

Good afternoon and welcome to our Easter Service. We look forward to sharing the Easter story together through readings, songs, film and prayers.

At Easter we remember three days that changed the world.

*It started on a Friday
with sadness and with tears.*

*On Saturday came anger
confusion doubt and fears
and then on Sunday morning,
the wonder and the joy
of life that lasts for-ever
that death cannot destroy.*

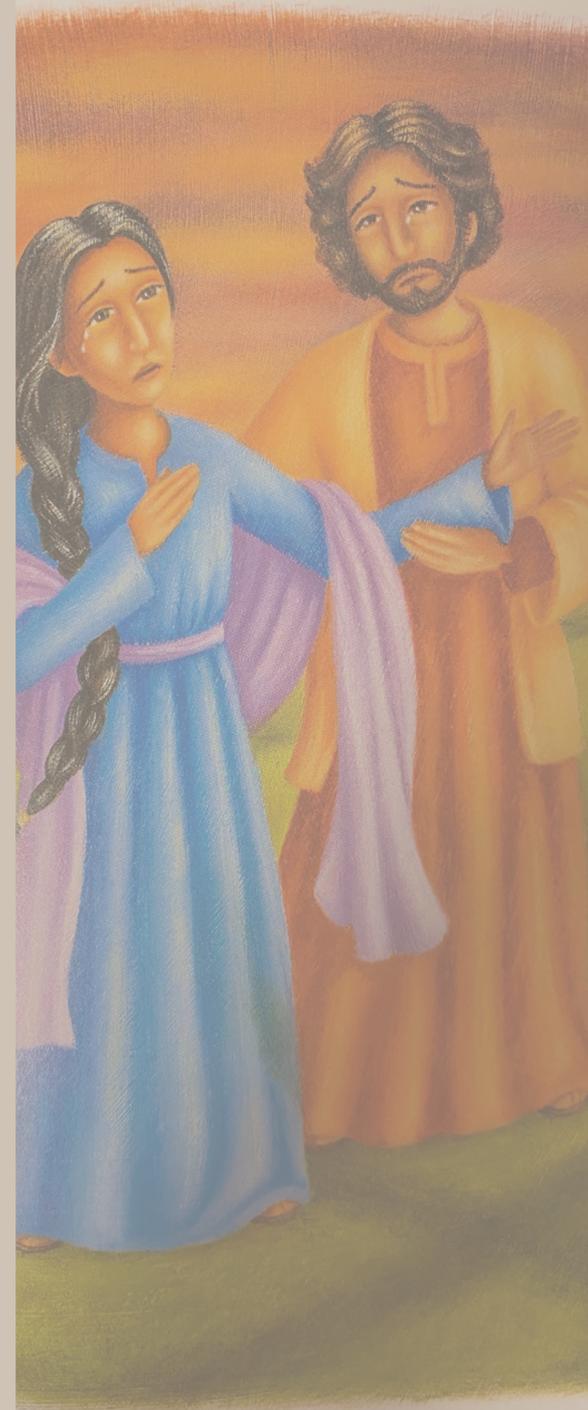
*Please join us as we sing Three days that changed the
World*

Twelve: Jesus dies upon the cross

For several hours, Jesus hung upon the cross. He asked God to forgive those who had treated him so cruelly.

He asked his friend, John, to be a son to his mother. He pleaded with God to tell him why he had been left alone to suffer.

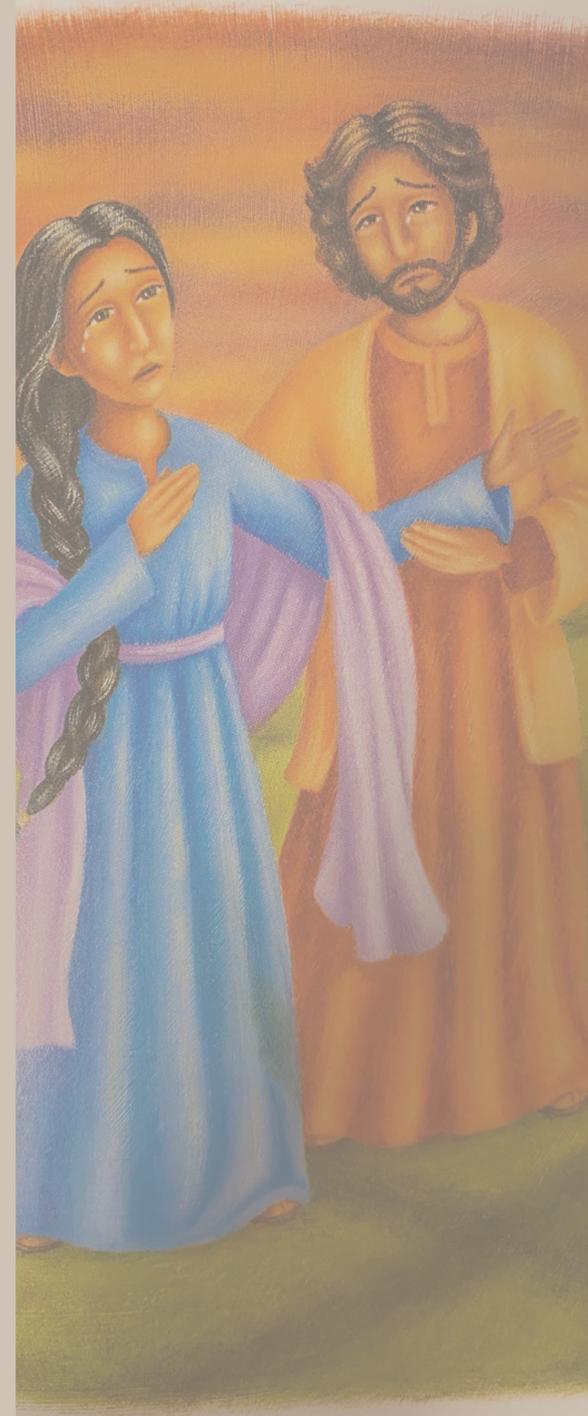
And then he died.



Dear God,

*In the face of darkness,
may I continue to believe
that you bring light.*

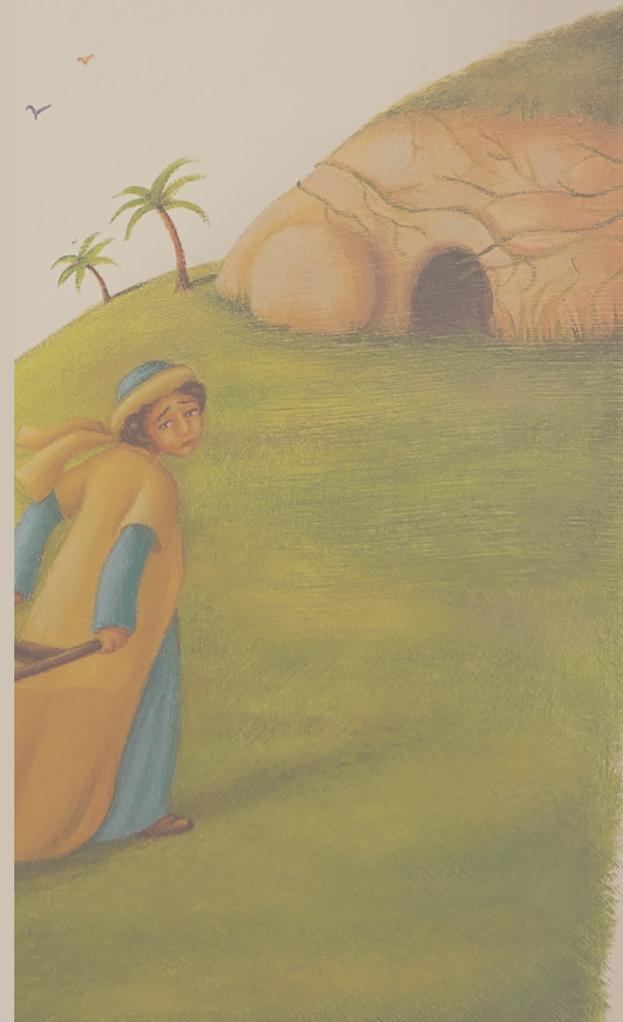
Amen

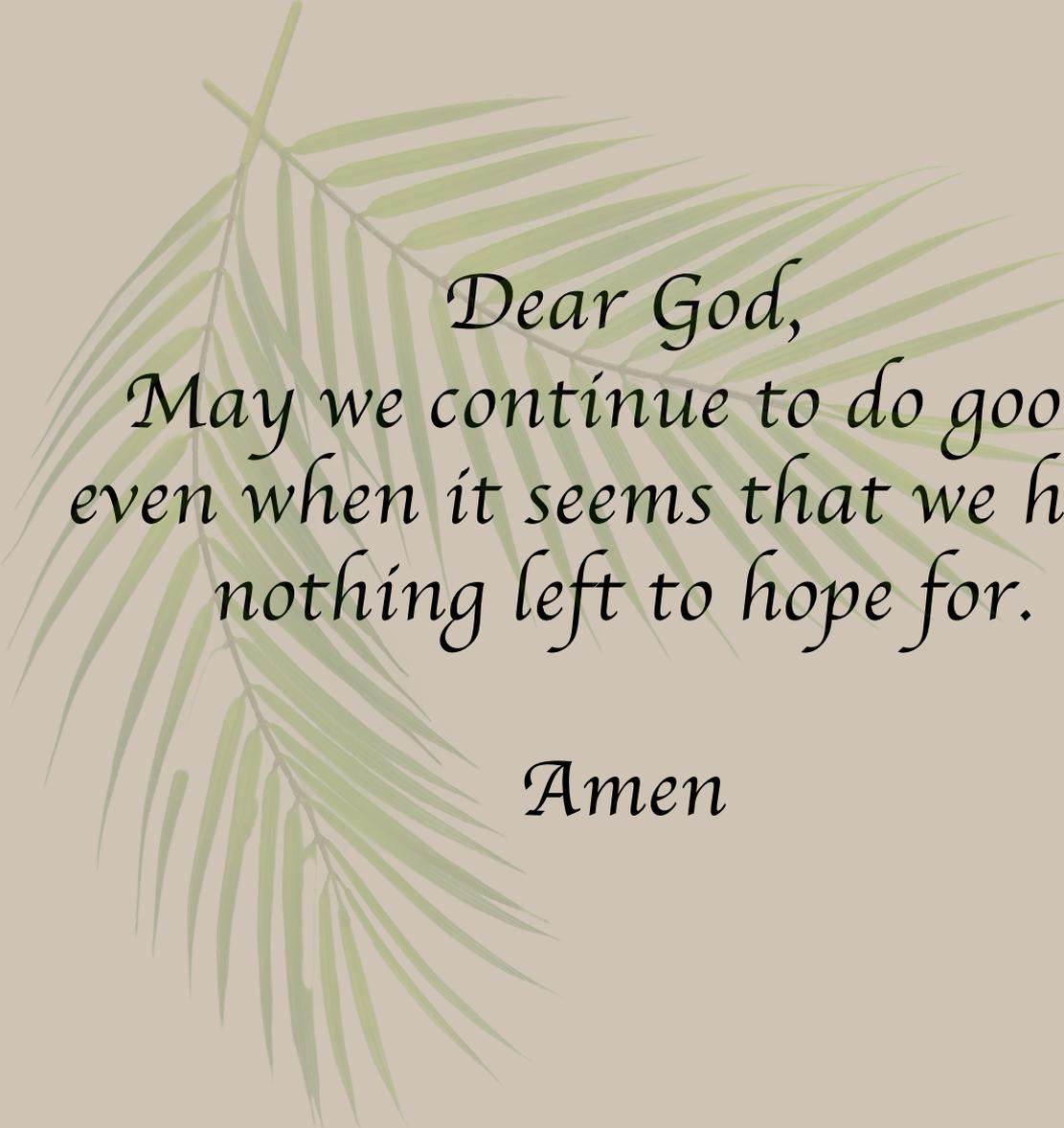


Thirteen: The body of Jesus
is taken down from the cross

A man named Joseph, from the town of Arimathea, saw Jesus die.

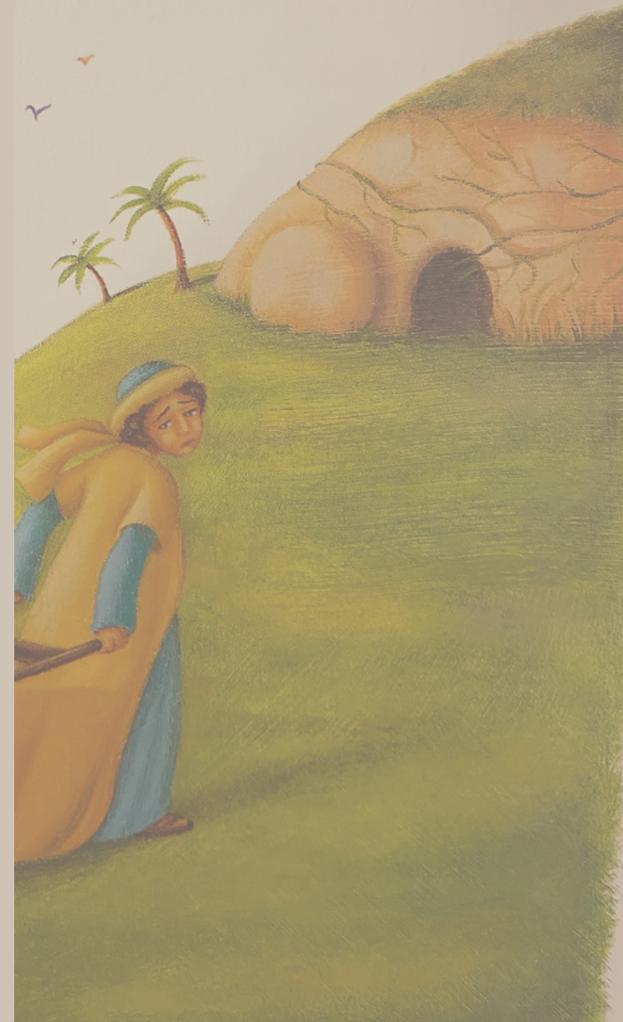
He was a wealthy man and had been a secret follower of Jesus. He asked Pilate if he could take the body and give it a proper burial.





*Dear God,
May we continue to do good,
even when it seems that we have
nothing left to hope for.*

Amen

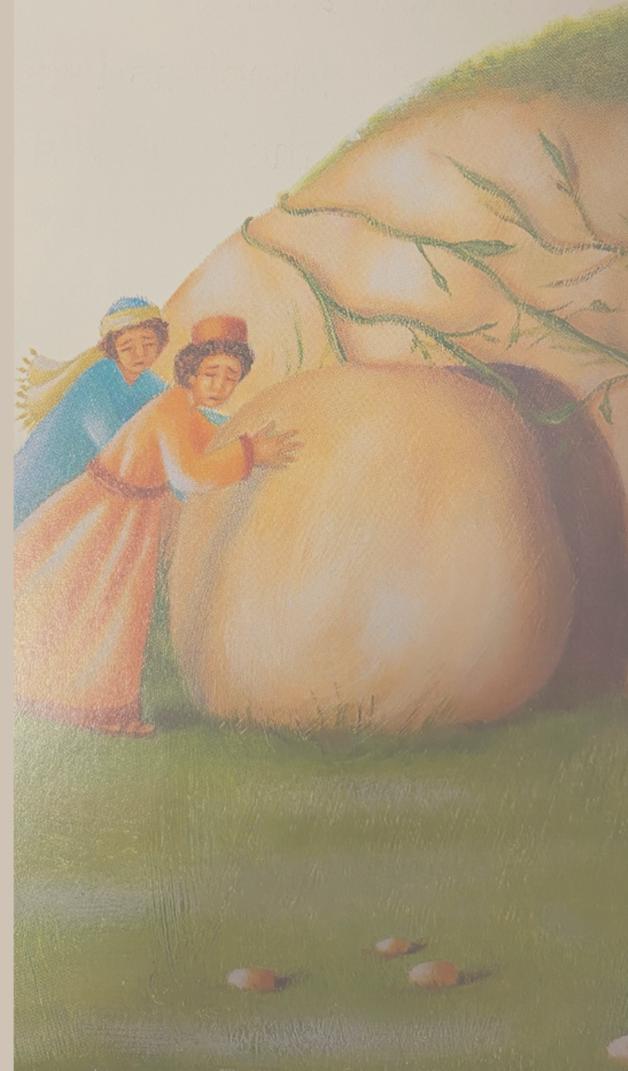


Fourteen: The body of Jesus
is laid in the tomb

Joseph had had a tomb prepared for his own death; a low cave cut into the rock with a large round stone to roll in place as a door.

As evening fell, Joseph and some of Jesus' friends hurriedly wrapped the body and laid it inside with the door rolled shut.

Then they had to hurry home because their weekly day of rest, the sabbath, was beginning.



*Dear God,
When we are in despair
and we have too many hours
to sit and weep,
be with us.*

Amen



Fifteen: Jesus rises from the tomb

When the day of rest was over,
some women who had been
followers of Jesus returned to the
tomb.

They brought with them spices
to prepare the body properly for
burial according to their
traditions.



Fifteen: Jesus rises from the tomb

As they approached, they saw that the stone was rolled aside. The body was no longer inside.

Instead, they saw angels.

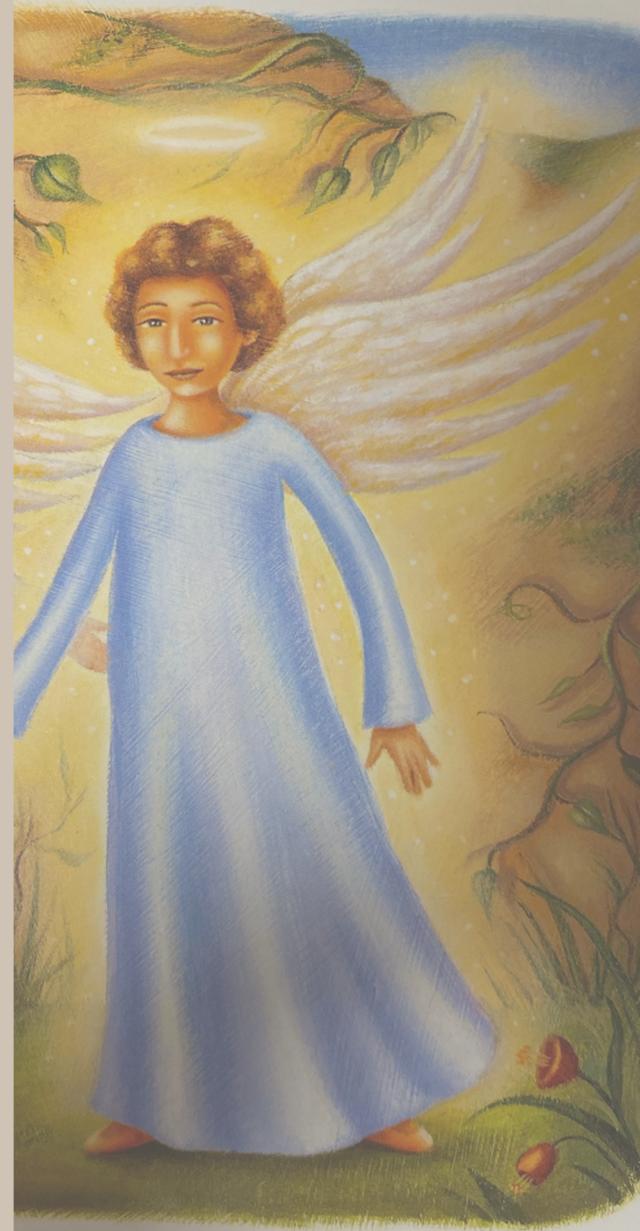
“Why are you looking among the dead for someone who is alive?” asked the angels.

Jesus is not here; he is risen.

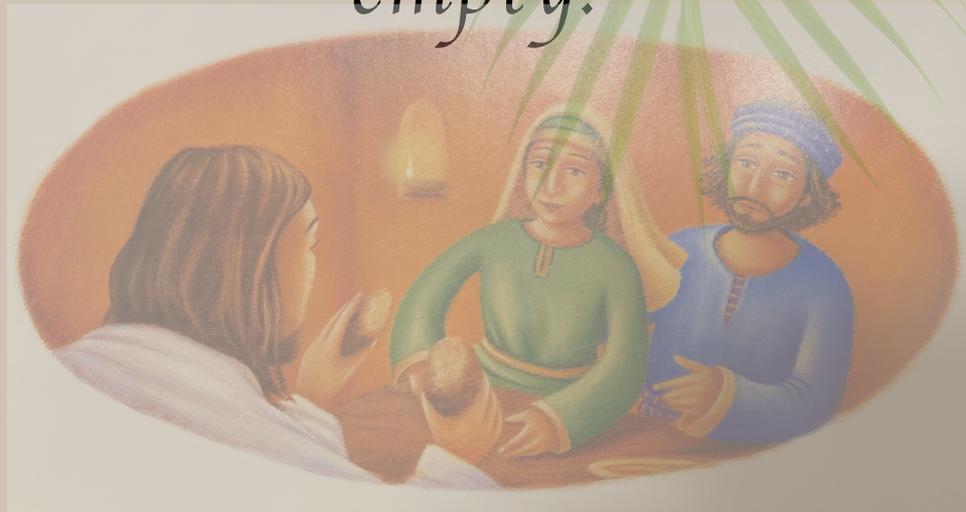


*Dear God
Help us to believe in you
and in the love that will bring us
to everlasting life.*

Amen

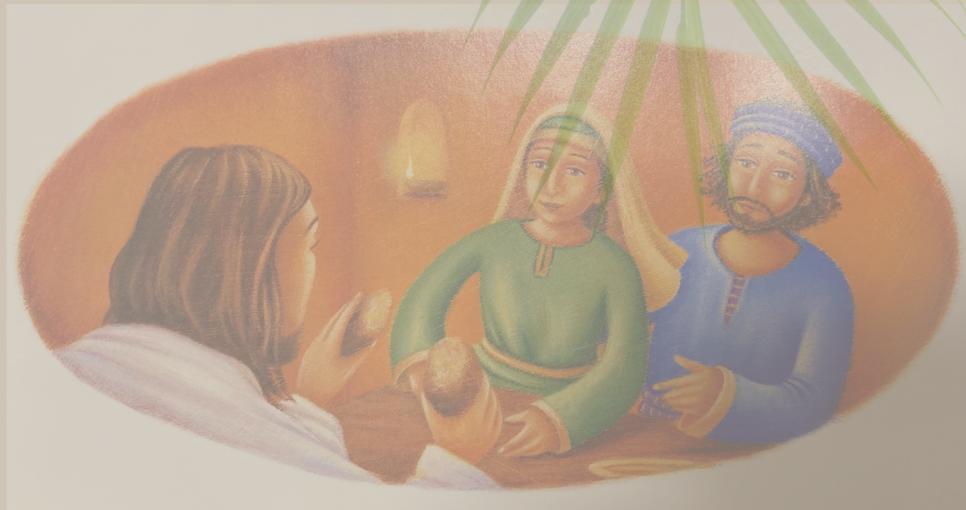


*‘He is not here, He is risen!’
The women could hardly believe the
angels’ words.
They ran to tell the disciples the
astonishing news.
At first, no-one believed what they
said. Yet the tomb was certainly
empty.*



*Then Jesus came and met with
his friends: they saw him and
they touched him.*

*So it continued for forty days,
and then Jesus' friends saw him
being taken up to heaven.*



Soon afterwards, they began to tell the whole story of Jesus, the story of the cross. There is a part of the story when wicked and cruel people seem to be winning. Then God changes everything, bringing life and love that will never end.



Here is what one of Jesus' followers wrote to his friends:

'Dear friends, let us love one another, because love comes from God. Whoever loves is a child of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love. And God showed his love for us by sending his only son into the world, so that we might have life through him. This is what love is: it is not that we have loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the means by which our sins are forgiven.'

1 John 4:7-10

Let us Pray

*Thanks be to You, Lord Jesus Christ,
for all the benefits which you have won for us,
for all the pains and insults which you have
borne for us.*

*O most merciful redeemer friend and brother,
may we know You more clearly, love You more
dearly, and follow You more nearly,
day by day.
Amen.*