

Swaythling Parish

Sunday 4 April 2021

Easter Sunday



Welcome

Below is a service sheet for you to use at home. You can also find our Sunday morning reflection on YouTube channel, available at 10am on Sunday, (and afterwards). Please search for "Swaythling Parish" on YouTube to find and view it.

*If we can support you in any way at the present time, or you would just like to chat, do please get in touch: 023 8055 4231
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Introduction from Rev Peter Dockree
Welcome to our service today, however you are joining us.

This Sunday is Easter Sunday.

As we journeyed with Christ through the season of Lent, we explored the brokenness and pain of the cross. This year many things feel different, but one thing remains, the hope of the resurrection. Now we come bringing the brokenness and pain with us into the glorious light of the risen Christ.

You may want to light a candle, if you have one to hand.

The Light of Christ.
Thanks be to God.

Easter Morning

Do not cling ...
Let me be bigger than your heart can hold
Rise with me to a larger vision.

A Lewin

Alleluia! Christ is risen.
He is risen indeed. Alleluia!

Blessed be God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
Blessed be God for ever.

Gloria in Excelsis

On New Year's Day this year there was much

talk of consigning 2020 quickly to history. But as we come to this key moment in the Christian year, we wish to celebrate what has been gained as well as lost, the moments of joy, the things to be thankful for. As we remember an open tomb, we give thanks for a love that is more powerful than anything, and that breaks all barriers.

Gloria

You are invited to say or sing the Gloria.

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.

Confession

This morning we remember a love that changes everything. A love that no man-made boundaries can get in the way of. Nothing we have done, nothing we have thought and nothing we have said can stop God loving us. But sometimes our feelings of guilt are holding us to the mistakes we have made. So we take a moment to own those mistakes.

Lord have mercy
Lord have mercy

Christ have mercy
Christ have mercy

Lord have mercy
Lord have mercy

A Short silence.

God's love changes everything.
So in light of that promise
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. **Amen.**

The Collect for Easter Day:

**God of glory,
by the raising of your Son
you have broken the chains of death
and hell:
fill your Church with faith and hope;
for a new day has dawned
and the way to life stands open
in our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.**

Hymn: Thine be the Glory

1 Thine be the glory,
Risen, conquering Son,
Endless is the victory
Thou o'er death hast won;
Angels in bright raiment
Rolled the stone away,
Kept the folded grave-clothes
Where thy body lay.
*Thine be the glory, Risen, conquering Son;
Endless is the victory thou o'er death hast won!*

2 Lo, Jesus meets us,
Risen from the tomb;
Lovingly he greets us,
Scatters fear and gloom;
Let the Church with gladness
Hymns of triumph sing,
For her Lord now liveth,
Death hath lost its sting.
*Thine be the glory, Risen, conquering Son;
Endless is the victory thou o'er death hast won!*

3 No more we doubt thee,
Glorious Prince of life;
Life is naught without thee:
Aid us in our strife;
Make us more than conquerors
Through thy deathless love;
Bring us safe through Jordan
To thy home above:
*Thine be the glory, Risen, conquering Son;
Endless is the victory thou o'er death hast won!*

Edmond Budry, 1884 / G F Handle (1759)

Reading: Acts 10:34-43

Then Peter began to speak to them: 'I truly understand that God shows no partiality, but in every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him. You know the message he sent to the people of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ—he is Lord of all. That message spread throughout Judea, beginning in Galilee after the baptism that John announced: how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power; how he went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him. We are witnesses to all that he did both in Judea and in Jerusalem. They put him to death by hanging him on a tree; but God raised him on the third day and allowed him to appear, not to all the people but to us who were chosen by God as witnesses, and who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead. He commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one ordained by God as judge of the living and the dead. All the prophets testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name.'

For the Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

The Easter Gospel

Reading: John 20:1-18

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.' Then Peter and the other disciple set out and went towards the tomb. The two were running together, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. He bent down to look in and saw the linen wrappings lying there, but he did not go in. Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb. He saw the linen wrappings lying there, and the cloth that had been on Jesus' head, not lying with the linen wrappings but rolled up in a place by itself. Then the other disciple, who reached the tomb first, also went in, and he saw and believed; for as yet they did not understand the scripture, that he must rise from the dead. Then the disciples returned to their homes.

But Mary stood weeping outside the tomb. 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 round and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not know that

it was Jesus. Jesus said to her, 'Woman, why are you weeping? For whom are you looking?' 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.

At the end, the Reader says:

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

An Easter Reflection by Rev Canon Bruce Hartley

Talking to drama and dance students, I have been reminded that is not just the voice that conveys character but the whole way you hold your body and move.

I have been picturing Mary from Magdala this particular morning, approaching the tomb before sun-up, slowly, shoulders drooped, with grief written all over her. Then she is startled to find the stone rolled away and immediately

anxious. 'What can have happened? Who can I ask?'

She runs to Peter and John to report the news and to share her dread that the body has been moved making even anointing impossible now. The disciples come to the tomb but fail to solve the mystery and go home.

She stays and gives way to sobbing. Only when she looks into the tomb itself does she see and hear the two angelic messengers. They want to know what is upsetting her and she shares her concern that the body's been removed.

Half-conscious of someone else nearby, she turns to him, thinking he may be a gardener in the place but she doesn't fully take in who it is. His question about the reason for her crying gets the same answer. It is only when he addresses her in the old familiar tone and by name that she turns to give him her full attention and recognizes that he is the answer to her search.

Early this Easter morning surely we are encouraged to follow Mary's example: to turn about and focus our attention on the risen Lord; to turn and turn again. Only then shall we recognize his call to each of us by our name.

The reading from the Acts of the Apostles is not an arbitrary add-on to the Easter Gospel. It is an emphatic reminder of the way the first Christian community grew, from the 12 to hundreds and into thousands. They were

witnesses charged with sharing the Jesus story – a story that had completely changed them and their lives. This was news for all races and languages: it changed the world and all their priorities. Soon they were setting up the Food Banks of their day and caring for the single parent families and their un-pensioned aged. There was no question: they must walk the talk too.

Thus I was glad to hear this Eastertide that Christian Aid is 75 this year. All my life, but for my toddler years, it has been a highly effective instrument of ministry and active concern. Guided by Easter hope, supporters of Christian Aid believed that the horrors of apartheid could be resisted and overcome, if we stood with the brave men and women of South Africa against it. In Christian Aid we have together taken on war, disaster and poverty in many different parts of the world, for instance reaching half a million people with food, shelter and healthcare after the 2004 tsunami in Asia. Fairer trade has been established and debt relief found for poor countries. And now, grasped by the Easter promise that new life is offered to us all in Christ's resurrection, we are working to face and overcome the threat of climate crisis.

Trying to walk the talk myself, I have gladly added a special birthday contribution to this fulfilment of the post-Easter promise of living hope. Like Mary that dawning day, we each need again and again to turn from our own worries and preoccupations to recognize our living Lord and follow his lead.

An Easter Reflection by Rev Peter Dockree

I read recently a set of novels which covered the whole 20th century. By placing individual dramas and narratives within the bigger narrative it reminded me how important perspective can be. When people were sitting in houses in London or down at Southampton docks in the middle of the Blitz, it must have felt like it would never end, and that when it did it may well involve a Nazi occupation of Britain. Those fighting for civil rights in the US must have felt utter despair when President Nixon, with the racist overtones of his message, came to power. And in personal crises and tragedy the moment can feel utterly overwhelming. Yet there is always a bigger picture there is always a larger narrative at play even if we can't see it.

When Mary Magdalene was sitting at that tomb, she must have felt that engulfing despair. We know little about Mary Magdalene and much of what is told of her is appropriation and legend, but we know this, Jesus was important enough to her that she must have given up much of what she knew before to follow him. Here she was having had given up so much only to see it whipped from under her eyes. She got to the tomb to do the one last thing that she could for Jesus, and then even that had been denied her by some grave robbers. What utter despair she must have felt as she sat at that tomb and wept. I don't think we are talking a momentary little cry, I think we are talking about heart wrenching sobbing, the sort of tears that can lead people

to walk away and not know what to do. In that moment all was lost. In that moment all was gone.

In the last year some will have been as desperate as this, feeling the utter loss of someone close, feeling the impossibility of unemployment and the inability to cope. Other in places like Myanmar and China must have felt the chains of political realities that never seemed to change. Those in Syria feeling the ongoing and impossible struggles of a conflict that is no longer front and centre of world news but remains there daily reality. For many others it has not been so extreme, but most have probably experienced days and times when the hypothetical talk of dates out of lockdown and such things felt very abstract and unreal.

So let's return to Mary. As she sat engulfed by her tears. As she broke down, utterly bereft, Jesus calls her name. Jesus calls her name, Mary Mary why are you weeping. He knows the bigger picture, but he gently calls her out of herself. He goes on to tell her something of the bigger story, "you can't hold on to me", but first he simply calls her name, Mary, Master, Mary, Master.

Sometimes we can the bigger picture easy to see, we can be full of hope and brimming with promise. Sometimes we can find the bigger picture impossible to grasp. The reality in the moment we are in is simply too great and too immense to be able to see something beyond it. This Easter Day we remember a Jesus who

calls by name, who reaches into the darkest and least certain spaces of our lives and calls our name. Who breaks through the barriers that humankind has erected, who chooses to appear first to woman in days when it was assumed that men were the religious leaders. How much more then can we know that all the barriers that mankind erects, Jesus reaches through and calls us by name.

I have no doubt that when someone writes a narrative of the 21st century, the year that has just been will simply fit as part of a much bigger narrative of ebbs and flows, but some of us need someone to call us by name and call us onward and that is the promise of Easter.

Prayers

Lord God, just as Jesus called Mary by name so you call us by name, and we come before you this morning minded of that promise.

We pray for those who need to know the call of their name, Those in broken and desperate places. Those hurting and grieving. Those battling with their mental health. Those alone. All who need to know the call of their name deep in their hearts, may they hear that call today.

We pray for those who feel neither happy nor sad, just flat. Those for whom Easter may pass by this year, may they know something of the deep inner joy, and profound love that is fundamental to the story.

We pray for situations around our world that feel uncertain and broken, we pray for the persistent hope of the resurrection.

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

Hymn: Alleluia, Alleluia, give thanks to the risen lord.

*Alleluia, Alleluia, give thanks to the risen Lord,
Alleluia, alleluia, give praise to His name.*

Jesus is Lord of all the earth.
He is the King of creation.

Spread the good news o'er all the earth.
Jesus has died and has risen

We have been crucified with Christ.
Now we shall live forever.

God has proclaimed the just reward:
Life for all men, alleluia!

Come, let us praise the living God,
Joyfully sing to our Saviour.

Donald Fishel (1950)

Closing Blessing

Thank you to everyone for worshiping with us today.

May Christ, who out of defeat brings new hope and a new future, fill you with his new life;

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

Go in the light and peace of Christ.
Alleluia, alleluia.
Thanks be to God. Alleluia, alleluia.

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