

Morning Prayer
Easter Season
Sunday, 26 April 2020
The Third Sunday of Easter

Please note that main text in **bold** is to be said by the congregation

Preparation

O Lord, open our lips

All and our mouth shall proclaim your praise.

In your resurrection, O Christ,

All let heaven and earth rejoice.

One or more of the following is said or sung:

this or another prayer of thanksgiving

Blessed are you, Lord God of our salvation,
to you be praise and glory forever.

As once you ransomed your people from Egypt
and led them to freedom in the promised land,
so now you have delivered us from the dominion of darkness
and brought us into the kingdom of your risen Son.

May we, the first fruits of your new creation,
rejoice in this new day you have made,
and praise you for your mighty acts.

Blessed be God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

All Blessed be God for ever.

a suitable hymn, or the Easter Anthems

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 Corinthians 5.7b, 8

Christ once raised from the dead dies no more: ♦

death has no more dominion over him.

In dying he died to sin once for all: ♦

in living he lives to God.

See yourselves therefore as dead to sin: ♦
and alive to God in Jesus Christ our Lord.

Romans 6.9-11

Christ has been raised from the dead: ♦
the first fruits of those who sleep.

For as by man came death: ♦
by man has come also the resurrection of the dead;

for as in Adam all die: ♦
even so in Christ shall all be made alive.

1 Corinthians 15.20-22

**All Glory to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning is now
and shall be for ever. Amen.**

This opening prayer may be said

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

Silence is kept.

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.

All Amen.

The Word of God

Psalmody

The appointed psalmody is said.

Psalm 23

Refrain: I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

The Lord is my shepherd; ♦
therefore can I lack nothing.

He makes me lie down in green pastures ♦
and leads me beside still waters. *R*

He shall refresh my soul ♦
and guide me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,
I will fear no evil; ♦
for you are with me;
your rod and your staff, they comfort me. *R*

You spread a table before me
in the presence of those who trouble me; ♦
you have anointed my head with oil
and my cup shall be full.

Surely goodness and loving mercy shall follow me
all the days of my life, ♦
and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

Refrain: *I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.*

*O God, our sovereign and shepherd,
who brought again your Son Jesus Christ
from the valley of death,
comfort us with your protecting presence
and your angels of goodness and love,
that we also may come home
and dwell with him in your house for ever.*

Each psalm or group of psalms may end with

***All Glory to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning is now
and shall be for ever. Amen.***

***If there are two Scripture readings, the first may be read here, or both may be read
after the canticle.***

Acts 2:14a, 36-41

Peter, standing with the eleven, raised his voice and addressed the crowd, "Let the entire house of Israel know with certainty that God has made him both Lord and Messiah, this Jesus whom you crucified."

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?" Peter said to them, "Repent, and be baptised 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. 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." And he testified with many other arguments and exhorted them, saying, "Save yourselves from this corrupt generation." So

those who welcomed his message were baptised, and that day about three thousand persons were added.

Canticle

The Song of Moses and Miriam, or another suitable canticle, for example, number 23 (page 574) or number 32 (page 583), may be said

Refrain:

**All In your unfailing love, O Lord,
you lead the people whom you have redeemed.**

I will sing to the Lord, who has triumphed gloriously, ♦
the horse and his rider he has thrown into the sea.

The Lord is my strength and my song ♦
and has become my salvation.

This is my God whom I will praise, ♦
the God of my forebears whom I will exalt.

The Lord is a warrior, ♦
the Lord is his name.

Your right hand, O Lord, is glorious in power: ♦
your right hand, O Lord, shatters the enemy.

At the blast of your nostrils, the sea covered them; ♦
they sank as lead in the mighty waters.

In your unfailing love, O Lord, ♦
you lead the people whom you have redeemed.

And by your invincible strength ♦
you will guide them to your holy dwelling.

You will bring them in and plant them, O Lord, ♦
in the sanctuary which your hands have established.

Exodus 15.1b-3, 6, 10, 13, 17

**All Glory to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning is now
and shall be for ever. Amen.**

**All In your unfailing love, O Lord,
you lead the people whom you have redeemed.**

Scripture Reading

One or more readings appointed for the day are read.

The reading(s) may be followed by a time of silence.

1 Peter, 1. 17-23

To the exiles of the Dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, who have been chosen and destined by God the Father and sanctified by the Spirit to be obedient to Jesus Christ and to be sprinkled with his blood: May grace and peace be yours in abundance. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! By his great mercy he has given us a new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and into an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, who are being protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. In this you rejoice, even if now for a little while you have had to suffer various trials, so that the genuineness of your faith—being more precious than gold that, though perishable, is tested by fire—may be found to result in praise and glory and honour when Jesus Christ is revealed. Although you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and rejoice with an indescribable and glorious joy, for you are receiving the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls. Concerning this salvation, the prophets who prophesied of the grace that was to be yours made careful search and inquiry, inquiring about the person or time that the Spirit of Christ within them indicated when it testified in advance to the sufferings destined for Christ and the subsequent glory. It was revealed to them that they were serving not themselves but you, in regard to the things that have now been announced to you through those who brought you good news by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven—things into which angels long to look! Therefore prepare your minds for action; discipline yourselves; set all your hope on the grace that Jesus Christ will bring you when he is revealed. Like obedient children, do not be conformed to the desires that you formerly had in ignorance. Instead, as he who called you is holy, be holy yourselves in all your conduct; for it is written, “You shall be holy, for I am holy.” If you invoke as Father the one who judges all people impartially according to their deeds, live in reverent fear during the time of your exile. You know that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your ancestors, not with perishable things like silver or gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without defect or blemish. He was destined before the foundation of the world, but was revealed at the end of the ages for your sake. Through him you have come to trust in God, who raised him from the dead and gave him glory, so that your faith and hope are set on God. Now that you have purified your souls by your obedience to the truth so that you have genuine mutual love, love one another deeply from the heart. You have been born anew, not of perishable but of imperishable seed, through the living and enduring word of God. For “All flesh is like grass and all its glory like the flower of grass. The grass withers, and the flower falls, but the word of the Lord endures forever”. That word is the good news that was announced to you.

Gospel Reading Luke 24. 13-35

Now on that same day two of them were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem, and talking with each other about all these things that had happened. While they were talking and discussing, Jesus himself came near and went with them, but their eyes were kept from recognizing him. And he said to them, "What are you discussing with each other while you walk along?" They stood still, looking sad. 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?" 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, and how our chief priests and leaders handed him over to be condemned to death and crucified him. 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. Moreover, some women of our group astounded us. They were at the tomb early this morning, 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. 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." Then he said to them, "Oh, how foolish you are, and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have declared! Was it not necessary that the Messiah should suffer these things and then enter into his glory?" Then beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them the things about himself in all the scriptures. As they came near the village to which they were going, he walked ahead as if he were going on. 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. When he was at the table with them, he took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. Then their eyes were opened, and they recognized him; and he vanished from their sight. 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?" That same hour they got up and returned to Jerusalem; and they found the eleven and their companions gathered together. They were saying, "The Lord has risen indeed, and he has appeared to Simon!" Then they told what had happened on the road, and how he had been made known to them in the breaking of the bread.

A suitable song or chant, or a responsory in this or another form, may follow

Death is swallowed up in victory.

All Where, O death, is your sting?

Christ is risen from the dead,
the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep.

All Death is swallowed up in victory.

The trumpet will sound
and the dead shall be raised.

All Where, O death, is your sting?

We shall not all sleep,
but we shall be changed.

All Death is swallowed up in victory.

Where, O death, is your sting?

from 1 Corinthians 15

Gospel Canticle

*The Benedictus (The Song of Zechariah) is normally said,
or The Song of Christ's Glory (page 619) may be said*

Refrain:

**All The Lord is risen from the tomb
who for our sakes hung upon the tree.**

Blessed be the Lord the God of Israel, ♦
who has come to his people and set them free.

He has raised up for us a mighty Saviour, ♦
born of the house of his servant David.

Through his holy prophets God promised of old ♦
to save us from our enemies,
from the hands of all that hate us,

To show mercy to our ancestors, ♦
and to remember his holy covenant.

This was the oath God swore to our father Abraham: ♦
to set us free from the hands of our enemies,

Free to worship him without fear, ♦
holy and righteous in his sight
all the days of our life.

And you, child, shall be called the prophet of the Most High, ♦
for you will go before the Lord to prepare his way,

To give his people knowledge of salvation ♦
by the forgiveness of all their sins.

In the tender compassion of our God ♦
the dawn from on high shall break upon us,

To shine on those who dwell in darkness and the shadow of death, ♦
and to guide our feet into the way of peace.

Luke 1.68-79

**All Glory to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning is now
and shall be for ever. Amen.**

Refrain:

**All The Lord is risen from the tomb
who for our sakes hung upon the tree.**

The Sermon The Reverend Mother Yejide Peters

Were not our hearts burning within us while he was talking to us on the road, while he was opening the scriptures to us?"

I think about the Road to Emmaus, and all that has happened leading up to it. The story has spread among the disciples that Jesus' tomb is empty, and that he is quite possibly alive. Here we have the two disciples-one unnamed, and one whose only (named) appearance is in this story...(well there is a thought that he could be the husband of Mary who is one of the women who followed Jesus and were there at his crucifixion. Even so, this is certainly the only time he is a named participant in a story). So these two disciples who are not part of the inner circle of twelve (now eleven since the death of Judas), are walking when they encounter a stranger. They have a powerful conversation with him. He speaks to them of scripture and they enjoy his company so much, or are concerned for his welfare, that they invite him to stay with them. And it is there, during the meal that he says a blessing over the bread breaks it and shares it with them. Only then do they recognise him as Jesus. And as soon as they do, he vanishes.

They have no idea they have met Jesus, even go so far as to explain to Jesus the story of his very death! And this story gives me so much hope. Because it holds out several promises for us:

- 1- Jesus is with us even when we do not recognise him.
- 2- Jesus meets us in the scripture, and in the telling and retelling of the Gospel and the great story of our redemption. Our own stories of faith are a part of that larger story
- 3- He will make himself known to us at an unexpected time

Let's take up the first proposition: Jesus is with us even when we do not recognise him.

I think many of us are struggling right now to see Jesus, to see redemption and hope. And I want to acknowledge that that is a godly reality. To deny that we do feel this is to deny God the opportunity to step into that space, just as Jesus did on that Emmaus Road. The disciples were "looking sad" when they met him. Sure, they had heard that Jesus was no longer in the tomb, and yet, what exactly had happened to him was unclear. Hearing about the possibility of the Resurrection is not the same as encountering the risen Jesus oneself. We need to hold onto this- Jesus is with us even when we cannot see him. So what do we do in the meantime? We might study scripture, we tell and retell

the story of our faith, we share our own journeys with one another. Why this path? Because this is how Jesus meets them on the road, and he has promised his presence “wherever two or three are gathered.”

Let’s look at the second proposition: Jesus meets us in the scripture, and in the telling and retelling of the Gospel and the great story of our redemption. Our own stories of faith are a part of that larger story.

Jesus does not say to them, “Hi, y’all! It’s okay. I’m back.” Rather he listens to their reports of the crucifixion and the purported resurrection appearance and begins to share with them the seamless connection between the Scriptures (what we would call the Old Testament) and the reality of Jesus the Messiah who is risen. He connects all that they have known of God’s sacred story with the people of Israel with this new sad and bewildering reality in which they live. They are obviously captivated by this, and one can imagine that some of that interpretation survives in our own understanding of scripture and Jesus and his resurrection.

Perhaps this is where we need to focus some of our spiritual energy. Are we studying scripture and listening for God? This week, I have included a Bible Study with the order of service. It is only a guide, one which will hopefully encourage you to delve more deeply into the scripture and into your own faith. However you choose to do so studying our Sacred Story, especially the Great Story of our Redemption, even as we are living our own stories, is essential as walk this uncharted road, and indeed the very path of our life.

Finally, let’s consider the third proposition: Jesus will make himself known to us at an unexpected time. The scripture is filled with references to the surprising nature of God’s interaction with people. It seems that while we are given prophecy and assurance, a sense of the pattern of things, we are not given a time in which things will happen. At heart, all of the post-Easter appearances we hear in the gospels have an element of both great familiarity and unexpected encounter. Jesus meets those who love him in places and ways they do not expect. He meets them after he has died and in a way they (and we) cannot fully comprehend. As we hear today, he meets two of his disciples on the road when they are walking, filled with sorrow. He meets another when she is distraught in a garden, because his corpse has vanished from the tomb. He meets others when at a beach—they are disheartened, having spent a long night fishing and returning with empty nets.

This is, too, how Jesus has, and will, meet us. Perhaps it will be mid-sentence in a scripture reading, or maybe during a walk in the early afternoon. Or maybe he will visit us in a dream, or perhaps we will simply have a profound sense that Jesus is with us, beside us even. But meet us he will. And when he does, may we invite Him into our lives, our homes, and most especially our hearts. May we be ready and eager to receive Him, who has done the impossible, that we might be with Him always.

The Nicene Creed

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen. We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father; through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven, was incarnate from the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary and was made man. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end. We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is worshipped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets. We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

Prayers

Intercessions are offered

I ask your prayers for God's people throughout the world; for Justin Archbishop of Canterbury, John Archbishop of York; Michael our Diocesan Bishop and Sara, our Area Bishop; and for all ministers and people. Pray for the Church.

Silence

I ask your prayers for peace; for goodwill among nations; we pray for our Sovereign Lady Queen Elizabeth, our Prime Minister Boris Johnson, all Ministers of Parliament, and all who govern and hold authority in this and every land.

Pray for the well-being of all people. Pray for justice and peace.

Silence

We give thanks for those newly born and their families, especially Baby Niamh Davies and her parents Rachel and Dennis.

Pray for infants, children, parents and guardians.

Silence

I ask your prayers for the poor, the sick, the hungry, the oppressed, and those in prison.

Pray for those in any need or trouble.

Silence

We pray for those who working on the front lines of this disease throughout the world remembering especially We pray for Dr. Trevor Hunt, Dr. Susan Kelly, and Dr Sade Hendricks. all those working with the NHS, chaplains, and other key workers.

Pray for those who work to ensure our health, safety, and wellbeing.

Silence

We pray especially for those who have asked the prayers of this benefice: for Chris Cheshire, Cathryn, Emma, Malcolm Booth, Jessica, Laverne, Maureen, Rachel, Jubilee, Lara, McKell, Baby Isabella, Casey, Deirdre Bean, Evan and Casey.

Silence

I ask your prayers for all who seek God, or a deeper knowledge of him. Pray that they may find and be found by him.

Silence

I ask your prayers for those who have died. We pray for the departed especially Brion Wong, Jan Green (née Jenkins), Joanna Nichols, Beryl Babel, and Pamela Joy Owens. For the families of those that have died: The Wong family, the Jenkins family, the Nichols family, the Babel family, the Owens family, the Barker family

We also pray for those have died from COVID-19. Pray for all who have died and for those they leave to mourn.

Silence

We also pray for those who are remembered especially this week for Edna Miller, Dorothy Powell.

Silence

Praise God for those in every generation in whom Christ has been honoured. Pray that we may have grace to glorify Christ in our own day.

Silence may be kept.

The Collect of the day is said

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.

All Amen.

The Lord's Prayer is said

Rejoicing in God's new creation,
as our Saviour taught us, so we pray

**All Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Lead us not into temptation
but deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours
now and for ever.
Amen.**

(or)

Rejoicing in God's new creation,
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

May the risen Christ grant us the joys of eternal life.
All Amen.

Let us bless the Lord.
All Thanks be to God.

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Bible Study

Acts 2:14a, 36-41

Peter, standing with the eleven, raised his voice and addressed the crowd, "Let the entire house of Israel know with certainty that God has made him both Lord and Messiah, this Jesus whom you crucified."

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?" Peter said to them, "Repent, and be baptised 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. 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." And he testified with many other arguments and exhorted them, saying, "Save yourselves from this corrupt generation." So those who welcomed his message were baptised, and that day about three thousand persons were added.

1. This account tells of an experience after Jesus's ascension. Peter's command to repent echoes that given by St. John before and during Jesus's public ministry. Compare and contrast these different calls to baptism using the passage below from the Gospel of Matthew:

"in those days John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness of Judea, proclaiming, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near."

Now John wore clothing of camel's hair with a leather belt around his waist, and his food was locusts and wild honey. Then the people of Jerusalem and all Judea were going out to him, and all the region along the Jordan, and they were baptised by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins.'

Again, consider this passage that follows in Matthew verses 7-11) "But when he saw many Pharisees and Sadducees coming for baptism, he said to them, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bear fruit worthy of repentance. Do not presume to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our ancestor'; for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. Even now the ax is lying at the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.

"I baptise you with water for repentance, but one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to carry his sandals. He will baptise you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor and will gather his wheat into the granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire." (Matthew 3, 1-6)

2. What are the primary qualities of St. John's call to baptism? St. Peter's?

3. How do you view repentance? Is it a one time renunciation? A continual one?

4. Part of what St. Peter does in this passage is share his own experience of knowing Jesus to a crowd of thousands. Have you ever made a public profession of faith (for example, where you baptised as an adult, confirmed as a teenager or young adult, reaffirmation of faith, publicly shared a faith story? If yes, what was that like? If no, how do you think that would feel?

5. Reread the passage from Acts. What is the gift of the Holy Spirit? How is it relevant to baptism?

Throughout the week: Pray for the continued presence of the Holy Spirit in your life and heart.

The Collect

Holy God, faithful and unchanging: enlarge our minds with the knowledge of your truth, and draw us more deeply into the mystery of your love, that we may truly worship you, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen

(Common Worship, A Collect for Trinity Sunday)