



Easter Sunday – In It Together!

Psalm 118:14-24 / Acts 10:34-43 / Matthew 28:1-10

Here we are on our most significant day in our church calendar and spiritual life. The celebration of the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. The day that heralds for us our victory over death, the promise of eternal life and the life in abundance that we have access to now.

Christ is Risen – He is Risen indeed. Hallelujah!

We have been urged more than ever to stay at home this weekend, the Bishop of Dover, Rev'd Rose Hudson-Wilkin affirmed this on national TV on Good Friday. It is a great sadness for us not to gather as the church of God on this very special day – but, today, more than ever, we must do our part in this, keeping others safe and serving the needs of this current time. This is what Christians, inspired by the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, have done for centuries. Some of us have been making Easter Gardens to put outside our homes, and I think this time will inspire new ideas for Christian witness going forward! Please do join in with the liturgy in this document for Easter Day as we stay well, safe and very blessed.

This week as I have prayed during the day and reflected I have been drawn to the wire tree with the red glass hearts on it – *pictured above*. I deliberately placed it on my 'office altar' last Sunday – I'll tell you why:

You bought it for me, from your generous collection, when I left Keston to go to Burrswood in 2017, it stayed on my windowsill whilst I was there and it represented for me all the hearts at Keston – I often looked at it and prayed for you all. Now it is back in Keston with me and again reminds me of you all and prompts me to pray for you; however, it now has the new significance for me, of being a visual of us all together even though we are apart.

The disciples of Jesus had been separated from him. They had been traumatised by his crucifixion and left in fear, not only for their own lives, but of never seeing Jesus again. Then, even though they should have known he would come back to them, as he said he would, he is back. Appearing to the women – as they 'ran very frightened but also filled with joy' Jesus met them and greeted them. And, as they fell down in worship, (*if you've ever been in a state of shock or fear, your legs go like jelly!*) Jesus is there saying to them: "Don't be afraid!" This is not the last time we will read of Jesus saying this. **"Don't be afraid!"**

In times of shock, fear, grief or uncertainty, Jesus comes to us and says **"Don't be afraid!"**

Because....'The Lord is our strength and our song: the Lord has given us victory. Songs of joy and victory are sung in the camp of the godly. The strong arm of the Lord has done glorious things!' Psalm 118 - which has been our Lectionary reading for the past couple of weeks. I wonder if this Psalm might become a 'go to' word for these times? 'Give thanks to the Lord – His faithful love endures forever.' No matter what – AND – *Don't be afraid!*

I did think I would light the new Paschal Candle today, but I have decided it would be wholly appropriate to light it when we are all back together in church!

I encourage you to look back over previous magazines – see what a thriving community we have. And especially the latest edition – you'll find how generous we've been able to be in the past year on page 8, the Easter Quiz on page 14 and a special prayer for this coronavirus pandemic on page 17.

Christ is Risen – He is Risen indeed. Hallelujah!

Things to ponder on this week.....

- What do you feel inspired to see happen in our community?
- How do you think you have changed as a result of these past weeks?
- What are you most grateful for?

Please be encouraged to keep a journal of this most exceptional time!



**Join together in worship and prayer.....
at 10am if you can**

During Lent we may have made sacrifices by fasting from certain things as we sought to join, with the sacrifice Jesus made for all Creation on the cross. Then we journeyed through Holy Week. Re-living, through the Scriptures, the events leading up to the crucifixion of Jesus; how he was betrayed, denied and crucified.

Today we remember with JOY and celebration, the resurrection of Jesus - his rising again to life! We celebrate because this is Good News for us all – that we can have a 'new life' when we turn to Jesus. When we follow him we are called to a life of love and peace - called to love our neighbours as ourselves.



When we meet again we will bring in the new Paschal Candle, a candle which remains in the church until next Easter and is lit throughout the year at baptisms and funerals and other occasions to symbolise for us the light of Christ with us. As we now light a candle wherever we are, we have the opportunity to renew, or maybe say for the first time, the vows said during a baptism.

Saying, or renewing these vows, is a way of affirming our commitment to following Jesus Christ, who the Bible says is The Way, The truth and The Life. (John 14:6)

Saying these words means we put Jesus at the centre of our life now and always – and look to that promised new life and a brighter future.

Light a candle and focus for a moment on the flickering flame....

Now that we have completed our observance of Lent, and we celebrate the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ from the dead, we renew the promises made at our baptism, affirming our allegiance to Christ, and our rejection of all that is evil.

Therefore, please answer these questions:

Do you reject the devil and all rebellion against God?

I reject them.

Do you renounce the deceit and corruption of evil?

I renounce them.

Do you repent of the sins that separate us from God and neighbour?

I repent of them.

Do you turn to Christ as Saviour?

I turn to Christ.

Do you submit to Christ as Lord?

I submit to Christ.

Do you come to Christ, the Way, the Truth and the Life?

I come to Christ.

We must not be ashamed to confess the faith of Christ crucified.

Let us fight valiantly as disciples of Christ against sin, the world and the devil, and remain faithful to Christ to the end of our lives.

May Almighty God deliver *me* from the powers of darkness, restore in *me* the image of his glory, and lead *me* in the light and obedience of Christ.

Amen.

Let us confess our sins

Jesus Christ, risen master and triumphant Lord, we come to you in sorrow for our sins, and confess to you our weaknesses and unbelief.

We have lived for this world alone and doubted our home in heaven.

We have lived by our own strength and not by the power of the resurrection.

In your mercy, forgive us.

Amen.

The Absolution

May the God of love and power forgive us and free us from our sins, heal and strengthen us by the Spirit, and raise us to new life in Christ our risen Lord.

Amen.



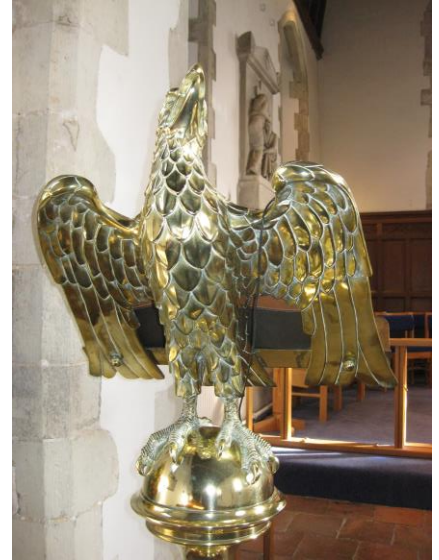
The Gloria *is said or sung*

**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 Collect

**Risen Christ, for whom no door is locked, no heart is closed:
Open the doors of our compassion,
that we may seek the good of others
and walk the joyful road of sacrifice and peace,
to the praise of God our Father.
Amen.**

Readings: Psalm 118:14-24 / Acts 10:34-43 / Matthew 28:1-10

Take some time to pray as the Spirit leads you.....

Remember: The night before he died, Jesus shared a meal with his friends.
Remember: Jesus took bread thanked God, broke it and gave it to his friends.

Remember: After the meal, Jesus took the cup of wine.
He thanked God, and gave it to his friends, saying:
"Drink this, all of you. This represents my blood,
the new promise of God's unfailing love for you all."

Whatever we eat and drink today,
let us remember Christ's death and resurrection;
let us ask for the Holy Spirit to be with us
as we eat and drink the gifts given to us.
Whatever they may be, may they be for us, Christ's body and blood.



Spend some time in silence reflecting on the words of Jesus "I am with you always"

Rejoicing in God's new creation,
let us pray with confidence as our Saviour taught us.

**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 forever.
Amen.**



A prayer for all

**Eternal God, Creator of all that is seen and unseen,
shield us under the shadow of your wings
and renew our strength as we trust in you.
Jesus, guide us into all wisdom
and may we triumph over fear and celebrate your victory.
Holy Spirit, fill us with the power to live as citizens of heaven;
whilst being people who come in the name of the Lord, here on earth.
Amen.**

Blessing

God, who through the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ
has given us the victory,
now give to us joy and peace in our faith:
And the blessing of God almighty,
the Father, the Risen Son and the Holy Spirit be alive within us,
and remain with us, and those we love, now and always.
Amen.

**Wishing you a
very Happy Easter**



NEW HYMN FOR EASTER 2020 (NOT IN THE SANCTUARY)

This Easter Celebration
AURELIA 7.6.7.6 D ("The Church's One Foundation")

This Easter celebration is not like ones we've known.
We pray in isolation, we sing the hymns alone.
We're distant from our neighbors— from worship leaders, too.
No flowers grace the chancel to set a festive mood.

No gathered choirs are singing; no banners lead the way.
O God of love and promise, where's joy this Easter Day?
With sanctuaries empty, may homes become the place
we ponder resurrection and celebrate your grace.

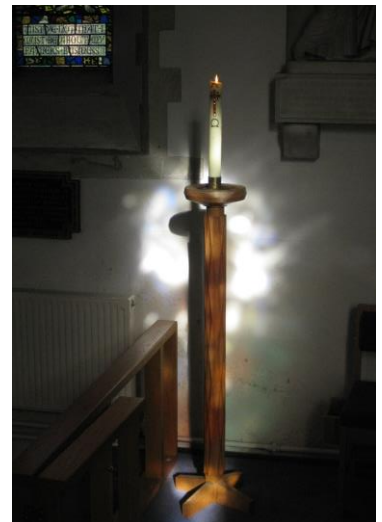
Our joy won't come from worship that's in a crowded room
but from the news of women who saw the empty tomb.
Our joy comes from disciples who ran with haste to see—
who heard that Christ is risen, and then, by grace, believed.

In all the grief and suffering, may we remember well:
Christ suffered crucifixion and faced the powers of hell.
Each Easter bears the promise: Christ rose that glorious day!
Now nothing in creation can keep your love away.

We thank you that on Easter, your church is blessed to be
a scattered, faithful body that's doing ministry.
In homes and in the places of help and healing, too,
we live the Easter message by gladly serving you.

Tune: Samuel Sebastian Wesley, 1864
Text: Copyright © 2020 by Carolyn Winfrey Gillette.
Email: carolynshymns@gmail.com New Hymns:

www.carolynshymns.com



Please check out the Church of England website and the Rochester and Canterbury Diocese websites for more resources....

www.churchofengland.org

www.rochester.anglican.org

www.canterburydiocese.org

Radio

- Prayer for the Day daily at 5.43am on BBC Radio 4
- Sunday Worship Sundays at 8.10am on BBC Radio 4
- Daily Service Monday to Friday at 9.45am on BBC Radio 4 Longwave It is also available on a Radio 4 DAB side channel which is automatically made available about a minute before the program begins.
- Lent Talks Wednesdays at 8.45pm on BBC Radio 4
- Choral evensong- Wednesdays at 3.30pm and the same service is repeated Sundays at 3pm on BBC Radio 3
- Listen live or catch up using [BBC Sounds](#)

Television

- BBC – 11.45am – Church Service
- Songs of Praise Sundays at 1.15pm on BBC1. Listen live or catch up [BBC iPlayer](#)

Prayer

- [Church of England daily prayer](#)
- [Audio daily prayer](#)
- [24-7prayer](#)