

**St Stephen's.  
Prayers and poems and other ideas.**

Thank you to those who have contributed ideas!  
Please keep sending them!



**Christ is Risen!  
He is Risen indeed!  
Alleluia!**



Noli me tangere | Fra Angelico | 1430

## A Favourite Easter Hymn

*Maybe take time to read through it slowly and savour the words ...*

Christ the Lord is risen today, Alleluia!  
Earth and heaven in chorus say, Alleluia!  
Raise your joys and triumphs high, Alleluia!  
Sing, ye heavens, and earth reply, Alleluia!

Love's redeeming work is done, Alleluia!  
Fought the fight, the battle won, Alleluia!  
Death in vain forbids him rise, Alleluia!  
Christ has opened paradise, Alleluia!

Lives again our glorious King, Alleluia!  
Where, O death, is now thy sting? Alleluia!  
Once he died our souls to save, Alleluia!  
Where's thy victory, boasting grave? Alleluia!

Soar we now where Christ has led, Alleluia!  
Following our exalted Head, Alleluia!  
Made like him, like him we rise, Alleluia!  
Ours the cross, the grave, the skies, Alleluia!

Hail the Lord of earth and heaven, Alleluia!  
Praise to thee by both be given, Alleluia!  
Thee we greet triumphant now, Alleluia!  
Hail the Resurrection, thou, Alleluia!

King of glory, soul of bliss, Alleluia!  
Everlasting life is this, Alleluia!  
Thee to know, thy power to prove, Alleluia!  
Thus to sing, and thus to love, Alleluia!

*Charles Wesley, 1707-1788*

And a chance to listen to it here ...

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rMwPEmUMP7U>

## A contemporary Easter song

See what a morning, gloriously bright  
With the dawning of hope in Jerusalem;  
Folded the grave-clothes  
Tomb filled with light,  
As the angels announce Christ is risen!  
See God's salvation plan, wrought in love,  
Borne in pain, paid in sacrifice,  
Fulfilled in Christ, the Man, for He lives,  
Christ is risen from the dead!

See Mary weeping: 'Where is He laid?  
As in sorrow she turns from the empty tomb;  
Hears a voice speaking, calling her name:  
It's the Master, the Lord raised to life again!  
The voice that spans the years,  
Speaking life, stirring hope,  
Bringing peace to us,  
Will sound till He appears,  
For He lives, Christ is risen from the dead!

One with the Father, Ancient of Days,  
Through the Spirit  
Who clothes faith with certainty,  
Honour and blessing, glory and praise  
To the King crowned  
With power and authority!  
And we are raised with Him,  
Death is dead, love has won  
Christ has conquered;  
And we shall reign with Him,  
For He lives, Christ is risen from the dead!

Stuart Townend & Keith Getty

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[songs@integritymusic.com](mailto:songs@integritymusic.com))

Listen to it here ...<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6xM-fpXayUg&list=PL3D2EAD1AC90321CB&index=2>

and a more traditional setting from Coventry Cathedral here ...  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=57C7uBkbO5E>



From Richard & Angela Poppleton ...

The choir I belong to has just produced a piece dedicated to those lost during this crisis. We each recorded our parts individually and then they were 'mixed' together. The music was composed by our conductor, Kevin Dowson and is usually an alternative setting to Away in a manger, but one of the members wrote new words more appropriate for today's events. I hope that you will find it as moving as we did singing it.

Please share it as you wish.

Richard

<https://youtu.be/g1JEBIGZrt0>



Some prayers and a creative response.

Thank you for Easter.

Thank you Lord Jesus for bearing the loneliness of praying in the Garden of Gethsemane. Remind us this Easter that solitary praying removes distractions and allows us a closeness and intimacy with you.

Thank you Lord Jesus for carrying the cross and being willing to submit to your Father's will. Remind us this Easter that whilst we may carry burdens and difficulties, you have the victory.

Thank you Lord Jesus for dying for our sins and in those moments showing compassion to those around you. Remind us this Easter that we are forgiven by your sacrifice and our response is to show love and compassion to others.

Thank you Lord Jesus that you rose victorious when all seemed lost. Remind us this Easter that you have conquered death and sin and bring salvation and hope to us all.

Thank you lord that we can always pray at any time of night or day. Thank you for your gift of life at Easter. We pray now for our families, church family and friends. Amen.

A Creative response to these prayers.

Sit on the grass in the early morning or evening. Run your hands through the grass. Close your eyes and imagine the garden as Jesus prayed. Use your senses to hear the birds, the wind, the normal noise of your garden. Smell the grass and flowers. Feel the intensity of those moments as Jesus chose to obey His father.

Look at a tree in your garden [or look in a book or online for an image]. Consider its beauty, its shape and the emerging foliage. Now think how men have used such a tree as an instrument of torture. Jesus carried this heavy burden to Calvary. Do you carry a burden? Lay it now in your mind's eye at the foot of the cross. Determine to leave it with Jesus. Thank him that you can do this.

Make a cross with natural materials in your garden such as pebbles, petals, twigs etc. Sit and look at it for a while and hear what God is saying to you, a precious child in His sight.

Or make a collage using paints, tissue and old scraps. Fashion a cross and place it in your window to bless others as they pass. [Or meditate on your palm cross].

Or go online and follow the instructions to fold a palm cross which can be made with a normal strip of paper. Write an affirming verse on the cross and place it where you will regularly see it and be reminded to pray.

Look up works of art that depict the Passion.

Le Christ Jaune :Albright Knox.

Christ on the Cross: Salvador Dali.

The Crucifixion : Craigie Aitchison.

The Crucifixion : Graham Sutherland.

The Crucifixion : Segna Di Buonaventura.

El Greco, Ruebens and Delacroix etc.

Choose your image and look carefully at Jesus. Look at those around Him and their expressions. Notice the colours and other details. Simply allow God to speak to you as you meditate on Jesus' sacrifice on the cross.



## The Resurrection Story told by Peter ...

Do listen to the recording of this – the words are good but it was written as a song ...

The gates and doors were barred and all the windows fastened down,

I spent the night in sleeplessness and rose at every sound,

Half in hopeless sorrow half in fear the day,

Would find the soldiers crashing through to drag us all away.

Then just before the sunrise I heard something at the wall,

The gate began to rattle and a voice began to call,

I hurried to the window and looked down to the street,

Expecting swords and torches and the sound of soldiers feet,

There was no one there but Mary so I went down to let her in,

John stood there beside me as she told us were she'd been,

She said they moved him in the night and none of us knows where,

The stones been rolled away and now his body isn't there.

We both ran toward the garden then John ran on ahead,

We found the stone and the empty tomb just the way that Mary said,

But the winding sheet they wrapped him in was just an empty shell,

And how or where they'd taken him was more than I could tell.

Something strange had happened there but what I did not know,

John believed a miracle but I just turned to go,

Circumstance and speculation couldn't lift me very high,

Cause I'd seen them crucify him and then I'd watched him die,

Back inside the house again all the guilt and anguish came,

Everything I'd promised him just added to my shame,

But at last it came to choices I denied I knew his name,

Even If he was alive it wouldn't be the same.

But suddenly the air was filled with a strange and sweet perfume,

Light that came from everywhere drove shadows from the room,

Jesus stood before me with his arms held open wide,  
And I fell down on my knees and clung to him and cried,  
He raised me to my feet and as I looked into his eyes,  
Love was shining out from him like sunlight from the sky,  
Guilt and my confusion disappeared in sweet release,  
And every fear I'd ever had just melted into peace.

He's alive, He's alive, He's alive and I'm forgiven,  
Heavens gates are open wide.

He's alive, He's alive, He's alive and I'm forgiven,  
Heavens gates are open wide.

He's alive, He's alive, He's alive and I'm forgiven,  
Heavens gates are open wide.

He's alive!

Don Francisco

Listen here ... <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FXcvbqpNsjI>

Or a golden oldies recording here ...

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4Lmv\\_xR6\\_q8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4Lmv_xR6_q8)



And from Mary's view ...

What did she feel  
on hearing her name,  
that voice so familiar,  
heart leaping in recognition?

And so she runs,  
from olive grove and angels  
to a darkened upper room,  
where fearful hearts behind heavy doors  
wait for news  
that will change their lives.

And they hear the words  
"I have seen the Lord,  
I have seen the Lord,"  
crowding around her with hearts on fire,  
a desperate love revived,  
and a faith that will not fail.  
Explosive power that rolled the stone away  
now released to a waiting world.  
Joy now rips through the temple curtain  
spreading like fire from town to town.

He is Alive.

He is alive.

Jesus is alive.

Jenny Hawke ... There was a garden.



Painting ... Eddie Askew ... There was a garden