

# Our Sunday Service Together

## Easter April 9<sup>th</sup> 2023



### An Easter Acclamation

Praise be to God in the highest. 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.

### 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

*Let us come to the light of Christ, confessing 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 Psalmody Psalm 118.1-2 and 14-24 *We say the psalm aloud*

O give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; his mercy endures for ever.  
Let Israel now proclaim, 'His mercy endures for ever.'

The Lord is my strength and my might; he has become my salvation.

There are glad songs of victory in the tents of the righteous:

'The right hand of the Lord does valiantly; the right hand of the Lord is exalted;  
the right hand of the Lord does valiantly.'

I shall not die, but I shall live, and recount the deeds of the Lord.

The Lord has punished me severely, but he did not give me over to death.

Open to me the gates of righteousness that I may enter through them and give thanks to the Lord.

This is the gate of the Lord; the righteous shall enter through it.

I thank you that you have answered me and have become my salvation.

The stone that the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone.

This is the Lord's doing; it is marvellous in our eyes.

This is the day that the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it.

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 10.34-43

Then Peter began to speak to them: 'I truly understand that God shows no partiality, <sup>35</sup>but in every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him. <sup>36</sup>You know the message he sent to the people of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ—he is Lord of all. <sup>37</sup>That message spread throughout Judea, beginning in Galilee after the baptism that John announced: <sup>38</sup>how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power; how he went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him. <sup>39</sup>We are witnesses to all that he did both in Judea and in Jerusalem. They put him to death by hanging him on a tree; <sup>40</sup>but God raised him on the third day and allowed him to appear, <sup>41</sup>not to all the people but to us who were chosen by God as witnesses, and who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead. <sup>42</sup>He commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one ordained by God as judge of the living and the dead. <sup>43</sup>All the prophets testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name.'

*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.

## The Gospel Matthew 28.1-10

After the Sabbath, as the first day of the week was dawning, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to see the tomb. <sup>2</sup> And suddenly there was a great earthquake; for an angel of the Lord, descending from heaven, came and rolled back the stone and sat on it. <sup>3</sup> His appearance was like lightning, and his clothing white as snow. <sup>4</sup> For fear of him the guards shook and became like dead men. <sup>5</sup> But the angel said to the women, 'Do not be afraid; I know that you are looking for Jesus who was crucified. <sup>6</sup> He is not here; for he has been raised, as he said. Come, see the place where he lay. <sup>7</sup> Then go quickly and tell his disciples, "He has been raised from the dead, and indeed he is going ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see him." This is my message for you.' <sup>8</sup> So they left the tomb quickly with fear and great joy, and ran to tell his disciples. <sup>9</sup> Suddenly Jesus met them and said, 'Greetings!' And they came to him, took hold of his feet, and worshipped him. <sup>10</sup> Then Jesus said to them, 'Do not be afraid; go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee; there they will see me.'

*at the end of the reading we say:*

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

## A Reflection for the day

Earthquake, an angel with the appearance of a flash of lightning, a stone rolled away, and some big butch soldiers so gripped with fear they physically shake and fall to the ground as if dead. Such is the holiness of God's presence!

We see time and again through the bible in instances of God's divine presence, sometimes in direct encounter, sometimes through the agents of God, both human and angelic, that the holiness of God instils fear; even to the point of death. So it should! God all loving but also all holy; a fearful reality, a presence quite beyond our everyday knowledge of the world about us. To not be in awe, in wonder, in fear and trembling would be inhuman.

But to Mary the angel says, and the English translation we have of Matthew's gospel misses the nuance of the original Greek, 'but YOU do not be afraid'. For the soldier's the correct human response is fear, but to Mary, whom the angel knows is looking for Jesus, there is an encouragement to step beyond the usual and enter into a new reality with the now resurrected Jesus.

I love the words of the Benedictus – "That we being delivered out of the hands of our enemies: might serve him *without fear*, in holiness and righteousness before him: all the days of our life". In the resurrection of Jesus Christ, we are delivered from our enemies, from sin and death, and we have a new reality to live in. We are now called into holiness and righteousness, called into service within the presence of God, without fear, all the days of our lives.

We, with Mary, are called on this resurrection day to step into a new way of being, to live in the reality of the resurrection. No longer to fear but to serve God in Christ, to be directed by the holy love of God which could do nothing other than send the Son into the world of His fallen creation and love it, redeem it, so that all may come without fear into His living presence.

We, with Mary are called to receive this new reality and then go and tell others of it. We are to enter into the life God graciously offers to us in His Christ and in so doing let others see and hear of His love for the world. Mary let joy dispel any fear and set her running to the others – I wonder if we can let the joy of Easter and the reality of the resurrection dispel all our fears, and send us running into the world to live and tell the story of Jesus Christ, sent to love, in that love to offer himself even unto death and then be raised to new life that all who would call upon his name would be saved!

## 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*

We pray to Jesus who is present with us to eternity.

Jesus, light of the world, bring the light and peace of your gospel to the nations ...  
*Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer.*

Jesus, bread of life, give food to the hungry ... and nourish us all with your word.  
*Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer.*

Jesus, our way, our truth, our life, be with us and all who follow you in the way ...  
Deepen our appreciation of your truth and fill us with your life.  
*Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer.*

Jesus, Good Shepherd who gave your life for the sheep, recover the straggler, bind up the injured, strengthen the sick and lead the healthy and strong to new pastures.  
*Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer.*

Jesus, the resurrection and the life, we give you thanks for all who have lived and believed in you ...  
Raise us with them to eternal life.  
Merciful Father accept our prayers, for the sake of your Son our saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.

## The Collect

All: Lord of all life and power, who through the mighty resurrection of your Son overcame the old order of sin and death to make all things new in him: grant that we, being dead to sin and alive to you in Jesus Christ, may reign with him in glory; to whom with you and the Holy Spirit be praise and honour, glory and might, now and in all eternity. **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.