

Lectionary readings: Jeremiah 31: 1-6; Psalm 118: 1-2, 14-24; Colossians 3: 1-4; Matthew 28: 1-10 (Easter Day)

For reflection and prayer

Jesus is alive and present with us!

- **Jeremiah 6:** *'They found grace out in the desert Israel, out looking for a place to rest, met God out looking for them.'* (v2 The Message) May we find grace whatever we are going through this week; and may we encounter God out looking for us. *'God told them, I've never quit loving you and never will. Expect love, love and more love.'* (v3 The Message) This is the God we worship - a God who loves, loves and goes on loving. May we encounter this loving God every day this week. This is a time for rejoicing and dancing. May we join in the dance of life this week as we celebrate the risen Christ's presence with us.
- **Psalm 118:** *'This is the day that the Lord has made. We will rejoice and be glad in it.'* (v24) *'The stone rejected by the builders has now become the cornerstone.'* (v22) God has come in Jesus and revealed Himself to us and, even though rejected, He is the foundation of the church. Today is God's gift to us; let's live it to the full, giving thanks for all God has done for us in Jesus. *'Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good. His faithful love endures for ever.'* (v1) Let's celebrate Jesus' love.
- **Colossians 3:** The life that we Christians are living is a new life, a different life, because Christ is alive within us. We don't have to wait till after death to experience life with God; we're invited to share in that life here and now. *'Don't shuffle along, eyes to the ground, absorbed with the things right in front of you.'* (v2 The

Message) Let's be alert to God's presence with us and within us this week, so that we're not 'shuffling along' through life, but dancing with joy and thanksgiving, open to God surprising us.

- **Matthew 28:** The two Marys were looking for Jesus in the place of the dead. Are we looking for Jesus in the wrong places? Have we preconceived ideas of where Jesus/God can be found? Have we really come to Jesus and experienced the miracle of new life in ourselves that Jesus wants to bring us? Are we people who are aglow with God's living presence because we have experienced the risen Christ in our ordinary everyday lives and been transformed by that presence? Then we must go and communicate by our lives that Jesus is alive.

*Let there be an uprising
of Christ - crushed, crucified, entombed.
Let the earth crack!
Let stones be rolled away!
Let the dawn push back the blanket of the night!
Let the trumpets sound!
Let flowers open!
For we welcome the One who affirms life!*

*Let there be an uprising
of God's little ones - dispossessed, outcast, silenced.
Let their land be given back to them!
Let the stones blocking their liberty be rolled away!
Let their stubborn hopes for tomorrow re-shape
the dark realities of today!
Let their own stories be heard!
Let our ears and hearts be opened to them!
For their struggles reveal the One who affirms life!*
(Donald Hilton)