

# Church at Home

## Fourth Sunday of Easter



## ***Before the Service***

Just over a year ago, as we found ourselves in troubled waters, we launched Church at Home – collaborative, livestreamed worship for anyone who needed it, in the diocese and beyond. We are so incredibly grateful to everyone who has volunteered their talents and time this year, and to all of you who have supported the service - it's been a joy to worship alongside so many of you.

We look forward now to a different summer, with the ability to return to onsite worship on the horizon and with hundreds of churches now offering their own online services. Our final Church at Home will be on Sunday 17 May. We hope you will join us to worship together and pray for God's peace in whatever the future may hold.

[oxford.anglican.org/parish-streams](https://oxford.anglican.org/parish-streams)

## **Alleluia, Christ is risen!**

A very warm welcome as we worship God together from across the Diocese of Oxford on the fourth Sunday of Easter.

We are delighted that the president today is the Rt Revd Dr Alan Wilson, Bishop of Buckingham, and that our address is given by the Revd Richard Lamey, rector of the Parish of St Paul, Wokingham. Many thanks to everyone who has contributed ideas, prayers, words and music for this week's Church at Home as we continue our Eastertide celebrations.

You will notice that the word 'Alleluia' appears frequently throughout the liturgy during the great 50 days of Eastertide, the period between Easter Day and Pentecost, as we speak and sing of our joy and celebrate the glory of the risen Christ. The Easter candle remains lit, we use white or gold vestments, and decorations emphasise the joy and brightness of this wonderful season.

Jesus says: 'I am the Good Shepherd who lays down his life for his sheep', claiming for himself the power of Psalm 23, 'The Lord is my Shepherd' and offering us his presence in our lives. Jesus calls us to follow him, offering us love and life and hope, meeting us in very ordinary and even extraordinary ways and places in our lives. Where will you meet Jesus this week? We pray that you do and that you will know the power and gentleness of the Holy Spirit in your life today. Happy Easter!

*Triumphant in his glory now,  
his sceptre ruleth all,  
earth, heaven and hell before him bow,  
and at his footstool fall.*

*(Fulbert of Chartres)*

Thank you to everyone from across the diocese who has made this service possible, including people from Milton Keynes, Buckingham, Crowmarsh Gifford, Taplow, Chipping Norton, Oxford, Wokingham, Wycombe, Dorchester, Waltham St Lawrence and Marlow.

**He is risen indeed, alleluia!**

We have a gospel to proclaim,  
Good news for men in all the earth;  
The gospel of a Saviour's name,  
We sing His glory, tell His worth.

Tell of His birth at Bethlehem,  
Not in a royal house or hall  
But in a stable dark and dim,  
The Word made flesh, a light for all.

Tell of his death at Calvary,  
Hated by those He came to save,  
In lonely suffering on the cross,  
For all He loved His life he gave.

Tell of that glorious Easter morn,  
Empty the tomb, for He was free.  
He broke the power of death and hell  
That we might share His victory.

Tell of His reign at God's right hand,  
By all creation glorified,  
He sends His Spirit on His church,  
To live for Him, the Lamb who died.

Now we rejoice to name Him King,  
Jesus is Lord of all the earth,  
This gospel message we proclaim,  
We sing His glory, tell His worth.

*Composed by Edward Joseph Burns in 1968,  
set to melody FULDA arranged by William Gardner in 1815.  
Sung by the Choir of the City Church of Milton Keynes  
with Adrian Boynton (organ)*

## Greeting

*President* In the name of the Father;  
and of the Son,  
and of the Holy Spirit.

*All* **Amen.**

*Bishop Alan welcomes the congregation gathered online and introduces the service.*

## Prayers of Penitence

*President* In baptism we died with Christ,  
so that as Christ was raised from the dead,  
we might walk in newness of life.  
Let us receive new life in him,  
as we confess our sins in penitence and faith.

*A moment of silent reflection is kept.*

*President* Like Mary at the empty tomb,  
we fail to grasp the wonder of your presence.  
Lord, have mercy.

*All* **Lord, have mercy.**

Like the disciples behind locked doors,  
we are afraid to be seen as your followers.  
Christ, have mercy.

*All* **Christ, have mercy.**

Like Thomas in the upper room,  
we are slow to believe.  
Lord, have mercy.

*All* **Lord, have mercy.**

## Absolution

*President* 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.

*All* **Amen.**

*All*            **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**

*President*      Let us pray.

*Silence is kept.*

*President*      Risen Christ,  
faithful shepherd of your Father's sheep:  
teach us to hear your voice  
and to follow your command,  
that all your people may be gathered into one flock,  
to the glory of God the Father.

*All*            **Amen,**

*We listen to God speaking through the Scriptures.*

## First Reading

Acts 4:5-12

*Read by Margaret Foster, St Mary Magdalene, Crowmarsh Gifford*

*Reader* A reading from the Acts of the Apostles.

The next day their rulers, elders, and scribes assembled in Jerusalem, with Annas the high priest, Caiaphas, John, and Alexander, and all who were of the high-priestly family. When they had made the prisoners stand in their midst, they inquired, 'By what power or by what name did you do this?' Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, 'Rulers of the people and elders, if we are questioned today because of a good deed done to someone who was sick and are asked how this man has been healed, let it be known to all of you, and to all the people of Israel, that this man is standing before you in good health by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead. This Jesus is "the stone that was rejected by you, the builders; it has become the cornerstone." There is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among mortals by which we must be saved.'

*Reader* This is the word of the Lord.

*All* **Thanks be to God.**

## Second Reading

I John 3:16-24

*Read by Jim Oliver, St Nicolas, Taplow*

*Reader* A reading from the first letter of John.

We know love by this, that he laid down his life for us—and we ought to lay down our lives for one another. How does God's love abide in anyone who has the world's goods and sees a brother or sister in need and yet refuses help?

Little children, let us love, not in word or speech, but in truth and action. And by this we will know that we are from the truth and will reassure our hearts before him whenever our hearts condemn us; for God is greater than our hearts, and he knows everything. Beloved, if our hearts do not condemn us, we have boldness before God; and we receive from him whatever we ask, because we obey his commandments and do what pleases him.

And this is his commandment, that we should believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ and love one another, just as he has commanded us. All who obey his commandments abide in him, and he abides in them. And by this we know that he abides in us, by the Spirit that he has given us.

Reader  
All

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

## Gradual Hymn

All my days, I will sing this song of gladness,  
Give my praise to the fountain of delights;  
For in my helplessness You heard my cry,  
And waves of mercy poured down on my life.

I will trust in the cross of my redeemer,  
I will sing of the blood that never fails;  
Of sins forgiven, of conscience cleansed,  
Of death defeated and life without end.

Beautiful saviour, wonderful counsellor,  
Clothed in majesty, Lord of history,  
You're the way, the truth, the life.  
Star of the morning, glorious in holiness,  
You're the risen one, heaven's champion,  
And You reign, you reign over all.

I long to be where the praise is never ending,  
Yearn to dwell where the glory never fades;  
Where countless worshippers will share one song,  
And cries of 'worthy' will honour the Lamb!

*Words and music by Stuart Townend (1963-)  
The Worship Team at St Mary's,  
Chipping Norton*

## Gospel Reading

John 10:11-18

*Read by the Revd Gemma Beesley, Assistant Curate, Parish of Cowley*

*Deacon* Jesus Christ is risen from the dead.

*All* **Alleluia.**

*Deacon* He has defeated the powers of death.

*All* **Alleluia.**

*Deacon* Jesus turns our sorrows into dancing.

*All* **Alleluia.**

*Deacon* He has the words of eternal life.

*All* **Alleluia.**

*Deacon* Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John.

*All* **Glory to you, O Lord.**

‘I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. The hired hand, who is not the shepherd and does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and runs away—and the wolf snatches them and scatters them. The hired hand runs away because a hired hand does not care for the sheep. I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, just as the Father knows me and I know the Father. And I lay down my life for the sheep. I have other sheep that do not belong to this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd. For this reason, the Father loves me, because I lay down my life in order to take it up again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it up again. I have received this command from my Father.’

*Deacon* This is the Gospel of the Lord.

*All* **Praise to you, O Christ.**

## Reflection

Revd Richard Lamey

Rector of the Parish of St Paul, Wokingham

*After the sermon we keep silence together for a few moments before affirming our faith together in the words of the Creed.*

## **The Creed**

*President*      Let us affirm our faith in God.

*All*              **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 of Intercession**

*Led by members St Francis of Assisi Church, Wycombe  
from their Easter garden*

*We bring ourselves to a place of quiet and stillness as we pray; you may like to adopt  
a prayer posture with your hands open or to focus your gaze on a candle.*

*The response to the prayers is:*

*Intercessor*     Lord, in your mercy,  
*All*                **Hear our prayer.**

*At the end we say:*

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

## **The Peace**

*President*       Alleluia. Christ has been raised from the dead.  
*I Corinthians 15:20*

*President*       The peace of the Lord be always with you.  
*All*                **And also with you.**

*Christians have shared a sign of peace since the very earliest days of the Church.  
Although we are separated by distance, we are one Body of Christ; the Spirit moves  
among us as we share Christ's peace.*

## Offertory Anthem

Lord I trust thee, I adore thee.  
Ah! thou friend of man, restore me!  
On thy loving grace relying,  
For the bread of life I'm sighing.  
Quench my thirst and let my hunger cease,  
Fill my heart with joy and endless peace.  
When the breath of life has left me,  
May my soul be blended with thee.

*Music: George Frederick Handel (1685-1759)*  
*Words: Barthold Heinrich Brockes (1680-1747)*  
*Sung by Waltham St Lawrence Virtual Voices*  
*directed by Simon Shaw, Organ Dr Camilla Jarrot*

### Preparation of the Table

*President* Blessed are you, Lord God of all creation.  
In your loving care you spread before us the table of life  
and give us the cup of salvation to drink.  
Keep us always in the fold of our Saviour and our Shepherd,  
your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

*All* **Amen.**

### The Eucharistic Prayer

*President* The Lord be with you.  
*All* **And also with you.**

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

*President* Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.  
*All* **It is right to give thanks and praise.**

*President* We give you thanks and praise  
for the gospel we have received.  
Christ died for our sins. Alleluia.

*All* **He is risen indeed. Alleluia.**

*President* Death comes to all through Adam,  
and sin reigns for a time.  
New life without end comes through Christ,  
and he reigns for ever. Alleluia.

*All* **He is risen indeed. Alleluia.**

*President* Grave, where is your victory?  
Death, where is your sting?  
Death is swallowed up in victory,  
the victory you give us in Christ. Alleluia.

*All* **He is risen indeed. Alleluia.**

*President* We have been crucified with Christ,  
and live his risen life,  
to praise you for ever with angels and archangels,

*All* **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.**

*President* We praise and bless you, loving Father,  
through Jesus Christ, our Lord;  
and as we obey his command,  
send your Holy Spirit,  
that broken bread and wine outpoured  
may be for us the body and blood of your dear Son.

On the night before he died, he had supper with his friends,  
and, taking bread, he praised you.  
He broke the bread, gave it to them and said:  
'Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you;  
do this in remembrance of me.'

When supper was ended, he took the cup of wine.  
Again, he praised you, gave it to them and said:  
'Drink this, all of you;  
this is my blood of the new covenant,  
which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins.  
Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.'

So, Father, we remember all that Jesus did,  
in him we plead with confidence his sacrifice  
made once for all upon the cross.

Bringing before you the bread of life and cup of salvation,  
we proclaim his death and resurrection  
until he comes in glory.

Jesus Christ is Lord:

*All*      **Lord, by your cross and resurrection,  
you have set us free.  
You are the Saviour of the world.**

*President*      Lord of all life,  
help us to work together for that day  
when your kingdom comes  
and justice and mercy will be seen in all the earth.

Look with favour on your people,  
gather us in your loving arms  
and bring us with all the saints  
to feast at your table in heaven.  
Through Christ, and with Christ, and in Christ,  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
all honour and glory are yours, O loving Father,  
for ever and ever.

*All*      **Amen.**

### **The Lord's Prayer**

*President*      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 it is 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.**

## **Breaking of the Bread**

*The president breaks the consecrated bread.*

## **Invitation to Communion**

*President*      God's holy gifts for God's holy people.  
*All*              **Jesus Christ is holy,  
Jesus Christ is Lord,  
in the glory of God the Father.**

*The president receives the bread and wine on behalf of the community as we make our 'spiritual communion'; taking time to notice God's presence with us and trust that, as we desire communion with God, God will meet us in our hearts by faith.*

*There are no special words or actions required for this; only true desire, lively faith and genuine love. If you find it helpful you may wish to use the following prayer, or simply listen to the music and meditate upon God's love for you.*

Lord, you stand at the door of my heart and knock. You wait for me and only I can let you in. I believe and trust in you and ask you now to fill me with your presence. Feed me with your body and unite me in your blood, that I may be your blessing to a world in need. Amen.

## **Music During Communion**

The Lord's my Shepherd I'll not want  
He makes me lie in pastures green,  
He leads me by the still, still waters,  
His goodness restores my soul.

And I will trust in You alone,  
And I will trust in You alone,  
For Your endless mercy follows me,  
Your goodness will lead me home.

He guides my ways in righteousness,  
And He anoints my head with oil,  
And my cup it overflows with joy  
I feast on His pure delights.

And though I walk the darkest path  
I will not fear the evil one,  
For You are with me and your rod and staff  
Are the comfort I need to know.

*Psalm 23*  
*Stuart Townend (1998)*  
*4U-Team, Marlow*

### **Prayer after Communion**

*President* Let us pray.

Merciful Father,  
you gave your Son Jesus Christ to be our good shepherd,  
and in his love for us to lay down his life and rise again:  
keep us always under his protection,  
and give us grace to follow in his steps;  
through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

*All* **Amen.**

### **Blessing and Dismissal**

*President* God the Father,  
by whose love Christ was raised from the dead,  
open to you who believe the gates of everlasting life.

*All* **Amen.**

*President* God the Son,  
who in bursting from the grave has won a glorious victory,  
give you joy as you share the Easter faith.

*All* **Amen.**

*President* God the Holy Spirit,  
who filled the disciples with the life of the risen Lord,  
empower you and fill you with Christ's peace.

*All* **Amen.**

*President* And the blessing of God almighty,  
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,  
be among you and remain with you always.

*All* **Amen.**

*President* We are raised to new life with Christ.  
Go in his peace. Alleluia, alleluia.

*All* **Thanks be to God. Alleluia, alleluia.**

## **Music**

*Fugue in G Major ('Gigue') by J.S. Bach (1685-1750)*  
*Organist Jeremy Boughton, Dorchester Abbey*

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the 4U-Team, Marlow;  
Jeremy Boughton, Dorchester Abbey.

Our lead liturgist this week was Dr Matthew Salisbury, Director of Studies and Lecturer in Music, University College, and Lecturer, Worcester College. The producer was Revd Sarah Nesbitt, assistant curate, United Benefice of Shiplake with Dunsden and Harpsden. Church at Home is produced each week by Revd Charlotte Bannister-Parker, associate chaplain to the Bishop of Oxford; and Steven Buckley, director of communications; with the help of Emma Thompson, digital communications officer, and Mark Robinson of Digital Creative.

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# COME AND EAT

**Take time to contemplate the profound,  
wonderful meal of Holy Communion.**

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