



Galaxies Evening Service 27 March 2016

Service by Pete Cowley



Welcome:

Welcome to our gathering this afternoon.

Our theme is : **Easter; Death, waiting, Rebirth.** Reflection on the unjust and cruel execution of Jesus and the resurrection of spirit in his followers as well as other modern-day crucifixions and resurrections, death and rebirth et al.



The sadistic torture of Jesus was a bloody & messy. Not the sanitised pictures we see today.

Call to togetherness and sharing:

Let us enter this moment in spirit and in truth.
Let us bring all we are, the honest reality of our humanness.
Here we remember Jesus,
who takes his last steps towards the cross,
yet holds in his hands the bread and wine of life.

**Sacred mystery and mercy,
Be with us as we draw near in remembrance.**

On Reflection

We come here today to remember a man. A man ...
who had dreams.
who had those dreams shattered,
who needed time to think and pray,

who knew he was likely to die for what he believed ...

A man of extraordinary religious insight.

A man who did die - a cruel death.

On Good Friday we look at the cross, and we remember ...

the betrayal of friendship and its consequences,
the casual cruelty of Roman authority and execution,
and how unreliable others proved to be in a crisis.

On this day may we also remember
that religions bigotry, cruelty and unreliability
are still a part of our everyday lives.

On this day, then, may we learn some new precepts for living ...

do not avoid contact and suffering,
or close your eyes before suffering,
do not maintain anger and hatred:

do not say untruthful things for the sake of personal interest.

Or to impress people;

do not live with a vocation that is harmful to humans and to nature ...

On this day we remember

Sometimes bad things happen so good things can

It is hard to image how any small group could survive without it's leader and especially when it's leader was so publicly humiliated, tortured and killed. A pretty blunt message of "Don't challenge us" from the powers - in Jesus' case his own religious leaders who were in cohorts with the Roman oppressors.

Who would have thought from such a brutal and public ending, that anything good could emerge. Certainly Jesus' followers did not think so at the time. They were scared and in hiding!

And then, ... surprisingly ... a resurrection. Jesus' followers begin to see that it was not the end, that the message was bigger than the messenger, bigger even than the death of the messenger and so the transformation of Jesus the itinerant teacher into the Christ of love began. And here we are 2000 or so years later - still proclaiming the good news of the power of love, that God IS love and that Love is in and through all that lives. Pretty amazing really!

But in many ways this happens over and over:

war, injustice, prejudice, fear, greed - the list goes on and on.

But out of such bad things good things can come:

Rising up as community to fight oppressors (Egypt, Lybia, Syria, ...)

Ghandi and all those who use peaceful resistance to injustices

Us as people concerned about others, showing our care by signing petitions, giving our money and helping others wherever we can.

The dying of Autumn, Death of Winter and resurrection of Spring!

What other things can you think of?

"A Time of preparation and change"

From Sanctuary. Where heaven touches earth by Trisha Watts

... the leaves are falling all around us
through days growing ever
clearer and more barren.

Surrounded by little deaths,
the drying of the grass
and shrivelling of the flowers,
we gather our lives in like the harvest.

Our friendships,
our experiences,
our achievements
we wrap around ourselves,
against the coldness which is to come.
For in this time,
our lives will be lived within.

Like the grapes that are harvested
in happy sunlight
turning to wine in dark cellars,
our thoughts will transform and grow richer

Come,, Spirit of Mysteries,
into the centre of our containment,
Grow new life from within us.
(silence)



Music: It's hard to say goodbye - Richard Clayderman & Francis Goya

Commentary: Saying goodbye and letting go of the things that die - Friends, Family, Summer, jobs, hobbies - contemplate the feeling of loss being without them.

Music: Desert of sadness - DJ Dado

The time between death and life, like the Winter can be hard to bear and can seem to last almost forever!

Music: Serenade to Spring - Secret Garden.

From death comes new life; Spring, babies, new beginnings. One door closes and another opens; can you find it? Sometimes it can take a long time, if ever ... but it is there!

Lighting the Candle of Love within us

Aware that the power of resurrection
has forever changed who we are,
and given us the courage
to boldly proclaim a living faith in the power of Love.

Today we celebrate:

new life

new joy

new possibilities.

**We give thanks for the Spirit of Love visible in Jesus,
visible in us, visible in people in all walks of life.**

Commissioning

Let us go forth from here:

**We go proclaiming the good news;
sharing in and working for resurrections
in all the crucified people & places in the world.**

Departure

In the face of all our realities:

**We are the people who heal each other,
who grow strong together,
who name the truth,
who know what it means to live in community,
moving towards a common dream
for a new heaven and a new earth
in the power of the love we call God,
the company of Jesus of Nazareth
and the leading of the great spirit.**

[Dorothy McRae-McMahon \(adapted\)](#)

