

**Welcome to our service of  
Holy Communion at St Mary's, Shirehampton  
Easter Day – 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024**

Alleluia. Christ is risen.

**He is risen indeed. Alleluia.**

*We light the candle from the flames of our crosses*

**THE EASTER CANDLE IS LIT.**

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

*The candle moves through the church*

The Light of Christ

**Thanks be to God**

**PROCESSIONAL HYMN** *The choir will walk through from the back of the church after the candle is placed*

Jesus Christ is ris'n today, alleluia!  
on triumphant holy day, alleluia!  
who did once, upon the cross, alleluia!  
suffer to redeem our loss, alleluia!

Hymns of praise then let us sing, alleluia  
unto Christ, our heav'nly King, alleluia  
who endured the cross the grave, alleluia  
sinners to redeem and save, alleluia!

But the pains that he endured, alleluia  
our salvation have procured; alleluia  
now above the sky he's King, alleluia  
where the angels ever sing, alleluia!

*From 'Lyra Davidica' (1708)  
CCL Number 5935*

## GATHERING

*Leader:* Early in the morning,

*Women:* **Fearful but faithful,**

*Men:* **Dubious and doubting,**

*All:* **We came to the garden ...**

*Women:* **We expected only silence but we heard the voice of angels;**

*Men:* **We did not understand but we found our hope rekindled;**

*All:* **We came to attend to a corpse  
but instead we encountered Life! Alleluia!**

## BLESSING OF THE EASTER GARDEN

The angel said to the women,

‘Do not be afraid;

I know that you are looking for Jesus who was crucified.

He is not here; for he has been raised, as he said.’

Blessed are you, Lord God of all creation,  
the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

To you be glory now and for ever.

In your great mercy you have given us a new birth into a living hope  
through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

By your blessing, may we who have prepared this garden in celebration of  
his victory be strengthened in faith, know the power of his presence, and  
rejoice in the hope of eternal glory.

Blessed be God,

Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

**Blessed be God for ever.**

Alleluia. Christ is risen.

**He is risen indeed. Alleluia.**

*We dress the cross with flowers as signs of our renewal in the risen Lord.*

*- This is Amazing Grace music plays*

## **CONFESSION**

We send our prayers to God

When we recall the things we say sorry for we pray to him asking his forgiveness for our sins

**Forgive us for not sharing in the Good News.**

**Forgive us when we find it more comfortable to worry and complain than to risk the joy and encouragement of new life in Christ.**

**Call us back to Your ways, O God, to seek hope and reconciliation, restoration and peace.**

**In the name of the Risen Christ, we pray. Amen.**

## **ASSURANCE OF PARDON**

Christ is risen!

The stone has been rolled away and the tomb has been found empty.

Know that all that is holding you back from the fullness of life has been removed.

You are forgiven, free to live joyfully, generously and with great faith.

Accept this new life and share it with others.

## THE GLORIA - sung

Glory to God, glory to God, glory to the Father.

Glory to God, glory to God, glory to the Father.

To Him be glory forever.

To Him be glory forever.

Alleluia, amen.

Alleluia, amen.

Alleluia amen, alleluia amen.

Glory to God, glory to God, Son of the Father.

Glory to God, glory to God, Son of the Father.

To Him be glory forever.

To Him be glory forever.

Alleluia, amen.

Alleluia, amen.

Alleluia amen, alleluia amen.

Glory to God, glory to God, glory to the Spirit.

Glory to God, glory to God, glory to the Spirit.

To Him be glory forever.

To Him be glory forever.

Alleluia, amen.

Alleluia, amen.

Alleluia amen, alleluia amen.

## FIRST READING – Acts 10: 34 - 43

*At the end the reader may say*

This is the word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

## HYMN

He has risen  
He has risen  
Jesus is alive

1 When the life flowed from His body  
Seemed like Jesus' mission failed  
But His sacrifice accomplished  
Vict'ry over sin and hell

2 In the grave God did not leave Him  
For His body to decay  
Raised to life - the Great Awakening  
Satan's pow'r He overcame

3 If there were no resurrection  
We ourselves could not be raised  
But the son of God is living  
So our hope is not in vain

4 When the Lord rides out of heaven  
Mighty angels at His side  
They will sound the final trumpet  
From the grave we shall arise

5 He has given life immortal  
We shall see Him face to face  
Through eternity we'll praise Him  
Christ the champion of our faith

Noel Richards, Gerald Coates, Tricia Richards  
CCL Number 5935

*Please stand*

## **GOSPEL READING - Matthew 28: 1 - 10**

Alleluia, alleluia.

Jesus said, 'I am the resurrection and the life.

Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live,  
and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die.'

**Alleluia.**

## SERMON

## EASTER AFFIRMATION

We believe that Jesus –  
God unbounded –  
directed by love, accepted restraint  
and lived a fully human life to begin the healing of the world.

**Alleluia! With wonder we affirm it!**

We believe that Jesus –  
God unbounded –  
sustained by love, accepted restraint  
and died on the cross to draw the sting of death.

**Alleluia! With faith we accept it!**

We believe that Jesus –  
God unbounded –  
empowered by love, accepted restraint  
and was entombed to break the grip of evil.

**Alleluia! With confidence we believe it!**

We believe that Jesus –  
God unbounded –  
directed, sustained and empowered by love,  
threw off all restraint  
and rose from the dead to transform the world through Life.

**Alleluia! With joy we proclaim it!**

## DANCE

## PRAYERS

## THE PEACE

May the peace of the resurrected Jesus –  
the challenging peace of committed life,  
the liberating peace of selfless love,  
the vibrant peace of new possibility –  
recall you to radical living,  
empower you for rich loving  
and transform you with radiant joy.

The peace of the Lord be always with you  
**and also with you.**

## HYMN

1 Joyful, joyful, Lord we adore Thee,  
God of Glory, Lord of Love;  
Hearts unfold like flowers before Thee,  
Opening to the sun above.  
Melt the clouds of sin and sadness;  
Drive the dark of doubt away;  
Giver of immortal gladness,  
Fill us with the light of day!

3 Thou art giving and forgiving,  
Ever blessing, ever blest,  
Wellspring of the joy of living,  
Ocean depth of happy rest!  
Thou our Father, Christ our Brother,  
All who live in love are Thine;  
Teach us how to love each other.  
Lift us to the joy divine.

2 All Thy works with joy surround Thee,  
Earth and heaven reflect Thy rays,  
Stars and angels sing around Thee,  
Centre of unbroken praise.  
Field and forest, vale and mountain,  
Flowery meadow, flashing sea,  
Singing bird and flowing fountain  
Call us to rejoice in Thee.

4 Mortals, join the happy chorus,  
Which the morning star began;  
Father love is reigning o'er us,  
Brother love binds man to man.  
Ever singing, march we onward,  
Victors in the midst of strife,  
Joyful music leads us Sunward  
In the triumph song of life.

*Henry J. van Dyke  
CCL Number 5935*

## INVITATION

We stand in the resurrection garden of God –  
a place suffused and shaped by Love and ripe with its potential;  
and this is the table of the risen Jesus –  
a place fashioned and furnished by love and rich with its promises ...

So come –  
whether you have seen and believed,  
or are dubious and doubting still,  
whether you confess confidently,  
or with a fragile, fearful heart.

Come and share these gifts of grace,  
encounter Christ,  
and be healed by Love and transformed by Life.

## COMMUNION

Before the bright dawn in the garden –  
in which Love was resurrected,

before the cold silence of the tomb –  
by which Love was swallowed,

before the black horror of the cross –  
on which Love was broken,

before the bitter struggle of another garden –  
through which Love affirmed its choices,

Jesus,  
eating a final supper with his friends,  
blessed and broke bread and poured out a cup of wine,  
sharing these tokens with them as a confirmation of the life  
he had lived and a sign of what was to come.



So we, too,  
and honouring that life,  
take and break this bread  
recalling that moment,  
and pour out this wine  
as a confirmation and sign that we are part of its ongoing story.

And remembering with wonder and joy that Love –  
though broken on a cross was not defeated,  
and though swallowed by death was not silenced,  
but lives unvanquished and speaks still, and to all,

words of welcome, healing and hope,  
we join our voices with that of Creation  
and with all those who bear witness across the world  
and throughout the ages  
to the transforming power of God's love and life:

**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!**

And as we remember and rejoice,  
send down your Holy Spirit on us  
and on these gifts of bread and wine,  
that we may once again encounter Love  
and be transformed by Life.

## **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.**

## **THE SHARING OF THE GIFTS**

Jesus,  
Love resurrected,  
comes to us now in the garden  
offering these signs of healing and hope  
and calling us onwards into transformation ...

Alleluia!

This living bread is broken for the life of the world.

**Alleluia! Let us keep the feast.**

## **COMMUNION**

## POST COMMUNION PRAYER

Faithful God,  
may we who share this banquet  
glory in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ,  
our salvation, life and hope,  
who reigns as Lord now and for ever.  
Amen.

Alleluia. Christ is risen.  
**He is risen indeed. Alleluia.**

## SENDING

Jesus,  
Love resurrected,  
has met us once again in the garden  
and touched and transformed us with Life.  
**Alleluia! With joy we accept it!**

Jesus,  
Life in all its fullness,  
now calls us onwards into the powerful reality,  
the challenging potential and the vibrant possibilities  
of the life of his Kingdom.  
**Alleluia! With conviction we will live it!**

## DISMISSAL AND BLESSING

May the power of life in Christ  
lift up the life of the world,  
the power of love in the creator swing wide above us  
like the blue of the sky  
and the faithfulness of the Holy Spirit  
raise our faith to the heights of hope

And the blessing...

## HYMN

1 Thine be the glory,  
risen, conqu'ring Son,  
endless is the vic'try  
thou o'er death hast won;  
angels in bright raiment  
rolled the stone away,  
kept the folded grave-clothes  
where thy body lay.

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 hast lost its sting.

*Thine be the glory,  
risen, conqu'ring Son,  
endless is the vic'try  
thou o'er death has 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 conqu'rors  
through thy deathless love;  
bring us safe through Jordan  
to thy home above.

*Edmund Louis Budry  
Trans. Richard Birch Hoyle  
CCL Number 5935*