

# Our Sunday Service Together

## Easter 3 April 26<sup>th</sup> 2020



*Today, as we enter into our Easter Season Worship, together yet apart, we will 'make a Spiritual Communion' and Christ, through the Spirit with us, will mediate the grace of God to us in fullness.*

*"Because you have seen Me, have you believed? Blessed are they who did not see, and yet believed."*

### An Acclamation for the Season of Easter

All: It is our duty and our joy, always and everywhere to give you thanks, almighty and eternal Father, and especially in these days of Easter to celebrate with joyful hearts the memory of your wonderful works.

For by the mystery of his passion Jesus Christ, your risen Son, has conquered the powers of death and hell and restored in men and women the image of your glory. He has placed them once more in paradise and opened to them the gate of life eternal. And so earth and heaven resound with gladness, while angels and archangels and the powers of all creation sing for ever the hymn of your glory.

Hymn Christ triumphant, ever reigning

### Preparation

All: This is the day that the Lord has made.  
Let us rejoice and be glad in it.

Through the brokenness of Christ, we become one body  
as one body we now gather in the name of Christ to offer our praise and thanksgiving, to receive God's holy word, to pray for the needs of the world,  
and to seek the forgiveness of our sins, that by the power of the Holy Spirit  
we may give ourselves to the service of God.

## Our Confession

*In baptism we died with Christ, so that as Christ was raised from the dead, we might walk in newness of life. Let us receive new life in him as we confess our sins in penitence and faith.*

All: Jesus Christ, risen Master and triumphant Lord, we come to you in sorrow for our sins, and confess to you our weakness and unbelief.

We have lived by our own strength, and not by the power of your resurrection.  
In your mercy, forgive us, hear us and help us.

We have lived by the light of our own eyes, as faithless and not believing.  
In your mercy, forgive us, hear us and help us.

We have lived for this world alone, and doubted our home in heaven.  
In your mercy, forgive us, hear us and help us.

*Be still for a moment in confession and in receiving God's Grace in Christ*

All: May Almighty God, who in Jesus Christ has given us a kingdom that cannot be destroyed, forgive us our sins, open our eyes to God's truth, strengthen us to do God's will and give us the joy of his kingdom, through Jesus Christ our Risen Lord.

**Amen.**

## The opening prayer

All: The night has passed, and the day lies open before us; let us pray with one heart and mind.

*Silence is kept.*

All: As we rejoice in the gift of this new day, so may the light of your presence, O God, set our hearts on fire with love for you;  
now and for ever. Amen.

## The Word of God

Psalmody    Psalm 116.1-3, 10 to end    *We say the psalm aloud*

I love the Lord, for he has heard the voice of my supplication;  
because he inclined his ear to me on the day I called to him.  
The snares of death encompassed me;  
the pains of hell took hold of me; by grief and sorrow was I held.  
Then I called upon the name of the Lord: 'O Lord, I beg you, deliver my soul.'

How shall I repay the Lord for all the benefits he has given to me?  
I will lift up the cup of salvation and call upon the name of the Lord.  
I will fulfil my vows to the Lord in the presence of all his people.  
Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his faithful servants.  
O Lord, I am your servant, your servant, the child of your handmaid;  
you have freed me from my bonds.  
I will offer to you a sacrifice of thanksgiving and call upon the name of the Lord.  
I will fulfil my vows to the Lord in the presence of all his people,  
In the courts of the house of the Lord, in the midst of you, O Jerusalem. Alleluia.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen

### Scripture Reading Acts 2.14a and 36-41

But Peter, standing with the eleven, raised his voice and addressed them (the crowd). Therefore let the entire house of Israel know with certainty that God has made him both Lord and Messiah, this Jesus whom you crucified.'

<sup>37</sup> Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and to the other apostles, 'Brothers, what should we do?' <sup>38</sup> Peter said to them, 'Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ so that your sins may be forgiven; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. <sup>39</sup> For the promise is for you, for your children, and for all who are far away, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to him.' <sup>40</sup> And he testified with many other arguments and exhorted them, saying, 'Save yourselves from this corrupt generation.' <sup>41</sup> So those who welcomed his message were baptized, and that day about three thousand persons were added.

*At the end of the reading we say:*

All: This is the word of the Lord. Thanks be to God.

### Gloria

All: Glory to God in the highest, and peace to his people on earth.  
Lord God, heavenly King, almighty God and Father, we worship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glory.  
Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father, Lord God, Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world: have mercy on us; you are seated at the right hand of the Father: receive our prayer.  
For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord, you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

*Alleluia, alleluia. Jesus said, 'I am the resurrection and the life.*

*Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die.' Alleluia.*

Now on that same day two of them were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem, <sup>14</sup> and talking with each other about all these things that had happened. <sup>15</sup> While they were talking and discussing, Jesus himself came near and went with them, <sup>16</sup> but their eyes were kept from recognizing him. <sup>17</sup> And he said to them, 'What are you discussing with each other while you walk along?' They stood still, looking sad. <sup>18</sup> Then one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answered him, 'Are you the only stranger in Jerusalem who does not know the things that have taken place there in these days?' <sup>19</sup> He asked them, 'What things?' They replied, 'The things about Jesus of Nazareth, who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, <sup>20</sup> and how our chief priests and leaders handed him over to be condemned to death and crucified him. <sup>21</sup> But we had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel. Yes, and besides all this, it is now the third day since these things took place.

<sup>22</sup> Moreover, some women of our group astounded us. They were at the tomb early this morning, <sup>23</sup> and when they did not find his body there, they came back and told us that they had indeed seen a vision of angels who said that he was alive. <sup>24</sup> Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said; but they did not see him.' <sup>25</sup> Then he said to them, 'Oh, how foolish you are, and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have declared! <sup>26</sup> Was it not necessary that the Messiah should suffer these things and then enter into his glory?' <sup>27</sup> Then beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them the things about himself in all the scriptures.

<sup>28</sup> As they came near the village to which they were going, he walked ahead as if he were going on. <sup>29</sup> But they urged him strongly, saying, 'Stay with us, because it is almost evening and the day is now nearly over.' So he went in to stay with them. <sup>30</sup> When he was at the table with them, he took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. <sup>31</sup> Then their eyes were opened, and they recognized him; and he vanished from their sight. <sup>32</sup> They said to each other, 'Were not our hearts burning within us while he was talking to us on the road, while he was opening the scriptures to us?' <sup>33</sup> That same hour they got up and returned to Jerusalem; and they found the eleven and their companions gathered together. <sup>34</sup> They were saying, 'The Lord has risen indeed, and he has appeared to Simon!' <sup>35</sup> Then they told what had happened on the road, and how he had been made known to them in the breaking of the bread.

*Alleluia, alleluia. Jesus said, 'I am the resurrection and the life.*

*Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die.' Alleluia.*

## A Reflection for the day

“Therefore let the entire house of Israel know with certainty that God has made him both Lord and Messiah, this Jesus whom you crucified.” To say that things had gone wrong in the events of what we call Holy Week, the arrest, trial and crucifixion of the ‘Son of Man’ would be, well completely wrong. We read, do we not, that Jesus mentioned quite a few times this is what was going to happen, and that this was God’s calling on his life.

If they had not ‘gone wrong’, then the events had certainly left people bemused, frightened, depressed maybe, certainly confused. Peter’s long speech from Acts 2 (split for us over several weeks) certainly gives an explanation. The men walking out of Jerusalem are clearly trying to get some perspective on what had happened; it’s into the midst of their conversation that Jesus jumps with his question ‘what’s the big discussion all about?’ And Jesus runs through it all again, with references, and lays it all before them – this was God’s work, this wasn’t a failed plan, this wasn’t something that went wrong, on the contrary this crucifixion was certainly God making Jesus Lord and Messiah.

But this was, for all, a world turning upside down matter – life would never be the same again (I mean look at Peter, I bet he never thought he would be a stand-up-in-public evangelist). It is only natural to not be able to see things plainly, to have some questions, to not have a clear sense of what next, how next, when the world is turned upside down.

There is the grace of God in all we see of the days between the resurrection and ascension. The ascension could have happened straight after there was witness to the resurrection, but Jesus lingers, he meets with the disciples, he takes time to talk things over with them, he enables, encourages even, their questioning, he reveals God’s presence and purpose in the word, and he breaks bread to remind them of his purpose as Lord and Messiah. The world is changed for certain, forever, but as God has been with his people in the past times so, although the times are new and strange, God will be with his people. For the disciples the learning is in knowing how to look and see, where to look and see, how to question and discuss; and all with the breaking of bread as a remembrance that this wasn’t something that went wrong, but God at work!

We hear a lot ‘things will never be the same again’ in the world, in our worlds, following this pandemic; and it is true. But God is still God with a purpose for each of us, with a longing for peace, justice, grace, mercy, healing and salvation for the entire world. The song is at heart the same – it after all the Lord’s song, but maybe now a new tune will be needed, a new way of singing in this strange land.

I wonder if we, like the first disciples, might be seekers of God’s purpose in the ‘new context’. Might we question, discuss, explore scripture, be in conversation through prayer and the Spirit, gain some clarity of vision for ourselves and our nation, and in doing so find we can sing the Lord’s song in the strange land.

## The Creed

All: I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,  
born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead.  
On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven,  
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,  
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church,  
the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting.  
Amen.

## Prayers *We make our intercessions*

In the power of the Spirit and in union with Christ let us pray to the Father.

We pray today for all who journey, for those who are leaving places of pain and sorrow, for those whose lives may be in danger, for all pilgrims and seekers, for refugee and homeless people, and for all who seek to have care for them .....

Lord, abide with us and we will abide with you.

We give thanks that you do come to us. Make us aware of your presence in our homes. Helps us to be aware of you as our hearts burn within us. We pray especially for the lonely, the rejected, the outcast, for all feeling cut off through isolation – especially for care and nursing home residents and those in hospital isolation.....

Lord, abide with us and we will abide with you.

We pray for the broken hearted, for those whose hopes have died, for all who are confused by the pain and sickness of our world. We remember all who travel lonely paths, all coming to the end of their journey in this world and who walk towards the sunset.....

Lord, abide with us and we will abide with you.

We pray for our journeys, we have questions about the future, we seek clarity of vision to see you with us, to know your purpose for our journey in the new land, the world coming to birth at this time. Be gentle with us, open your word to us, sit and converse with us as we pray; help us to see Lord.....

Lord, abide with us and we will abide with you.

## A Prayer during the Covid-19 Pandemic

All: Keep us, good Lord, under the shadow of your mercy  
in this time of uncertainty and distress.  
Sustain and support the anxious and fearful,  
and lift up all who are brought low;  
that we may rejoice in your comfort  
knowing that nothing can separate us from your love  
in Christ Jesus our Lord.  
**Amen.**

## The Collect

All: Almighty Father,  
who in your great mercy gladdened the disciples with the sight of the risen Lord:  
give us such knowledge of his presence with us,  
that we may be strengthened and sustained by his risen life  
and serve you continually in righteousness and truth;  
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,  
who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever. Amen

*Gathering our prayers and praises into one, let us pray with confidence as our Saviour has taught us*

All: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name;  
thy kingdom come; thy will be done; on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread.  
And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us.  
And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil.  
For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory  
for ever and ever. Amen.

## The Conclusion

All: Christ, as a light illumine and guide me this day.  
Christ, as a shield overshadow me.  
Christ under me, Christ over me;  
Christ beside me on my left and my right.  
This day be within and without me.  
Amen.