



8th May 2022
Fourth Sunday of Easter

*We welcome you to St Matthew's Church
this morning and pray you are blessed as
we worship the risen Lord together.*

*If you are with us for the first time we
would love to keep in touch with you, so
please fill in one of our Welcome Cards.
Thank you.*

*Please join in the words in **bold print**.*

Don't forget to silence your mobile!

Our Service is led by Revd Simon Foster.

Our Preacher is Revd Linda Fox.

The Gathering

Friends, let us worship God today,
for God is good –

**God has blessed us with life,
with faith, and with community.**

Let us worship God today,
for God is good –

**God forgives us, and encourages
us, and loves us.**

Let us worship God today –

For God is good.

Let us worship God.

Song

God is good, we sing and shout it,
God is good, we celebrate.
God is good, no more we doubt it,
God is good, we know it's true.

And when I think of His love for me,
my heart fills with praise,
and I feel like dancing.
For in His heart there is room for me,
and I run with arms open wide.

Graham Kendrick (b.1950) © 1985 Thankyou Music

The Lord be with you
and also with you.

We remain standing to pray together

Opening prayer

**Eternal God, source of all
blessing,
help us to worship you with all
our heart and mind and
strength;
for you alone are God,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit,
for ever and ever.
Amen.**

Please be seated

Prayer of Confession

We come to you in sorrow for our sins,
and confess to you our weakness and
unbelief.

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.

Merciful Lord,
you know our struggle to serve you:
when sin spoils our lives
and overshadows our hearts,
come to our aid
and turn us back to you again;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

The Collect

Risen Christ,
faithful shepherd of your Father's sheep:
teach us to hear your voice
and to follow your command,
that all your people may be gathered
into one flock,
to the glory of God the Father.

Amen.

¶ The Liturgy of the Word

Let us prepare ourselves for the Word
of God as it comes to us in the reading
of Holy Scripture.

Our hearts and minds are open.

First Reading

Genesis 7:1-5, 11-18, 8:6-19, 9:8-13

Then the Lord said to Noah, 'Go into the ark, you and all your household, for I have seen that you alone are righteous before me in this generation. ²Take with you seven pairs of all clean animals, the male and its mate; and a pair of the animals that are not clean, the male and its mate; ³and seven pairs of the birds of the air also, male and female, to keep their kind alive on the face of all the earth. ⁴For in seven days I will send rain on the earth for forty days and forty nights; and every living thing that I have made I will blot out from the face of the ground.' ⁵And Noah did all that the Lord had commanded him.

¹¹In the six-hundredth year of Noah's life, in the second month, on the seventeenth day of the month, on that day all the fountains of the great deep burst forth, and the windows of the heavens were opened. ¹²The rain fell on the earth for forty days and forty nights.

¹³On the very same day Noah with his sons, Shem and Ham and Japheth, and Noah's wife and the three wives of his sons, entered the ark, ¹⁴they and every wild animal of every kind, and all domestic animals of every kind, and every creeping thing that creeps on the earth, and every bird of every kind—every bird, every winged creature.

¹⁵They went into the ark with Noah, two and two of all flesh in which there was the breath of life. ¹⁶And those that entered, male and female of all flesh, went in as God had commanded him; and the Lord shut him in.

¹⁷The flood continued for forty days on the earth; and the waters increased, and bore up the ark, and it rose high above the earth. ¹⁸The waters swelled and increased greatly on the earth; and the ark floated on the face of the waters.

^{8:6}At the end of forty days Noah opened the window of the ark that he had made ⁷and sent out the raven; and it went to and fro until the waters were dried up from the earth. ⁸Then he sent out the dove from him, to see if the waters had subsided from the face of the ground; ⁹but the dove found no place to set its foot, and it returned to him to the ark, for the waters were still on the face of the whole earth. So he put out his hand and took it and brought it into the ark with him. ¹⁰He waited another seven days, and again he sent out the dove from the ark; ¹¹and the dove came back to him in the evening, and there in its beak was a freshly plucked olive leaf; so Noah knew that the waters had subsided from the earth. ¹²Then he waited another seven days, and sent out the dove; and it did not return to him any more.

¹³In the six hundred and first year, in the first month, on the first day of the month, the waters were dried up from the earth; and Noah removed the covering of the ark, and looked, and saw that the face of the ground was drying.

¹⁴In the second month, on the twenty-seventh day of the month, the earth was dry. ¹⁵Then God said to Noah, ¹⁶'Go out of the ark, you and your wife, and your sons and your sons' wives with you.

¹⁷Bring out with you every living thing that is with you of all flesh—birds and animals and every creeping thing that creeps on the earth—so that they may abound on the earth, and be fruitful and multiply on the earth.' ¹⁸So Noah went out with his sons and his wife and his sons' wives. ¹⁹And every animal, every creeping thing, and every bird, everything that moves on the earth, went out of the ark by families.

^{9:8}Then God said to Noah and to his sons with him, ⁹'As for me, I am establishing my covenant with you and your descendants after you, ¹⁰and with every living creature that is with you, the birds, the domestic animals, and every animal of the earth with you, as many as came out of the ark. ¹¹I establish my covenant with you, that never again shall all flesh be cut off by the waters of a flood, and never again shall there be a flood to destroy the earth.' ¹²God said, 'This is the sign of the covenant that I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for all future generations: ¹³I have set my bow in the clouds, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and the earth.

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

We stand to sing

♪ Song ♪

Led like a lamb to the slaughter,
in silence and shame,
there on Your back You carried a world
of violence and pain.
Bleeding, dying, bleeding, dying.

*You're alive, You're alive,
You have risen! Alleluia!
And the power and the glory is given,
alleluia! Jesus, to You.*

At break of dawn, poor Mary,
still weeping she came,
when through her grief she heard Your
voice
now speaking her name:
Mary, Master, Mary, Master!

At the right hand of the Father
now seated on high;
You have begun Your eternal reign
of justice and joy.
Glory, glory, glory, glory.

*Graham Kendrick (b. 1950) © 1983 Kingsway's
Thankyou Music*

Please be seated

Second Reading

Acts 9.36-43

In Joppa there was a disciple whose name was Tabitha, which in Greek is Dorcas. She was devoted to good works and acts of charity. ³⁷At that time she became ill and died. When they had washed her, they laid her in a room upstairs. ³⁸Since Lydda was near Joppa, the disciples, who heard that Peter was there, sent two men to him with the request, 'Please come to us without delay.' ³⁹So Peter got up and went with them; and when he arrived, they took him to the room upstairs. All the

widows stood beside him, weeping and showing tunics and other clothing that Dorcas had made while she was with them. ⁴⁰Peter put all of them outside, and then he knelt down and prayed. He turned to the body and said, 'Tabitha, get up.' Then she opened her eyes, and seeing Peter, she sat up. ⁴¹He gave her his hand and helped her up. Then calling the saints and widows, he showed her to be alive. ⁴²This became known throughout Joppa, and many believed in the Lord. ⁴³Meanwhile he stayed in Joppa for some time with a certain Simon, a tanner.

This is the word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Reflection

Let us stand to affirm our faith in Jesus Christ the Son of God.

Affirmation of Faith

Though he was divine, he did not cling to equality with God, but made himself nothing. Taking the form of a slave, he was born in human likeness. He humbled himself and was obedient to death, even the death of the cross. Therefore God has raised him on high, and given him the name above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, and every voice proclaim that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. Amen.

Please be seated

Prayers of Intercession

How long, Lord?

Will you forget me for ever?

How long will you hide your face from me?

We pray for those who feel forgotten and unseen, may they know that they are remembered and seen by you God.

Help us to work with you to remember the forgotten. Those amongst us who have fallen through the system. Those amongst us who struggle to find food, heating and accommodation.

Search our hearts to reveal those we hide our faces from, the outcast, the stranger or the homeless. Change our hearts, that we may turn our faces towards these people and see them as your beloved children.

How long must I wrestle with my thoughts and day after day have sorrow in my heart?

How long will my enemy triumph over me?

We pray for those we know who struggle with mental illnesses, anxiety and depression. We pray that there will be resources released to help, enough staff employed and finances given towards mental health services nationally. Help us to be a friend and a listening ear to those who suffer. Fill us with compassion and wisdom.

We mention those on our prayer list today...

Ultimately, we pray for those who struggle with illness and sorrow, that they may know your victory over those dark thoughts which currently seem to triumph.

**Look on me and answer,
Lord my God.
Give light to my eyes,
or I will sleep in death,
and my enemy will say,
'I have overcome him,'
and my foes will rejoice when I
fall.**

We pray for those who might be
considered fallen by those around them:
may they know your restoration and
grace, your goodness and your love.
Help us to not judge or exclude your
beloved children, but instead lift them
up in prayer, and embrace them with
the grace we know in Christ.

Thank you, loving Father God,
for hearing our prayer.
We proclaim together:

**But I trust in your unfailing
love; my heart rejoices in your
salvation.**

**I will sing the Lord's praise,
for he has been good to me.**

Easter Anthems

1 Christ our passover has been
sacrificed for us:
so let us celebrate the feast,

2 not with the old leaven of
corruption and wickedness:
but with the unleavened bread of
sincerity and truth.

3 Christ once raised from the dead
dies no more:
death has no more dominion over him.

4 In dying he died to sin once for all:
in living he lives to God.

5 See yourselves therefore as dead to
sin: and alive to God in Jesus Christ
our Lord.

6 Christ has been raised from the
dead: the first fruits of those who sleep.

7 For as by man came death:
by man has come also the resurrection
of the dead;

8 for as in Adam all die:
even so in Christ shall all be made alive.

**Glory to the Father and to the
Son and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning is now
and shall be for ever. Amen.**

We stand to sing

Hymn

The Lord's my shepherd, I'll not want.
He makes me lie in pastures green.
He leads me by the still, still waters,
His goodness restores my soul.

Men: And I will trust in You alone.

Women: I will trust, I will trust in You.

Men: And I will trust in You alone,

Women: I will trust, I will trust in You.

All: For Your endless mercy follows me,
Your goodness will lead me home.

He guides my ways in righteousness,
and He anoints my head with oil,
and my cup, it overflows with joy,
I feast on His pure delights.

And though I walk the darkest path,
I will not fear the evil one,
for You are with me, and Your rod and
staff

are the comfort I need to know.

Stuart Townend (b. 1963) © 1996 Thankyou Music.

Please be seated

The Lord's Prayer

Rejoicing in God's new creation,
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.**

Notices

♪ Hymn ♪

Great is Thy faithfulness,
O God my Father,
there is no shadow of
turning with Thee;
Thou changest not,
Thy compassions, they fail not;
as Thou hast been,
Thou for ever wilt be.

*Great is Thy faithfulness!
Great is Thy faithfulness!
Morning by morning
new mercies I see;
all I have needed
Thy hand hath provided,
great is Thy faithfulness,
Lord, unto me.*

Summer and winter,
and springtime and harvest,
sun, moon and stars
in their courses above,
join with all nature
in manifold witness
to Thy great faithfulness,
mercy and love.

Pardon for sin and
a peace that endureth,
Thine own dear presence
to cheer and to guide;
strength for today and
bright hope for tomorrow,
blessings all mine,
with ten thousand beside!

*Thomas Obadiah Chisholm (1866-1960)
© 1951 Hope Publishing Company*

¶ The Dismissal

Blessing

For your goodness and generosity
in giving us all we need,
help us to praise you O God.

In every circumstance of life,
in good times and bad,
help us to trust you, O God.

In love and faithfulness,
with all that we have and all that we
are,
help us to serve you, O God.

As we speak or write or listen
to those nearby or far away,
**help us to share your love,
O God.**

In our plans and work
for ourselves and for others,
help us to glorify you, O God.

In every thought and word and deed,
by the power of your Holy Spirit,
**this week, may we live for you,
O God.**

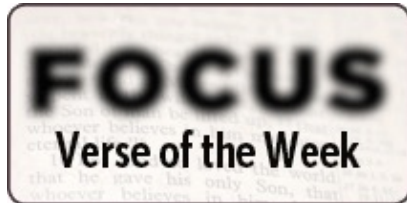
And the blessing of God almighty, the
Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be
upon you and remain with you, and all
those whom you love and all those for
whom you pray this day and
for evermore.
Amen.

Go in the peace of Christ. Alleluia
alleluia.

**Thanks be to God. Alleluia
alleluia.**

Amen.

Please take this service sheet with you.



God said, 'This is the sign of the covenant that I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for all future generations: ¹³I have set my bow in the clouds, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and the earth.

Genesis 9.12-13

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