

# THE SUNDAY SUPPLEMENT

12<sup>th</sup> April 2020 – Easter Sunday

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## WELCOME

Welcome to this week's *Sunday Supplement*. Thank you for all the numerous messages of support that you have sent over the past couple of weeks by email, text and phone. It is much appreciated.

It has been great to hear from so many people, and also to hear how we have been in touch with each other. Please pray for others during this time of isolation. I am praying for everyone I know of, by name, through the week. Remember that although we are many and apart, we remain one in the body of Christ. May the Lord be with you this Holy Week.

*God of compassion,  
be close to those who are ill, afraid or in isolation.  
In their loneliness, be their consolation;  
in their anxiety, be their hope;  
in their darkness, be their light;  
through him who suffered alone on the cross,  
but reigns with you in glory,  
Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

### To get in touch:

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## EASTER SUNDAY WORSHIP

Today we provide three options for Sunday worship:

- Using the Act of Spiritual Communion on page 4.
- Listening to the daily Morning Prayer audio track.
- Watching our Easter Service on YouTube.

The audio recording of Morning Prayer can be accessed as follows:

<https://www.achurchnearyou.com/church/4742/page/55145/view/>

All our services, including Morning Prayer, can be found on our YouTube channel:

<https://youtu.be/mMvyytzziM>

Thank you for watching the services online and for sending me your good wishes in response. At the time of writing, our Palm Sunday Eucharist had been viewed

150 times and the other services were coming up quickly from behind.

## READINGS & COLLECT

Acts 10:34-43  
Colossians 3:1-4  
Matthew 28:1-10

Almighty and everlasting God,  
who in your tender love towards the human race  
sent your Son our Saviour Jesus Christ  
to take upon him our flesh  
and to suffer death upon the cross:  
grant that we may follow the example of his patience  
and humility,  
and also be made partakers of his resurrection;  
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. **Amen.**

## EASTER SUNDAY MESSAGE

*Also available as the sermon in our video service.*

There have been dark times recently, even as the sun has shone. We cannot prevent the world from being tinged with suffering. It is so full of humanity, and of natural energy, and so teeming with competing life: some of its interactions will inevitably be painful. What is required in such circumstances is to hold fast to what is good and to hope in the future.

Our vigil reading from John 14 on Thursday night reminded us that Jesus promised to send the Holy Spirit, the comforter, who will abide in us forever. That same passage also assures us that Jesus leaves us his peace: a different and a greater reassurance than earthly peace. Jesus didn't say, 'nothing bad will happen', but he *did* say, do not let your hearts be troubled, do not be afraid. The Holy Spirit is with us now.

Easter Day affirms the greatest reassurance of all, that of the resurrection to eternal life. Jesus is not only the pioneer of our faith, as the Book of Hebrews teaches, but the pioneer of the resurrection life. He is, as St Paul says in his First Letter to the Corinthians, the first fruit of those who have been asleep.

Easter is about hope. Now, if you are a glass half empty sort of a person, as I sometimes am, you may say, “*it’s a bit difficult to think about hope in the present situation*”. If you are a glass half full sort of a person, as I sometimes am, you might say “*we need as much hope as we can get at present*”. Let me try to say something about hope that accommodates both kinds of thinking, because Christian faith, and Jesus Christ himself, accommodate, welcome and value every kind of personality.

Hope is not a sort of free gift, taped in a cellophane wrapper to the front of the magazine of life. It is easy to hope, when things are good. I hope there will be something good for dinner. I hope I will get something nice for my birthday. When the economy is on the up, it is easy to say, I hope for a promotion, I hope for a raise, even “I hope that everyone will be better off.”

That is a passive sort of hope. There is another kind of hope. It is the hope we have when things are not going the way we would like, as they are not at present. We hope that our worship will reach everyone who needs it, especially those who cannot connect with the church online. We hope that our hospitals will find the resources they need. We hope that the people who have lost income or jobs will find support.

These are hopes that, when things are bad, we will find ways to make them better. These hopes are not passive; if they were, they would be pointless. They are active. They imply that we, often collectively, must find solutions to the problems. We hope that no-one in our parishes will be left unsupported during the lockdown, so we have set up different support networks to try to guarantee that. We hope that no-one will go hungry, so we have raised over £500 in the past couple of weeks, and a huge amount of additional giving in kind, to support our foodbank. I am sure that there are other areas of need that we are overlooking, locally and further afield. I hope that you will bring them to my attention. I hope that you or I will be moved to take action.

This is the sort of hope to which Jesus calls us. Look at the reading from Acts 10 today. Peter is giving a sermon at the house of Cornelius. Cornelius, you will recall, is a Roman centurion, a soldier in an occupying force. He is also one who fears God (a “god-fearer”), in other words, a gentile who has embraced parts of the Jewish faith. We are told two key things about him: he gave alms, that is, he gave to charity; and he prayed constantly. So Peter is addressing a sympathetic and like-minded audience, but one that knows nothing about Jesus. He therefore explains that Jesus is the Lord

of All, who was put to death and raised on the third day, and that all the prophets testify that those who believe in him will receive forgiveness.

Alongside these key messages about the divine Jesus, the Son of God who died and rose again, Peter also says one thing about the earthly, human Jesus: *that he went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed*. That is what it looks like to be God on earth. This what it looks like, to look like Jesus.

I said in my Maundy Thursday sermon that the forgiveness Jesus offers isn’t just a cancellation of guilt which allows us to sit back and not worry any more about what we do. The forgiveness of Jesus is a radical sort of freedom; it releases us to obey the commandments that He gave us. He calls us not to pridefully think that we can end poverty (he warned us that we could not). However, he gave us permission to do just the best we could, out of love for Him and for our neighbour. He called us to love our neighbour not from our armchair, but in the road, like the Good Samaritan did. Loving our neighbour in that way at a time when loving also entails keeping a safe distance, is a challenge. It calls for ingenuity. But it requires action, not a temporary pause in following the Way of Christ. It requires faithful hope that endures and acts, despite the very worst that happens.

Remember Nicodemus, who we encountered a few weeks ago in John chapter 3? He was a furtive enquirer then, only prepared to meet with Jesus in secret at night. In the reading from John 19, the Passion Gospel on Good Friday, we saw that his hope now moved him to act, to bury Jesus according to custom. He acts at his own expense, because the spices are costly; and he acts at his own risk, because the man he is serving has been executed for offences against the state. Nicodemus’ hope is not passive. He acts, not in a spectacular way, but in the way that he can, out of love for Jesus.

Consider also the women at the cross, who accompany Jesus’s body to the tomb, and who return to the tomb on Sunday at dawn. They are still with Jesus, they are still prepared to be associated with him, even when things are at their worst. They do not have great power, but they act resolutely in the one way they can, out of love for Jesus.

So it is that we also, moved by love for Jesus and for our neighbour, should be moved to act. All the more so because we do not despair that Jesus is dead. We know that he is risen and alive. Nicodemus and the women acted in despair. We have a sure and certain hope.

“Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on the earth,” says St Paul to the Colossians. His is a call to holiness. It is a call to perspective, to see this world in the wider context of the Kingdom of God. It is a call neither to embrace this world completely, nor to disdain it entirely, in favour of the life to come. It is a call, I think, to the life of Cornelius, that of prayer and giving; and above all to the life of Jesus, **the** life of prayer and self-giving: of being *in* the world, an actor in the world, but not *of* the world, not a slave to it. It is that self-giving of Jesus Christ, which confers on us the hope of things that are above, that also guides us here below. For if there was nothing more than this life, why should not we not do with it exactly as we fancy? Hang the consequences, and to the non-existent hell with everyone else! Jesus confirms that there *is* more than the world. When we are living our eternal life, let us look back on our mortal lives and be proud of what we did, of how we served God and our neighbour here.

We will come through the current emergency. The experience will be hard: grief-stricken for some, chastening for most. Nothing is worth loss of life. Nothing is worth increasing the hardships which poverty has already inflicted. From a human perspective, from that of Jesus’ followers, nothing was worth the death of their teacher, rabbi, master - Jesus. It’s why Peter had such trouble accepting what Jesus said about his forthcoming suffering. But through his suffering, Jesus gives us hope. He gives us hope in the resurrection to eternal life of which he is the pioneer, through which we will all one day be reunited in perfect

happiness with God and one another. Jesus gives us hope in a forgiveness that frees us to follow him, through thick and thin, in service to others and to the Kingdom of God.

Alleluia, Christ is Risen!  
**He is Risen Indeed, Alleluia!**

## NOTICES

### Community support group

If you need help that you can’t get elsewhere, no matter what your age or circumstances, you can email [duddoncommunity@outlook.com](mailto:duddoncommunity@outlook.com) In Kirkby, you can phone Stephen Tudway (01229) 715259 or Linda Dean (01229) 889630. In Broughton and the valleys you can phone Stephen Tudway (01229) 715259 or Selwyn Wright (01229) 716797. We will be pleased to point one of our volunteers in your direction.

## EASTER EVENING

Please place a lighted candle in a front window this Easter Evening (and every night this week if you wish) and offer this prayer from Evensong:

*Lighten our darkness, we beseech thee, O Lord;  
 and by thy great mercy defend us  
 from all perils and dangers of this night;  
 for the love of thy only Son,  
 our Saviour Jesus Christ.  
 Amen.*

# BEATITUDES

FOR A GLOBAL PANDEMIC

BLESSED ARE THOSE WHO STAY INDOORS



FOR THEY HAVE PROTECTED OTHERS

BLESSED ARE THE UNEMPLOYED AND THE SELF-EMPLOYED



FOR THEIR NEED OF GOD IS GREAT

BLESSED ARE THE CORNER SHOPKEEPERS



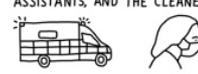
FOR THEY ARE THE PURVEYORS OF SCARCE THINGS

BLESSED ARE THE DELIVERY DRIVERS AND THE POSTAL WORKERS



FOR THEY ARE THE BRINGERS OF ESSENTIAL THINGS

BLESSED ARE THE HOSPITAL WORKERS; THE AMBULANCE CREWS, THE DOCTORS, THE NURSES, THE CARE ASSISTANTS, AND THE CLEANERS



FOR THEY STAND BETWEEN US AND THE GRAVE, AND THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN IS SURELY THEIRS

BLESSED ARE THE CHECKOUT WORKERS



FOR THEY HAVE PATIENCE AND FORTITUDE IN THE FACE OF OVERWORK AND FRUSTRATION

BLESSED ARE THE REFUSE COLLECTORS



FOR THEY WILL SEE GOD DESPITE THE MOUNTAINS OF WASTE

BLESSED ARE THE TEACHERS



FOR THEY REMAIN STEADFAST AND CONSTANT IN DISTURBING TIMES

BLESSED ARE THE CHURCH WORKERS; THE DEACONS, PRIESTS AND BISHOPS



FOR THEY ARE A COMFORTING PRESENCE IN A HURTING WORLD AS THEY CONTINUE TO SIGNPOST TOWARDS GOD

BLESSED ARE THE SINGLE PARENTS.



FOR THEY ARE COPING ALONE WITH THEIR RESPONSIBILITIES AND THERE IS NO RESPITE

BLESSED ARE THOSE WHO ARE ALONE.



FOR THEY ARE CHILDREN OF GOD AND WITH HIM THEY WILL NEVER BE LONELY

BLESSED ARE THE BEREAVED.



FOR WHOM THE WORST HAS ALREADY HAPPENED THEY SHALL BE COMFORTED

BLESSED ARE THOSE WHO ARE ISOLATED WITH THEIR ABUSERS



FOR ONE DAY - WE PRAY - THEY WILL KNOW SAFETY

BLESSED ARE ALL DURING THIS TIME WHO HAVE PURE HEARTS: ALL WHO STILL HUNGER AND THIRST FOR JUSTICE; ALL WHO WORK FOR PEACE AND WHO MODEL MERCY



MAY YOU KNOW COMFORT. MAY YOU KNOW CALM. AND MAY THE GRACE OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST, AND THE LOVE OF GOD, AND THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE HOLY SPIRIT, BE WITH US ALL. AMEN

# AN ACT OF SPIRITUAL COMMUNION

## Prayer

*You may wish to set aside a space for prayer in front of a cross and/or candle, in a part of the house which is calm and comfortable and perhaps decorated for Easter.*

*The Act of Spiritual Communion is best used at the time of normal church services, or as a personal response after listening to a broadcast or livestreamed service.*

*Guidance appears in italics. You may wish to say aloud the words in bold type.*

## Introduction

*Begin by making the sign of the cross and thinking of those who might otherwise be sitting around you in church.*



**In the name of the Father,  
And of the Son,  
And of the Holy Spirit.  
Amen.**

## Reflection

*Spend some time reflecting upon the past year.*

**Jesus Christ, risen Master, 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.**

*Give thanks to God that he sent his only Son to die on the cross and rise again that we might be reconciled to Him once and for all.*

## The Word of God

*Read one or more passages of scripture, perhaps the readings set for the day. Sunday readings can be found in the Sunday Supplement. You may like to read the sermon.*

*Begin with the Collect. Ask the Holy Spirit to guide you to the needs of the world, our community, family and friends and to the prayers you ought to offer for them.*

*Pray for our churches, the buildings, the people and the common, that they may be reinvigorated in the coming year. Ask God to reveal how he is already working here and where he invites us to join with him.*

*Spend time in silence to reflect on your own circumstances and to feel assured that God is with you.*

*End with the Lord's Prayer:*

**Our Father, who art in heaven... or**

**Our Father in heaven...**

## Prayer for Communion

*Remember all those who might make their communion at Easter.*

**Thanks be to you, Lord Jesus Christ,  
for all the benefits you have given me,  
all the pains and insults you have borne for me.  
Since I cannot now receive you sacramentally,  
I ask you to come spiritually into my heart.  
O most merciful redeemer, friend and brother,  
may I know you more clearly,  
love you more dearly,  
and follow you more nearly, day by day.  
Amen.**

*(After the prayer of St Richard of Chichester)*

## Closing prayers

**God of Life, who for our redemption gave your only-begotten Son to the death of the cross,  
and by his glorious resurrection have delivered us from the power of our enemy: grant us so to die daily to sin, that we may evermore live with him in the joy of his risen life;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.**

*Jesus said, 'I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die.'*

**The Lord bless us, and preserve us from all evil,  
and keep us in eternal life. Amen.**