



## 26<sup>th</sup> April 2020 – Easter 3

### Still Together, Though Separated!



Again our Bible readings this week bring us comfort at this time, a time that will go down in history! Psalm 116 reminds us that the Lord bends down to listen to our prayers. Even when the terrors of the grave overtake us. It talks of believing in God, praising God and offering thanksgiving. The work of God's saints at the moment is to pray, pray and pray again! That's why I've included the simple prayer model of A.C.T.S. on the next page.

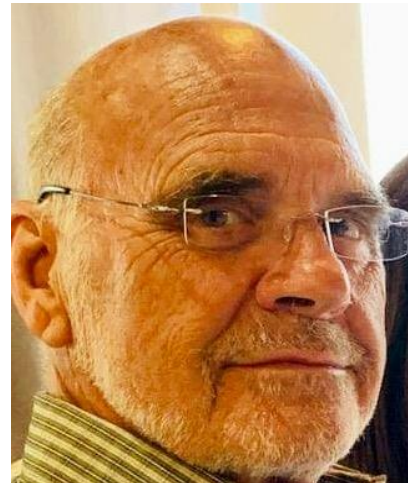
We hear Peter preach the gospel powerfully – words that pierced the hearts of the hearers and caused them to ask: "What should we do?" Peter, of course, replies "Repent of your sins and turn to God, and be baptised in the name of Jesus for the forgiveness of your sins." These passages form what is really the bottom line for us. Praise God, offer thanksgiving, ask forgiveness, turn to God - PRAY. Simply turn to God each step of the way on this uncertain path – because although this path may be uncertain our God never changes and certainly never leaves us. God walks this path with us, so walk closely.

**Christ is Risen – He is Risen indeed. Hallelujah!**

### A Message from Our Friend Rev Eric Heselwood

Hope you are all behaving yourselves out there, not having parties, without inviting me!!

An interesting point on this first Sunday after Easter. Those early disciples were in lockdown men and women nursing broken hopes and shattered dreams. In Jesus they had hoped for the completion of Gods kingdom, but this charismatic young Rabi was another in a long list of preachers and prophets who had let them down. Instead of the Kingdom, was the cross.



So they gathered to lick their wounds and shut themselves away in that bolted and barred upper room, afraid that what had happened to Jesus could as easily happen to them. But the bars couldn't keep Jesus out, and his first word was PEACE. He asked Mary at the Tomb, not to touch him, but here he asked his doubting friends to place their finger into the mark of the nails, thrust their fist into his side. Those friends believed, because Jesus revealed himself to them, as he does to us today.

Lockdown, I am sure has not been easy for many of you on your own, probably the same, even for those who have had the support of family members. I can boast the cleanest and neatest garden in the area!! I have read books, fumed at social media, telling the government how to get on with the job!! But within my prayers, I have asked Gods protection for my family, as well as many others, cried over the stories of bereavement, and as I have clapped for the NHS, I

have surrounded my clapping with my prayers for those on the front line. Probably, you have done the same.

But I come back to that greeting of Jesus, PEACE. In all this God has some plan, some purpose. This world is his loved creation, not to be cast off by God, or even thwarted by mankind. Someway or other , we must come out of this tragedy respecting, searching, knowing what God has been saying, and in his way revealing to us. Nation has to speak peace unto nation. In Gods good time, the first thing I want to do when we are through this, is to go to Keston church and say THANK YOU.

May God bless us and answer our prayers.

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As we're reading the book of Acts at the moment...

### A.C.T.S. Prayer

#### A – Adoration

Worship and praise God. Express how wonderful God is.

#### C – Confession

Admit your sins and brokenness before  
God, ask for forgiveness.

#### T – Thanksgiving

Say 'thank you' to God. Give thanks for all God has done and is doing  
in your life.

#### S – Supplication

Make your requests to God. Bring the needs of the world, your family,  
friends and neighbours – and yourself before God.

### Readings for this week

Psalms 116:1-3, 10-end / Acts 2:14a, 36-41 / Luke 24:13-35

*Light a candle if you can and focus for a moment on the flickering flame....*

**The Lord is here – his Spirit is with us.**

The Collect

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 you Son our Lord,  
who is alive and reigns with you,  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and forever.  
Amen.



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

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.

Pray a Blessing for Us All

May God keep us and Christ shield us;  
may the Spirit bring healing and peace.  
May God the Holy Trinity drive all darkness from us:  
And the blessing God: the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit  
be with us, this nation and the world,  
now and always.  
Amen.

A Poem from Mrs Johanne Turner from Keston Primary School

When the bells all chimed at midnight,  
All across the land,  
As we laughed and drank, sang 'Auld Land Syne',  
We talked of what we'd planned.

Resolutions made that night,  
Some wild ideas were sown,  
We raised a glass without a care,  
Oh how could we have known.

Now we live in isolation,  
With confusion, panic, fear,  
Torn away from family,  
And friends we hold so dear.

But there's blossom on the trees out there,  
Spring has just begun,  
Mother Nature ever hopeful,  
So sit tight everyone.

The storm will pass, as all storms do,  
Lessons learned along the way,  
And after, we'll be stronger,  
And rejoice in each new day.

I've made myself a promise,  
One I'll gladly share,  
To value those around me,  
So they're in no doubt that I care.

Our values may be different then,  
To resolutions made before,  
They may well be more simple,  
Just to love each other more.

So let's raise a glass from isolation,  
I send love from me to you,  
I cannot wait for that next hug,  
And the one the next day too.



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This Wednesday there was 'Earth Day' – again poignant timing as the earth enjoys a break from human pollution. Why not visit their website [www.earthday.org](http://www.earthday.org)

This Thursday was, of course, St George's Day – praise God for courage!

From the Collect for St George's Day

God of hosts, who so kindled the flame of love in the heart of your servant George;  
give us the same faith and power of love that we who rejoice in his triumphs  
may come to share with him the fullness of the resurrection.

A Messy Church banner of the Church organ pipes

Worship the Lord! Please Watch to the end.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z0aKC3K>



Some words for the week ahead from the book  
'Encountering the Depths by Mother Mary Clare SLG

The most difficult and decisive part of prayer is acquiring the ability to listen. Listening is now passive affair, a space when we happen not to be doing or speaking. Inactivity and superficial silence do not necessarily mean that we are in a position to listen. Listening is a conscious, willed action, requiring alertness and vigilance, by which our whole attention is focussed and controlled. Listening is in this sense a difficult thing. And it is decisive because it is the beginning of our entry into a personal and unique relationship with God, in which we hear the call of our own special responsibilities for which God has intended us. Listening is the aspect of silence in which we receive the commission of God.

