



Chet Valley Churches

Easter Morning



Family-Friendly Communion
12th April 2020

Welcome

The paschal candle is lit in silence. The president says

Alleluia. Christ is risen.

He is risen indeed. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Praise God for the victory of light over darkness.

Praise God for Christ's victory over death.

The Collect (*Prayer for the 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.**

It is 10.30am on Easter Day. We are isolated in our own homes. Let us each light our own candle as we gather together for worship, reminding us of Jesus, The Light of the World. If you would like, why don't you place on a table, close by you, a piece of bread and a glass of wine. If you can, please also have a small bowl of water.

Hymn: Jesus Christ is Risen Today

Jesus Christ is risen today, Alleluia!

Our 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 heavenly King, Alleluia!

Who endured the cross and grave, Alleluia!

Sinners to redeem and save, Alleluia!

But the anguish He endured, Alleluia!

Our salvation hath procured, Alleluia!

Now above the sky He's king, Alleluia!

Where the angels ever sing, Alleluia!



Confession (*We Say Sorry to God*)

In baptism we died with Christ, so that as Christ was raised from the dead, we might walk in newness of life.

Let us receive new life in him as we confess our sins in penitence and faith.

Father God

**We ask you to forgive us
For the things we have thought
And the things we have said
And the things we have done
That do not please you.
We are sorry.**

**Help us to be more like Jesus:
Ready to pray, ready to help others,
Ready to do your will
In all things, every day. Amen.**

Absolution *(The Priest Announces God's Forgiveness)*

May the God of love and power
Forgive us and free us from our sins,
Heal and strengthen us by his Spirit
And raise us to new life in Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Hymn: *Lord, I Lift Your Name on High*

**Lord, I lift Your name on high,
Lord, I love to sing Your praises.
I'm so glad You're in my life,
I'm so glad You came to save us.**

***You came from heaven to earth
to show the way.***

***From the earth to the cross
my debt to pay.***

***From the cross to the grave,
From the grave to the sky,
Lord, I lift Your name on high.***

[Repeat verse and chorus]

Reading: *Acts 10:34-43 [David]*

Peter then said:

Now I am certain that God treats all people alike. God is pleased with everyone who worships him and does right, no matter what nation they

come from. This is the same message that God gave to the people of Israel, when he sent Jesus Christ, the Lord of all, to offer peace to them.

You surely know what happened everywhere in Judea. It all began in Galilee after John had told everyone to be baptized. God gave the Holy Spirit and power to Jesus from Nazareth. He was with Jesus, as he went around doing good and healing everyone who was under the power of the devil. We all saw what Jesus did both in Israel and in the city of Jerusalem.

Jesus was put to death on a cross. But three days later, God raised him to life and let him be seen. Not everyone saw him. He was seen only by us, who ate and drank with him after he was raised from death. We were the ones God chose to tell others about him.

God told us to announce clearly to the people that Jesus is the one he has chosen to judge the living and the dead. Every one of the prophets has said that all who have faith in Jesus will have their sins forgiven in his name.

For the word of the Lord,
Thanks be to God.

Gradual Hymn 475: *Now the Green Blade Riseth*

**Now the green blade riseth,
from the buried grain,
Wheat that in dark earth
many days has lain;
Love lives again,
that with the dead has been:
Love is come again
like wheat that springeth green.**

**In the grave they laid Him,
Love, who men had slain,
Thinking that never
He would wake again,
Laid in the earth like
grain that sleeps unseen:
Love is come again like
wheat that springeth green.**

**Forth He came at Easter,
like the risen grain,**



**Jesus, for three days
in the grave had lain;
Quick from the dead
the risen One is seen:
Love is come again like
wheat that springeth green.**

**When our hearts are wintry,
grieving, or in pain,
Thy touch can call us
back to life again,
Fields of our hearts
that dead and bare have been:
Love is come again like
wheat that springeth green.**

Gospel: *Matthew 28:1-10*

Jesus Christ is risen from the dead. **Alleluia.**
He has defeated the powers of death. **Alleluia.**
Jesus turns our sorrow into dancing. **Alleluia.**
He has the words of eternal life. **Alleluia.**

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew:
Glory to you O Lord.

After the sabbath, as the first day of the week was dawning, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to see the tomb. And suddenly there was a great earthquake; for an angel of the Lord, descending from heaven, came and rolled back the stone and sat on it. His appearance was like lightning, and his clothing white as snow. For fear of him the guards shook and became like dead men. But 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. Come, see the place where he lay. Then go quickly and tell his disciples, 'He has been raised from the dead, and indeed he is going ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see him.' This is my message for you." So they left the tomb quickly with fear and great joy, and ran to tell his disciples. Suddenly Jesus met them and said, "Greetings!" And they came to him, took hold of his feet, and worshiped him. Then Jesus said to them, "Do not be afraid; go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee; there they will see me."

This is the gospel of the Lord

Praise to you O Christ.

Sermon by Rev Alison

I'm jolted awake by people shouting in the distance, 'Barabbas. Barabbas. Barabbas'.

That's me. Barabbas. Murderer held at the emperor's pleasure in a cell in Jerusalem while they decide what to do with me. It's a fair cop – Jerusalem's busy with people flocking in from all round for the Passover. It's an easy time for light thievery. Except this bloke didn't want to give up his purse, so rather than have a fight about it, I knifed him. Trouble is, there are that many extra soldiers and guards around, I am seen and arrested.

So here I am half-asleep in chains in a dank, smelly cell, jolted awake by people shouting, 'Barabbas. Barabbas. Barabbas'.

Sounds like quite a lot of people. But why me all of a sudden? I mean, I am known as a criminal though I've not actually been caught that often. I make my life out of stealing and more. How do they even know that I'm in prison?

It goes quiet for a bit. And then fear in the pit of my stomach. I can hear them shouting again. Louder this time, absolutely crystal clear. 'Crucify him! Crucify him! Crucify him!'

I vomit in fear and apprehension of what's about to happen to me. Crucifixion. Is that how I'm going to end my life? Stuck up on a cross – a common criminal? You could say I had it coming to me; that I deserve it. I've seen them up there before. It's a cruel death. Oh God! What have I done?

Steps approach the cell. Two guards. 'Get up!'

They come in and kick me into motion.

"So this is it", I think, "my last few minutes".

I feel numb; stumble to my feet.

'Hold out your hands'.

I do so obediently and am momentarily relieved as they take the chains off.

'Right! Get out! This is your lucky day!'

I just stand there not taking in what they've said. Wondering if I'll be able to stand the pain; How long I'll take to die.

'Didn't you hear us? Get out before Pilate changes his mind!'

"Pilate changes his mind? You're letting me go?"

Once it sinks in, I'm outta there. Don't need telling again. I quickly blend with the crowds; lose myself amongst all those people just in case there's been a big mistake and they try to come after me. But they don't.

It's a strange time. The elation I feel when I finally realise I am free. And then – well, it's hard to describe. You see, I know that there are crucifixions, and for some reason, I find myself in the crowd going along to watch. Two common criminals, like me, and then this other one, beaten up, bruised with a sign over his head:

This is Jesus, the king of the Jews.

Loads of people are here taking the mick out of him – nasty stuff given the circumstances: "He saved others, he cannot save himself!" "If you're the Son of God, come down from the cross." Even the bandits are at it.

And then I realise.

This man, this Jesus, is being crucified in my place. It should be me up there on that cross, not him. I don't know what he's done, but I'd murdered someone and the rest. There's been some talk about Pilate's amnesty for a prisoner at the festival – it's his custom – and that prisoner is clearly me. They say he saved others. I suppose in a funny kind of way, he saved me.

And what does it mean that he's the Son of God? That sounds like blasphemy even to me and I'm not the best student of the law. But if he is..., I've been saved by the Son of God.

No matter. I decided then and there that my life was going to change. I was going to try and live like most people do – try to make an honest living, maybe marry and have kids, start afresh if you like. I was going to have a new life because of what that Jesus had done. It felt like I had been given new life.

And talking of new life, now, a few days later, there are some funny stories going around about this Jesus – how although he died, he is now alive. It's obviously unbelievable, but do you know what, I think I might believe it.

We believe...

As we celebrate the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ from the dead, we remember that through the Easter mystery we have died and been buried with him in baptism. To follow Christ means dying to sin and rising to new life with him. Therefore we ask:

Do you reject the devil and all rebellion against God?

I reject them.

Do you renounce the deceit and corruption of evil?

I renounce them.

Do you repent of the sins that separate us from God and neighbour?

I repent of them.

In baptism, God calls us out of darkness into his marvellous light. Therefore we ask:

Do you turn to Christ as Saviour?

I turn to Christ.

Do you submit to Christ as Lord?

I submit to Christ.

Do you come to Christ, the way, the truth and the life?

I come to Christ.

If you would like, use the water in your bowl to mark a sign of the cross on your forehead or to wash your hands reminding you of your baptism.

Prayers

Lots of people think of eggs when they think of Easter so we are going to use eggs to help us to pray today.

Here I have an icon – painted with love and care onto an egg; a picture of Madonna and child, Mary and the baby Jesus.

This Easter we give thanks that you came to live among us, to show us how to love, to give us a glimpse of your kingdom. We give thanks that you came to die for us and live again for us so that we might live.

Here I have a bowl of eggs of different sizes and colours: some richly decorated with painted patterns; some highly polished – striped and mottled; some very plain.

We pray for those people who are different from us – a new child in our class; a new colleague; a new neighbour. Each has their own experiences and stories to share with us. Help us to be open and understanding of people who are different. Help us to live well alongside whoever we find ourselves next to. Help us to celebrate and enjoy our differences.

Here I have a box of broken and empty eggs – ready to be crushed and thrown out.

We pray for those people in our world who feel crushed and broken: those caught up in conflict, stuck in refugee camps, devastated by natural disaster; those suffering physical or mental illness; those who are isolated or lonely. We pray that your healing and peace will come to them.

Here I have a bag of eggs – shiny with their foil wrappings enclosing tasty chocolate underneath.

Help us to be grateful for the good things that we have and always to be ready to share them with others. Especially help us to share the good news we celebrate at Easter, which we declare by saying together:

Jesus Christ has died.

Jesus Christ is risen.

Jesus Christ will come again.

The Peace

The risen Christ came and stood among his disciples and said, 'Peace be with you.' Then were they glad when they saw the Lord. Alleluia.

John 20.19, 20vii

The peace of the Lord be always with you

And also with you.

Let us share the Easter peace with each other in our hearts.

Offertory Hymn 305: Lord of the Dance

I danced in the morning when the world was begun;

I danced on the Moon and the Stars and the Sun.

I came down from Heaven and I danced on the Earth.

At Bethlehem I had my birth:

Dance, dance, wherever you may be

I am the Lord of the Dance, said He!

***And I'll lead you all, wherever you may be
And I'll lead you all in the Dance, said He!***

**I danced for the Scribe and the Pharisee,
But they would not dance and they wouldn't follow me.
I danced for fishermen, James & John,
They came with me and the Dance went on:**

Dance, dance, wherever you may be...

**I danced on the Sabbath and I cured the lame.
The holy people said it was a shame!
They whipped and they stripped and they hung me high,
And they left me there on a cross to die!**

Dance, dance, wherever you may be...

**I danced on a Friday when the sky turned black.
It's hard to dance with the devil on your back.
They buried my body and they thought I'd gone,
But I am the Life and I still go on!**

Dance, dance, wherever you may be...

**They took me down and I leapt up high.
I am the Life that will never, never die!
I'll live in you if you'll live in Me:
I am the Lord of the Dance, said He!**

Dance, dance, wherever you may be...

The Eucharistic Prayer

The Lord be with you
And also with you.

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.

Holy, *Holy*, **Holy** [Getting louder]



It is always right to give you thanks, God our Creator, loving and faithful, holy and strong. You made us and the whole universe, and filled your world with life.

Holy, *Holy*, **Holy** *[Getting louder]*

You sent your Son to live among us, Jesus our Saviour, Mary's child. He suffered on the cross; he died to save us from our sins; he rose in glory from the dead.

Holy, *Holy*, **Holy** *[Getting louder]*

You send your Spirit to bring new life to the world, and clothe us with power from on high. And so we join the angels to celebrate and sing:

**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.

Jesus Christ has died. *[Open your arms]*
Jesus Christ has died. [Open your arms]

Jesus Christ is risen. *[Raise your arms]*
Jesus Christ is risen. [Raise your arms]

Jesus Christ will come again. *[Wave arms in celebration]*
Jesus Christ will come again. [Wave arms in celebration]

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.

Amen, *Amen*, **Amen.** *[Getting louder]*



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.

Amen, *Amen*, **Amen.** [*Getting louder*]

For honour and praise belong to you, Father, with Jesus your Son, and the Holy Spirit: one God, for ever and ever.

Amen, *Amen*, **Amen.** [*Getting louder*]

The service continues with 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.

The Fraction (*Breaking of Bread*)

Jesus says, I am the bread of life, whoever eats this bread will live for ever.

Lord, our hearts hunger for you; give us this bread always.

The Invitation

This is the table, not of the Church, but of the Lord, it is made ready for those who love Him and who want to love Him more.

So, come, you who have much faith, and you who have little,

you who have been here often, and you who have not been for a long time,

you who have tried to follow, and you who have failed.

Come, not because it is I who invite you: it is our Lord,

It is His will that those who want Him should meet Him here. Come.

The Communion

The bread and wine we eat now are a token only, and not the same as a full sharing when we can be physically present with each other. It is a foretaste of the greater communion in which we can partake when our churches are open again and the restrictions are lifted.

♪ All are Welcome

**Let us build a house where love can dwell
and all can safely live,
a place where saints and children tell
how hearts learn to forgive.
Built of hopes and dreams and visions,
rock of faith and vault of grace;
here the love of Christ shall end divisions.
All are welcome, all are welcome, all are welcome in this place.**

**Let us build a house where prophets speak,
and words are strong and true,
where all God's children dare to seek
to dream God's reign anew.
Here the cross shall stand as witness
and as symbol of God's grace;
here as one we claim the faith of Jesus.
All are welcome, all are welcome, all are welcome in this place.**

**Let us build a house where love is found
in water, wine and wheat:
a banquet hall on holy ground
where peace and justice meet.
Here the love of God, through Jesus,
is revealed in time and space;
as we share in Christ the feast that frees us.
All are welcome, all are welcome, all are welcome in this place.**

**Let us build a house where hands will reach
beyond the wood and stone
to heal and strengthen, serve and teach,
and live the Word they've known.
Here the outcast and the stranger
bear the image of God's face;**

**let us bring an end to fear and danger.
All are welcome, all are welcome, all are welcome in this place.**

**Let us build a house where all are named,
their songs and visions heard
and loved and treasured, taught and claimed
as words within the Word.**

**Built of tears and cries and laughter,
prayers of faith and songs of grace,
let this house proclaim from floor to rafter.
All are welcome, all are welcome, all are welcome in this place.**

Post communion prayer

God of Life, who for our redemption gave your only-begotten Son to the death of the cross, and by his glorious resurrection have delivered us from the power of our enemy:

grant us so to die daily to sin, that we may evermore live with him in the joy of his risen life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Ending

Alleluia. Christ is risen.

He is risen indeed. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Praise the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

He has given us new life and hope.

He has raised Jesus from the dead.

God has claimed us as his own.

He has brought us out of darkness.

He has made us light to the world.

Alleluia. Christ is risen.

He is risen indeed. Alleluia.

Blessing

May Jesus, 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.

Final Hymn: *Thine Be the Glory*

**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 vict'ry, Thou o'er death hast won.***

**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 vict'ry, Thou o'er death hast won.***

**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 vict'ry, Thou o'er death hast won.***

The Dismissal

With the risen life of Christ within you,
Go in the peace of Christ. Alleluia, alleluia.
Thanks be to God. Alleluia, alleluia.



Happy Easter!

