

**Monday 22 July 2024**

# St Mary Magdalene



St Mary: Street art from Salt Lake City; artist unknown.

All four gospels give Mary Magdalene a unique place among Jesus' followers. Probably from Magdala by the Sea of Galilee, she is described as having been healed by Jesus before accompanying him during his ministry. Along with other faithful women, she stayed beside the cross during the crucifixion and was the first disciple to discover the empty tomb on Easter morning. She was privileged with the first appearance of the risen Lord, who sent her to take the good news of the resurrection to the other disciples. Within the early Church, this commission earned her the title 'Apostle to the Apostles'.

**Sermon** © Revd Dr Paul Monk.

**Liturgy** © 2000 The Archbishops' Council.

**Bible readings** © The publishers of the NRSV translation.

**Intercessions** © The Church of England in Spain (slightly adapted).

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>

**HYMN 1** [Isn't he beautiful?](#)

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

## **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.**

## **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 calls us to share the heavenly banquet of his love with all the saints in earth and heaven. Therefore, knowing our unworthiness and sin, let us 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**

**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 for Mary Magdalene**

Almighty God,  
whose Son restored Mary Magdalene  
to health of mind and body  
and called her to be a witness to his resurrection:  
forgive our sins and heal us by your grace,  
that we may serve you in the power of his risen life;  
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 Song of Songs

Upon my bed at night I sought him whom my soul loves; I sought him, but found him not; I called him, but he gave no answer. 'I will rise now and go about the city, in the streets and in the squares; I will seek him whom my soul loves.' I sought him but found him not. The sentinels found me, as they went about in the city. 'Have you seen him whom my soul loves?' Scarcely had I passed them, when I found him whom my soul loves. I held him, and would not let him go until I brought him into my mother's house, and into the chamber of her that conceived me.

*Song of Songs 3:1-4*

This is the Word of the Lord

**All Thanks be to God.**

## Second reading

A reading from St Paul's Second Letter of Paul to the Corinthians.

The love of Christ urges us on, because we are convinced that one has died for all; therefore all have died. And he died for all, so that those who live might live no longer for themselves, but for him who died and was raised for them. From now on, therefore, we regard no one from a human point of view; even though we once knew Christ from a human point of view, we know him no longer in that way. So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new!

*2 Corinthians 5:14-17*

This is the Word of the Lord

**All Thanks be to God.**

**HYMN 2 O the bitter shame and sorrow** [\(click on this link to hear the hymn\)](#)

## Gospel reading

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John

**All Glory to you O Lord.**

Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the tomb. So she ran and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved, and said to them, 'They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him.'

Mary stood weeping outside the tomb and, as she wept, she bent over to look into the tomb; and she saw two angels in white, sitting where the body of Jesus had been lying, one at the head and the other at the feet. They said to her, 'Woman, why are you weeping?' She said to them, 'They have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid him.' When she had said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not know that it was Jesus. Jesus said to her, 'Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you looking for?' Supposing him to be the gardener, she said to him, 'Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away.' Jesus said to her, 'Mary!' She turned and said to him in Hebrew, 'Rabbouni!' (which means Teacher).

Jesus said to her, 'Do not hold on to me, because I have not yet ascended to the Father. But go to my brothers and say to them, 'I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God''.' Mary Magdalene went and announced to the disciples, 'I have seen the Lord'; and she told them that he had said these things to her.

*John 20:1-2, 11-18*

This is the Gospel of the Lord

**All Praise to you O Christ.**

## Sermon

Jesus had several disciples called Mary. We often bundle their stories together, perhaps to fill the gaps in our knowledge because, in reality, we don't really know much about any of them. Indeed, the only thing we do know is the fact of their discipleship. They each loved Jesus and showed their love by following him. We gain the impression that little else mattered to them.

It's fitting that we know nothing of their discipleship because a genuine disciple gives her or his life to Jesus. As St Paul says in our second reading, 'He [Jesus] died for all so that those who live might live no longer for themselves but for him who died.'

We know a lot about some disciples but very much less about others. Some, like St Paul, wrote books brimming with detail about themselves, but about others, like Mary, we know at best a tiny amount. But, in fact, the names and history of most disciples are known to God alone. And each of us is also a disciple. Where do we fall on this spectrum, between the extremes of known and unknown, and where on its long path do we want to be?

Our attitude to this last question can reveal quite a lot about our own discipleship. The extent to which we want people to see or admire our discipleship reflects the extent to which we have given up our lives for Him: a disciple who to follow Jesus but wants history to remember them is thinking of both Jesus and themselves. By contrast, the disciple who has genuinely given up their life for Jesus does not worry about what people remember of their life and history. For them, 'history' has become 'his story'.

It's quite easy to say that we've given our lives to Jesus and his service. but it's quite another to genuinely do so. So here is a simple exercise that might say something about our lives as disciples: write your own obituary. We must leave some parts almost unwritten because we don't know much about our earliest years. Some parts are not yet knowable such as the day when we pass from this life to the next. But the

central portion can say everything about us or everything about Him. As we struggle to write these parts of our stories, we'll want to say something about the turning points and moments of revelation. We'll want to describe the people who inspired or changed us. And we'll want to talk about those people we loved, those who loved us, and the people who made us what we are.

Later, we can read back the story we've written. If we've been honest, we can look to see how often we refer to self and how often the story talks about Jesus. We can note where the highpoints occur and ask how each relates to Jesus. What are the achievements in the life we describe: do they involve Jesus?

In ways such as writing an obituary, we can analyse ourselves and how we're living as disciples. Maybe we could ask someone we trust to read it and see if they recognise us! Many of us when we do this exercise find that Jesus is almost incidental. Others will find the emphases changing from their earlier lives when we lived for ourselves and today when we live more for Jesus. And many of us will see a we've long way to go.

It seems clear from the Gospel story about Mary Magdalene that Jesus completely fills her life. Her life has become his life; her discipleship has become a life as his disciple. And today, as we remember her story, Jesus is asking us to discern the extent to which our lives have transmuted in this way. *To what extent are we truly his disciples?*

## Prayers of intercession

Almighty God, today we thank you for the witness of Mary Magdalene, a woman once possessed by demons and guilty of many sins, whose life was changed by Jesus. Might we too find our lives transformed by the miracle of such love and enjoy restoration and forgiveness through his amazing love.

Lord in your Mercy

**All** Hear our prayer

We thank You for those of your servants who work to lead and heal our Church. Cleanse your Church and heal it of its demons. Keep reminding us that You who began all good work in us will ultimately perfect it through your son Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit.

Lord in your Mercy

**All** Hear our prayer

Creator God we pray for your whole creation; for our brothers and sisters throughout the world and for their lives to be respected and revered regardless of creed or colour, gender or sexuality, wealth or status and for a fair distribution of precious resources and the conservation of our fragile and beautiful world.

And we pray for women, like Mary Magdalene, whose lives are broken by abuse and exploitation while working in the world's sex trade.

Lord in your Mercy

**All Hear our prayer**

Father God, we raise before you our homes and our relationships for you to work in. We thank you for the community of which we are part; for those who share with us in its activities, for all who serve its varied interests. Help us, to make our own contribution to the community and to learn to be good neighbours at all times.

Lord in your Mercy

**All Hear our prayer**

Loving God bring healing to all who are wounded, make whole those who are broken, and shed light wherever there is darkness. Hear now those we name before you who have asked for or are in need of healing prayer ...

Lord in your Mercy

**All Hear our prayer**

Merciful God we thank you for those who have travelled before us on the way of the cross and are now at peace in your eternal presence. Help us to live always mindful of your promise to us that the road of faith will lead into your heavenly kingdom.

Lord in your Mercy

**All Hear our prayer**

Faithful God, fill our hunger with the food that lasts, the bread of God which comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.

Merciful Father,

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



## The peace

May the God of peace sanctify you: may he so strengthen your hearts in holiness that you may be blameless before him at the coming of our Lord Jesus with his saints.

The peace of the Lord be always with you:

**All And also with you.**

**HYMN 3** [When I look into your holiness](#) [\(click on this link to hear the hymn\)](#)

The liturgy of the Communion Service appears below

## The Dismissal

May Christ who makes saints of sinners,  
who has transformed those we remember today,  
raise and strengthen you that you may transform the world;  
and the blessing of God the Almighty:  
Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, be with you now and remain with you always.

**All Amen**

**HYMN 4** [I heard the voice of Jesus say](#) [\(click on this link to hear the hymn\)](#)

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

**All In the name of Christ. Amen.**

## 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.**

It is truly right and just,  
our duty and our salvation,  
always and everywhere to give you thanks,  
Lord, holy Father,  
almighty and eternal God,  
whose mercy is no less than His power,  
to preach the Gospel to everyone, through Christ, our Lord.  
In the garden He appeared to Mary Magdalene,  
who loved him in life, who witnessed his death on the cross,  
who sought him as he lay in the tomb,  
who was the first to adore him when he rose from the dead,  
and whose apostolic duty was honoured by the apostles,  
so that the good news of life might reach the ends of the earth.  
And so Lord, with all the Angels and Saints,  
we, too, give you thanks,  
as in exultation we acclaim:

**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 St Mary Magdalene and 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**

God of life and love,  
whose risen Son called Mary Magdalene by name  
and sent her to tell of his resurrection to his apostles:  
in your mercy, help us,  
who have been united with him in this eucharist,  
to proclaim the good news  
that he 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.**