be faithful witnesses to the resurrection,  
so that all may come to believe and have new life in Christ.

For the people and leaders of every nation,  
that your boundless grace, which shows no partiality,  
might bring Christ's reign of peace and justice to all.

For all who are despised, rejected, and oppressed,  
that they may know the liberating power of the gospel  
and rejoice and be glad in the day of the Lord.

For those who weep like Mary at the tomb,  
that their tears of sorrow may turn to cries of joy  
in the presence of the risen Christ.

For the promise of a new creation,  
where all creatures may live together in safety  
and none shall hurt or destroy on your holy mountain.

*Other petitions may be included, or worshipers may be invited to offer their own prayers, silently or aloud.*

God our strength and salvation, we pray all these things in resurrection hope, and with the confidence that you have already answered us; through Christ, who is alive and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

— — — ***The Eucharist*** — — —

OFFERING

*If the Lord's Supper is not celebrated:*

INVITATION TO THE LORD'S TABLE

GREAT THANKSGIVING *BCW 318-321*

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING *BCW 321-322*

LORD'S PRAYER

LORD'S PRAYER

BREAKING OF THE BREAD

COMMUNION OF THE PEOPLE

— — — ***Sending*** — — —

HYMN, PSALM, OR SPIRITUAL

CHARGE AND BLESSING

## **Appendix: Presentation of Sacred Symbols**

*This litany would be appropriate for use at the “Dressing of the Church” on Easter Sunday, or any time these liturgical symbols are brought into the sanctuary in procession. The words are designed to be simple enough to be understood by children; the leader part might be spoken by an older child.*

Here is the cross, a sign of God’s love.

**Jesus is our Savior and Lord,  
who lived and died and rose again for us.**

Here is the candle, the light of Christ.

**Jesus is the light of the world,  
showing us God’s holy way.**

Here is the Bible, the book of faith.

**Jesus is the Word of God made flesh  
who came to live among us.**

Here is the water, a sign of God’s grace.

**Jesus gives us living water  
so that we may never be thirsty.**

Here is the bread, the body of Christ.

**Jesus is the bread of heaven,  
the food of everlasting life.**

Here is the cup, a sign of God’s promise.

**Jesus is the vine and we are the branches,  
growing together in faith, hope, and love.**