

Central Queens Pastoral Charge
United Church of Canada
April 20, 2025 – 6:00 am

Easter Sunrise Service

Welcome

Lighting the Dawn Fire (or Candle)

Light is coming, just as it always does.
It comes slow, like a whisper at first—then all at once.
Today, we remember that Love rose with the sun.
Christ is risen, and with him, everything has changed.
Christ is risen indeed! The darkness has not won.

Song

A Blessing of the Morning Light (Facing East)

Bless this day, O God of life.
Bless the rising sun that dances on the water,
Bless the birds that sing your praise without words,
Bless our hearts that yearn for hope.
Shine in us, through us, beyond us.
Let your resurrection be not just a story—but a way of living.
Amen, and amen.

Reading the Resurrection Story (Luke 24:1-12)

It was just before sunrise on the first day of the week. The air was still cool, and the sky was slowly turning from night to the soft blue of dawn. A small group of women walked quietly toward the tomb where Jesus had been laid. Their arms were full of the spices they had so carefully prepared, a final act of love and honour for the one they had followed.

When they arrived, something was wrong.

The heavy stone that had sealed the tomb was no longer in place—it had been rolled away. Hearts pounding, they stepped inside, only to find the body gone. Confused and frightened, they stood in the emptiness, unsure of what to think.

And then, without warning, two figures appeared beside them—men in dazzling, radiant clothes. The women fell to the ground, shielding their faces, overwhelmed with fear. But the men spoke gently:

“Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here—he has risen. Remember what he told you, back in Galilee? That the Son of Man would be handed over, crucified, and on the third day rise again?”

The words sparked something deep in their memory. Yes... he *had* said that. They remembered now.

Without wasting a moment, they rushed back into the city to find the eleven disciples and tell them everything. Breathless, they spoke of the empty tomb, the shining messengers, and the message they had received.

But the disciples didn't believe them. It sounded like nonsense—a tale too strange to be true.

Still, something stirred in Peter. He couldn't shake what they'd said. He leapt up and ran to the tomb. When he arrived, he bent down, peered inside, and saw only the linen cloths lying there, folded and still.

He left the tomb in silence, his heart filled with wonder, unsure of what it all meant—but knowing something extraordinary had happened.

That's where resurrection begins: With surprise. With hope. With a sunrise.

Over . . .

Poem

Shared Affirmation

Christ with us at the break of day
Christ behind us, Christ ahead
Christ in our laughter and our tears
Christ in the rising from the dead
Christ in the stillness, Christ in the song
Christ is alive, and love goes on!

Song

Communal Prayer

**Risen Christ, you show up where we least expect you—
in gardens, in grief, in early morning light, in
cemeteries.**
**Walk with us today. Breathe new life into our tired
places.**
**Help us to see the world through resurrection eyes—
where every flower is a miracle, every stranger is a
friend,
and every ending is just the start of something new.**
Amen.

Closing Blessing

Now go, into the sunrise. With joy in your belly, dirt on your
boots, and resurrection in your bones.
May the road rise up to meet you,
May the wind be always at your back,
May the sun warm your face, and until we meet again,
May the Risen Christ hold you gently in the palm of his
hand.

Amen, and let it be so.

Song