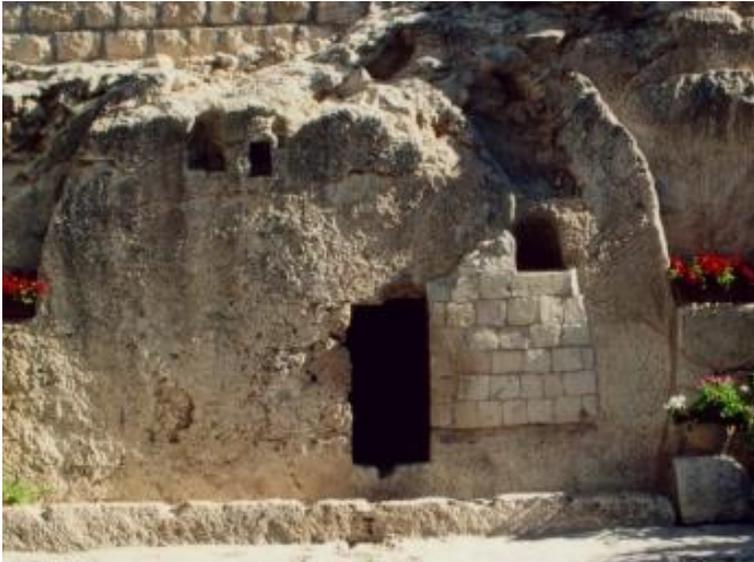


St Mark's Church, Broomhill & Broomhall  
*Living, Thinking, Loving Faith*

## **Night Service**

**11 April 2021 @ 7pm**



## ***The Empty Tomb***

***Welcome!***

*Take time to settle.*

*Use these opening minutes to ...*

*become aware ...  
of the surroundings,  
of those around,  
of those you carry within.*

## Gathering

The excitement is over,  
the balloons are burst and the Easter Garden cleared away.  
We are in a time of anti-climax  
and our hearts feel as empty as the empty tomb.  
O God, help us to endure the emptiness  
when a beloved friend has gone away.

Sharer of our sorrows,  
**help us to share each other's grief.**

Christ is risen  
**He is risen indeed**

*Jean Gaskin (from 'Human Rites')*

## Introduction

We gather this evening in the wake of the resurrection.  
In the empty tomb, we encounter the loss of Jesus –

There is no body to care for  
No marker at which to mourn  
Just this empty tomb  
*He is risen!*  
But *He is not here*  
And when he appears, we do not recognise him.  
Even as we celebrate the resurrection  
It is ok to mourn Jesus  
It is ok to feel his absence  
And to worry that we will not see him again  
And in this empty tomb,  
we share in grief for all we have lost,  
for those who have passed,  
for all who accompanied them,  
for all who were unable to accompany them,  
and for all who have not had the opportunity  
to mourn their loved ones as they had wished.

## Reading 1 - Mark 16.1-8a

When the sabbath was over, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices, so that they might go and anoint him. And very early on the first day of the week, when the sun had risen, they went to the tomb. They had been saying to one another, "Who will roll away the stone for us from the entrance to the tomb?" When they looked up, they saw that the stone, which was very large, had already been rolled back. As they entered the tomb, they saw a young man, dressed in a white robe, sitting on the right side; and they were alarmed. But he said to them, "Do not be alarmed; you are looking for Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has been raised; he is not here. Look, there is the place they laid him. But go, tell his disciples and Peter that he is going ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see him, just as he told you." So they went out and fled from the tomb, for terror and amazement had seized them; and they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid.

*A candle is lit*

Risen Lord, be with us, we pray, when we fail to find you;  
when we want to believe  
    but find it too incredible  
    so we are scared to share the story

Risen Lord, **be with us.**

## Reading 2 – ‘Tomb Day’

It's a tomb day alright,  
miserable and raining,  
dreary and dull.

Bored, I go downstairs  
to do my ironing  
and think of Mary,  
going back to John's house  
and getting on with life.

On the outside,  
nothing's changed,  
but on the inside,  
everything.

I think of her,  
cooking, cleaning,  
washing,  
hanging out  
the clothes  
to dry  
and  
all the time  
thinking,  
wondering,  
questioning,  
remembering,  
her son,  
that once  
was hers,  
and

is

no  
more.

*Susy Brouard (from 'Let justice roll down')*

*A candle is lit*

Risen Lord, be with us, we pray, when we fail to find you;  
when we long to dwell in the memory of love  
but are instead overwhelmed by all we have lost  
Risen Lord, **be with us.**

### Reading 3 – a prayer of Quaker origin

We give back to you, O God, those whom you gave us.  
You did not lose them when you gave them to us,  
and we do not lose them by their return to you.  
Your dear son has taught us  
that life is eternal and love cannot die.  
So death is only an horizon,  
and an horizon is only the limit of our sight.  
Open our senses to perceive more clearly,  
and draw us closer to you  
that we may know that we are nearer to our loved ones,  
who are with you.  
You have told us that you are preparing a place for us:  
Prepare us also for that happy place,  
that where you are we may also be always,  
O Dear Lord of Life and Death.

*William Penn (1644-1718), adapted*

*A candle is lit*

Risen Lord, be with us, we pray, when we fail to find you;  
when in bereavement we crave the certainty of eternal life  
but are afraid it is simply wishful thinking  
Risen Lord, **be with us.**

## Reading 4 - John 20.11-18

But Mary stood weeping outside the tomb. As she wept, she bent over to look into the tomb; and she saw two angels in white, sitting where the body of Jesus had been lying, one at the head and the other at the feet. They said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping?" She said to them, "They have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid him." When she had said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not know that it was Jesus. Jesus said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you looking for?" Supposing him to be the gardener, she said to him, "Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away." Jesus said to her, "Mary!" She turned and said to him in Hebrew, "Rabbouni!" (which means Teacher). Jesus said to her, "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.'" Mary Magdalene went and announced to the disciples, "I have seen the Lord"; and she told them that he had said these things to her.

*A candle is lit*

Risen Lord, be with us, we pray, when we fail to find you;  
when we long to be close to you  
    but cling so tightly to the way things used to be  
    that we do not notice the new creation

Risen Lord, **be with us.**

## Reading 5 – ‘Immortality’

Do not stand at my grave and weep  
I am not there. I do not sleep.  
I am a thousand winds that blow.  
I am the diamond glints on snow.  
I am the sunlight on ripened grain.  
I am the gentle autumn rain.  
When you awaken in the morning's hush  
I am the swift uplifting rush  
Of quiet birds in circled flight.  
I am the soft stars that shine at night.  
Do not stand at my grave and cry;  
I am not there. I did not die.

*Clare Harner Lyon (1909-1977)*

*A candle is lit*

Risen Lord, be with us, we pray, when we fail to find you;  
when we seek you in the world around us  
    but focus so much on the dramatic signs  
    that we do not notice you in the small moments  
Risen Lord, **be with us.**

## Reading 6 – ‘We will carry them with us’

Long the journey we must now make  
for one of our kind has left us and we cannot be the same.  
Slow the feet tread moment by moment,  
a wonder that morning and evening keep coming round.  
But weaving the old story into the new cannot be hurried  
for there are no landmarks and no maps.  
We must weep over their bones until we carry them within us.  
And when the winter of our grief is past  
and the rains are over and gone  
we will arise and come away,  
put our hand in the hand of life,  
see the world afresh with newborn eyes  
as the flowers appear on the earth again  
and the time of singing is come.

Tess Ward

*A candle is lit*

Risen Lord, be with us, we pray, when we fail to find you;  
when we long to live in resurrection hope  
yet we cannot see beyond the horizon

Risen Lord, **be with us.**

## *Remembering*

*You are invited to light a candle in memory of those whom you love but can no longer see, or to mark the loss of something you mourn.*

God of compassion,  
your mercy is over all you have made.  
We thank you for all those whom we love but see no longer.  
As we remember them in this place,  
Look with tenderness on all who love them.  
Comfort and sustain them as they walk through the valley of shadows  
and lighten their path as you lead them,  
step by step to the far horizon  
where new life awaits for them and those they love. **Amen.**

*Common worship, adapted by Tess Ward*

**Chant**

**Iedere nacht verlang ik naar u, O God,  
ik hunker naar u met heel mijn ziel.**

*My soul longs for you in the night,  
My spirit within me earnestly seeks you*

Taizé

*We share a time of silence for our own reflections and prayers, lasting approximately 10 minutes.*

*You may wish to imagine yourself as sitting in the empty tomb, surrounded by absence. Become aware of those things you miss and allow them to share this space with you for a time before letting them go, addressing each in turn. As you do so, you may wish to use the following prayer:*

**Peace  
Peace, be still  
Peace**

*At the end of the silence, we listen or sing along again to our chant:*

**Iedere nacht verlang ik naar u, O God,  
ik hunker naar u met heel mijn ziel.**

*My soul longs for you in the night,  
My spirit within me earnestly seeks you*

Taizé

Lord, You have always given  
bread for the coming day;  
and though I am poor,  
**today I believe.**

Lord, You have always given  
strength for the coming day;  
and though I am weak,  
**today I believe.**

Lord, You have always given  
peace for the coming day;  
and though of anxious heart,  
**today I believe.**

Lord, You have always kept  
me safe in trials;  
and now, tried as I am,  
**today I believe.**

Lord, You have always marked  
the road for the coming day;  
and though it may be hidden,  
**today I believe.**

Lord, You have always lightened  
this darkness of mine;  
and though the night is here,  
**today I believe.**

Lord, You have always spoken  
when time was ripe;  
and though you be silent now,  
**today I believe.**

As you do the work that love asks of you now,  
when you watch and wait and help the dear one on their way,  
may God bear you and strengthen you,  
wipe every tear,  
still your fears.

May Spirit gently unclasp your fingers  
so you may let go into the mystery before you.  
Let God anoint old wounds and mend you in mercy,  
and may your heart brim with gratitude at this gift of this life.  
And as you leave this place and tread the path without map or sign,  
may you know God's presence with you in grief's dark vale.  
May you know that love has been this way before,  
and when the sun that you thought would never come  
rises over the faraway hill, may you look back  
and find your heart opened with kindness, renewed by grace,  
and may you glimpse the light that always shines  
beyond the places we can see.

*Tess Ward, adapted.*

**God of love enfold us,  
God of comfort heal us.  
God of joy uplift us,  
God of hope renew us,  
God of peace refill us  
time and time again.**

*Cecily Taylor (from 'Let justice roll down')*

May the blessing of God,  
Creator, Christ and Spirit of Life,  
Be among you and all whom you love, both living and departed, now  
and forever. **Amen.**

***Please feel free to stay for social time after the service.***

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Thank you.

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*This service will use a track from the album  
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