

HE IS RISEN!

by June M. Todd



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COSTUMING SUGGESTIONS

If biblical costumes are available, these would be appropriate. If not, it is suggested:

WOMEN: Long dark skirts if possible. Shawls to wear over their heads when walking, then down around shoulders when standing. A plain blouse. Should carry baskets with handles or plain bundles wrapped in dark cloth. No makeup. Hair very simple.

SOLDIERS: A short cape. Carrying a round, painted shield and a wooden sword. Loose shirt, dark pants.

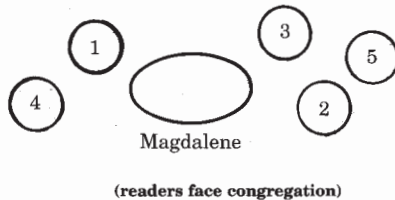
ANGELS: Long, vestment-type robes if possible. Straight and simple, white.

LORD: Long vestment-type robe. The Greek look with robe over the arm is also appropriate.

PRODUCTION IDEAS

This piece is particularly applicable to young people — sophomore high school and up. This play can be effectively staged by younger or older actors. If possible, paint a simple screen back-drop with trees suggesting a garden or burial place.

READERS' ARRANGEMENT AROUND MAGDALENE



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DESCRIPTION

On the first Easter morning, the women — led by Mary Magdalene — are walking, sadly, to the tomb. (*Screen painted with scene of trees*) On the way they discuss the terrible death of their friend and leader, Jesus, and lament on the ways of those responsible. Two soldiers, guards at the tomb, come on the scene and reveal the astounding news that the stone has been rolled away and the tomb is empty. The women are stunned! Following this, three ways to present the joyous climax of the Easter story are provided for your choice:

Ending A — is Luke's version in which the angels appear to the women.

Ending B — is John's version in which angels and Jesus appear to Mary Magdalene.

Ending C — is John's version, only instead of angels and Jesus being portrayed, their words are read by a narrator and Mary Magdalene reacts to their statements.

Following the playlet (which runs about 20-25 minutes), a triumphant Easter service is provided, including responsive readings, Scripture suggestions, prayers and hymns.

CAST

6 Women and 2 to 5 Men (*Depending on the version of the ending chosen.*)

Scripture text is from the *Good News Bible — Old Testament*: Copyright: © American Bible Society, 1976.

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- 1 *(Six WOMEN READERS enter; walk down center aisle, pause*
 2 *midway to front of church.)*
- 3 **WOMAN 1:** *(Plaintive)* Magdalene? How much farther is it?
- 4 **WOMAN 2:** Yes. I'm confused. Is it this garden... on this
 5 side of the road? Or is it the next?
- 6 **WOMAN 4:** Only once were we here, and then in near
 7 darkness.
- 8 **WOMAN 1:** And we are in darkness, now. Dawn is not for
 9 some time yet.
- 10 *(Standing center aisle, the READERS change places back and*
 11 *forth to give the impression of movement, at the DIRECTOR'S*
 12 *discretion.)*
- 13 **MAGDALENE:** *(Impatiently)* I know where we are. And I know
 14 the garden. We'll be there soon enough.
- 15 **WOMAN 2:** You can't expect to remember.
- 16 **WOMAN 4:** Excuse me, Magdalene. I don't believe it's
 17 possible.
- 18 **MAGDALENE:** *(Archly)* So? Perhaps I've been here another
 19 time, secretly. Perhaps, on the Sabbath, I slipped out into
 20 the city streets while you were all hiding... and found
 21 my way outside the walls to Golgotha...
- 22 **WOMEN 3:** *(Shocked)* Magdalene!
- 23 **MAGDALENE:** And from Golgotha, found my way to this
 24 road again...
- 25 **WOMAN 5:** Mary Magdalene, surely among women, you are
 26 the most foolhardy.
- 27 **MAGDALENE:** ...And then perhaps I found the garden
 28 with the tomb, and Pilate's soldiers on guard, two before
 29 the stone at the entrance, three around the fire.
- 30 **WOMAN 2:** Magdalene!
- 31 **WOMAN 3:** Incredible!
- 32 **WOMAN 4:** Someday you will pay for your audacity...
- 33 **MAGDALENE:** We are here, aren't we? *(Looking around)* And
 34 very close now. *(Starting forward... All move with her until*
 35 *before the altar in front of the congregation, during*

- 1 *MAGDALENE'S speech*) Yes. Here it is. And here is the
 2 garden.
 3 *(Pause. WOMEN can lower shawls from over their heads to*
 4 *around their shoulders, can put down bundles or baskets they*
 5 *have been carrying.)*
 6 **MAGDALENE:** Let's stop here. Not too far now, just past
 7 the trees, we will find the tomb. *(She gestures direction.)*
 8 This way. We can rest and gather our thoughts, compose
 9 ourselves for the anointing ahead.
 10 **WOMAN 1:** We have all the spices and cloth we will need?
 11 **WOMAN 4:** Yes.
 12 **WOMAN 2:** Oh, yes.
 13 **WOMAN 3:** We are prepared.
 14 **WOMAN 5:** All Sabbath day we gathered the finest oils . . .
 15 **WOMAN 4:** . . .the costliest spices . . .the choicest herbs.
 16 **WOMAN 1:** The burial shroud and the head cloth brought
 17 from his own house by Joseph of Arimathea were already
 18 of the finest linen. Nothing needs to be changed there.
 19 **WOMAN 5:** For which, thanks be to God.
 20 **WOMAN 4:** We could never have afforded to purchase such
 21 excellent materials.
 22 **WOMAN 3:** We also have the softest cotton cloth for bathing
 23 his body . . . his poor, broken body . . .
 24 **WOMAN 2:** I am not eager on this mission.
 25 **WOMAN 4:** Of course your heart is heavy that our Lord is
 26 dead.
 27 **WOMAN 2:** We are all heavy with this pain. I mean . . . to see
 28 him . . . without life . . .
 29 **MAGDALENE:** *(Heartfelt)* I am grateful with all my heart, for
 30 this opportunity . . .
 31 **WOMAN 4:** For what we are about to do, how can you
 32 possibly be grateful! *(Agitated)*
 33 **MAGDALENE:** To do him honor with our services. To bathe
 34 away the horror of his death. And to anoint his holy body
 35 with the best this earth can offer, before he is sealed

- 1 away forever. For these duties, it is seemly to be grateful.
- 2 **WOMAN 2:** She is right.
- 3 **WOMAN 3:** Wisely thought and well said, Magdalene.
- 4 **MAGDALENE:** (*Impassioned*) Even more, though, I shall be
- 5 grateful, one last time, to be in his presence. To look once
- 6 again upon my Lord (*Pause, gathering strength*) and then
- 7 to say the final farewell. In the dignity of our love, to pay
- 8 the last tribute. This is of the utmost importance to me.
- 9 **WOMAN 2:** (*Quietly*) Amen.
- 10 **WOMAN 4:** This we shall do.
- 11 **WOMAN 3:** With our love, his final touch.
- 12 (*Silence*)
- 13 **WOMAN 1:** How quiet it is.
- 14 **WOMAN 3:** No birds, yet.
- 15 **WOMAN 4:** And cool.
- 16 **WOMAN 2:** First light is just beginning. Do you see
- 17 it . . . above the trees, there? (*Silence*)
- 18 **WOMAN 5:** Could you ever have believed it . . . from just a
- 19 week ago . . . that it would come to this? Our Lord in his
- 20 grave?
- 21 **MAGDALENE:** From the beginning. (*Implied, I knew he would*
- 22 *be killed*)
- 23 **WOMAN 3:** How could you know that?
- 24 **MAGDALENE:** Men always kill everything beautiful.
- 25 **WOMAN 2:** With all that cheering and excitement last week
- 26 when they welcomed him into Jerusalem — no one could
- 27 have expected this.
- 28 **MAGDALENE:** I did. From the first.
- 29 **WOMAN 4:** You exaggerate, Magdalene.
- 30 **MAGDALENE:** Ask John. I told him long ago. I said Jesus
- 31 would be killed.
- 32 **WOMAN 4:** (*Disapproving*) Mary Magdalene sees the world
- 33 through very weary eyes.
- 34 **WOMAN 5:** A cynic, there is no doubt.
- 35 **MAGDALENE:** And for good reason. With one single

- 1 exception, I have been unimpressed with the works of men.
- 2 **WOMEN 3:** (*Disbelief*) It was explained to me, for politics he
- 3 was killed. Can you believe that?
- 4 **MAGDALENE:** (*Exploding*) Believe it! Yes! The Sanhedrin
- 5 voted death to preserve their authority. Caiaphas plotted
- 6 death to preserve his influence. Pilate — that coward! —
- 7 declined judgment to preserve his supposed integrity.
- 8 They killed in self-interest . . . as always.
- 9 **WOMAN 5:** I think men kill what they do not understand.
- 10 **WOMAN 1:** They kill, also, to preserve their way of life
- 11 . . . because they fear change.
- 12 **WOMAN 3:** (*Thoughtful*) What they have preserved . . . is it
- 13 worthy?
- 14 **MAGDALENE:** (*Bitterly*) Of course Jesus had to die! He spoke
- 15 the truth! He bowed not to the fools who command! He
- 16 helped . . . he saved . . . he healed. How could such a one
- 17 be allowed to live? His life was an insult to other men.
- 18 **WOMAN 4:** Not an insult, Magdalene. An example.
- 19 **MAGDALENE:** Hah! Since when do people rejoice over
- 20 examples?
- 21 (*Pause*)
- 22 **WOMAN 5:** Hush. I heard a bird. (*Pause*) Hear him?
- 23 **WOMAN 1:** The sky lightens more. We should be going.
- 24 **MAGDALENE:** When I first met him . . . in that moment when
- 25 I anointed his head with oil, and he forgave me my
- 26 sins . . . I looked into his eyes, and I knew then he would
- 27 not be allowed to live.
- 28 **WOMAN 2:** What did you see?
- 29 **MAGDALENE:** In his eyes there was too much
- 30 understanding . . . too much pity. He would have to act
- 31 against injustice and greed. He could not turn away when
- 32 the people came to him . . . he would have to heal them
- 33 and teach them.
- 34 **WOMAN 2:** (*Perplexed*) Why would that cause him to be
- 35 killed?

- 1 WOMAN 4: Men in high places fearing for their
2 positions . . . Jesus attacked their corruption . . .
- 3 WOMAN 5: He chastised the Pharisees . . .
- 4 WOMAN 1: And he grew to be too popular with the people.
- 5 MAGDALENE: (*Explosive*) The people! You mean those scum who
6 called for Barabbas when Pilate offered them their
7 choice? Bah!
- 8 WOMAN 3: Oh, Magdalene. Those were agents of the high
9 priest and Herod calling for Barabbas.
- 10 MAGDALENE: And the rest were silent as kicked dogs,
11 weren't they? Tell me, Esther, who called for Jesus?
- 12 WOMAN 3: Many did.
- 13 MAGDALENE: (*Bitterly*) But not enough, eh, Esther? No, not
14 nearly enough. And so our Lord lies dead.
15 (*Pause*)
- 16 WOMAN 2: It is good Mary his mother is not with us.
- 17 WOMAN 1: She rests — away from everyone — with John's
18 family.
- 19 WOMAN 4: You heard Jesus give his mother to the care of
20 John, Magdalene.
- 21 MAGDALENE: I was there at the foot of the cross. I heard
22 and I saw . . . everything.
- 23 WOMAN 2: It is good Mary will have someone to care for
24 her. A woman needs to be cared for.
- 25 WOMAN 4: And does not a woman do her share of caring
26 for others? For her husband . . . her children . . . her
27 parents?
- 28 WOMAN 5: She tends the needs of her family . . . from the
29 birthing to the dying.
- 30 WOMAN 2: Washing and wrapping in swaddling clothes the
31 newborn . . .
- 32 WOMAN 3: Washing and wrapping in their shrouds, the
33 dead.
- 34 WOMAN 4: We all need caring for. There is no difference,
35 man to woman, in that.

- 1 **WOMAN 2:** Sharing love is the greatest human need. Jesus
 2 understood that so well.
- 3 **WOMAN 1:** I wish other men understood it only half so well.
- 4 **WOMAN 5:** That caring should be first in our lives. First
 5 before kingdom . . .
- 6 **WOMAN 4:** Before wealth or position . . . or thoughts of
 7 enterprise.
- 8 **WOMAN 3:** Do you think people will ever learn
 9 this . . . truly?
- 10 **MAGDALENE:** No!
- 11 **WOMAN 2:** *(Quickly)* Oh, I pray . . .
- 12 **WOMAN 1:** *(Quickly)* It must be . . .
- 13 **WOMAN 5:** *(Quickly)* It is my most fervent hope.
- 14 **MAGDALENE:** Sooner hope for crickets to turn into
 15 cabbages in your garden. It's more likely.
- 16 **WOMAN 4:** We must all hope, Magdalene. It is essential to
 17 the human spirit to hope.
- 18 **MAGDALENE:** What hope is there, then, when people crucify
 19 Jesus, a blessed one of God? You are all foolish women
 20 to harbor such a hope.
- 21 **WOMAN 3:** *(Just though of it)* Uh-oh. It is indeed foolish
 22 women we are. I have just had the thought . . . who will
 23 roll away the stone from in front of the tomb?
- 24 **WOMAN 1:** Oh, no . . .
- 25 **WOMAN 5:** I'd not thought of that . . .
- 26 **WOMAN 4:** Who is there to help us . . .
- 27 **WOMAN 2:** Not the soldiers, surely. We can't expect any help
 28 from them.
- 29 **WOMAN 1:** Shall we go back . . . for Peter or John?
- 30 **WOMAN 4:** It's too far now.
- 31 **MAGDALENE:** The soldiers must help us! We will prevail
 32 upon them to have pity.
- 33 **WOMAN 5:** Would Pilate's soldiers have pity on us?
- 34 **WOMAN 4:** I doubt that.
- 35 **MAGDALENE:** Then we will just have to roll it away

1 **ourselves!**

2 **WOMAN 4:** *(Quickly)* **Impossible!**

3 **WOMAN 2:** *(Quickly)* **What are you saying, Magdalene?**

4 **WOMAN 1:** *(Quickly)* **That cannot be done!**

5 *(Enter SOLDIERS from direction of tomb)*

6 **MAGDALENE:** **Shhh. Here comes a pair of them. We will**
7 **approach them.**

8 *(SOLDIERS enter, walking with a swagger, talking as they walk*
9 *until they reach a point not exactly even with the WOMEN.*
10 *MAGDALENE starts to go towards them, but the other WOMEN*
11 *draw her back. They can then retreat from the scene and leave*
12 *stage center for the SOLDIERS)*

13 **GAIUS:** *(Very concerned)* **What does he expect us to tell Pilate?**

14 **ATTACA:** **You have your orders. You don't question the**
15 **Captain.**

16 **GAIUS:** **It looks bad for us, Attaca, no matter what we say.**

17 **ATTACA:** **I still can't believe it.**

18 **GAIUS:** **A contingent of Roman soldiers . . . four trained men**
19 **and a Captain . . .**

20 **ATTACA:** **All of them . . . every one of them . . . fallen**
21 **completely asleep on guard duty!**

22 **GAIUS:** **A simple mission. Two men on four hour watch. I've**
23 **done it a hundred times.**

24 **ATTACA:** **A thousand times.**

25 **GAIUS:** **Never, never has the watch not been kept!**

26 **ATTACA:** **We ate nothing, drank nothing that might have**
27 **drugged us.**

28 **GAIUS:** **And we are all of us veterans who know the penalty**
29 **for an unkept watch.**

30 **ATTACA:** *(Shuddering)* **It is unthinkable.**

31 **GAIUS:** **So soundly we slept, there was dew on my shield . . .**

32 **ATTACA:** **I could see by the crush of the grass, I hadn't moved**
33 **all night.**

34 **GAIUS:** **And the fire gone entirely out. Incredible!**

35 **ATTACA:** **I'd sooner stick my hand in a thornbush than give**

1 **Pilate this news.**

2 *(GAIUS takes a few steps back towards the tomb area, quizzical*
 3 *expression on his face. He stands staring that way a moment,*
 4 *then turns to ATTACA.)*

5 **GAIUS: (In wonderment) How do you suppose they did it?**
 6 **Rolled the stone away?**

7 **ATTACA: Heavy it was, too. I know. I tried it.**

8 **GAIUS: And took away the body.**

9 *(MAGDALENE gasps, reacts with horror. All the WOMEN are*
 10 *stunned. SOLDIERS now begin exiting down center aisle.)*

11 **GAIUS: Without waking five Roman Legionnaires...**
 12 *(Shaking his head)*

13 **ATTACA: I'll tell you, Gaius, it's more than this poor brain**
 14 *(Gestures to head)* **can comprehend.**

15 *(The WOMEN are in dismay. The following in horror.*
 16 *MAGDALENE stands staring in the direction of the tomb, agony*
 17 *etched in her face.)*

18 **WOMAN 3: Did you hear?**

19 **WOMAN 1: ...Stolen his body ...**

20 **WOMAN 2: But who?**

21 **WOMAN 4: None of us, surely.**

22 **WOMAN 5: No one left the safe place last night. There was**
 23 **too much talk of possible arrest.**

24 **WOMAN 4: We were huddled together mourning our**
 25 **Lord ... no one went out.**

26 **MAGDALENE: We have come to do him honor ... to pay our**
 27 **final tribute. (Anguished) We must ... we must find his**
 28 **body. We must be sure he is sealed away forever ... that**
 29 **everything proper is done.**

30 *(From this point on, you may choose the ending you wish to*
 31 *perform for your congregation.)*

32

33 **Ending A** is as described in Luke 24:4-9

34 **Ending B** is as described in John 20:13-16

35 **Ending C** is as described in John 20:15-18

ENDING A — Luke 24:4-9

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(The following needs as much dramatic interpretation as possible in order to give the simple dialogue its impact. It is recommended the following be memorized by the players. Use pauses for emphasis, go slowly.)

(Enter two ANGELS from tomb area. Entrance should be timed so that WOMEN do not notice their entrance, and are thus very startled at their first words.)

ANGEL 1: *(Strongly, but warmly)* **Why are you looking among the dead for one who is living?**

(WOMEN react with awe and wonder, looking at each other in amazement. MAGDALENE takes a step forward as though to speak with them. ANGEL #1 raises one hand in admonition and she stops.)

ANGEL 2: *(Compassionately)* **He is not here. He has been raised.**

(The good news begins to dawn on the WOMEN. During the following ANGELS' speeches, they sink to their knees, slowly. MAGDALENE remains standing.)

ANGEL 1: **Remember what he said to you while he was in Galilee ...**

(MAGDALENE, remembering, shakes her head "yes")

ANGEL 2: **"The Son of Man must be handed over to sinful men ...**

ANGEL 1: **... be crucified ... and three days later ...**

ANGEL 1, 2: *(Together)* **... be raised ... to life!"** *(Arms raised in benediction.)*

(MAGDALENE reaches her arms toward the ANGELS, great joy in her face. Group holds this in-freeze to the count of five. Then ANGELS step back from the scene. MAGDALENE drops her arms, begins gathering belongings. Admonishes the WOMEN)

MAGDALENE: **Quickly. We must tell the others.**

- 1 **WOMAN 2:** *(As though coming out of a dream)* **He is . . . alive!**
 2 **WOMAN 1:** **Hallelujah!**
 3 **WOMAN 5:** **He lives! Oh, Joanna, did you hear? He lives!**
 4 **WOMAN 3:** **We must tell Peter.**
 5 *(Everyone is scurrying about gathering together their baskets,*
 6 *etc.)*
 7 **WOMAN 4:** **And John, we must tell John . . .**
 8 **WOMAN 5:** **God be praised! He lives!**
 9 *(They begin exiting down center aisle. MAGDALENE remains,*
 10 *looking in the direction of the tomb. Others stop mid-aisle, turn*
 11 *back and look at MAGDALENE.)*
 12 **WOMAN 2:** *(Gently)* **Come Magdalene, we must tell the good**
 13 **news.**
 14 **MAGDALENE:** *(Picking up the refrain, triumphant)* **Yes. The**
 15 **good news. That Jesus . . . the Christ . . . is risen!**
 16 *(MAGDALENE pulls shawl over head, hurries to join others)*
 17 *(All exit)*

19 **ENDING B — John 20:13-16**

- 20
 21 *(The following needs as much dramatic interpretation as*
 22 *possible in order to give the simple dialogue its impact. It is*
 23 *recommended the following be memorized by the players. Use*
 24 *pauses for emphasis; go slowly.)*
 25
 26 **WOMAN 4:** **We must tell the others.** *(A command)* **Quickly!**
 27 *(They start down center aisle. MAGDALENE remains staring*
 28 *in direction of the tomb.)*
 29 **WOMAN 4:** *(Midway down the aisle, turning back)* **Magdalene,**
 30 **are you coming?** *(No answer)* *(Sharply)* **Magdalene!** *(No*
 31 *answer. She shrugs and they leave, hurriedly.)*
 32 *(MAGDALENE turns, looks after them a while; then turns away*
 33 *from tomb area, obviously distraught, wringing hands. Thus she*
 34 *does not notice entrance of the strangers.)*
 35 **MAGDALENE:** *(Wringing hands. Speaking to self)* **Oh, my**

1 **Lord . . . Oh, my lord . . .**

2 *(Enter two ANGELS and JESUS during MAGDALENE'S*
3 *speech. Two ANGELS walk before, JESUS two steps behind*
4 *them.)*

5 **ANGEL 1: Woman, why are you crying?**

6 **MAGDALENE: They have taken my Lord away, and I do not**
7 **know where they have put him!** *(Anguished)*

8 *(JESUS steps forward; ANGELS step back until they are behind*
9 *him, one on each side. They kneel and hold their hands up*
10 *towards him, prayerfully. Their eyes are on him continually.)*

11 **JESUS: Who is it that you are looking for?**

12 **MAGDALENE: (Pleading, agitated) If you took him away, sir,**
13 **tell me where you have put him, and I will go and get him.**

14 **JESUS: (Pause. Then raising one arm in benediction.) Mary!** *(With*
15 *great love)*

16 **MAGDALENE: (Looking closely, recognizing him, then slowly**
17 *dropping to her knees, her eyes glued to his face. She raises her*
18 *arms to him.) Master!* *(A joyous cry)*

19 *(Music sung by CHOIR)*

20 *(JESUS, two ANGELS, MAGDALENE hold their pose for a*
21 *while into the music. Have a definite count. Then break pose,*
22 *quietly, and exit through nearest exit — eyes downcast)*

23 *(Music continues during cast exit)*

24

25 **ENDING C — John 20:15-18**

26

27 *(The following needs as much dramatic interpretation as*
28 *possible in order to give the simple dialogue its impact. It is*
29 *recommended the following be memorized by the players. Use*
30 *pauses for emphasis; go slowly.)*

31

32 **WOMAN 4: We must tell the others. (A command) Quickly!**

33 *(They start down center aisle. MAGDALENE remains staring*
34 *in direction of the tomb)*

35 **WOMAN 4: (Midway down the aisle, turning back) Magdalene,**

- 1 **are you coming?** *(No answer) (Sharply) Magdalene! (No*
 2 *answer. She shrugs and they leave hurriedly.)*
 3 *(MAGDALENE turns, looks after them a while, then turns away*
 4 *from tomb area, obviously distraught, wringing hands. From*
 5 *the time the PASTOR/NARRATOR begins reading,*
 6 *MAGDALENE must react as though to a person standing before*
 7 *her in the direction of the tomb area. The “presence” of Jesus*
 8 *must be strongly suggested by MAGDALENE’S attitude.*
 9 *Initially, she wrings her hands, looking away from that*
 10 *direction — but turns at the point that the PASTOR/*
 11 *NARRATOR begins reading Jesus’ words. MAGDALENE’S*
 12 *part should be memorized from this point forward.)*
 13 **MAGDALENE:** Oh, my Lord . . . Oh, my Lord . . . *(Wringing her*
 14 *hands, distraught)*
 15 **PASTOR/NARRATOR:** The Gospel according to John,
 16 **Chapter 20, Verses 15 to 18.** *(Pause, reading from the Good*
 17 *News Bible, or script as prefers) “Woman, why are you*
 18 *crying?” Jesus asked her. “Who is it that you are looking*
 19 *for?” (Pause) She thought he was the gardener, so she said*
 20 *to him . . .*
 21 **MAGDALENE:** “They have taken my Lord away, and I do
 22 not know where they have put him. *(Pause, entreating) If*
 23 *you took him away, sir, tell me where you have put him,*
 24 *and I will go and get him.” (Arms open, entreating gesture)*
 25 **PASTOR/NARRATOR:** Jesus said to her, *(Pause, lovingly)*
 26 **“Mary!”** *(Pause) She turned to him and said in Hebrew . . .*
 27 **MAGDALENE:** *(Recognition dawning, exultant, arms still out,*
 28 *sinking slowly to her knees) “Rabboni!”*
 29 **PASTOR/NARRATOR:** This means teacher. *(MAGDALENE*
 30 *holds pose during following reading, continues to look ecstatic*
 31 *as though beholding the risen Christ.) “Do not hold on to me”*
 32 **Jesus told her, “because I have not yet gone back up to**
 33 **the Father. But go to my brothers and tell them that I**
 34 **am returning to him who is my Father and their Father,**
 35 **my God and their God.”** *(Pause) So Mary Magdalene went*

and told the disciples that she had seen the Lord and related to them what he had told her.

(Music by CHOIR)

(MARY MAGDALENE exits through nearest exit with least exposure to congregation.)

NOTE: The numerals running vertically down the left margin of each page of dialogue are for the convenience of the director. With these he/she may easily direct attention to a specific passage.

ORDER OF SERVICE

HYMN: *“Jesus Christ is Risen Today”* (See music page)
(Congregation rises. Can be processional for choir)

RESPONSIVE READING — *L = Leader, P = People*
(Congregation remains standing)

L: Hallelujah! Christ is Risen!

P: He is risen indeed!

L: We come together to share in his triumph.

P: In this early Easter morning we greet each other
with great joy. The Lord is risen!

L: On Good Friday, we were made to part with our
friend. Lovingly, we placed his body in the
tomb . . .

P: Sadly, we went away to mourn our loss, to grieve
the world’s tragic injustice.

L: He had been taken from us, a young man, a loving
man, a healer, a teacher . . .

P: We sorrowed for a person — such a one who could
never be replaced.

L: And now we learn that he is raised! The tomb is
empty!

P: Hallelujah! Hallelujah!

L: It all becomes clear in the dawn light — what he
told of himself, we now understand.

P: Jesus is Lord. Jesus is the Son of God. Hallelujah!

PRAYER: Heavenly Father, we give thanks to you for
the infinite joy of the resurrection — given to Jesus,
your son — promised to us, your children. We are free
in your love — free of fear of death, free of despair
at partings.

ALL: Jesus lives! Hallelujah! He lives! (Congregation may
be seated)

READING: *Psalm 98* (entire) From *The Good News Bible*. (The
Psalm may be read in parts by a leader and the congregation)

where the leader reads to the (:) and the congregation reads to the (.), or the Psalm may be read by two readers standing before the altar, reading responsively [to be read very joyously].)

**Sing a new song to the Lord:
he has done wonderful things!**

**By his own power and holy strength:
he has won the victory.**

**He made his saving power:
known to the nations.**

**He kept his promise to the people of Israel:
with loyalty and constant love for them.**

**All people everywhere have seen:
the victory of our God.**

**Sing for joy to the Lord, all the earth:
praise him with songs and shouts of joy.**

**Sing praises to the Lord:
Play music on the harps.**

**Blow trumpets and horns:
and shout for joy to the Lord, our king.**

**Roar, sea, and every creature in you:
sing, earth, and all who live on you!**

**Clap your hands, you rivers:
you hills, sing together with joy before the Lord,
because he comes to rule the earth.**

He will rule the peoples of the world:

with justice and fairness.

SONG: (*Any joyous theme of your choice*)

PASTOR'S GREETING

READING OF THE FIRST LESSON: *1 Corinthians 15:19-22*

PRAYER: Eternal God and Lord, we rejoice in the new life won by Jesus Christ. By the resurrection act you have defined yourself for mankind — a loving Father, a forgiving Father, a Father who promises an eternal future for every one of your trusting children. Death is defeated. Love is triumphant.

SOLO: *"I Know That My Redeemer Liveth"* by G. F Handel
(*Or any song of your choice*)

READING OF THE SECOND LESSON: THE GOSPEL
Luke 24:1-12 (*If you use ending A in the reading*) *John 20:1-18*
(*If you use ending B or C in the reading*)

SERMON (*Or dramatization*)

HYMN OF THE DAY: *"Welcome, Happy Morning!"* (*See music page*)

OFFERING COLLECTED

RESPONSIVE PRAYER — *L = Leader, P = People*

- L:** Almighty God, this day of glorious victory is our joy and inspiration.
- P:** We celebrate with great excitement and enthusiasm the Good News of Jesus' resurrection.
- L:** On this day we are filled with the burning spirit of renewal, rededication.
- P:** Lord, we pray you will help us keep this warmth and this light glowing in our lives from this day forward.
- L:** As we go out into the community, as we go home to our families . . .
- P:** Make us aware that love, forgiveness, reconciliation, trust, hope — are also risen with our Lord and have been entrusted to our care.
- L:** In the days ahead, keep the spirit of Easter vital

and growing in our lives . . .

P: So that the victory of our Lord over death, will prompt the victory in us of love over anger, patience over ego, thoughtfulness over selfishness, hope over despair.

L: Then, with this victory, Heavenly Father, will the joy of Easter abound in our lives always.

ALL: Amen.

ALL: The Lord's Prayer.

BENEDICTION

RECESSIONAL: *"Christ Is Risen, Alleluia!" (See music page)*



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