

Easter Sunday 31st March 2024: Holy Communion Service

Welcome

One - Stones of fear are rolled away. **Christ is risen!**

Two - Walls of prejudice are broken down. **Christ is risen!**

Three - Those who were pushed aside are welcomed in. **Christ is risen!**

Alleluia. Christ is risen **He is risen indeed. Alleluia.**

New Testament Reading

Acts 10.34–43

This is the word of the Lord; **Thanks be to God**

Song

OH, TO SEE THE DAWN

Of the darkest day:
Christ on the road to Calvary.
Tried by sinful men,
Torn and beaten then
Nailed to a cross of wood.

*This, the power of the cross:
Christ became sin for us.
Took the blame, bore the wrath –
We stand forgiven at the cross.*

Oh, to see the pain
Written on Your face,
Bearing the awesome weight of sin.
Every bitter thought,
Every evil deed
Crowning Your bloodstained brow.

Now the daylight flees,
Now the ground beneath
Quakes as its maker bows His head.
Curtain torn in two,
Dead are raised to life;
'Finished!' the victory cry.

Oh, to see my name
Written in the wounds,
For through Your suffering I am free.
Death is crushed to death,
Life is mine to live,
Won through Your selfless love.

We say sorry to God and one another

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.**

We are forgiven

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.**

Song

THANK YOU FOR SAVING ME;

What can I say?

You are my everything,

I will sing Your praise.

You shed Your blood for me;

What can I say?

You took my sin and shame,

A sinner called by name.

*Great is the Lord.
So great is the Lord.
For we know Your truth has set us free;
You've set Your hope in me.*

Mercy and grace are mine,
Forgiven is my sin;
Jesus, my only hope,
The Saviour of the world.
'Great is the Lord,' we cry;
God, let Your kingdom come.
Your word has let me see,
Thank You for saving me.

*Great is the Lord.
So great is the Lord.
Great is the Lord.
So great is the Lord.
For we know Your truth has set us free;
You've set Your hope in me*

The church's prayer for today:

God of glory, by the raising of your Son you have broken the chains of death and hell: fill your Church with faith and hope; for a new day has dawned and the way to life stands open in our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.

Gospel

John 20.1–18

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John; **Glory to you, O Lord.**

This is the Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

Talk

Song

IN THE DARKNESS we were waiting
Without hope, without light
'Til from Heaven You came running
There was mercy in Your eyes
To fulfil the law and prophets
To a virgin came the word
From a throne of endless glory
To a cradle in the dirt

*Praise the Father, praise the Son
Praise the Spirit, three in one
God of glory, Majesty
Praise forever to the King of Kings*

To reveal the kingdom coming
And to reconcile the lost
To redeem the whole creation
You did not despise the cross
For even in your suffering
You saw to the other side
Knowing this was our salvation
Jesus for our sake you died

And the morning that You rose
All of Heaven held its breath
'Til that stone was moved for good
For the Lamb had conquered death
And the dead rose from their tombs
And the angels stood in awe
For the souls of all who'd come
To the Father are restored

And the church of Christ was born
Then the Spirit lit the flame
Now this gospel truth of old
Shall not kneel, shall not faint

By His blood and in His name
In His freedom I am free
For the love of Jesus Christ
Who has resurrected me

Prayers of intercession

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

The Peace

God has called us to live in peace.

The peace of the Lord be always with you; **and also with you.**

Communion

The Lord is here. **His Spirit is with us.**

Lift up your hearts. **We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give thanks and praise.

Question: Why is it right to give thanks and praise?

Answer: Listen, and we will hear.

Lord of all life, you created the universe, where all living things reflect your glory. You give us this great and beautiful earth, to discover and to cherish.

You give us your love, even when things go wrong. Jesus knew hurt and pain. Through him you wipe away our tears, and fill us with your peace.

You made us all, each wonderfully different, to join with the angels and sing your praise:

Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

We thank you, loving Father, because, when we turned away, you sent Jesus, your Son. He gave his life for us on the cross and shows us the way to live. Send your Holy Spirit that these gifts of bread and wine may be for us Christ's body and his blood.

Question Why do we share this bread and wine?

Answer Listen, and we will hear.

On the night before he died, when darkness had fallen, Jesus took bread. He gave thanks, broke it, and shared it with his disciples, saying: 'This is my body, given for you. Do this to remember me.'

After they had eaten, he took the cup of wine, gave thanks, and shared it with his disciples, saying: 'This is my blood, poured out for you and for many, for the forgiveness of sins.'

So Father, with this bread and this cup we celebrate his love, his death, his risen life.

As you feed us with these gifts, send your Holy Spirit, and change us more and more to be like Jesus our Saviour.

Question How do we follow Jesus Christ?

Answer Listen, and we will hear.

Follow God's example and live a life of love just as Jesus loved us and gave himself for us. Live as children of light and find out what pleases the Lord.

Help us, Father, to love one another, as we look forward to that day when suffering is ended, and all creation is gathered in your loving arms.

And now with all your saints we give you glory, through Jesus Christ, in the strength of the Spirit, today and for ever. **Amen.**

The Lord's Prayer

As our Saviour taught us, so we pray

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

We break this bread to share in the body of Christ; **Though we are many, we are one body, because we all share in one bread.**

We share bread and wine together

Jesus, love resurrected, comes to each of us as the bread of life, and the cup of blessing. Friends, these are the gifts of God for the people of God.

We would love to pray for you – you will find our prayer team waiting at the front-left.

Prayer after communion

Merciful Lord, grant your people grace to withstand the temptations of the world, the flesh and the devil, and with pure hearts and minds to follow you, the only God; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Notices

Song

**THINE BE THE GLORY,
Risen, conquering Son;
Endless is the victory
Thou o'er death hast won.
Angels in bright raiment
Rolled the stone away,
Kept the folded grave-clothes
Where Thy body lay.**

*Thine be the glory,
Risen, conquering Son;
Endless is the victory
Thou o'er death hast won!*

Lo, Jesus meets us,
Risen from the tomb!
Lovingly He greets us,
Scatters fear and gloom.
Let the church with gladness
Hymns of triumph sing,
For her Lord now liveth,
Death hath lost its sting.

No more we doubt Thee,
Glorious Prince of life;
Life is naught without Thee:
Aid us in our strife;
Make us more than conquerors,
Through Thy deathless love;
Lead us in Thy triumph
To Thy home above.

The Blessing

From where we are to where you need us, **Christ be beside us.**
From what we are to what you can make of us, **Christ be before us.**
From old systems to new ways, **Christ be beneath us.**
Through the streets of this world to the very gates of heaven, **Christ be above us.**

May Christ who out of defeat brings new hope and a new future,
fill you with new life; and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the
Son, and the Holy Spirit, be upon you and remain with you for ever.

Amen.

He is not here. He is risen.
Go in the peace of Christ. Alleluia, alleluia.

Thanks be to God. Alleluia, alleluia.