

SAFFRON WALDEN AND VILLAGES TEAM MINISTRY HYMNS AND PRAYERS FOR EASTER DAY AND SUNDAYS IN EASTERTIDE: APRIL 4 TO MAY 16

This prayer sheet may be especially helpful for those praying at home during Coronavirus restrictions. It covers Easter Day and Sundays throughout Eastertide, with readings and suggested hymns for each week. The text of the readings is given in the Grapevine, which will be sent round each week. We hope that this sheet will continue to connect you to the rhythm of our worship together. You might like to light a candle, symbolising Jesus as the Light of the World: and to say the prayers and readings out loud. Remember that even if you are by yourself at home, you are still part of God's Church, praying across the world. The wonder of the Resurrection remains the core of the Christian faith, with the promise which nothing in the world can overcome the loving power and life of God. White or gold vestments and hangings in church reflect the joy of this time.

Introduction

We gather together, united in purpose though separate in place, in the name of God, our Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer.

We say together an opening hymn: see pages 5-16.

The Lord is here. **His Spirit is with us.**

We have come together as the family of God in this community. And especially today we thank you, heavenly Father, for the resurrection of your Son Jesus from the dead: for the grace and forgiveness he brings us, and the promise of life eternal. Help us to pray to you in faith, to sing your praise with gratitude, and to listen to your word with eagerness; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Prayers of Penitence

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.

Hearing God's forgiveness

May the Father forgive us by the death of his Son and strengthen us to live in the power of the Spirit all our days. **Amen.**

As God's forgiven people, we say

Thanks be to God for his endless grace.

Readings *We now follow the readings on the Grapevine:*

Collect (the special prayer for each Sunday)

April 4th (Easter Day):

First Reading: Acts 10: 34-43; **Gospel:** John 20: 1-18

April 11th (Second Sunday of Easter):

First Reading: Acts 4:32-35; **Gospel:** John 20:19-31

April 18th (Third Sunday of Easter):

First Reading: Acts 3:12-19; **Gospel:** Luke 24:36b-48

April 25th (Fourth Sunday of Easter):

First Reading: Acts 4:5-12; John 10:11-18

May 2nd (Fifth Sunday of Easter):

First Reading: Acts 8:26-40; **Gospel:** John 15:1-8

May 9th (Sixth Sunday of Easter):

First Reading: Acts 10: 44-48; **Gospel:** John 15: 9-17

May 16th (Seventh Sunday of Easter: Sunday after Ascension)

First Reading: Acts 1:15-17, 21-26; **Gospel:** John 17: 6-19

Reflection *You may wish to read the Reflection on the Grapevine, and think what these readings have to say for you in your own life this week.*

We declare our faith together

We believe and trust in God the Father,

from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named.

We believe in God the Son,

who lives in our hearts through faith, and fills us with his love.

We believe in God the Holy Spirit,

who strengthens us with power from on high.

This is our faith. We believe and trust in one God;

Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen

Prayers of Intercession

You may like to base your own prayers around the themes below: feel free to expand and to use your own words

Lord, we rejoice with all creation at the resurrection of your Son Jesus Christ. May we live as Easter people, spreading your light, confident in your love, and trusting that your power has overcome the evil of sin and death.

Lord of life ***Hear our prayer***

In these weeks of Eastertide we listen to all that Jesus did after his resurrection until he ascended to be with you in heaven, and we hear the courage of the first Christians as they built up his church. Give us that peace and courage, that we may always know his presence with us.

Lord of life ***Hear our prayer***

We pray for your Church, Christ's Body throughout the world: for our Bishops; for all the people, communities and churches of this Saffron Walden and Villages Team Ministry. We pray especially for those who have been baptised and confirmed this Eastertide, both here and across the globe, and for all Christians who face persecution. Defend them always with your heavenly grace, that they may be yours for ever: and give us all grace to support them.

Lord of life ***Hear our prayer***

We pray for the needs of the world: for places where the fullness of Christ's risen life is marred by injustice, violence, hunger, or disease. *You may wish to pray for places or situations which have been in the news this week.....* May your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.

Lord of life ***Hear our prayer***

We pray for the continuing effects of the COVID pandemic. As our life in this country gradually seems to be opening up, we give thanks for the vaccination programme, for the dedication of medical staff and carers, and the resilience of so many over these months of lockdown. We pray for a just rollout of the vaccines across the world, and countries where the infection rate is still high.

Lord of life ***Hear our prayer***

We pray for all who are sick or in any kind of need: those suffering from long COVID; those who mourn the loss of loved ones; those suffering from other illnesses; those who are anxious or lonely; those who are near death. Give them courage and help in their troubles, and make us channels of your love to them.

Lord of life ***Hear our prayer***

Bless our families, friends and neighbours, both near and far, and all those we have loved but see no longer. May we know that they are safe in your eternal kingdom, and that nothing can separate us or them from your love. And hear our prayers for all we name before you in our hearts.....

Lord of life

Hear our prayer

In a moment of silence, offer to God any other needs on your heart.

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

Sharing God's Peace

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

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

As you say this, hold in your mind all who are joining in these prayers today.

The Lord's Prayer *Let us pray together as Jesus has taught us*

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come, thy will be done; on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

We ask God's grace for the week ahead

Heavenly Father, sustain us in our joys and in our anxieties. Enfold us in your peace in our waking and in our sleeping, and may we know your presence with us now and always: in the name of your Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

We say (or sing!) a final hymn: see pages 5 -16

The God of peace, who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, make you perfect in every good work to do his will; and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and Holy Spirit, be with us all now and evermore.

Let us go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

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SUGGESTED HYMNS

SUNDAY 4th April (Easter Day)

The strife is o'er, the battle done;
Now is the Victor's triumph won;
O let the song of praise be sung.
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Death's mightiest pow'rs have done their worst,
And Jesus hath his foes dispersed;
Let shouts of praise and joy outburst.
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

On the third morn he rose again
Glorious in majesty to reign;
O let us swell the joyful strain.
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Lord, by the stripes which wounded thee
From death's dread sting thy servants free,
That we may live, and sing to thee:
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Thine be the glory, risen, conqu'ring Son;
endless is the vict'ry 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 conqu'ring 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....

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.

Thine be the glory....

SUNDAY 11th April (Second Sunday of Easter)

Love's redeeming work is done,
Fought the fight, the battle won.
Lo, our Sun's eclipse is o'er!
Lo, he sets in blood no more!

Vain the stone, the watch, the seal!
Christ has burst the gates of hell;
Death in vain forbids his rise;
Christ has opened paradise.

Lives again our victorious King;
Where, O death, is now thy sting?
Dying once, he all doth save;
Where thy victory, O grave?

Soar we now where Christ has led,
Following our exalted Head;
Made like him, like him we rise,
Ours the cross, the grave, the skies.

Hail the Lord of earth and heaven!
Praise to thee by both be given:
Thee we greet triumphant now;
Hail, the Resurrection thou!

Guide me, O thou great redeemer,
Pilgrim through this barren land;
I am weak, but thou art mighty,
Hold me with thy powerful hand;
Bread of heaven, bread of heaven
Feed me till I want no more;
Feed me till I want no more.

Open now the crystal fountain
Whence the healing stream doth flow;
Let the fire and cloudy pillar
Lead me all my journey through:
Strong deliverer, strong deliverer;
Be thou still my strength and shield;
Be thou still my strength and shield.

When I tread the verge of Jordan,
Bid my anxious fears subside;
Death of death, and hell's destruction
Land me safe on Canaan's side:
Songs of praises, songs of praises,
I will ever give to thee;
I will ever give to thee.

SUNDAY 18th April (Third Sunday of Easter)

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 had been slain,
Thinking that He never would awake 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 who 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,
Jesus' 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.

Alleluia, alleluia!
hearts to heaven and voices raise:
sing to God a hymn of gladness,
sing to God a hymn of praise;
he who on the cross a victim
for the world's salvation bled
Jesus Christ, the king of glory,
now is risen from the dead.

Christ is risen, we are risen!
set your hearts on things above:
there in all the Father's glory
lives and reigns our king of love;
hear the word of peace he brings us,
see his wounded hands and side!
now let every wrong be ended,
every sin be crucified.

Alleluia, alleluia!
glory be to God on high:
alleluia to the Saviour
who has gained the victory;
alleluia to the Spirit,
fount of love and sanctity:
alleluia, alleluia
to the Triune Majesty!

SUNDAY 25th April (Fourth Sunday of Easter – St Mark)

There's a wideness in God's mercy,
Like the wideness of the sea;
There's a kindness in His justice,
Which is more than liberty.

There is no place where earth's sorrows
Are more felt than up in heav'n;
There is no place where earth's failings
Have such kindly judgment giv'n.

For the love of God is broader
Than the scope of human mind;
And the heart of the Eternal
Is most wonderfully kind.

There is plentiful redemption
In the blood that has been shed;
There is joy for all the members
In the sorrows of the Head.

If our love were but more simple,
We should take Him at His word;
And our lives would be all gladness
In the joy of Christ our Lord.

Will you come and follow me
if I but call your name?
Will you go where you don't know
and never be the same?
Will you let my love be shown,
will you let my name be known,
will you let my life be grown
in you and you in me?

Will you leave yourself behind
if I but call your name?
Will you care for cruel and kind
and never be the same?
Will you risk the hostile stare
should your life attract or scare,
will you let me answer prayer
in you and you in me?

Will you love the 'you' you hide
if I but call your name?
Will you quell the fear inside
and never be the same?
Will you use the faith you've found
to reshape the world around
through my sight and touch and sound
in you and you in me?

Lord, your summons echoes true
when you but call my name.
Let me turn and follow you
and never be the same.
In your company I'll go
where your love and footsteps show.
Thus I'll move and live and grow in you and you in me.

SUNDAY 2nd MAY (Fifth Sunday of Easter)

Thy hand, O God, has guided
thy flock, from age to age;
the wondrous tale is written,
full clear, on ev'ry page;
our forebears owned thy goodness,
and we their deeds record;
and both of this bear witness:
one Church, one Faith, one Lord.

Thy heralds brought glad tidings
to greatest, as to least;
they bade them rise, and hasten
to share the great King's feast;
and this was all their teaching,
in ev'ry deed and word,
to all alike proclaiming:
one Church, one Faith, one Lord.

Through many a day of darkness,
through many a scene of strife,
the faithful few fought bravely,
to guard the nation's life.
Their gospel of redemption,
sin pardoned, hope restored,
was all in this enfolded:
one Church, one Faith, one Lord.

Thy mercy will not fail us,
nor leave thy work undone;
with thy right hand to help us,
the vict'ry shall be won;
and then, by all creation,
thy name shall be adored:
and this shall be their anthem:
One Church, one Faith, One Lord.

Forth in the peace of Christ we go;
Christ to the world with joy we bring;
Christ in our minds, Christ in our lips,
Christ in our hearts, the world's true King.

King of our hearts, Christ makes us kings;
kingship with him his servants gain;
with Christ, the Servant-Lord of all,
Christ's world we serve to share Christ's reign.

Priests of the world, Christ sends us forth
this world of time to consecrate,
our world of sin by grace to heal,
Christ's world in Christ to re-create.

Prophets of Christ, we hear his word:
he claims our minds, to search His ways,
he claims our lips, to speak his truth,
he claims our hearts, to sing his praise.

We are his Church, he makes us one:
here is one hearth for all to find,
here is one flock, one Shepherd-King;
here is one faith, one heart, one mind.

SUNDAY 9th MAY (Sixth Sunday of Easter)

All my hope on God is founded;
he doth still my trust renew.
Me through change and chance he guideth,
Only good and only true.
God unknown, he alone
Calls my heart to be his own.

Human pride and earthly glory,
sword and crown betray his trust;
what with care and toil he buildeth,
tow'r and temple, fall to dust.
But God's pow'r, hour by hour,
Is my temple and my tow'r.

God's great goodness aye endureth,
deep his wisdom, passing thought:
splendour, light, and life attend him,
beauty springeth out of naught.
Evermore, from his store
new-born worlds rise and adore.

Still from earth to God eternal
sacrifice of praise be done,
high above all praises praising
for the gift of Christ his Son.
Christ doth call one and all:
Ye who follow shall not fall.

I, the Lord of sea and sky,
I have heard my people cry.
All who dwell in dark and sin
My hand will save.
I who made the stars of night,
I will make their darkness bright.
Who will bear my light to them?
Whom shall I send?

*Here I am, Lord. Is it I, Lord?
I have heard you calling in the night.
I will go, Lord,
If you lead me.
I will hold your people in my heart.*

I, the Lord of snow and rain,
I have borne my people's pain.
I have wept for love of them.
They turn away.
I will break their hearts of stone,
give them hearts for love alone.
I will speak my word to them,
Whom shall I send?

Here I am, Lord.....

I, the Lord of wind and flame,
I will tend the poor and lame.
I will set a feast for them.
My hand will save.
Finest bread I will provide
till their hearts be satisfied.
I will give my life to them
Whom shall I send?

Here I am, Lord....

SUNDAY 16th MAY (Seventh Sunday of Easter – Sunday after Ascension)

The head that once was crowned with thorns
is crowned with glory now:
a royal diadem adorns
the mighty victor's brow.

The highest place that heav'n affords
is his, is his by right,
the King of kings, and Lord of lords,
and heav'n's eternal Light;

The joy all of all who dwell above,
the joy of all below,
to whom he manifests his love
and grants his Name to know.

To them the cross, with all its shame,
with all its grace is giv'n;
their name an everlasting name;
their joy the joy of heav'n.

The cross he bore is life and health,
though shame and death to him;
his people's hope, his people's wealth,
their everlasting theme.

Hail the day that sees him rise, alleluia!
to his throne above the skies; alleluia!
Christ the Lamb for sinn'rs given, alleluia!
enters now the highest heav'n! alleluia!

There for him high triumph waits; alleluia!
lift your heads, eternal gates! alleluia!
He hath conquered death and sin; alleluia!
take the King of Glory in! alleluia!

Lord, though parted from our sight, alleluia!
far above the starry height, alleluia!
grant our hearts may thither rise, alleluia!
seeking thee above the skies. alleluia!

Ever upward let us move, alleluia!
wafted on the wings of love, alleluia!;
looking when our Lord shall come, alleluia!
longing, sighing after home, alleluia!