

Our Sunday Service Together

May 7th 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 20 *We say the psalm aloud*

May the Lord hear you in the day of trouble, the name of the God of Jacob defend you;
send you help from his sanctuary and strengthen you out of Zion;
remember all your offerings and accept your burnt sacrifice;
grant you your heart's desire and fulfil all your mind.

May we rejoice in your salvation and triumph in the name of our God;
may the Lord perform all your petitions.

Now I know that the Lord will save his anointed;

he will answer him from his holy heaven, with the mighty strength of his right hand.

Some put their trust in chariots and some in horses, but we will call only on the name of the Lord our God.

They are brought down and fallen, but we are risen and stand upright.

O Lord, save the king and answer us when we call upon you.

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 7.55-60

But filled with the Holy Spirit, he gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. ⁵⁶ 'Look,' he said, 'I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God!' ⁵⁷ But they covered their ears, and with a loud shout all rushed together against him. ⁵⁸ Then they dragged him out of the city and began to stone him; and the witnesses laid their coats at the feet of a young man named Saul. ⁵⁹ While they were stoning Stephen, he prayed, 'Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.' ⁶⁰ Then he knelt down and cried out in a loud voice, 'Lord, do not hold this sin against them.' When he had said this, he died.

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 John 14.1-14

'Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe^[a] in God, believe also in me. ²In my Father's house there are many dwelling-places. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you?^[b] ³And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, so that where I am, there you may be also. ⁴And you know the way to the place where I am going.'^[c] ⁵Thomas said to him, 'Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?' ⁶Jesus said to him, 'I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. ⁷If you know me, you will know^[d] my Father also. From now on you do know him and have seen him.'

⁸Philip said to him, 'Lord, show us the Father, and we will be satisfied.'⁹ Jesus said to him, 'Have I been with you all this time, Philip, and you still do not know me? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, "Show us the Father"? ¹⁰Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own; but the Father who dwells in me does his works. ¹¹Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; but if you do not, then believe me because of the works themselves. ¹²Very truly, I tell you, the one who believes in me will also do the works that I do and, in fact, will do greater works than these, because I am going to the Father. ¹³I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. ¹⁴If in my name you ask me^[e] for anything, I will do it.

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 *Revd John Webb writes*

I seem to be caught into making myself a 'hostage to fortune' because on this Coronation Weekend I can't help but reflect on such an important occasion, but I am writing before it happens and you will be reading after it is over when anything may have happened. There is no doubt that there is an overwhelming wish that all will go really well and that it will prove to be a memorable occasion so many people will be having long days and sleepless nights to that end. I hope that those who might see it as an opportunity to cause trouble will refrain. It is the most significant event for this country in many years and it will be witnessed by the largest ever gathering of national leaders.

There is no simple definition of monarchy but it seems to have evolved over the years as each king or queen expressed it in their own unique way. Some people see it as all about wealth, privilege and power, and certainly in the past that may have been true. But it has evolved into something quite different during the 20th Century. This became obvious in 1937 when the new King Edward VIII abdicated when he realised that it demanded a total commitment which he felt unable to give. As a result, his brother became George VI although he was unprepared, unsuited and ill-equipped for the role.

My father and his generation had great admiration, sympathy and respect for George VI who, with the loyal support of his wife, became an inspiration during the dark days of WW2. We tend to think of Churchill as the great war leader, which he certainly was, but it is suggested that King George, by his quiet presence sharing in the danger and hardships of the people of London was equally important in maintaining national morale.

Sadly, he died unexpectedly Elizabeth became Queen long before she had anticipated. But she had already learnt from her father's example that monarchy was about service as she famously said in her broadcast on her 21st birthday. This was affirmed at her coronation which I remember watching on a neighbour's tiny flickering black and white television. It was only slowly that we saw how seriously she took her coronation oath.

Many of us had assumed that when she got to retirement age she would abdicate and hand over to Charles but as time went on we realised that her commitment was for life and that retirement was not an option. She has given a remarkable life of service to our nation. She quietly made it quite clear that she was inspired, motivated and strengthened by Christ and her Christian faith expressed in the coronation.

The Coronation may appear to be a grand and perhaps slightly archaic ceremony, but that would be a superficial understanding. To Elizabeth all those years ago and now for Charles it is a very personal commitment and commissioning to serve our nation. We must offer our support and prayers as he starts his reign. May he be encouraged by the words of Jesus in our gospel 'Let not your heart be troubled. Believe in God, believe also in me.'

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*

O God of peace, who has taught us that in quietness and confidence shall be our strength; help us, as we come into your presence, to be still and know that you are God.

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

As we continue this season of Easter let us pray that our faith will grow and develop.
Lord in your mercy hear our prayer.

We pray for Bishops Michael Ruth and all laity and clergy who seek to serve you in this diocese. May they be filled with the Spirit and speak with authority.
Lord in your mercy hear our prayer.

We Pray for King Charles as starts his reign that he will be given faith, wisdom and strength.
Lord in your mercy hear our prayer.

For Camilla the Queen Consort, William Prince of Wales, the Princess of Wales, and all the Royal Family; that they may love and support the King as he bears the burden of his office.
Lord in your mercy hear our prayer.

For the building up of the Church under its Supreme Governor, for the building up of all Christian people, and for mutual understanding and fellowship between all people of faith.
Lord in your mercy hear our prayer.

For this United Kingdom, for His Majesty's other Realms and Territories, for the whole Commonwealth of Nations, for their governments and ministers, and for all who are called to public service, that they will seek

justice, mercy, and peace.

Lord in your mercy hear our prayer.

We pray for all trade unions and their leaders that they may work for the good of everyone.

Lord in your mercy hear our prayer.

We pray for our families, friends, and neighbours that we may serve Christ in one another and seek the common good.

Lord in your mercy hear our prayer.

We pray for the sick, suffering, dying and those who mourn and we give thanks and pray for those who care for them.

Lord in your mercy hear our prayer.

Rejoicing in the fellowship of all your saints, we commend ourselves and the whole creation to your unfailing love; and may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all, now and for evermore. Amen.

The Collect

All: Almighty God, the fountain of all goodness, bless our Sovereign Lord, King Charles, and all who are in authority under him; that they may order all things in wisdom and equity, righteousness and peace, to the honour of your name, and the good of your Church and people; through Jesus Christ our Lord.
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.