# Easter Communion Liturgy — Inspired by A Song of Faith

*by Alydia Smith and the Rev. Alison Etter*

### Introit

“The Strive Is O’er” (*Voices United* (VU) 159)

“Christ Is Risen from the Dead” (VU 167)

“Now Christ Is Risen” (VU 172)

“Halle, halle, halle” (VU 958)

### Call to Worship

Christ is risen!

**He is risen indeed!**

Christ is risen!

**He is risen indeed!**

Christ is risen!

**He is risen indeed!**

**Hallelujah!**

### Lighting of the Christ Candle

The Risen Christ lives today!

**We are witnesses to these things.**

We sing praise to God incarnate.

**May his love burn within us!**

### Sung Response

(sung to the tune of VU 167)

**Hallelujah, hal-le-e-lu-jah, halle, hallelujah!** (x2)

**Hal–le, hal-le-lu-jah, halle, hallelujah** (x2)

*or*

“Hallelujah” (*More Voices* (MV) 32)

“Alleluia” (MV 50, 52, 54)

“Alleluia, Praise to God” (MV 59)

### Opening Prayer

**God of grace and power,**

**we have longed and prepared for this joyous day:**

**on Ash Wednesday we humbled ourselves before you,**

**on Maundy Thursday we learnt a new commandment,**

**on Good Friday we cried at the foot of the cross,**

**on Holy Saturday we kept vigil,**

**and on this Blessed Sunday we rejoice in the risen power of love, hope, and new life.**

**Make this rising real in our own lives.**

**Let us be people of love, hope, and new life.**

**Let us be people of joy.**

**In Jesus’ name.**

**Amen.**

### Hymn

“Jesus Christ is Risen Today!” (VU 155)

“Christ is Alive” (VU 158)

“Hail, Glad Festival Day” (VU 163)

“Good Christians All, Rejoice and Sing” (VU 169)

“O Sons and Daughters, Let Us Sing” (VU 170)

### Prayer of Confession

God of grace,

despair, pain, and fear are part of life;

sometimes we let them guide us.

Sometimes we let them hold us back from living your way,

and we lose sight of your strong love.

Help us be a brave and holy people,

living beyond fear.

Teach us to trust in your steadfast love.

Amen.

### Words of Assurance

This is the good news:

God raised Jesus from death,

turning sorrow into joy and

despair into hope.

Hallelujah!

### Anthem

### A Time with the Children

##### Making an Easter Tree or Mural

Preparation: Using cardboard (and the PDF of Easter Symbols), cut out the symbols listed below; it may be helpful to number them. If you wish, punch a hole at the top and string a ribbon through each cut-out to make ornaments for an “Easter tree.” Or have sticky tack on hand and tack the symbols to a mural. At the bottom of the tree or mural have a basket of hollow plastic Easter eggs ready to be given out to the children after the story. (Ahead of time you will have hidden a butterfly sticker or candy in each.)

In sequence, ask a child to find the symbol or ornament and ask the child to show the symbol to the congregation. Read (or have a youth read) the corresponding story for the symbol.

The congregational responses are excerpts from A Song of Faith.

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| **Alternatives*** Give families (or Sunday school classes) symbols and the story in advance and have them read it together.
* Invite the Sunday school to make the symbols to be placed on the tree or mural.
* Hide each symbol within an Easter egg (they could be placed in a ½ dozen egg carton) and ask the children to open them in sequence.
* Have the congregation sing a brief refrain as the symbols are placed on the tree or mural. For instance, the congregation could be lead in a “Hallelujah” refrain that builds in intensity, climaxing at the last symbol. Ways to build intensity could include: introducing harmony and/or instrumentation with each singing of the refrain or increasing the tempo and dynamics.
* Invite the congregation say together the bolded sections (below).
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##### Cross

One: The day Jesus died was very sad. It was a Friday. A man in the crowd helped Jesus to carry his cross to a place called Golgotha. When Jesus died on the cross, it was so sad that people say the sun refused to shine.

**All: We sing of Jesus.**

**He suffered abandonment and betrayal,**

**State-sanctioned torture and execution.**

##### Rock/Tomb

One: When Jesus died, Joseph of Arimathea wrapped Jesus’ body in linen and placed him in a tomb sealed with a large stone so that no one would trouble Jesus’ body.

**All: He was crucified.**

##### Sunrise

One: Three days later, on a Sunday, very early in the morning, while it was still dark with tints of purple and pink in the sky, some women went to the tomb. They were too unhappy to notice the beautiful sky. In fact, they were so distracted and sad they even forgot about the big rock sealing Jesus’ tomb. How would they roll it away? All they wanted was to care for Jesus’ body.

**All: But death was not the last word.**

##### Empty Tomb

One: When the women arrived they found that the stone had been rolled away! They looked inside the tomb; it was dark, cold, and empty. The women were scared. Where is Jesus? What has happened to his body?

**All: God raised Jesus from death,**

**turning sorrow into joy,**

**despair into hope.**

##### Angel

One: And then a warm, bright light shone all around them. The woman froze with fear at the sight of two angels. One said to them, “Don’t be afraid. Why do you look for Jesus here? This is a place for the dead, and Jesus is alive!” The woman ran back to tell the other disciples all that had happened.

**All: We sing of Jesus raised from the dead.**

**We sing hallelujah!**

##### Butterfly

One: Jesus, although in a different form, returned to Galilee to visit his disciples and give them instructions on how to live. Jesus, although in a different form, continues to live among us now.

**All: The Risen Christ lives today,**

 **present to us and the source of our hope.**

**In response to who Jesus was**

 **and to all he did and taught,**

 **to his life, death, and resurrection,**

 **and his continuing presence with us through the Spirit,**

**we celebrate him as**

 **the Word made flesh,**

 **the one in whom God and humanity are perfectly joined,**

 **the transformation of our lives,**

**the Christ.**

### Hymn

“Jesus Incarnate” by Robert Hall and Bill Steadman (Sacred Song Competition Winner) <<insert link to downloadable score>>

### Readings

### Sermon

### Offering

### Presentation

**“**For the Fruit of All Creation” v.3 (VU 227)

“Now Thank We All Our God” v.3 (VU 236)

### Prayer of Dedication

### Affirmation of Faith

“A New Creed” (VU 918)

### The Passing of the Peace

(based on St. Patrick)

Christ’s peace be with you,

 Christ’s peace within you,

 Christ’s peace behind you,

 Christ’s peace before you,

 Christ’s peace beside you,

 Christ’s peace to win you,

 Christ’s peace to comfort and restore you.

Christ’s peace be with you,

 **And also with you**

 Let us greet each other with signs of the peace of Christ.

### An Invitation to Communion

### Hymn

“All Who Hunger” (VU 460)

“Christ, Be Our Host” (VU 465)

“Let Us Talents and Tongues” (VU 468)

### The Prayer of Great Thanksgiving

Christ is risen!

**He is risen indeed!**

Lift up your hearts.

**We lift them up to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

Holy Mystery that is Wholly Love,

you are beyond complete knowledge,

above perfect description.

Father, Son, and Holy Spirit;

Source of Life, Living Word, and Bond of Love,

you are creative and self-giving,

generously moving

in all the near and distant corners of the universe.

Nothing exists that does not find its source in you.

Through fear-filled days and aching nights

when the powers of death have done their worst,

your love has never deserted us.

Even when we turn away from you, you are with us;

your presence never fails us,

your gifts of hope and new life transform us.

We praise you for Jesus Christ,

risen to life, eternal as your love.

With the women at the tomb,

 we raise the strain of gladness.

Hallelujah! Life is stronger than death!

The day of resurrection has come, scattering fear and gloom.

And so we rejoice with all your people of every time and place,

and with angels and archangels,

to proclaim the glory of your name:

*Sanctus and Benedictus*

 Kingsfold Communion Set (MV 203)

 Communion Setting E (VU 942)

It is Jesus, God incarnate, the Risen Christ,

who joins us together as a community of broken but hopeful believers:

loving what he loved

living what he taught, and

striving to be his faithful servants

in our time and place.

In this meal we remember Jesus, his promises,

and the price he paid for who he was, what he said, and what he did.

On the night before Jesus died,

he took a loaf of bread,

gave thanks, broke it, and said,

“Take and eat, whenever you do this, remember me.”

After supper, Jesus took the cup, and poured, saying,

“This is the new covenant, remember me.”

We do remember.

We remember his life of love, his friendship, his teaching, his dying, and his rising to life again.

In sharing this meal, we live out the mystery of our faith:

*Memorial Acclamation*

Kingsfold Communion Set (MV 204)

 Communion Setting E (VU 943)

Holy Mystery, God the Spirit,

we call on you to transform these familiar things,

as you continually transform the world around us.

Bless this bread and this cup,

 the wheat and the grape,

 the farmer and the harvest,

 the seed and the sower.

So that in the sharing of these simple elements in community,

we may taste and see your goodness.

Through Christ, in Christ, and with Christ,

in the unity of the Holy Spirit,

all glory is yours, God most holy,

now and forever.

*Great Amen*

Kingsfold Communion Set (MV 205)

 Communion Setting E (VU 943)

### Breaking the Bread, Pouring the Cup

The body of Christ,

**the bread of life.**

The lifeblood of Christ,

**the cup of blessing.**

The gifts of God for the people of God,

**Thanks be to God!**

### Sharing the Meal

*Choir Anthem/Music*

### Prayer after Communion

**Thank you, O Christ, for this feast of life.**

**We are fed by your love;**

**we are strengthened by your life.**

**We are sent forth into this world to live your way and share your joy.**

**We are now commissioned to:**

**feed as we have been fed,**

**forgive as we have been forgiven,**

**love as we have been loved.**

**Thanks be to God.**

**Amen.**

### Hymn

“Thine Is the Glory” (VU 173)

“Joyful, Joyful We Adore You” (VU 232)

“Sent Forth by God’s Blessing” (VU 481)

### Blessing