**A Prayer for Easter**

O Lord, our God, we are experiencing a radically different Easter. The warmth of personal fellowship with physical closeness in places of worship where we have experienced you with great glory is missing.

Standing in the midst of the congregation and singing hymns such as *Christ the Lord is Risen Today* while chills run up and down our spine is missing. Seeing the beauty of our favorite place of worship with special flowers to smell is missing.

Seeing people dressed in their Spring finery as well as those who came as they are that we might experience the full diversity of your Kingdom is missing. Seeing the excitement of children around special stories, eggs for which they search, and the anxiety to get all this picture-taking over with so they can put on regular clothes and go play is missing.

Having family and friends with us who bring a smile to our face because they gather for worship so seldom is missing. Enjoying lunch with our extended family and friends just cannot take place this year. It is among the missing. Yet, that which is of the greatest importance is not missing.

The glory of Jesus of Nazareth who is our resurrected Christ is no less wondrous in the virtual Church than it is in the gathered congregation. It is not missing. May Jesus the Christ be praised! May we proclaim Him in the virtual world in ways that would not be possible if we simply gathered in our church buildings and other assembly places and looked straight forward at the worship leaders.

May we see this as an opportunity for more people than ever\ to hear what God has done, is doing, and will do through the death, burial, and resurrection of His Son – Jesus the Christ. May we be even bolder in telling of the unconditional love of God through Jesus Christ.

May we celebrate that earthly death is not the end but only a beginning. May we realize that some people are dying due to the coronavirus who do not know Jesus as their Savior and Lord. May we feel a sense of guilt if we have not shared or have been hesitant to share with everyone we can about Jesus.

In the midst of the current crisis may the world truly know that we are Christians by our love. May we love our neighbor enough to stay home and stay safe, and if essential life, work, or ministry activities take us out into Your world, may we protect ourselves from any possibility of infecting our neighbor with any germs or viruses we may be carrying. Yes, Lord, it is about our neighbor more than it is about ourselves.

We wash our hands. We cover our faces when close to people. We keep a physical distance so we do not harm them more than that they do not harm us. You taught us in the sacrifice of Jesus that it is about our neighbors close by and throughout the world.

In the name of risen Christ, we pray. Amen.