

**COLLECT**

Lord of all life and power,  
 who through the mighty resurrection of your Son  
 overcame the old order of sin and death  
 to make all things new in him:  
 grant that we, being dead to sin  
 and alive to you in Jesus Christ,  
 may reign with him in glory;  
 to whom with you and the Holy Spirit  
 be praise and honour, glory and might,  
 now and in all eternity.

**FIRST READING**

(Alternative readings)

The reading from Acts must be used as either the first or second reading.

Either **Acts 10:34-43**

*A reading from the Acts of the Apostles.*

Peter began to speak to those assembled in the house of Cornelius. "I truly understand that God shows no partiality, but in every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him. You know the message he sent to the people of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ – he is Lord of all. That message spread throughout Judea, beginning in Galilee after the baptism that John announced: how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power; how he went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him. We are witnesses to all that he did both in Judea and in Jerusalem. They put him to death by hanging him on a tree; but God raised him on the third day and allowed him to appear, not to all the people but to us who were chosen by God as witnesses, and who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead. He commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one ordained by God as judge of the living and the dead. All the prophets testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name."

Or **Jeremiah 31:1-6**

*A reading from the book of the prophet Jeremiah.*

At that time, says the LORD, I will be the God of all the families of Israel, and they shall be my people. Thus says the LORD: The people who survived the sword found grace in the wilderness; when Israel sought for rest, the LORD appeared to him from far away. I have loved you with an everlasting love; therefore I have continued my faithfulness to you. Again I will build you, and you shall be built, O virgin Israel! Again you shall take your tambourines, and go forth in the dance of the merry-makers. Again you shall plant vineyards on the mountains of Samaria; the planters shall plant, and shall enjoy the fruit. For there shall be a day when sentinels will call in the hill country of Ephraim: "Come, let us go up to Zion, to the LORD our God."

**PSALM**

**Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24 (or 118:14-24)**

**R** *I will give thanks to you, for you have become my salvation.*



I will give thanks to you, for you have become my salvation.

O give thanks to the Lord, for he is good;  
 his mercy endures for ever.  
 Let Israel now proclaim,  
 "His mercy endures for ever." **R**

The Lord is my strength and my song,  
 and he has become my salvation.  
 Joyful shouts of salvation  
 sound from the tents of the righteous:  
 "The right hand of the Lord does mighty deeds;  
 the right hand of the Lord raises up;  
 the right hand of the Lord does mighty deeds." **R**

I shall not die, but live  
 and declare the works of the Lord.  
 The Lord has punished me sorely,  
 but he has not given me over to death.  
 Open to me the gates of righteousness,  
 that I may enter and give thanks to the Lord. **R**

This is the gate of the Lord;  
 the righteous shall enter through it.  
 I will give thanks to you,  
 for you have answered me  
 and have become my salvation. **R**

The stone which the builders rejected  
 has become the chief cornerstone.  
 This is the Lord's doing,  
 and it is marvellous in our eyes.  
 This is the day that the Lord has made;  
 we will rejoice and be glad in it. **R**

**SECOND READING**

(Alternative readings)

Either **Colossians 3:1-4**

*A reading from the letter of Paul to the Colossians.*

If you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth, for you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ who is your life is revealed, then you also will be revealed with him in glory.

Or **Acts 10:34-43** (as above)

**GOSPEL (Alternative readings)**

Either **John 20:1-18**

*Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John.*

Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the tomb. So she ran and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved, and said to them, "They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him." Then Peter and the other disciple set out and went towards the tomb. The two were running together, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. He bent down to look in and saw the linen wrappings lying there, but he did not go in. Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb. He saw the linen wrappings lying there, and the cloth that had been on Jesus' head, not lying with the linen wrappings but rolled up in a place by itself.

Then the other disciple, who reached the tomb first, also went in, and he saw and believed; for as yet they did not understand the scripture, that he must rise from the dead. Then the disciples returned to their homes. 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? For whom are you looking?" 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.

Or **Matthew 28:1-10**

*Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew.*

After the sabbath, as the first day of the week was dawning, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to see the tomb. And suddenly there was a great earthquake; for an angel of the Lord, descending from heaven, came and rolled back the stone and sat on it. His appearance was like lightning, and his clothing white as snow. For fear of him the guards shook and became like dead men. But the angel said to the women, "Do not be afraid; I know that you are looking for Jesus who was crucified. He is not here; for he has been raised, as he said. Come, see the place where he lay. Then go quickly and tell his disciples, 'He has been raised from the dead, and indeed he is going ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see him.' This is my message for you." So they left the tomb quickly with fear and great joy, and ran to tell his disciples. Suddenly Jesus met them and said, "Greetings!" And they came to him, took hold of his feet, and worshipped him. Then Jesus said to them, "Do not be afraid; go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee; there they will see me."

**POST COMMUNION**

God of Life,  
 who for our redemption gave your only-begotten  
 Son  
 to the death of the cross,  
 and by his glorious resurrection  
 have delivered us from the power of our enemy:  
 grant us so to die daily to sin,  
 that we may evermore live with him  
 in the joy of his risen life;  
 through Jesus Christ our Lord.



# The surprise of a lifetime

Caroline Hodgson *reflects on* Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24 and John 20:1-18

**H**aving seen Jesus' body placed in the tomb, Mary Magdalene and the other followers of Jesus can see only darkness ahead. All their hopes are dashed, and their grieving is all the more bitter because of the expectations they had about Jesus' purpose on earth. All that remains is to ensure that his body is properly looked after. But when they arrive the tomb is empty. Their exhausted, wrung-out hearts must have sunk, to think this was yet another, unwelcome twist in the tale.

Of course we know that in the days to come surprise will be heaped upon surprise, as we journey with the disciples and the resurrected Christ appears to them, and as we witness his ascension to

heaven and the world-shaking events of Pentecost.

Even though we may know the story well, possibly even word for word, we should expect the unexpected from the God who surprised the disciples all those years ago, and who continues to do astonishing and amazing things, if we admit the possibility of being astonished and amazed.

The psalmist today sings for joyful surprise at God's triumph over death: "I shall not die, but I shall live... he did not give me over to death." As people renewed by God's action through Jesus this Easter Day, we are invited to add our voices to that of the psalmist, to join him in singing: "This is the day that the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it." 🍷

**God of surprises, keep us alive to your astonishing actions in this world. Teach us how to spread the joyful news of the miracles you have performed, to the work you are doing today, and to the amazing things you will do tomorrow. Amen.**

## Stations of the resurrection

The resurrection

by Richard Greatrex

When Jesus died the veil of the Temple was torn in two, the partition between humanity and divinity was ripped apart. Had that not already happened, though, when Jesus was born, breaking through the fleshly barrier of the womb? The Word pitching his tent among us – the nomadic God of Moses, whose lodging was the peripatetic Ark of the Covenant – was making footprints on the sand. The Temple had outlived its

purpose; and now these new walls loomed impenetrably – smaller, tighter, far more claustrophobic.

Solomon wondered as he dedicated the first Temple: "will God indeed dwell on the earth? Even heaven and the highest heaven cannot contain you, much less this house that I have built!" Up until his death Jesus' disciples had been slowly, falteringly, reaching the conclusion that God was truly inhabiting the earth. Now the tomb was going to bear witness that God could not, cannot, be contained. 🍷



From Stations of the Resurrection: from Easter to Pentecost.  
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## International Day of Human Space Flight

by Lisa Tulfer

Today is the International Day of Human Space Flight. It celebrates the anniversary of the first human space flight by Soviet cosmonaut Yuri Gagarin in 1961. In fact the "space parties" happening all over the world are called "Yuri's Night". It also celebrates Valentina Tereshkova (the first woman in space), Alexei Leonov (who

performed the first spacewalk), the crew of Apollo 11 (who first landed on the moon), and nearly six hundred people who have travelled into space.

It is also a time to remember all those engineers and technicians who work behind the scenes to make the high-profile space missions possible, and the scientists who study the data they gather. While the "space race" between the USA and the USSR was built on rivalry between political powers and worldviews, we can unite in celebrating human achievement, and the understanding that space travel has given us of aspects of God's marvellous creation. 🍷

“ Let the resurrection joy lift us from loneliness and weakness and despair to strength and beauty and happiness.

Floyd W Tomkins (1850-1932), US Episcopal deacon