

# Our Sunday Service Together

## Easter April 5<sup>th</sup> 2026



### 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

The resurrection brings emotions to the fore in those who encounter it; not that it would have been the case if this had happened in England, we can't possibly show any emotion in our faith and worship!

We have three emotional responses in today's gospel reading – terror, fear and joy.

Terror: the better and more apt word in English for the translation of the Greek texts and the response of the guards to the appearance of the angels. They are terrified to the point they shake in their fear and pass out.

I wonder if you noted that the angel says nothing to them and completely ignores their reaction. Instead the angel is concerned for the women and their reaction to this divine messenger's appearance – 'do not be afraid', it says.

Be it for the guards or for the women it seems that the presence of God's agents, produces fear on that morning - and it would seem this is rightly so! For this resurrection is not a mere party trick, it isn't a small matter, this is God at work – and God is HOLY, God is ALMIGHTY and the presence of God, or His agents is a serious matter. God is far beyond our imaginings and the appropriate response is fear!

It would seem fine for the guards to be afraid to the point of terror and passing out, but why not the women? I wonder if it might be that, as well as being all-holy, God is also all-loving. But whilst God is all loving there is no suggestion that we should have no fear. Instead, in Christ, we are invited to step beyond our fear into a new relationship; one founded on the Joy of the resurrection at Easter!

To lose all aspects of awe and wonder, to lose sight of the reality that we are mere mortals will leave us open to the danger of not treating God as God. And more, we diminish ourselves and our faith when we diminish the true immensity of the work of God in Christ at Easter.

We miss the full implication that in Christ sin and death have been defeated.

We miss the full implication that in His resurrection we receive a new life, a new dignity, as those called 'the children of God'.

We miss the fullness of the relationship we are called by faith to step into in which we pray 'our Father'.

We miss out on the JOY of entering into His courts in praise and thanksgiving, of approaching the eternal throne, of casting our crowns before Him in worship and praise and adoration. Sorry, lots of emotions expressed there!

Great Joy, not ordinary Joy, it seems has filled the hearts of the women as they run back into the city to tell everyone about all they had seen and experienced. But, Matthew would have us note they still have fear with their 'great joy'.

On Easter morning then, the appropriate response to our God is both fear and a wonder filled Joy, and this is the foundation of our worship in Jesus Christ and the service He calls His disciples into – that of telling of all He is raised from the dead.

## 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*

On this Easter Sunday let us give thanks for the miracle of the resurrection of Jesus and pray that our faith will grow and develop. *Lord in your mercy hear our prayer.*

Strengthen Michael and Fiona our Bishops and all laity and clergy who seek to serve us in this diocese May they be filled with the Spirit and speak with authority. *Lord in your mercy hear our prayer.*

We Pray for Our King, Prime Minister, and all World leaders, that they may have the Spirit of wisdom to lead into peace, justice and to see the fruit of the Kingdom of Christ in our age. *Lord in your mercy hear our prayer.*

We pray for the hungry and starving, that the available food may be used for the benefit of all. *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 our schools, the children, teachers, and support staff. We pray for all those responsible for religious education that they may inspire those they teach. *Lord in your mercy hear our prayer.*

We pray for the sick, suffering and dying ..... and we give thanks and pray for those who use their skill and risk their lives to care for them. *Lord in your mercy hear our prayer.*

Hear us as we remember those who have died..... According to your promises grant them a share in your eternal kingdom. *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: 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.