



**Chet Valley Churches**



**Morning Worship**  
**Second Sunday of Easter**  
**11<sup>th</sup> April 2021**

Alleluia. Christ is risen.

**He is risen indeed. 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.**

Alleluia. Christ is risen.

**He is risen indeed. Alleluia.**

**Faithful one, whose word is life:  
come with saving power  
to free our praise,  
inspire our prayer and shape our lives  
for the kingdom of your Son,  
Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

**♪ Hymn: Rejoice, the Lord is King**

**Rejoice! The Lord is King,  
Your Lord and King adore;  
Mortals, give thanks and sing,  
And triumph evermore:**

*Lift up your heart, lift up your voice;  
rejoice, again I say, rejoice.*

**Jesus the Saviour reigns,  
The God of truth and love;  
When he had purged our stains,  
He took his seat above:**

*Lift up your heart...*

**His kingdom cannot fail;  
He rules o'er earth and heaven;  
The keys of death and hell  
Are to our Jesus given:**

*Lift up your heart...*

**He sits at God's right hand  
Till all his foes submit,  
And bow to his command,  
And fall beneath his feet:**



*Lift up your heart...*

**Rejoice in glorious hope;  
Jesus the judge shall come,  
And take his servants up  
To their eternal home:**

*We soon shall hear the archangel's voice;  
The trump of God shall sound: rejoice!*

## **Prayer of Approach**

Lord, direct our thoughts and teach us to pray.  
Lift up our hearts to worship you in spirit and in truth,  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

*Silence*

**Loving God,  
we have come to worship you.  
Help us to remember  
that you are here with us.  
May we pray to you in faith  
and listen to your word with eagerness;  
through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

## **Psalm 133:1-3**

How very good and pleasant it is when kindred live together in unity! It is like the precious oil on the head, running down upon the beard, on the beard of Aaron, running down over the collar of his robes.

It is like the dew of Hermon, which falls on the mountains of Zion. For there the LORD ordained his blessing, life for evermore.

*Silence*

To you, loving God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit,  
be all glory, honour and praise now and for ever. **Amen.**

## **Prayer of Confession and Declaration of Forgiveness**

Jesus Christ, risen Master and triumphant Lord,  
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.**

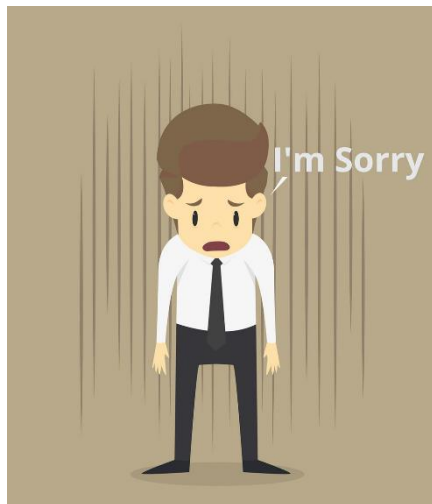
We have lived for this world alone,  
and doubted our home in heaven.

In your mercy, forgive us.

**Lord, hear us and help us.**

*Silence*

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.**



## **The Collect, the Prayer of the Day**

Risen Christ, for whom no door is locked, no entrance barred:  
open the doors of our hearts, that we may seek the good of others  
and walk the joyful road of sacrifice and peace,  
to the praise of God the Father. **Amen.**

## **New Testament Reading: Acts 4:32-35**

Now the whole group of those who believed were of one heart and soul,  
and no one claimed private ownership of any possessions, but everything  
they owned was held in common. With great power the apostles gave their  
testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon  
them all. There was not a needy person among them, for as many as  
owned lands or houses sold them and brought the proceeds of what was  
sold. They laid it at the apostles' feet, and it was distributed to each as any  
had need.

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

## **Hymn/Song: My Hope is Built (Cornerstone)**

**My hope is built on nothing less,  
Than Jesus blood and righteousness.  
I dare not trust the sweetest frame,  
But wholly trust in Jesus' name.**

**Christ alone, Cornerstone,  
Weak made strong in the Saviour's love.  
Through the storm, he is Lord,  
Lord of all.**

**When darkness seems to hide his face  
I rest on his unchanging grace.  
In every high and stormy gale  
My anchor holds within the veil.**

**Christ alone, Cornerstone,  
Weak made strong in the Saviour's love.  
Through the storm, he is Lord,  
Lord of all.  
He is Lord, Lord of all.**

## **Gospel Reading: John 20:19-30**

When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors of the house where the disciples had met were locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, 'Peace be with you.' After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. Jesus said to them again, 'Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you.' When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, 'Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained.'

But Thomas (who was called the Twin), one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. So the other disciples told him, 'We have seen the Lord.' But he said to them, 'Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands, and put my finger in the mark of the nails and my hand in his side, I will not believe.'

A week later his disciples were again in the house, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were shut, Jesus came and stood among them

and said, 'Peace be with you.' Then he said to Thomas, 'Put your finger here and see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it in my side. Do not doubt but believe.' Thomas answered him, 'My Lord and my God!' Jesus said to him, 'Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe.'

Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book.

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

## **Talk [Rev David]**

Many years ago now, during the final year at junior school my teacher introduced the class to J R R Tolkien's novel, *The Hobbit*, the task she set each week was for us to write a précis of the chapter we'd had read to us and to draw an illustration to accompany it. I recall vividly that my template for drawing Bilbo Baggins was "Noddy"! Ah well. I also recall the chapter from the book, Riddles in the Dark, in which Bilbo, having found "the Ring" has now encountered Gollum and finds himself in a riddle challenge. Riddles can be fun and clever. "What has roots as nobody sees, Is taller than trees, Up, up it goes, And yet never grows?" [A mountain]. They can also be old and corny like the Christmas Cracker riddle which asks, "When is a door, not a door?" The answer being, "When it is a-jar."

Our gospel reading, on this the second Sunday of Easter, begins by recounting the story of the disciples who are firmly behind a locked door; this is a door which is definitely not ajar.

Doors have two main functions, they exist to keep things in or to keep things out. No matter how ornate or plain they are that is what they're there to do. In John's account of the events of that first Easter evening, the door of the house where the disciples are meeting, is definitely serving the purpose of keeping things out! We are told that it was locked "for fear..." When we are afraid there is a natural instinct to keep things out, to keep things at bay. I'm not surprised that they were fearful, they had discovered that the body of Jesus wasn't in the tomb, they had been told by Mary Magdalene that she had actually had an encounter with Jesus and had "seen the Lord", and they were now trying to make sense of it all. Then, it happened. Jesus came and stood among them. And said: "Peace be with you." Fear, surprise, peace. What an injunction!

John tells us that Jesus then showed them his wounds and breathed on them. But there was one disciple, at least, who wasn't there that evening. Where he was the gospel writer doesn't explain suffice to say that he is incredulous about what the others tell so much so that it has led to him forever having the epithet of Doubting Thomas. Not surprisingly he too wants to see the wounds which the others have been privileged to have seen. And he has to wait—a whole week is to pass before Jesus re-appears—and yet again the door is shut. Once more there is still an air of uncertainty between those inside and those who are outside. This time Jesus is very personal speaking directly to Thomas he offers him the opportunity to look and touch and Thomas's response is the acclamation: "My Lord and my God".

It is in that moment of recognition of who the risen Jesus is that the task of those first disciples become paramount. Let's not forget what a disparate group of individuals they were—drawn from a variety of backgrounds with little in common yet now given a common purpose.

In the first of the trilogy which makes up *The Lord of the Rings* Tolkien entitled it *The Fellowship of the Ring*. In that too, a disparate group are given a common purpose, but they are charged with being a "fellowship". Something which the theologian Jane Williams picks up from this passage in John's gospel and the other writings attributed to him—the letters of 1 & 2 John.

The task that Jesus gave to those first disciples is one that he gives to his church today. To create a fellowship, "that is strong through its truthfulness..." Those first disciples, we are reminded, had overplayed their own capabilities "...they had said that they would never abandon Jesus, that they would follow him and stick with him through anything, and they know that their lies led to disintegration of the fellowship at the Cross."

The new fellowship, our fellowship of the Church, must be different. It must be based on the recognition that true fellowship can only be built on an appreciation and recognition that we continually need no longer to be fearful but rather keep the door of our lives ajar to allow for God's forgiveness to enter.

## **Affirmation 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.**

### **♪ Hymn/Song: *Here is Love, Vast as the Ocean***

**Here is love, vast as the ocean.  
Loving kindness as the flood.  
When the prince of life, our ransom  
Shed for us his precious blood.  
Who his love will not remember?  
Who can cease to sing his praise?  
He can never be forgotten  
Throughout heaven's eternal days  
On the mount of crucifixion  
Fountains opened deep and wide.  
Through the floodgates of God's mercy  
Flowed a vast a gracious tide.  
Grace and love, like mighty rivers  
Poured incessant from above.  
And heaven's peace and perfect justice  
Kissed a guilty world in love.**



### **🙏 Prayers of Intercession**

The risen Jesus appeared to his disciples while they were hiding behind closed doors for fear of the authorities. Closed doors helped them to feel safe—but they weren't to stay there for ever. So, doors are the theme of our prayers today.

The first door is the one that opens out onto community life. Life has changed so much during the pandemic for communities everywhere. We pray that we might retain the positive things that we have learned and



rediscover good things that have had to be put aside. We pray for all who work to build up community life, whether as individuals or as organisations.

Lord of the world, **hear our prayer.**

Next, there is the door of our church. We pray that the door may be open to all and that each one of us will be ready to welcome others who want to experience the risen Jesus or maybe just come in and find peace.

Lord of our church, **hear our prayer.**

The third door is the door of our homes. We pray for all who have been separated from family and friends over the past year and who long for social contact. We pray especially for people whose mental health has been affected and for those who are afraid for the future.

Lord of our well-being, **hear our prayer.**

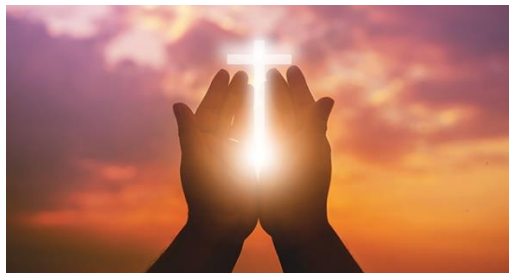
And the final door in our prayers is the door of our hearts. Lord, help us to know you better, to worship you more deeply, and to live in the light of your resurrection.

Lord of our lives,  
**hear our prayer and help us to follow you, in Jesus' name. Amen.**

### **♪ Reflection: *Light of the World***

**Light of the world you stepped down into darkness,  
Opened my eyes, let me see  
Beauty that makes this heart adore you;  
Hope of a life spent with you.**

**Here I am to worship,  
Here I am to bow down,  
Here I am to say that  
You're my God.  
You're altogether lovely,  
Altogether worthy,  
Altogether wonderful to me.**



**King of all days, oh, so highly exalted,  
Glorious in heaven above.  
Humbly you came  
To the earth you created;  
All for love's sake became poor.**

**Here I am to worship...**

**I'll never know how much it cost, to see my sin upon that cross.**

**Here I am to worship...**

## **We pray**

**God of compassion and mercy, listen to our prayer.**

**May what we ask in Jesus Christ**

**your Son be done according to his word,**

**who said, 'Ask, and you will receive,**

**seek, and you will find, knock,**

**and the door will be opened to you.'**

**To you, merciful God, through your Son,**

**in the power of the life-giving Spirit,**

**be glory and praise for ever. Amen.**

## **The Lord's Prayer**

Gathering our prayers and praise into one, let us pray as our Saviour taught us:

**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.**

## **Hymn: All Heaven Declares**

**All heaven declares the glory of the risen Lord.**

**Who can compare with the beauty of the Lord?**

**Forever he will be the Lamb upon the throne.**

**I gladly bow the knee and worship him alone.**

**I will proclaim the glory of the risen Lord;**

**Who once was slain to reconcile man to God.**

**Forever you will be the Lamb upon the throne.**

**I gladly bow the knee and worship you alone.**

## **Prayer of Praise**

**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.**

Alleluia. Christ is risen.

**He is risen indeed. 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.**

## **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.

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

## 🎵 **Hymn: We Have a Gospel to Proclaim**

We have a gospel to proclaim  
Good news for men in all the earth;  
The gospel of a saviour's name:  
We sing his glory, tell his worth.

Tell of his birth at Bethlehem,  
Not in a royal house or hall  
But in a stable dark and dim:  
The word made flesh, a light for all.

Tell of his death at Calvary,  
Hated by those he came to save;  
In lonely suffering on the cross  
For all he loved, his life he gave.

Tell of that glorious Easter morn:  
Empty the tomb, for he was free.  
He broke the power of death and hell  
That we might share his victory.

Tell of his reign at God's right hand,  
By all creation glorified;  
He sends his Spirit on his church  
To live for him, the Lamb who died.

Now we rejoice to name him King:  
Jesus is Lord of all the earth.  
This gospel message we proclaim:  
We sing his glory, tell his worth.

## **Blessing and Dismissal**

The blessing of God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit be among us  
and remain with us and those whom we love, now and always. **Amen.**

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord. **In the name of Christ. Amen.**

