

Christ is Risen

A Joint Benefice Service of the Word
for Easter 5 May 2nd 2021
'Godparent's Sunday'



***If you have a Candle at home this can be used as a
*Paschal Candle.***

Please light your Easter Candle

May the light of Christ, rising in glory,
banish all darkness from our hearts and minds.

Amen

Grace, mercy and peace from our Lord Jesus Christ



Hymn: God is Love, let Heaven adore Him

Opening Prayer and confession

This is the God we serve. A God of love, of healing and power.

Alleluia

This is the God we serve. A God who loves us with a Father's love.

Alleluia

A God who laughs as we laugh, and suffers as we suffer

Alleluia

A God whose touch brings not only healing but wholeness

Alleluia

Thanksgiving and Praise

Christ is the living water
cleansing, refreshing, making all things new.

Christ is the living bread;
food for the hungry,
strength for the pilgrim and the labourer.

**So now we offer our thanks
for the beauty of our land
for the wild places
for the mountains, the coast and the sea.**

**We offer thanks and praise to God for this good land;
for its trees and pastures,
for its plentiful crops
and the skills we have learned to grow them.**

**Our thanks for our villages and the cities we have built;
for science and discoveries,
for our life together,
for our churches,
for the continued life of prayer in our communities.**

Forgiveness

We come seeking forgiveness
for all we have failed to be and do
as members of Christ's body.

In God there is forgiveness.

Loving and all-seeing God,
forgive us where we have failed to support one another
and to be what we claim to be.

Forgive us where we have failed to serve you;
and where our thoughts and actions have been
contrary to yours we ask your pardon.

God forgives us; be at peace.

Silence

Rejoice and be glad,
for Christ is resurrection,
reconciliation for all the human race.

**We shall all be one in Christ,
one in our life together.
Praise to God who has created us,
praise to God who has accepted us,
praise to God who sends us into the world**

**Reading by
Acts 8:26-40**

Philip and the Ethiopian Eunuch

²⁶ Now an angel of the Lord said to Philip, "Rise and go towards the south^[a] to the road that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza." This is a desert place. ²⁷ And he rose and went. And there was an Ethiopian, a eunuch, a court official of Candace, queen of the Ethiopians, who was in charge of all her treasure. He had come to Jerusalem to worship ²⁸ and was returning, seated in his chariot, and he was reading the prophet Isaiah. ²⁹ And the Spirit said to Philip, "Go over and join this chariot." ³⁰ So Philip ran to him and heard him reading Isaiah the prophet and asked, "Do you understand what you are reading?" ³¹ And he said, "How can I, unless someone guides me?" And he invited Philip to come up and sit with him. ³² Now the passage of the Scripture that he was reading was this:

*"Like a sheep he was led to the slaughter
and like a lamb before its shearer is silent,
so he opens not his mouth.*

³³ In his humiliation justice was denied him.

*Who can describe his generation?
For his life is taken away from the earth."*

³⁴ And the eunuch said to Philip, "About whom, I ask you, does the prophet say this, about himself or about someone else?" ³⁵ Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning with this Scripture he told him the good news about Jesus. ³⁶ And as they were going

along the road they came to some water, and the eunuch said, "See, here is water! What prevents me from being baptized?"³⁸ And he commanded the chariot to stop, and they both went down into the water, Philip and the eunuch, and he baptized him. ³⁹ And when they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord carried Philip away, and the eunuch saw him no more, and went on his way rejoicing. ⁴⁰ But Philip found himself at Azotus, and as he passed through he preached the gospel to all the towns until he came to Caesarea.

Hymn: God is Love, His the care.

Reading by
1 John 4:7-21
God Is Love

⁷ Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God. ⁸ Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love. ⁹ In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him. ¹⁰ In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. ¹¹ Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. ¹² No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God abides in us and his love is perfected in us.

¹³ By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit. ¹⁴ And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son to be the Saviour of the world. ¹⁵ Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God. ¹⁶ So we have come to know and to believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him. ¹⁷ By this is love perfected with us, so that we may have confidence for the day of judgement, because as he is so also are we in this world. ¹⁸ There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear. For fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not been perfected in love. ¹⁹ We love because he first loved us. ²⁰ If anyone says, "I love God", and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen cannot^a love God whom he has not seen. ²¹ And this commandment we have from him: whoever loves God must also love his brother.

Gospel reading by

John 15:1-8

I Am the True Vine

15 "I am the true vine, and my Father is the vine dresser. ² Every branch in me that does not bear fruit he takes away, and every branch that does bear fruit he prunes, that it may bear more fruit. ³ Already you are clean because of the word that I have spoken to you. ⁴ Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. ⁵ I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing. ⁶ If anyone does not abide in me he is thrown away like a branch and withers; and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. ⁷ If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. ⁸ By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples.

Sermon by Revd Steven *John 15: 1-8 - Jesus the True Vine*

We hear in our Gospel reading today, one of the 7 I AM sayings of Jesus in John's Gospel. These sayings are: -

I am the bread of life. (John 6:35)

I am the light of the world. (John 8:12)

I am the door. (John 10:9)

I am the good shepherd. (John 10:11)

I am the resurrection and the life. (John 11:25-26)

I am the way and the truth and the life. (John 14:6)

I am the vine; (John 15:5)

It is worth displaying these sayings in our homes and for those who are creative can come up with some interesting and colourful designs.

In verse 1, Jesus says 'I am the true vine'. Jesus says this because the nation of Israel was to be God's vineyard in the Old Testament to be a blessing to the nations, but they failed in their task. We see an example of this in the teaching of the Pharisees who added extra laws for people to follow, which creates a struggle for the people to follow.

Jesus says, I am the true vine, the true vine who teaches us God's true commandments to love God and our neighbour. Jesus is also the true vine, because he is the person, God's only Son, on whom we are to abide in – verse 4 – through Baptism, receiving Holy Communion, Worship, Prayer and Bible Reading.

Jesus says that if we are connected to him and abide in him, we will bear fruit for God because we have received his word and have been cleansed by his word – verse 3. This means that we are to have God's love and presence in our lives. By abiding in Jesus, we are also pruned by the Father, to remove things in our lives which stop us from bearing fruit for God. In John's first letter, John writes that we are to love one another because love is from God.

So a question for today, is what is stopping you from loving God and your neighbour?

What attitudes or perceptions, does God the Father need to remove from us, so that we are set free to live in love.

If you are not part of the vine or have not been active in the vine for a time, come back to him, Jesus the true vine, so that you may receive and live in the love of God. Like taking away dead branches from a vine, in order to make the vine grow better, God the Father wants to take the things in our lives, which are stopping us from us from living our lives to the full.

God abides with us in our lives because Jesus has come to abide with us and through the giving of the Holy Spirit. As God has come to abide with us through his Son and Spirit, we receive with them joy and thanks. We hear in John's first letter that "God is love, and those who abide in love abide in God, and God abides in them." As we abide in this love from God, God comes to abide with us. This love John goes onto write casts out fear in our lives, because we know that God is with us always.

Let us cast our fears onto God and be open to receive his love and may we be open and make all efforts, to come into the true vine, receive the true things for the Father to take away from our lives, the things that are stopping us from living in love and we give God the thanks, that we can be grafted into the true vine in our lives now and in eternal life, **Amen.**

Prayers of Intercession read by Theresa Reed

Intercessions for Sunday 2nd May 4th Sunday after Easter

Dear Lord, as your disciples here on earth, we offer up these prayers in the knowledge that there is power in prayer.

Today is Godparents Day, so we pray for all who have been asked to take on this role; that they may engage with the child, nurture them in faith and help to develop them in ways that parents cannot. Give every Godparent wisdom, kindness, joyfulness and humour in their relationship with their godchild.

Lord in you mercy: **hear our prayer**

Loving God, we thank you that we live in a country, which is rich enough and wise enough, to have helped us, through vaccination as well as lockdown, for us to see this dreadful coronavirus start to come under control. However we know that this is not so in many other places, here we especially pray for the people of India and surrounding regions. We pray that we and more fortunate countries of the world will come to India's aid today, tomorrow and in the days and weeks to come.

Lord in you mercy: **hear our prayer**

Father God as restrictions on our behaviour begin to change and we are able to meet people face to face with pray for those who have struggled with their mental health. Help us to see in others, in the stranger, in the sick, in the poor, you Lord Jesus and enable us to greet you in the people we meet.

Lord in you mercy: **hear our prayer**

We know that across our parishes there are many you need God's healing power, those who are lonely, those who are in need of peace and those who need to feel your love dear Jesus. We especially pray for: -

Tom Clarke

Gerry Lewsey

Sadie Russell

Jean Webber

Elliott

Sue Wilson

Sarah, Diane and Den's daughter

Tony Grinstead

Anne Cowell

Eunice Siggins

Keith Marshall

Len Chapman

and any known only to us.

Lord in you mercy: **hear our prayer**

There, sadly, have been many in the last year that has lost a loved one. We ask that they may find healing in your love and in the love of those around them either family or friend.

We pray for the families of

Matthew Lee

Jo Cable

Fr. Lionel.

Lord in you mercy: **hear our prayer**

Everlasting God, we ask that you would bless us here in this benefice with vision for a new future and service plan whilst having reverence for the past. Guide us each day as we minister to one another and to the world. Help us each day to bear witness to your name and to do your bidding, always mindful of your amazing love for us.

Merciful father:

Accept these prayers for the sake of your Son, our Saviour, Jesus Christ.

Amen

We joint together in 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.

Thanksgiving, blessing and praise be yours,
God of the incarnation;
because you care for us and for our prayer.
May our love for you and our likeness to you
be strengthened every time we pray.
Amen.

Hymn **Stand up stand up for Jesus**

The blessing of the Trinity
the blessing of God
who is in this place and every place;
the blessing of Jesus
who is among us, often unrecognised;
the blessing of the Holy Spirit
encouraging us to welcome and to feel at home;
be with us all.

We go on our way in peace, in love and share our faith with all we meet on our
journey, that our intention be fulfilled and we may return home in peace,
safety and joy. **Amen.**

Let us proceed in Peace on our journey in Faith
We will in the name of Christ. Amen.

Final Hymn: **In Christ Alone**

Notices

Thank you

Myself and Kate would like to thank everyone for their cards and messages on our engagement, we are overjoyed! Revd Steven & Kate

Spiritual Communion

Steven Poss is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

Topic: Spiritual Communion

Time: May 2, 2021 10:00 AM London

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81609201210?pwd=dHRuRnUybEdkOVNyYmF6RlhodzNZZz09>

Meeting ID: 816 0920 1210

Passcode: 702470

Bible Study

I plan to start our Bible Study again at 7.30pm on Wednesday 12th May via zoom looking at the Gospel of Mark.

Thy Kingdom Come Initiative – Please read the information via the link below

[Thy Kingdom Come! | Chelmsford Diocese \(anglican.org\)](https://www.anglican.org/)



Living in Love and Faith: view this introduction:

How do questions about identity, sexuality, relationships and marriage fit within the bigger picture of the good news of Jesus Christ? What does it mean to live in love and faith together as a Church?

Find out more about Living in Love and Faith by watching the video and listening to the podcast.

View

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g7A3wt0jqZM>