

## Preparation:

1. You may want to read some or all of these readings, set for Sunday 18th April 2021, before starting your worship.
  - **Acts 3:12-19**
  - **Psalm 4**
  - **1 John 3:1-7**
  - **Luke 24:36b-48**
2. The hymns can be sung if you are able, or you can read the words out loud – or silently if that seems better. You may be able to find them on YouTube or elsewhere on the internet.
3. As a focus during the prayer you may want to light a candle, placing something next to it which reminds you of Jesus' resurrection or light in the darkness.
4. When you are ready, relax and offer yourself in worship to the risen Christ.

*Picture opposite:*

## **Richard Bavin The Empty Tomb 2013**

*This work will be displayed at Central Hall in September.*

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<https://www.methodist.org.uk/our-faith/reflecting-on-faith/the-methodist-modern-art-collection/index-of-works/the-empty-tomb-richard-bavin/>



## **Worship at Central Hall on 18<sup>th</sup> April 2021**

### **Call to worship:**

Psalm 4:6 " Let the light of your face shine on us, O LORD!"

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

### **Hymn 311:** The day of resurrection

### **Prayers**

Risen Christ you light up our hearts, and we discover, through your resurrection, that we are alive once more. Forgive us when our hearts are cold towards you, or others. Reveal yourself to us and, in hope and joy, by the power of your resurrection, assure us of your saving grace. **Amen**

*Take a moment and relax in the knowledge that you have been set free by the saving love of Jesus.*

**Hymn 293:** All heaven declares

**Gospel Reading:** Repentance and forgiveness of sins is to be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. *Luke 24:47*

### **Reflection**

Each of the set readings mentions sin. Sin is not such a popular word these days, and perhaps we don't want to think about our lives in terms of our sinfulness.

Today we may be more focused on self-actualisation or becoming the person we would like to be – maybe through positive thinking. That is a good thing in many ways. It is not good to be weighed down by guilt and that sense of sinfulness or shame. Such attitudes towards our own lives can be false and life denying. A sense of sinfulness, or the sense of guilt connected to it, can ruin a person's life – damaging self-worth, and deepening feelings of unworthiness or even worthlessness.

Often people feel guilty because something has happened in their lives which they feel responsible for. This might be something which brings them shame, but was not something they were responsible for. It might be something others imposed on them, or led them into.

These readings show that Jesus wants to do away with all of that!

Jesus' resurrection offers us a new perspective for our lives – one that frees us from guilt and unburdens us from all that might bind us. Christ's desire for us is not that we feel sinful or guilty about sinfulness. Rather, Jesus calls us to be forgiven and free. In today's New Testament readings the risen Christ shows this clearly to his disciples.

Repentance and forgiveness of sins can free us from things that bind us. To be released from such ties as a sense of inadequacy and selfishness, is a great and wonderful thing.

This is not to say that we can never be at fault! However, the risen Christ wants us to be free from guilt whatever its cause, and all we have to do is turn humbly to him and ask him to set us free. Christ wants this for us all, whether guilty or not. Ultimately the Acts reading puts it like this: "turn to God so that your sins may be wiped out".

It can be in another's interests to keep us feeling sinful and guilty, the reading from 1 John suggests that this can be an area where others may deceive us to keep us feeling bad, but it is never Jesus' desire. The risen Christ only wants us to be free and alive with him!

**Hymn 295:** Alleluia, alleluia

### **Offertory**

### **Prayers of intercession**

### **Lord's prayer**

**Hymn 364:** O for a thousand tongues

### **Blessing**

### **Closing words:**

The risen Christ came and stood among his disciples and said: 'Peace be with you!' Then they were glad when they saw the Lord.

May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all, evermore, **Amen**

Let us love and serve the Lord In joy and peace.  
In the name of Christ. **Alleluia!**