

Father, as we bring this bread and wine,
and remember his death and resurrection,
send your Holy Spirit,
that we who share these gifts
may be fed by Christ's body and his blood.

Pour your Spirit on us
that we may love one another,
work for the healing of the earth,
and share the good news of Jesus,
as we wait for his coming in glory.
For honour and praise belong to you, Father,
with Jesus your Son, and the Holy Spirit:
one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

Trusting in the compassion of God, let us pray with confidence
as our Saviour has taught us ...

**Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come;
thy will be done;
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation;
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory,
for ever and ever. Amen.**

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. **Amen**

Go now as those who have met with Christ
in the morning of this day.

Go now as those whose hearts have burned within them,
as the Scriptures were explained.

Go now as those
who have been touched by resurrection.

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

With the power that raised Jesus from the dead at work within you,
keep you safe in the peace of Christ. Alleluia, alleluia.

Thanks be to God. Alleluia, alleluia.

Standing Orders

Thank you to those who
have now signed a
Standing Order for your
giving. **If you are able**, it
would be really lovely if
you would instruct your
bank to pay us what you
normally would have given
in cash through a
Standing Order. A form
went out with the Palm
Sunday sheet, or ring
Andrew for a new one -
425615.

NB We are not asking you
for more money, just a
different way of giving
what you already pledged.

Please remember in your prayers

Syd Clarke,
Angie Twaite,
Joan Compton and
Tony Warburton who
died recently, and
those who mourn
their passing.

(Donations In memory
of Joan Compton to
Nicholas Potts, please)

Year's Mind

Arthur Lines,
Beryl Mason,
Rosemary Marston,
Dawn Davison,
Ron Marshall,
Iris Cannell

St Margaret's Old Catton Sunday worship



26 April 2020

this service can be found online at https://youtu.be/Z_W2kJBd9Nw

Grace, mercy and peace from God our Father
and the Lord Jesus Christ be with you
and also with you.

Alleluia. Christ is risen

He is risen indeed. Alleluia

**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.**

Easter is not an event that has occurred
it's an adventure that has begun;
not a place that we have visited
but a path on which we stand;

a story not complete, but unfolding
characters still breathing, stations still teeming
with the promise of new life
not just for you and me, but for all people, in all places,
a cosmic crux, a turning point of time.

Easter is the season of wild hope, of dangerous intent of potent promise
where the future flaps unfurled in the spirit's breeze
where hopes bubble with uncorked effervescence
where toes tap to free-form rhythms
where rainbow hues splash empty canvas



This is also accessible from St Margaret's Website on
'A Church near You'. To view,
go to St Margaret's, Old Catton
via 'A church near You' and
from the menu list on the left,
click on 'This Sunday's Service'.
On a Tablet or phone, bring
down the menu from icon ≡
on the right, and choose
'This Sunday's Service'

Today we continue the journey, we re-enter the story
to explore our questions to uncover our doubts
to face our nagging need.

We walk the path of two who traveled a dusty road
wrapped in confusion and despair
two who shared the company of a stranger,
voicing their pain, airing their fears, and in the listening
heard words of hope and promise;
and in the eating, received true bread of life

Today we re-enter the story
with expectation that Christ will also reveal himself to us
in sights and sounds, in words and symbols, in bread and wine

Let us pray

Risen Christ, walk with us,
be our companion and guide, our teacher and friend, our host and servant
bringing your gifts of faith, peace and hope and deep joy. **Amen.**

Iona Community, adapted

Christ our passover lamb has been sacrificed for us.
Let us therefore rejoice by putting away all malice and evil
and confessing our sins with a sincere and true heart.

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.

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. **Amen.**

Collect

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

The Lord is here
His Spirit is with us.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give thanks and praise.

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy,
always and everywhere to give you thanks,
almighty and eternal Father,
and in these days of Easter
to celebrate with joyful hearts
the memory of your wonderful works.
For by the mystery of his passion
Jesus Christ, your risen Son,
has conquered the powers of death and hell
and restored in men and women the image of your glory.
He has placed them once more in paradise
and opened to them the gate of life eternal.
And so, in the joy of this Passover,
earth and heaven resound with gladness,
while angels and archangels and the powers of all creation
sing for ever the hymn of your glory.

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.

Father, on the night before he died,
Jesus shared a meal with his friends.
He took the bread, and thanked you.
He broke it, and gave it to them, saying:
Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.
Do this to remember me.

After the meal, Jesus took the cup of wine.
He thanked you, and gave it to them, saying:
Drink this, all of you.
This is my blood,
the new promise of God's unfailing love.
Do this to remember me.

Great is the mystery of faith:
Christ has died.
Christ is risen.
Christ will come again.

Let us pray.

Risen Lord Jesus
like those disciples on the road to Emmaus,
we struggle to recognise you in the everyday journey of our lives.
We seek your wisdom in the midst of the questions we have
about the circumstances we find ourselves in,
an Easter like no other.

Open our eyes, Light of the World,
to your work of transformation in and around us.
As we walk with you day by day,
may your new life be shown in what we say to others.

As you opened the scriptures to the disciples
and taught them everything,
open our eyes to behold you in your Word,
in the beauty of nature,
the beauty of another human being
and the beauty of sacred art.

And in our seeing,
help us to recognise and welcome the stranger in our midst.
Help us to recognise and value
the service of those around us
neighbours from around the world
bringing the sacrifice of service
to bring healing and breathing.

You were known to the disciples in the breaking of the bread.
May your resurrection presence guide us in the decisions we make
about what we eat and what we drink.
As we long for the fellowship of eating together
help us to remember the needs of the hungry.

So often we forget, Holy One,
that you invite us to abide with you;
to have our lives hidden in you.
We thank you that you travel with us in our joys and our concerns.

We offer these prayers to you Lord God
always mindful of the great company who compass you about,
the ransomed and the redeemed of all the ages.
As once they inspired us by their living,
may they continue so to do till the day of our own homecoming to you
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

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and serve you continually in righteousness and truth; 3
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.

Gospel Reading

Alleluia, alleluia.

I am the first and the last, says the Lord, and the living one;
I was dead, and behold I am alive for evermore. **Alleluia.**

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke.
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.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, O Christ.

We read in St Luke's gospel how the two followers of Jesus on the road to Emmaus were talking with each other about the things that had been happening in Jerusalem. Luke wrote his gospel to help us understand these things, so we fit into the story right here.

We hear how Cleopas and his companion had been hoping. "We had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel", they tell the stranger. They'd invested a lot in him, and their hopes had been dashed.

The verb is in the pluperfect. It is over-and-done-with, and whereas a few days ago they were full of excitement, expectation, enthusiasm and hope, they were now trudging home utterly wretched and miserable, joy and hope having left them. Plodding along into the evening, it's not surprising that another traveller going the same way should have caught them up; and they enjoyed being able to share their thoughts.

Many of us are finding present circumstances hard to come to terms with. We are isolated from human company in many cases, unable to meet our friends or family; it's particularly hard for those who live alone, for those with health conditions, for those who live in flats with no garden to enjoy, as well as for those in the Health and Caring services working their socks off and risking their own health for us. And it's hard for those trying to keep their businesses going. We had hoped to enjoy the spring weather, we had hoped to socialise with our friends, we had hoped to meet friends again, but are now parted from them for ever. There are many in hospitals in Intensive Care, fighting for breath, struggling for life itself, and so many have lost that fight. But lockdown itself takes its toll, so we must acknowledge our gratitude for the help given by so many to help us through it, the delivery drivers and supermarket staff, care and health workers and the teachers who look after their children, all the key workers and volunteers who make life possible to continue in the strange times.

The painful experience of hope-disappointed is what those two bring to that discussion. And the gospel story is so real - it talks about us and our situation. We know deep disappointment, right now. And the story of the Emmaus road becomes our story.

And it's to these heartbroken disciples that the Risen Christ comes, walking along *with us* on the road, astonished that we don't see as we ought, teaching us the Scriptures so we may understand, sharing his presence through bread and wine, and granting us burning hearts that prompt us back into the world.

And that is the other aspect. - The broken hearts were burning again within a few miles. As Cleopas and his friend talked about the cross, their bewilderment and sorrow, this traveller brought other words to the discussion. He "explained to them what was said about himself in the

Scriptures, beginning with of Moses and the writings of the prophets".

He told how the prophets foreshadowed a saviour who would be obedient to the point of death. He reminded them of Abraham who *almost* sacrificed his son - and how God *did* sacrifice his Son. He would speak of Isaiah's description of the Suffering Servant of God who "*was wounded for our transgressions, crushed for our iniquities*". No doubt these men were far more familiar with their Bibles than most of us are, but they still expected that the Messiah would come in some sense with glory and power.

Their hearts warmed as they listen to this stranger. But there is still some distance, some doubt, that clouds their vision and obscures their recognition of who it is walking and talking with them.

It is a feature of several of the resurrection appearances that it takes time for the disciples to recognise him. Mary Magdalene confusing the risen Christ for a gardener. And after the Emmaus Road episode, we read that it takes some time for the disciples' eyes to recognise what appears like a ghost.

In that story, food plays a critical role. Jesus eats fish, something no ghost can claim. Such sustenance strengthens the muscles of the risen Messiah. Today too, Jesus is known in the blessing, breaking, and giving of bread, again showing that the saviour resurrests humanity carbohydrate by carbohydrate, from the most basic stuff of life.

Arriving at Emmaus those disciples must in that moment of recognition, have connected their astonishing supper with the Last Supper, when Jesus said he would not eat with them again till the Passover had been fulfilled. They recognised a common bread, a common host. In this simple action of blessing, breaking, and giving of bread, crumbs of disbelief and hopelessness fall to the ground. The disciples' eyes, once clouded with tears, are opened to the realities of the resurrection and the provisional character of death.

The Emmaus Road story shows us God's loving response to brokenness, which we see so many times in the life, death, and ministry of Jesus. Jesus has a care for those whose lives are split open, by sickness, loss or disappointment. It's in the cracks of our humanity that divine, resurrection life shines brightest.

With the hopes and dreams of Cleopas and his companion scattered on that dusty road from Jerusalem, Jesus comes to them, opens up the scriptures again, and reminds them of the very foundations of their hope. The disciples hear the great narrative of God's great love from the lips of love himself.

And when all the scriptures have been unpacked and interpreted, when all the loose ends have been tied up, a meal reinforces the point: the Lord is risen indeed. Alleluia! Amen.