

Sunday 23 April 2023

The Third Sunday of Easter



Sermon © the Revd Robin Wilding.

Prayers of intercession © Revd Dr Paul Monk.

Liturgy © 2000 The Archbishops' Council.

Bible readings © the publishers of the NRSV translation.

The liturgy assumes the service is Eucharistic. The prayers of consecration are included at the end.

The hymn can be accessed via a YouTube link. Please click on the links.

To see service transcripts from previous weeks, please visit the page,

<http://www.medlockhead.co.uk/resources/index.htm>

The Welcome

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit

All Amen.

The Lord be with you

All And also with you.

Alleluia, Christ is risen!

All He is risen indeed! Alleluia!

HYMN 1 Jesus lives!

[\(please click on this link to hear the hymn\)](#)

The Preparation

**All Almighty God,
to whom all hearts are open,
all desires known,
and from whom no secrets are hidden:
cleanse the thoughts of our hearts
by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit,
that we may perfectly love you,
and worthily magnify your holy name;
through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

Our Lord Jesus Christ said:

The first commandment is this:

‘Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is the only Lord.

You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart,

with all your soul, with all your mind,

and with all your strength.’

And the second is this: ‘Love your neighbour as yourself.’

There is no other commandment greater than these.

On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.

All Amen. Lord, have mercy.

Christ our Passover lamb has been sacrificed for us.

Let us therefore rejoice by putting away all malice and evil

and confess our sins in penitence and faith,

firmly resolved to keep God’s commandments

and to live in love and peace with all.

All Almighty God, our heavenly Father,
we have sinned against you
and against our neighbour
in thought and word and deed,
through negligence, through weakness,
through our own deliberate fault.
We are truly sorry
and repent of all our sins.
For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ,
who died for us,
forgive us all that is past
and grant that we may serve you in newness of life
to the glory of your name. Amen.

Almighty God,
who forgives all who truly repent, have mercy upon you,
pardon and deliver you from all your sins,
confirm and strengthen you in all goodness,
and keep you in life eternal;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All Amen.

The Gloria

This Gloria is sung to the tune of 'Cwm Rhondda'. Click [here](#) for the tune.

All Glory be to God in Heaven,
Songs of joy and peace we bring,
Thankful hearts and voices raising,
To creation's Lord we sing.
Lord we thank you, Lord we praise you,
Glory be to God our King:
Glory be to God our King.

Lamb of God, who on our shoulders,
Bore the load of this world's sin;
Only Son of God the Father,
You have brought us peace within.
Lord, have mercy, Christ have mercy,
Now your glorious reign begin:
Now your glorious reign begin.

**You O Son of God are Holy,
You we praise with one accord.
None in heav'n or earth is like you,
Only you are Christ the Lord.
With the Father and the Spirit,
Ever worshipped and adored:
Ever worshipped and adored.**

The Collect for the Third Sunday of Easter

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

All Amen.

First reading

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles

Peter stood with the eleven, raised his voice, and addressed them: 'Men of Judea and all who live in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and listen to what I say: let the entire house of Israel know with certainty that God has made him both Lord and Messiah, this Jesus whom you crucified.'

Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and to the other apostles, 'Brothers, what should we do?' Peter said to them, 'Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ so that your sins may be forgiven; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is for you, for your children, and for all who are far away, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to him.' And he testified with many other arguments and exhorted them, saying, 'Save yourselves from this corrupt generation.' So those who welcomed his message were baptised, and that day about three thousand persons were added.

Acts 2:2:14a; 36-41

This is the Word of the Lord

All Thanks be to God.

Second reading

A reading from First Letter of St Peter

If you invoke as Father the one who judges all people impartially according to their deeds, live in reverent fear during the time of your exile. You know that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your ancestors, not with perishable things like silver or gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without defect or blemish. He was destined before the foundation of the world, but was revealed at the end of the ages for your sake. Through him you have come to trust in God, who raised him from the dead and gave him glory, so that your faith and hope are set on God.

Now that you have purified your souls by your obedience to the truth so that you have genuine mutual love, love one another deeply from the heart. You have been born anew, not of perishable but of imperishable seed, through the living and enduring word of God. *1 Peter 1:17-23*

This is the Word of the Lord

All Thanks be to God.

HYMN 2 Here is love, vast as the ocean [\(click on this link to hear the hymn\)](#)
Isn't he beautiful [\(please click on this link to hear the hymn\)](#)

Gospel reading

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke

All Glory to you O Lord.

Now on that same day two of them were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem, and talking with each other about all these things that had happened. While they were talking and discussing, Jesus himself came near and went with them, but their eyes were kept from recognising him. And he said to them, 'What are you discussing with each other while you walk along?' They stood still, looking sad. Then one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answered him, 'Are you the only stranger in Jerusalem who does not know the things that have taken place there in these days?' He asked them, 'What things?' They replied, 'The things about Jesus of Nazareth, who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, and how our chief priests and leaders handed him over to be condemned to death and crucified him. But we had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel. Yes, and besides all this, it is now the third day since these things took place. Moreover, some women of our group astounded us. They were at the tomb early this morning, and when they did not find his body there, they came

back and told us that they had indeed seen a vision of angels who said that he was alive. Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said; but they did not see him.' Then he said to them, 'Oh, how foolish you are, and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have declared! Was it not necessary that the Messiah should suffer these things and then enter into his glory?' Then beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them the things about himself in all the scriptures.

As they came near the village to which they were going, he walked ahead as if he were going on. But they urged him strongly, saying, 'Stay with us, because it is almost evening and the day is now nearly over.' So he went in to stay with them. When he was at the table with them, he took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. Then their eyes were opened, and they recognised him; and he vanished from their sight. They said to each other, 'Were not our hearts burning within us while he was talking to us on the road, while he was opening the scriptures to us?' That same hour they got up and returned to Jerusalem; and they found the eleven and their companions gathered together. They were saying, 'The Lord has risen indeed, and he has appeared to Simon!' Then they told what had happened on the road, and how he had been made known to them in the breaking of the bread.

Luke 24:13-35

This is the Gospel of the Lord

All Praise to you O Christ.

Sermon

The Passover is over. But the shock of what has happened, the extent of the loss, the awfulness of the suffering of their friend remains. It's time to go home, to leave after all the investment of energy and love and hope—and it's all ended in blood and tears and death. The only thing left is to go back to the old way of life, to settle to normal instead of extraordinary, to find some way of rebuilding.

The hills are steep enough anyway but today they seem like cliffs. Heavy hearted and heavy legged they take the familiar track. But the memories of the last two years and the last three days echo around their hearts and they try and talk it out as they go—but there are no answers but disappointment and loss. They take a dark cloud with them, it seems.

Do we know who they are, these two travellers? Well Cleopas is one of them—I always like it when Luke names people because I reckon he's basically saying to his first readers 'And you can go and ask him yourself'—*these* are his witnesses. It is possible that Mary Clopas, one of the women at the Cross was his wife – in which

case maybe this is the couple travelling home together. They've been part of the travelling circle of friends and supporters of Jesus—perhaps part of the seventy, perhaps wider travelling companions but close enough to have dreams and hopes, to invest in this wonderful Man.

This sheds a light on the Easter events from the perspective of those close to Jesus. They didn't expect his resurrection! Every attitude of them all screams that the Cross ended it all—all the doubting, all the hiding, all the grief and now the heavy-footed trudge of broken witnesses giving up and going home. There were 2 schools of thought at the time—the Sadducees didn't expect a resurrection – now or future and for them this is it. The Pharisees expected resurrection but at the last day when we are called to Judgement—note in the story of the raising of Lazarus this is what Martha expects after the death of her brother—nothing now. So when the stranger walking near them interjects and starts teaching them the pall of depression and loss and the whole unexpectedness of it hides who he is.

He is recognised in the breaking of bread! And their world shifts again. Instead of a heavy trudge home they rush back to Jerusalem to find they are not the first but can confirm—Jesus is risen from the dead. He's alive. And whatever men may say for them life will never be the same, life will never be the same again.

I wonder where you're at this morning? What has life dealt you? Are you trudging your way with little hope or expectation, with no dreams any more? There will be good reasons to feel like that—life can kick us in the teeth and our worlds can turn grey and cloudy. Today you have a companion on that road. Today there is someone, vaguely familiar maybe, don't I recognise that voice, with us in our trudge. Will we let him renew and restore us? He is waiting for that moment of recognition, that welcome and return to joy. He is alive, life has lost an end, we have a welcome in his heart and home and hope beyond our wildest dreams if only we will let him in to change us.

The Creed

Do you believe and trust in God the Father,
the source of all being and life,
the one for whom we exist?

All We believe and trust in him.

Do you believe and trust in God the Son,
who took our human nature,
died for us and rose again?

All We believe and trust in him.

Do you believe and trust in God the Holy Spirit,
who gives life to the people of God
and makes Christ known in the world?

All We believe and trust in him.

This is the faith of the Church.

All This is our faith.

**We believe and trust in one God,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
Amen.**

Prayers of intercession

Thank you for the resurrection of our Lord and Saviour. Help us to respond, that we become the people you want us to be.

Lord, hear us.

All Lord, gracious hear us.

We pray for your Church. Help it become the powerhouse of worship and renewal you want it to be. To that end, please inspire the Church to witness and love. Helps us, its members, to work together and become the Body of Christ here on earth.
Lord, hear us.

All Lord, gracious hear us.

We pray for ourselves and our friends, family, neighbours, colleagues ... all the people we know. Give us the courage to listen to love them.

Lord, hear us.

All Lord, gracious hear us.

We pray for the world, asking that your Kingdom come here on earth as it is in heaven. We pray for places of warfare—including those no longer in the news. We pray for those fighting climate change. We pray for those fighting disease and dis-information. Those fighting crime and political corruption.

Lord, hear us.

All Lord, gracious hear us.

We pray for those in need especially those fighting against the claims of love that Jesus places before us all; those responding to God and finding it difficult to leave behind the claims of their past lives; and all those countless others for whom the love of God seems distant.

Lord, hear us.

All Lord, gracious hear us.

We pray for those who've died in the faith and now worship continually in heaven. We pray for those who died this past night; those who died alone; those whose year's mind occur at this time. We pray for those who miss them, mourn, and grieve. Lord, hear us.

All Lord, gracious hear us.

Merciful Father,

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

The peace

The risen Christ came and stood among his disciples and said, 'Peace be with you.' Then were they glad when they saw the Lord. Alleluia.

The peace of the Lord be always with you,

All And also with you.

HYMN 3 Lift high the cross! (please click on this link to hear the hymn)

The liturgy of the Communion Service appears below

HYMN 4 Love divine, all loves excelling (click on this link to hear the hymn)

The Dismissal

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

All Amen.

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

All Amen.

God the Holy Spirit,
whom the risen Lord breathed into his disciples,
empower you and fill you with Christ's peace.

All Amen.

And the blessing of God the Almighty:
Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,
be with you now and remain with you always.

All Amen.

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

All In the name of Christ. Amen.

Alleluia, Christ is risen!

All He is risen indeed! Alleluia!

The Liturgy of the Sacrament

Eucharistic Prayer (prayer E)

The Lord be with you

All and also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

All We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

All It is right to give thanks and praise.

Father, you made the world and love your creation.
You gave your Son Jesus Christ to be our Saviour.
His dying and rising have set us free from sin and death.
And so we gladly thank you,
with saints and angels praising you, and saying,

**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.**

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.

Great is the mystery of faith:

All Christ has died.
Christ is risen.
Christ will come again.

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

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 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

We break this bread to share in the body of Christ.

All **Though we are many, we are one body,**
 because we all share in one bread.

All **Lamb of God,**
 you take away the sin of the world,
 have mercy on us.

Lamb of God,
 you take away the sin of the world,
 have mercy on us.

Lamb of God,
 you take away the sin of the world,
 grant us peace.

Draw near with faith.

Receive the body of our Lord Jesus Christ
which he gave for you,
and his blood which he shed for you.

Eat and drink in remembrance that he died for you,
and feed on him in your hearts
by faith with thanksgiving.

All We do not presume
to come to this your table, merciful Lord,
trusting in our own righteousness,
but in your manifold and great mercies.
We are not worthy
so much as to gather up the crumbs under your table.
But you are the same Lord
whose nature is always to have mercy.
Grant us therefore, gracious Lord,
so to eat the flesh of your dear Son Jesus Christ
and to drink his blood,
that our sinful bodies may be made clean by his body
and our souls washed through his most precious blood,
and that we may evermore dwell in him,
and he in us.
Amen.

Communion is distributed.

Prayer after Communion

Living God,
your Son made himself known to his disciples
in the breaking of bread:
open the eyes of our faith,
that we may see him in all his redeeming work;
who is alive and reigns, now and for ever.

All Amen

All Almighty God,
we thank you for feeding us
with the body and blood of your Son Jesus Christ.
Through him we offer you our souls and bodies
to be a living sacrifice.
Send us out in the power of your Spirit
to live and work
to your praise and glory.
Amen.