

Morning Worship for Easter Sunday

Preparation

Alleluia. Christ is risen.

He is risen indeed. Alleluia.

Praise the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

He has given us new life and hope.

He has raised Jesus from the dead.

Alleluia. Christ is risen.

He is risen indeed. Alleluia.

Opening Prayer

Faithful one, whose word is life:

come with saving power

to free our praise,

inspire our prayer

and shape our lives

for the kingdom of your Son,

Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Cast your burden upon the Lord:

And he will sustain you.

Create in us clean hearts O God:

And renew a right spirit within us.

Cast us not away from your presence:

And take not your Holy Spirit from us.

Give us the joy of your saving help:

And sustain us with your life-giving Spirit.

Blessed be the Lord day by day:

The God of our salvation who bears our burdens.

We confess our sins.

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.

Lord, 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.

Lord, hear us and help us.

We have lived for this world alone,

and doubted our home in heaven.

In your mercy, forgive us.

Lord, hear us and help us.

May the God of love and power

forgive you and free you from your sins,

heal and strengthen you by his Spirit,

and raise you to new life in Christ our Lord. ***Amen.***

Praise

O Lord, open our lips:

And our mouth shall proclaim your praise.

Let us worship the Lord:

All praise to his name.

Gloria in Excelsis

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 word of God

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles.

Peter began to speak to those assembled in the house of Cornelius. 'I truly understand that God shows no partiality, but in every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him. You know the message he sent to the people of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ – he is Lord of all. That message spread throughout Judea, beginning in Galilee after the baptism that John announced: 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. 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; 40 but God raised him on the third day and allowed him to appear, 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. 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. All the prophets testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name.' (Acts 10:34–43)

A reading from the Gospel of Matthew.

After the sabbath, as the first day of the week was dawning, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to see the tomb. 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. His appearance was like lightning, and his clothing white as snow. For fear of him the guards shook and became like dead men. But the angel said to the women, 'Do not be afraid; I know that you are looking for Jesus who was crucified. He is not here; for he has been raised, as he said. Come, see the place where he lay. 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.' So they left the tomb quickly with fear and great joy, and ran to tell his disciples. Suddenly Jesus met them and said, 'Greetings!' And they came to him, took hold of his feet, and worshipped him. Then Jesus said to them, 'Do not be afraid; go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee; there they will see me.' (Matthew 28:1–10)

A reflection from Rev Stephen Burge Curate of St Mary's Eaton Bray Alleulia, Christ is risen! He is risen indeed, Alleluia!

Easter Sunday is usually a very exciting day, and one that we share with others in church, as well as with our families and friends. Chocolate abounds and many of everyone's favourite hymns get played. For our emotions, Holy Week is always something of a roller-coaster and it is always a brilliant feeling to end on the unbridled joy of the resurrection. This year, Easter will be a little different – we will not be gathering together in church, and we cannot invite our wider families and friends over for a special meal. Even the chocolate probably won't feel quite the same. Yet, there is still much joy to revel in – Jesus is Risen!

We know that after his very painful death, Jesus rose again – so we always go through the Easter story in the full knowledge of what is about to happen; but for Mary Magdalene and 'the other' Mary their journey to the Garden that Easter morning must have been a very strange and unsettling experience. But the joy they must have felt when they realized that Jesus had risen must have been unending, unbounded and completely incomprehensible. I think that when we come to meet to worship together again, we will all feel something of that great joy ourselves, when we can see old friends and family again.

I know that many of us are currently anxious and fearful of our times, anxious about contracting the coronavirus, fearful for those whom we love, and eager to meet our friends and family once again. We should, however, take comfort in the words of the angels to the two Marys: 'Do not be afraid!' Jesus cares for us and will meet us in our anxiety, will walk with us and be with us until the pandemic ends. On the cross, Jesus not only took upon him all our sins, our fears, and our anxieties, but also our hopes and our joys. Jesus shares completely in our lives. Above all, Jesus' resurrection brings us new life, renewed hope and new opportunities. This is something we should be deeply thankful for, so, this morning, as we remember the gift of resurrection that Jesus has given us, we should reflect on all the things that we are thankful for and offer them to God, our Father in heaven.

In his Letter to the Corinthians, Paul writes that: 'Christ our passover has been sacrificed for us: so let us celebrate the feast, not with the old leaven of corruption and wickedness: but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth. (1 Cor 5 7b-8) Jesus' resurrection brings about a change in us and the way we live our lives – Jesus is the one who makes us grow in holiness, as we should celebrate the possibilities that Jesus' resurrection brings.

In the sermon we heard him preach in the book of Acts, Peter says Jesus' resurrection demands a response from us – we cannot simply

sit and accept it and move, but we must do something, we must spread the Good news too. He says, '[Jesus] 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.' (Acts 10:42) We are all called to preach the love of Christ-crucified and Christ-resurrected!

This Easter, because of the social distancing rules, we have all been given the chance to take some time to sit and think about how our lives have been changed by God's love for us, and, more importantly, time to reflect on what God has in store for us and what God is calling us to do. What can we do for God and for others right now? What can we do for God and for others when things return to some sense of normality?

The Resurrection is what gave the Apostles and the Church the power, the drive and the confidence to preach God's love to all; and the Resurrection is what gives us, and continues to give us, that same confidence to bear witness to God's love in our lives. Rejoice, be glad, and show the world that God's redeeming work is done! Alleulia, Christ is risen! He is risen indeed, Alleulia!

Our faith

Let us declare our faith in the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ.

**Christ died for our sins
in accordance with the Scriptures;
he was buried;
he was raised to life on the third day
in accordance with the Scriptures;
afterwards he appeared to his followers,
and to all the apostles:
this we have received,
and this we believe. Amen.**

Prayers of intercession- Barbara Morton

Thanks be to you Father, for your indescribable gift! To you be glory and honour, on this Resurrection Day, and forever.

Father you promised that whatever we ask in the name of Jesus will be granted, therefore we bring before you our prayers for our world.

Lord, without the resurrection of Jesus, our faith would be empty and without hope. But he is alive, and we rejoice and wonder in the mystery of his presence among us.

We pray for your church, that you will guide us and give us courage to proclaim the gospel in our communities. We ask your blessing on Joy,

on Stephen and on Gordon. We pray for our PCC and all who work to ensure that the work of the church can proceed. Especially at this time when we cannot be together, make us remember that the church is its people, not the building. Help us all to give freely of our time and talents so that our church becomes a beacon of hope in our community.

We pray for your church throughout the world, especially in places where it is difficult to be a Christian and we thank you for our freedom to worship you.

Lord, in your mercy, **Hear our prayer.**

We pray, Lord for all communities in the world where Covid-19 has taken hold. We pray for all those working on tests for the disease and especially for those who are putting their own lives at risk by working in our hospitals and care homes. We thank you for the service of all who are keeping our food sources supplied at the moment; for our farmers, factory workers and shop workers. May we all play our part in limiting the spread of the virus. Show us where we can be of service to others. We give you thanks for the many blessings we enjoy, making our lives much easier at this time. Help us to appreciate that others do not have access to clean water, shelter, food or any of the luxuries that we have.

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.

Lord, in your mercy, **Hear our prayer.**

Father, surround with your presence and peace those who doubt their own worth, those who are mentally or physically ill, their families, their friends and the medical staff who care for them. We name silently to you now those known to us who suffer at this time.....

On this Easter Day we thank and praise you for the gift of eternal life through the resurrection of Jesus. We rejoice with all the saints in glory and pray for all who have died that, free from sorrow and pain, they may be at peace with you in your everlasting kingdom, for Jesus Christ is the light of the world, a light which no darkness can quench.

We pray that those who mourn will feel your love surrounding and comforting them.

Lord, in your mercy, **Hear our prayer.**

Father You loved this world so much that you gave your one and only Son, that we might be called your children too. Lord, help us to live in the gladness and grace of Easter Sunday every day. Let us have hearts of thankfulness for your sacrifice. Let us have eyes that look upon your grace and rejoice in our salvation. Help us to walk in that mighty grace and tell your good news to the world.

Merciful Father, **accept these prayers for the sake of your Son, our risen Saviour, Jesus Christ. Amen**

We join together with Christians throughout the world in the prayer that Jesus taught us.

**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.**

Conclusion

The Collect for the day
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.

God has claimed us as his own.

He has brought us out of darkness.

He has made us light to the world.

Alleluia. Christ is risen.

He is risen indeed. Alleluia.

We end with the words of the Grace, an ancient Christian prayer of fellowship, remembering that although we are not together in person, nothing can separate us from the love of God found in Christ Jesus our Lord.

**The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ
and the love of God
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit
be with us all evermore. Amen.**



If you would like us to pray for you during this time of stress and anxiety, please leave a prayer request on the website email address or contact Joy (vicar@stmaryseatonbray.org.uk)

Reverend Joy Cousans
Reverend Stephen Burge

Material from New Patterns for Worship. Compilation copyright © The Archbishops' Council 2002.