



Chet Valley Churches

Easter Communion



Easter 4
3rd May 2020

The Greeting and Welcome

Welcome to our service of Holy Communion on this the 4th Sunday of Easter.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

The Lord be with you, **and also with you.**

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

♪ Hymn: Good Christians All Rejoice and Sing

**Good Christians all, rejoice and sing!
Now is the triumph of our King!
To all the world glad news we bring:
“Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!”**

**The Lord of Life is risen for ay:
Bring flowers of song to strew his way;
Let all the world rejoice and say:
“Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!”**

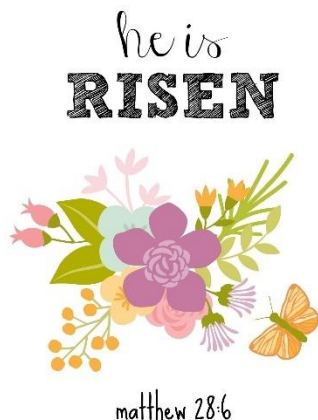
**Praise we in songs of victory
That Love, that Life, which cannot die,
And sing with hearts uplifted high:
“Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!”**

**Your name we bless, O risen Lord,
And sing today with one accord
The life laid down, the life restored:
“Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!”**

Invitation to Confession

God so loved the world that he gave his only Son Jesus Christ to save us from our sins, to be our advocate in heaven, and to bring us to eternal life.

Let us confess our sins in penitence and faith, firmly resolved to keep God's commandments and to live in love and peace with all:



Like Mary at the empty tomb,
we fail to grasp the wonder of your presence.

Lord, have mercy.

Lord, have mercy.

Like the disciples behind locked doors,
we are afraid to be seen as your followers.

Christ, have mercy.

Christ, have mercy.

Like Thomas in the upper room, we are slow to believe.

Lord, have mercy.

Lord, have mercy.

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.

Gloria in Excelsis

**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.**

The Collect: Prayer of the Day

Let us pray. 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

The First Reading: Acts 2: 42-end

They spent their time in learning from the apostles, taking part in the fellowship, and sharing in the fellowship meals and the prayers. Many miracles and wonders were being done through the apostles, and everyone was filled with awe. All the believers continued together in close fellowship and shared their belongings with one another. They would sell their property and possessions, and distribute the money among all, according to what each one needed. Day after day they met as a group in the Temple, and they had their meals together in their homes, eating with glad and humble hearts, praising God, and enjoying the good will of all the people. And every day the Lord added to their group those who were being saved.

The second reading: 1 Peter 2: 19-end

God will bless you for this, if you endure the pain of undeserved suffering because you are conscious of his will. For what credit is there if you endure the beatings you deserve for having done wrong? But if you endure suffering even when you have done right, God will bless you for it. It was to this that God called you, for Christ himself suffered for you and left you an example, so that you would follow in his steps. He committed no sin, and no one ever heard a lie come from his lips. When he was insulted, he did not answer back with an insult; when he suffered, he did not threaten, but placed his hopes in God, the righteous Judge. Christ himself carried our sins in his body to the cross, so that we might die to sin and live for righteousness. It is by his wounds that you have been healed. You were like sheep that had lost their way, but now you have been brought back to follow the Shepherd and Keeper of your souls.

♪ Hymn: The King of Love My Shepherd Is.

**The King of love my shepherd is,
whose goodness faileth never.**

**I nothing lack if I am his,
and he is mine forever.**

**Where streams of living water flow,
my ransomed soul he leadeth;
and where the verdant pastures grow,
with food celestial feedeth.**

**Perverse and foolish, oft I strayed,
but yet in love he sought me;
and on his shoulder gently laid,
and home, rejoicing, brought me.**

**In death's dark vale I fear no ill,
with thee, dear Lord, beside me;
thy rod and staff my comfort still,
thy cross before to guide me.**

**Thou spreadst a table in my sight;
thy unction grace bestoweth;
and oh, what transport of delight
from thy pure chalice floweth!**

**And so through all the length of days,
thy goodness faileth never;
Good Shepherd, may I sing thy praise
within thy house forever.**



Gospel reading: *John 10: 1-10*

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 John.

Glory to you, O Lord.

Jesus said, "I am telling you the truth: the man who does not enter the sheep pen by the gate, but climbs in some other way, is a thief and a robber. The man who goes in through the gate is the shepherd of the sheep. The gatekeeper opens the gate for him; the sheep hear his voice as he calls his own sheep by name, and he leads them out. When he has

brought them out, he goes ahead of them, and the sheep follow him, because they know his voice. They will not follow someone else; instead, they will run away from such a person, because they do not know his voice.” Jesus told them this parable, but they did not understand what he meant.

So Jesus said again, “I am telling you the truth: I am the gate for the sheep. All others who came before me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not listen to them. I am the gate. Those who come in by me will be saved; they will come in and go out and find pasture. The thief comes only in order to steal, kill, and destroy. I have come in order that you might have life—life in all its fullness.

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

Sermon

I wonder what caught your attention, what did you imagine on hearing this passage? Did you have a picture of a particular shepherd in your mind? Who might the thieves be? Did you imagine a calm flock of sheep or were they scattered in fright? What kind of life is Jesus talking about?

The Pharisees and no doubt others in the crowd, did not understand Jesus. So he emphasised how important it is to grasp what he is saying! Jesus said, “I am telling you the truth. Truth meaning that which is reliable and consistent with God’s revelation. This is made real in the person and character of Jesus.

The Psalms speak of God. Psalm 119 has many verses, but this is like a conversation with God! Reading from verse 142 it saysYou always do what is right, and your law is true. I’ve had my share of trouble and suffering but your commands give me delight! Your covenant laws are always right. Help me to understand them, then I will live.

God’s law is true. Jesus speaks the truth, he would often speak words from Scripture to reveal who God is. To show us how to have a relationship with him and to learn to trust and rely on him.

But this might be difficult for us, especially as we are so keen to manage in our own way.

Since the risk of disease and the ensuing restrictions began, I have been reading about and hearing stories about previous pandemics, and the trials

and tragedy of living in war time. How people had managed to survive through those times. Spending so much time in air raid shelters, eating dried eggs and having only a tiny amount of fruit and sweet things to eat! How encouraging to find there are many wonderful stories of courage and service.

Today we are living through a time of great anxiety and fear, and for some a terrible time of great loss. I wonder if it is the fear of an unknown future which is hardest to try to cope with.

Thank goodness there are some good news stories to give us a sense of hope. Heart warming news such as the survival of a 6 month old baby among others, a 15 year old boy is back home with his parents after being critically ill, and elderly people are recovering and going home too, even a 99 year old lady! I am sure we all agree, the tremendous work and self-giving of the professionals, community helpers and neighbours is absolutely incredible!

Many people are now saying that they are looking forward to things getting back to normal. But do we really want the wider world to go back to how things were? Should we hope for a new and better normal?

Jesus speaks this truth into our lives. God's people are the sheep spoken of in the parable. Not everyone among the sheep is a true shepherd, and just as in Ancient times, some use ways such as political manipulation and corruption to get in. Jesus can be trusted. The gatekeeper knows this and lets him in. A true shepherd comes in by a legitimate way, by love, care and service.

Every spring season on the farm, I watch the cattle go out onto new pasture. The sheer joy for them being out on the fresh grass is very evident! It's a happy scene too when the new lambs are seen running and jumping around their mums as they become stronger! The herd and the flock have followed their keeper out to a new life of abundant nourishment!



In this special Easter season, we relive the wonder of Jesus' resurrection. By his crucifixion and resurrection, we all have the gift of a gateway to freedom and abundant life.

Each one of us are called by name to follow Jesus, to listen for his voice and be led by him. We can have complete trust in him as he speaks only of the truth and leads us to the joy of living a truly fulfilled life, to be and to do what God has intended for us. Amen

The Confession of Faith

Let us declare our faith in the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ.

**Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures;
he was buried; he was raised to life on the third day
in accordance with the Scriptures;
afterwards he appeared to his followers, and to all the apostles:
this we have received, and this we believe. Amen.**

The Intercessions

In the power of the Spirit and in union with Christ, let us pray to the Father. We pray for the Church of Christ...

Lord, in your mercy **Hear our prayer.**

We pray for creation and human society...

Lord, in your mercy **Hear our prayer.**

We pray for the local community....

Lord, in your mercy **Hear our prayer.**

We pray for those who are ill or in need...

Lord, in your mercy **Hear our prayer.**

We pray for the communion of saints...

Lord in your mercy **Hear our prayer.**

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

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.
Alleluia.

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



🎵 **Hymn: Restore O Lord the Honour of Your Name**

**Restore, O Lord, the honour of Your name,
In works of sovereign power Come shake the earth again;
That all may see and come with reverent fear
To the living God, Whose kingdom shall outlast the years.**

**Restore, O Lord, In all the earth Your fame,
And in our time revive The church that bears Your name.
And in Your anger, Lord, remember mercy,
O living God, Whose mercy shall outlast the years.**

**Bend us, O Lord, Where we are hard and cold,
In Your refiner's fire Come purify the gold.
Though suffering comes And evil crouches near,
Still our living God Is reigning, He is reigning here.**

**Restore, O Lord, The honour of Your name,
In works of sovereign power Come shake the earth again;
That all may see and come with reverent fear
To the living God, Whose kingdom shall outlast the years.**

The Eucharistic Prayer

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.

Blessed are you, Lord God, our light and our salvation; to you be glory and praise for ever. From the beginning you have created all things and all your works echo the silent music of your praise.

In the fullness of time you made us in your image, the crown of all creation. You give us breath and speech, that with angels and archangels and all the powers of heaven we may find a voice to sing your praise:

**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.**

How wonderful the work of your hands, O Lord. As a mother tenderly gathers her children, you embraced a people as your own. When they turned away and rebelled your love remained steadfast.

From them you raised up Jesus our Saviour, born of Mary, to be the living bread, in whom all our hungers are satisfied. He offered his life for sinners, and with a love stronger than death he opened wide his arms on the cross.

On the night before he died, he came to supper with his friends and, taking bread, he gave you thanks. He broke it and gave it to them, saying: "Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of me."

At the end of supper, taking the cup of wine, he gave you thanks, and said: "Drink this, all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant, which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me."

Jesus Christ is Lord:

**Lord by your cross and resurrection you have set us free.
You are the saviour of the world.**

Father, we plead with confidence his sacrifice made once for all upon the cross; we remember his dying and rising in glory, and we rejoice that he intercedes for us at your right hand.

Pour out your Holy Spirit as we bring before you these gifts of your creation; may they be for us the body and blood of your dear Son. As we eat and drink these holy things in your presence, form us in the likeness of Christ, and build us into a living temple to your glory.

Remember, Lord, your Church in every land. Reveal her unity, guard her faith, and preserve her in peace. Bring us at the last with all the saints to the vision of that eternal splendour for which you have created us; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, by whom, with whom, and in whom, with all who stand before you in earth and heaven, we worship you, Father almighty, in songs of everlasting praise:

**Blessing and honour and glory and power
be yours for ever and ever. Amen.**

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 Breaking of the Bread

Whoever eats this bread and drinks this cup
will have eternal life, says the Lord.

**You are the bread of life, Lord Jesus,
and you will raise us up at the last day.**



Lamb of God

**Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world,
have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world,
have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world,
grant us peace.**

Alleluia! Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us.

Therefore let us keep the feast. Alleluia!

The Communion

The bread and wine we eat now are a token only, not the same as full sharing when we can be fully 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.

Prayer after Communion

Let us pray. Merciful Father, you gave your Son Jesus Christ to be the Good Shepherd, and in his love for us to lay down his life and rise again:

Keep us always under his protection, and give us grace to follow in his steps; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

**Father of all, we give you thanks and praise,
that when we were still far off
you met us in your Son and brought us home.
Dying and living, he declared your love,
gave us grace and opened the gate of glory.
May we who share Christ's body live his risen life;
we who drink his cup bring life to others;
we whom the Spirit lights, give light to the world.
Keep us firm in the hope you have set before us,
so we and all your children shall be free,
and the whole earth live to praise your name;
through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

♪ Hymn: *Through All the Changing Scenes of Life*

**Through all the changing scenes of life, in trouble and in joy,
The praises of my God shall still My heart and tongue employ.**

**Oh, magnify the Lord with me; with me exalt his name;
When in distress to him I called, he to my rescue came.**

**The hosts of God encamp around the dwellings of the just;
Deliv'rance he affords to all who on his succor trust.**

**Fear him, ye saints, and you will then have nothing else to fear;
Make you his service your delight, he'll make your wants his care.**

The Blessing

God, who through the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ has given us the victory, give you joy and peace in your faith; and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among you and those whom you love, now and always. **Amen.**

The Dismissal

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

