



**St Peter  
Berryarbor**



**Holy Week  
and Easter  
in the  
Combe to  
Combe Benefice**

## **The Lord's Prayer**

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.

### **OR**

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.

Dear Friends,

We are shortly approaching Holy Week, culminating spectacularly in Easter day itself. There are many traditions throughout this week that have become part of our annual worship pattern including the giving of palm crosses on Palm Sunday, the washing of feet on Maundy Thursday, a walk of witness on Good Friday, just to mention a few. However, this year things will need to be different due to our current constraints. This booklet will outline what is happening each day, and has been designed so that everyone can access what is going on throughout the season and join in.

Our hope is that you can join us by calling the number below just before the time of the service, entering the access code, then the # button. That way we can worship together. If you cannot do that, please join in whatever way you can.

Dial-in using your **home phone or mobile**:

**Call: 0333 113 0100 and enter the access code: 998 3503**

*N.B. This call will cost you the same as a local rate call (c. 12p per minute), but may be included in your monthly telephone packages.*

**Each service will be at 7pm, and will last a maximum of 15 minutes.**

We do hope you can join us daily as we journey through the Easter story, and deepen our faith in our Lord Jesus, and our love for Him.

Yours in Christ,

Rev. Peter Churcher

## **Palm Sunday**, led by Rev Peter Churcher

### **The Triumphal Entry**

*You will need your bible an item of outdoor clothing and – if you have one – a palm cross.*

#### **Welcome and opening prayer**

Almighty God,  
your Son Jesus Christ was acclaimed as King and Saviour  
as he entered Jerusalem.  
May we welcome him daily into our hearts through faith,  
and prepare to deny ourselves,  
take up our own cross and follow him. Amen.

#### **Today's Theme**

*It was on a Sunday that Jesus took on the city!  
They wanted a Messiah to save them from Roman occupation.  
They got a wandering preacher teaching peace, remorse, grace and love.  
They wanted a king on a charger – the symbol of power.  
They got a humble countryman riding on a donkey – a symbol of poverty, humility and service.  
They received him as a King with palms and glad hosannas.  
Yet his victory was to die as an innocent victim, a troublemaker.*

*Religious freaks usually go out in the desert, urging folk to leave all that behind and get back to nature. God, it seems, doesn't live in the city!  
He prefers gardens to gutters, rivers to roads, hills to houses?!  
The city is the place of sin!?  
But Jesus rides into the city from the Mount of Olives – a King on donkey – following the prophecy of Zechariah! And the city dwellers*

*throw down their cloaks, strew the steep road with palm leaves and some cry out, “Who is this? Who has come to save us?”  
“Only Jesus, the prophet from Nazareth!”*

*Take time to think...Where do you find Jesus most easily? In the beauty of the countryside?  
Or in the busyness and grime of the city?*

## **Reading Matthew 21.1-11**

### **A Symbolic Act and Reflection**

The crowd laid down their clothes before Jesus and cut palm leaves to strew on the steep road. This was their way of rolling out the red carpet in welcome as they shouted, “Hosanna to the Son of David!”

How excited are you to be a follower of Jesus? To proclaim his name?

Take your item of clothing and lay it before you as you repeat several times...

*“Come to my heart, Lord Jesus. There is room in my heart for you.”*

Take up your palm cross – place it in your window where passers-by can see it.

Imagine yourself telling all your neighbours why you are so excited that Jesus has come into your life! You can speak it out loud, say it silently or write it down.

## **Prayers**

Lord Jesus, over the virus-ridden, unhealthy parts of our world and lives

### **Ride on, Ride on in Majesty**

Over places of violence and hatred, abuse and mistrust  
Over hurts and pains and unfulfilled hopes

### **Ride on, Ride on in Majesty**

Through back streets, dark places, sin bins...  
Over fears, obsessions and addictions

### **Ride on, Ride on in Majesty**

Over communities divided by strife and power struggles

### **Ride on, Ride on in Majesty**

Let your love shine out, your healing Spirit dwell

### **Ride on, Ride on in Majesty**

Bring hope, courage, faith and trust  
And call us all to follow you  
and be your faithful servants and witnesses

### **Ride on, Ride on in Majesty**

In your company and at your side  
may we help to bandage and heal the wounds of the world

### **Ride on, Ride on in Majesty**

## **The Lord's Prayer (Page 1)**

We adore you, O Christ and we bless you;

**By your holy cross you have redeemed the world**

God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong.

**We adore you, O Christ and we bless you;**

We preach Christ crucified, the power of God and the wisdom of God.

**By your holy cross you have redeemed the world**

God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ

**We adore you, O Christ and we bless you;**

**By your holy cross you have redeemed the world**

*Cf 1 Cor 1 and Galatians 6*

### **Prayer**

Christ crucified draw you to himself  
to find in him a sure ground for faith,  
a firm support for hope  
and the assurance of sins forgiven;  
and the blessing of God almighty  
Father the Son and the Holy Spirit  
Be with us all, and remain with us always.

*Each night Jesus went out of the city to Bethany where he spent the night. May the Lord be with you this night, watch over you and keep you safe.*

**Suggested Hymn to use today - My song is love unknown**

## **Holy Monday**, led by Rev Clive Thomas

*You will need your bible and handful of coins*

### **Jesus overturns the tables in the Temple**

#### **Opening prayer**

Gracious, God,

your Son our Saviour entered the holy city to the praise of the people,  
yet upset the rulers and leaders by showing a new and glorious way.

May we be drawn to his loving, healing ministry,

and, following his example,

change the culture around us to reveal your presence

and bring about your kingdom here on earth.

For we pray in Jesus's name. Amen.

#### **Today's theme**

*It was on the Monday that religion got in the way. It was like panic buying, only it wasn't for food! It was a rip-off in the holy Temple. And the price was something only the rich could afford – no special deals for the old and vulnerable or those on benefits!*

*Then he – the holiest man in the world – went through the bizarre bazaar overturning tables, like a bull in a china shop. The doves and sheep and goats got set free – but the sellers and the priests got angry!*

*The police went crazy, but the poor folk clapped like mad because he was showing them that God was for everybody.*

*And he healed them!*

*He turned the tables on the Monday.*

*The day that religion got in the way*

#### **Reading**

Jesus overturns the tables Matthew 21.12-17



## A symbolic action and reflection

Jesus was not prepared to allow the old ways to continue.

Take a pile of 6 coins and one by one take each one in your hand,  
.....reflect on each as below..... then create a new pile.

For each coin, contemplate something that needs our Lord's help to  
change in order to truly reflect his kingdom values...

In the wider world      in this country      in Ilfracombe

In Pip and Jim's      In your family      in your own life

Take up the coins again and pray in your own words for those changes  
to come about and an openness in you to allow - and even to take  
action to effect - those changes.

## Prayers

*The religious leaders had allowed money and religious practices to  
become more important than a loving relationship with God and each  
other.*

Healing God, on the Monday of Holy Week, Jesus challenged the  
culture of the temple...

Let us pray:

- for all religious leaders, that they may walk in - and spread  
abroad - the light and love of Jesus Christ....(take time to offer  
names...)
- that those trapped in superstition - or beliefs that imprison - be  
set free in Jesus' name to know his love (offer to the Lord any  
who come to mind...)
- that true faith in our Lord will set us free from debilitating  
concern about money (take time to reflect on our own  
concerns...)

- that the church will witness to the life-changing presence of Jesus amongst all those seeking or not yet finding (offer to the Lord those who come to mind...)
- that the people of the world will work together to put an end to the Corona virus and be united in serving each other (take time to imagine this...)
- For all who need healing in body, mind or spirit today (take time to offer names...)

Father give us a true vision of your kingdom.

Into your hands, Father, we commend all for whom we pray today;

Enfold them in your loving care and bless them all. Amen

### **The Collect**

Most merciful God,

who by the death and resurrection of your Son

delivered and saved the world;

grant that by faith in him who suffered on the cross,

we may triumph in the power of his victory,

through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

### **The Lord's Prayer (Page 1)**

#### **Reflect on...**

The word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing,  
but to those who are being saved it is the power of God

## **Blessing**

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

Bless us today with your presence. Amen.

*Each night Jesus went out of the city to Bethany where he spent the night. May the Lord be with you this night, watch over you and keep you safe.*

**Hymn suggestion for today - If You come and follow me**

## **Holy Tuesday**, led by Rev Clive Thomas

*You will need your bible and a handful of 10 or so coins*

### **Jesus is betrayed**

#### **Introduction and opening prayer**

Father God, we come before you in humility, aware of our weakness and wickedness and your unfathomable perfection and glory. Today we offer ourselves to you, knowing that you are full of compassion and mercy, slow to anger and of great goodness. You do not always accuse us nor do you keep your anger for ever. You do not deal with us according to our sins nor reward us according to your wickedness, but as a father has compassion on his children, so you are merciful towards us who honour you. Take us as we are, cleanse us from our sin, and anoint us with your Spirit, we may deny ourselves, take up our cross and follow your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

#### **Today's theme**

*It was on the Tuesday that Jesus was betrayed! But it wasn't just Judas that was angry with him!*

*The chief priests and elders weren't used to being questioned.*

*"You can't just come into our city and throw your weight about, telling us we've got it all wrong. We're the leaders, the chosen ones. We're in charge here!" But he saw through their bluster.*

*They weren't used to having some upstart teaching against them, whipping up enthusiasm amongst the hoi-polloi. Telling stories against them of wedding banquets and tenants in the vineyard. Calling them hypocrites and blind guides, snakes and whitewashed tombs! He needed to be got rid of - and quickly! Arrested and killed when others would be too busy to notice!*

*But they loved Judas – how a name can be passed down in history to signify betrayal! Was he dishonest, money grabbing? Did he feel Jesus was misguided, weak, not zealous enough – not going to drive out the Roman oppressors? Or too much against Temple, the chief priests and elders?*

*Did he realise his mistake when he saw Jesus led away in chains? Did Jesus engage him eyeball to eyeball, causing Judas to see him for who he truly is? Did Jesus ever forgive Judas? Could Jesus have triumphed on the cross without Judas playing his part?*

**Reading**            Matthew 26.1-5 and 14-16

### **Symbolic actions and reflection**

*You may not have 30 pieces of silver! But we collectively betray Jesus on a daily basis by not living up to his expectations. Let's use the coins we have to symbolise our own faults and/or the sins of the world, and pray for his forgiveness. For each of the commandments we have failed to keep, place a coin in front of you.*

Have we...

- clung to other gods, comforts or sources of wisdom or failed to put God first in our actions and decisions?
- made an idol out of money, power, popularity, knowledge, sex, possessions, how we look...anything else?
- misused the name of God before others...or played down our faith in him before others?
- remembered to allocate enough time when we put God first?
- honoured our parents and given them the respect, generosity and love that God shows to us?
- committed murder - or kept hatred, suspicion or angry feelings towards others in our hearts?

- committed adultery - or lusted after others or possessions?
- taken things that don't belong to us?
- told lies about others?
- been jealous or envious of others or their possessions?

*Repeat this prayer to yourself until it becomes part of you...*

**Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the living God**

**Have mercy on me, a sinner**

The money in front of you represents your betrayal of Jesus.

Dirty money?

Jesus bore the weight of the sins of the whole world on his shoulders on the cross – including yours and mine.

By dying for you, he has forgiven you.

But he wants to give it back to you.

It has been cleansed – a sign that Jesus has cleansed you by his blood.

You have been set free. Take it up. It's precious.

Use it – and any other money you have - to do good in his name.

## **Prayers**

Knowing we are forgiven, let's give thanks to almighty God...

For the gift of life.....and abundant life

For all those who have shown us love...

For all who have taught us in our faith...

For enough money to live by...

For our homes and possessions...

For our skills, talents, abilities and interests...

For our health and well-being...

For our faith in Jesus and all his blessings...

*We pray together...*

Thanks be to thee O Lord Jesus Christ,  
For all the benefits which thou hast won for us  
And all the pains and insults which thou hast born for us.  
Most merciful Redeemer, Friend and Brother,  
May we know you more clearly,  
Love you more dearly  
And follow you more nearly.  
Day by Day. Amen *The Prayer of St Richard of Chichester*

### **The Lord's Prayer (Page 1)**

We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you;  
**By your holy cross you. Have redeemed the world.**  
Christ committed no sin, no guile was found on his lips.

**We adore you O Christ and we bless you**  
He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree  
that we might die to sin and live to righteousness.

**We adore you O Christ and we bless you.**  
By his wounds you have been healed.  
**We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you;**  
**By your holy cross you have redeemed the world.**

The Lord bless you and keep you  
Make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you.  
The Lord look upon you kindly and give you his peace.  
*Each night Jesus went out of the city to Bethany where he spent the night. May the Lord be with you this night, watch over you and keep you safe.*

**Hymn suggestion for today - God forgave my sin (Freely, freely)**

## **Holy Wednesday**, led by Rev Clive Thomas

Jesus is anointed

*You will need some perfume, after shave, a fragrant ointment or perfumed hand gel, or something similar... and your bible.*

### **Introduction and opening prayer**

Most merciful God, you have prepared for those who love you such good things that surpass our understanding.

Pour out your love upon us,  
that we, loving you above and beyond all things,  
may receive your promises,  
which far exceed all we could desire or deserve;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

### **Today's theme**

*It was on the Wednesday that called him a waster.*

*The place smelt like the perfume department of Banbury's!*

*It was as if someone had sent a perfume bottle crashing to the floor,  
setting off the most expensive stink bomb on earth!*

*But this happened, not in a shop, but in a house of leper – an outcast!*

*And the woman was the poorest of the poor - another outcast -  
giving away the most precious thing she had!*

*And those who saw her pour the liquid over his hair and feet -  
wiping them with her own hair -*

*remembered that he was against extravagance  
and called him and waster!*

*They'd forgotten that **he** was the poorest of the poor.*

*Those who had much – who had given him nothing – objected to the  
pauper giving him everything.*



*And Jesus told them that such beauty in simplicity – this act of holy love - will always be remembered.*

*It was on the Wednesday when the poor woman's generous love became an embarrassment to their comfort – and they called him a waster!*

## **Reading Matthew 26.6-13**

### **A symbolic act and reflection**

Pure nard was a very expensive perfume.

Take time to smell the fragrance you have. Rub it on your hands...indulge yourself in the sensations...

Imagine the scene with Jesus and the woman anointing him with oil.

Where are you and what is your role there?

Exactly what is she doing...how? How does it make you feel?

Notice the room and who is in it. What do you see...hear...smell...feel?

What is the reaction of those in the room - Simon the Leper, the disciples...?

Observe the body language...look at the expression of the face of Jesus and the woman...the others...smell the fragrance...notice the reactions of others...sense the love...hear Jesus' words.

How do the others react...? How do you react...?

How does the scene end? Bring yourself back to now.

## Prayers of Praise and Adoration

The woman used the ointment, her hands, her hair to love the Lord.

Let us show our love for our Lord by contemplating his many names.  
What does each name mean to you? How do you see Jesus when you think of these names?

Take time to address Jesus by each of these names and notice what feelings or images come to mind.

Saviour	Son of God	The Christ	The Messiah
Emanuel	Redeemer	Lord	Lamb of God
Teacher	Master	Friend	Brother
Son of David	Word made flesh		Jesus

What act of holy love or service does this inspire in you?

How can you express your love for Jesus?

*Maybe, as our act of love, we give our lives to bring His love to others*

Make me an instrument of your peace.

Where there is hatred let me bring your love.

Where injury let me bring pardon.

Where there is discord harmony

Where there is doubt...faith

Where there is despair...hope

Where there is darkness...light

Where there is sadness...joy.

O Master, grant that I may never seek  
So much to be consoled as to console,  
To be understood as to understand  
To be loved as to love.  
For it is in pardoning that we are pardoned;  
In giving that we receive;  
In dying that we are born to eternal life.

*Attributed to St Francis of Assisi*

*Each night Jesus went out of the city to Bethany where he spent the night. May the Lord be with you this night, watch over you and keep you safe*

**Hymn suggestion for today   I will offer up my life**

## **Maundy Thursday**, led by Rev Peter Churcher

### **The new commandment, the Last Supper, and Gethsemane**

You will need: a bible, a glass or cup, a plate

#### **Introduction and opening prayer**

**God, our Father, you have invited us to celebrate the supper which your Son gave to the church to proclaim his death until he comes. May he nourish us by his presence, and unite us in his love; for he is alive and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.**

#### **Today's themes**

*It was on the Thursday that he said his goodbye!*

*Jesus celebrated with - and taught - his disciples as they ate the Passover meal together. He even upset them by taking the role of the servant washing their feet! The Master washing the servant's feet?*

*Unheard of! Not done! Yet a powerful image they would not forget!*

*He said goodbye to his trusted team! They were confused. "Where are you going? Can we come too?" Had they really not listened to anything he had told them before?*

*He sent Judas on the way of betrayal. He challenged Peter that even he would deny him 3 times. And he told his disciples that they would all fall away because of him.*

*Was this really a celebration? Or a cataclysmic warning?*

*Did they listen? Did they understand? As usual...not a bit!*

*But also as usual...he was proved right! Prophetic or what?*

*And he gave them a new commandment – to love one another as he had loved them – by this, others would know that they are his disciples, but only if they had love for one another. And he promised them the gift*

*of the Holy Spirit. This was all too much to take in for one night!  
Especially after food and wine!*

*And he gave them the sacrament by which he would be remembered  
for all time. They thought they were celebrating the Passover festival,  
but the suffering of the next day would not 'pass over' their Lord Jesus,  
nor 'pass over' them. It would be very real. Very painful.*

*Too much to bear.*

*And he celebrated his last supper with them, but did they understand  
the symbolism of the bread and wine – his body and blood?*

### **Reading – Matthew 26.26-30. The Last Supper**

#### **A symbolic act**

Before you is a cup and plate. At this time, we cannot celebrate the Lord's Supper together, and church tradition does not allow us to celebrate communion alone. So let us remind ourselves of the meal that Jesus left with us, by which he will always be remembered.

As you take the plate into your hands remember...

*The bread of the presence in the Old Testament Temple symbolised God  
united with his people...*

*Remember the feeding of the five thousand, how so many were fed  
from just 5 loaves...*

*Jesus said, I am the bread of life...the living bread...those who come to  
me will never go hungry, whoever eats of this bread will live for ever.*

*The bread is my flesh which I give for the life of the world.*

*Jesus took the bread, gave thanks, broke it and said, "Take and eat.  
This is my body."*

*Paul reminds us, "Because there is one bread, we who are many are  
one body because all share the one bread."*

As you take the cup into your hands, remember...

*Jesus said, "This is my blood poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins."*

*St Paul asks us, "Is not the cup of thanksgiving... a participation in the blood of Christ?"*

As you remember the act of communion, remember that Christ died for you and be thankful.

### **Prayers**

Father, on this night your Son our Lord was betrayed by one of his disciples.

Give us the resolve never to let him down, betray his trust in us, or belittle his importance in our lives.

#### **Lord hear us, and keep us humble**

Father, on this night Jesus washed the feet of his disciples.

May we follow the example of the Suffering Servant by our humility, our service to others and love for the marginalised.

#### **Lord hear us, and keep us humble**

Father, on this night Jesus prayed for his disciples to be united and to love one another.

Unite your church in the bond of peace, in love for one another and for those who do not yet know you.

#### **Lord hear us, and keep us humble**

Father, on this this night, Jesus was rejected and disowned by his followers.

Into your hands we place all who are rejected, unloved, abandoned.

#### **Lord hear us, and keep us humble**

Father, on this night Jesus reminded them that if the world hated them, it hated him first.

Bless and protect all who are persecuted for their faith.

**Lord hear us, and keep us humble  
Into your hands, Father, we commit all for whom we pray this night.  
Enfold them in your loving care and bless us all. Amen.**

### **The Lord's Prayer (Page 1)**

**Reading** Matthew 26.36-39 and 45-46

We leave worship on this night conscious of Jesus' arrest, betrayal, trial, and imprisonment.

Let us pray

Lord Jesus, on this night you gave us amazing examples of how you would like us to follow you.

May the washing of your disciples' feet remind us to offer our lives in love and humble service to others and to you.

May your new commandment to love one another be always at the forefront of our minds and direct our actions.

May your betrayal by Judas and denial by your disciples remind us to remain faithful in our witness to you, no matter what.

May your time in Gethsemane remind us to keep watchful and to keep faithful to you, regardless of how difficult, stressful or tiring that might be.

For you are our Lord and Master, our Teacher and our Friend. Amen.

Jesus prayed, "Father, if this be possible let this cup of suffering pass from me." But he proved to be obedient, even to death.

Let us go in the peace and love of Christ.

**Thanks be to God.**

**Hymn suggestion for today** From heaven you came (The Servant King)

## **Good Friday**, led by Rev Peter Churcher The Crucifixion

*You will need a cross and 7 small stones or coins*

### **Today's theme**

*It was on the Friday...*

*It was on **Good Friday** that it came to an end.*

*They did what they wanted. They got what they wanted.*

*They didn't do it alone. They did it in crowds – it's safer that way!*

*In the Sanhedrin. The religious council.*

*In a crowd of soldiers. In the baying mob before Pilate. On the Via Dolorosa.*

*And he said nothing. He did not fight back*

*He took the insults, the bruises, the spit in the face, the whip, the curses, the friends running away.*

*And he said nothing.*

*He let them do their worst – until their worst was done.*

*They led like a lamb to the slaughter and did not open his mouth.*

*They pierced him for our sins and crushed him for our iniquities.*

*It was on the Friday they ended it all.*

*And he said..."Father forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing."*

### **Reading – Matthew 27.32-56**

#### **An act of remembrance**

During the three hours on the cross, Jesus gave his last 7 "words" or utterances.

As we sit, stand or kneel before the cross, hear those words for yourself. Place a stone or coin at the foot of the cross as you meditate on each sentence.



What is Jesus saying to us through these words?

*Concerning the soldiers dividing his clothes between them...*

Father, forgive them for they do not know what they are doing.

Luke 23.24

*To the criminal beside him on the cross...*

Today, you will be with me in paradise

Luke 23.43

*To his mother and his disciple...*

Woman behold your son...Behold your mother

John 19.26-27

*To God his Father...*

My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?

Matt 27.46

*Aloud before the crowd...*

I thirst

John 19.28

*As he approached the end...*

Father, into your hands I commend my spirit

Luke 23.46

*And his final words*

It is finished

John 19.30

What would we want to say to Jesus at the moment of his death?

At this moment of great grief, let's remind ourselves of the good news of the cross...

**The word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing,**

**But those who are being saved it is the power of God.**

### **Prayer**

Heavenly Father

Simon of Cyrene was forced to carry the cross. Father God, help us to lift the heavy loads from those we meet and stand alongside those condemned to suffer.

**Lift the burden from all who are weighed down by life's cares and help us to walk the way with them.**

Your Son watched the soldiers profit from his misfortune.

Forgive those who make a profit from their victims and those whose hearts are hardened by their work.

**Forgive those who seek to gain unjustly while others suffer, soften their hearts and give them the joy of generosity.**

The thief looked for a part in the coming of your kingdom and received words of hope and comfort

**Give hope, courage, healing and peace to all who look suffering or death in the face today.**

In Mary and John your Son created a new family at the cross.

Fill our relationships with love, care and responsibility and give us a secure hope for the future.

**Bless all families suffering loss or division that they may know your protection and love.**

The centurion was astonished to see your glory in the crucified Messiah.

**Open the eyes of those who do not yet know you, that they may find in you the meaning of life and victory over death.**

Nicodemus and Joseph came to take away the body of your dear Son.

**Give sensitivity and hope to all who minister to the dying.**

Simon and Nicodemus, Mary and John became part of your church in Jerusalem.

**May your church be full of faithful witnesses, united in your cross, celebrating the good news of your sacrificial love.**

Eternal Father your patience and mercy are endless;  
permit us to carry the burdens of the heavy laden  
and to lay them on Jesus Christ,  
who has borne our grief, and carried our sorrows,  
and who makes all burdens light. Amen.

**Words of love at the foot of the cross**

We adore you, O Christ and we bless you,

**By your holy cross you have redeemed the world.**

God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong.

**We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you.**

We preach Christ crucified, the power of God and the wisdom of God.

**By your holy cross you have redeemed the world.**

God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.

**We adore you, O Christ and we bless you,**

**By your holy cross you have redeemed the world.**

You believe that by his dying Christ destroyed death forever.

You have been crucified with Christ and live by faith in the Son of God,  
who loves you and gave himself for you.

May he send you out in the glory of his cross -

in the scandal of his cross – carrying in you the power of the cross.

Live no longer for yourselves –

but for him who died and was raised to life for us.

And the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son. And the Holy  
Spirit be with you now and forever. Amen.

**Hymn suggestion      When I survey the wondrous cross**

## **Holy Saturday**, led by Rev Clive Thomas

A day of grieving and mourning

*You will need your bible and a cross*

### **Introduction and Opening Prayer**

Loving Father, your Son Jesus Christ said

“Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.”

Be with us in times of waiting and mourning,

Of doubt and confusion, fear and uncertainty.

To you, O Lord we lift up our souls. O God, in you we trust,  
for you are the God of our Salvation. Amen.

### **Today's theme**

*It was on the Saturday that came the lockdown.*

*“Stay indoors. You are not safe. You could be arrested. What is out there is toxic...the whole world is against us!*

*What is happening? What have we lost? Everything!”*

*Grief. Mourning. Fear. Lost hopes. Lost dreams.*

*They had seen their Lord, their Master, their friend and Saviour,  
crucified. He was dead. In the tomb.*

*All his promises...all his brave and comforting words...all his healings  
and miracles...his identity as Messiah...have all come crashing down.*

*So now, locked in a safe house, in shock and despair, abandoned, alone,  
his disciples and his women followers grieve, shedding tears of blood.*

*“Why? Why have you forsaken us? Where are you, Lord, now when we  
need you most?*

*Where did it all go wrong? Were we duped?*

*Was he a false Messiah...like so many others?*

*Did we miss something?*

*But no! See how the crowds loved him! See how he changed our world...their world. See the hope, the healing, the life he brought. How he sought out the lost, brought in the outcast, lifted up the lowly, challenged the powers that be.*

*But how can he be the Messiah lying dead in a tomb?*

*So now we have to get used to a new normal. Without him.*

*A new way of being. Fearful. Afraid of admitting to knowing and following him. Keeping apart from others who know us. Looking away in the street, maintaining our distance, in isolation. How long can this go on?*

*What do we do now? Can we survive?*

We don't know what his followers did that Saturday. But just maybe they looked back to the cross, to his words for a clue as to what they had missed.

On the cross Jesus himself cried out, "My God, my God! Why have you forsaken me?" The cry of desolation, despair and dereliction. That is a quote from Psalm 22. So let's read the psalm and imagine those locked down reading this trying to make sense of the last days.

## **Reading Psalm 22**

### **A time to reflect...**

Let's read the psalm again, in chunks, noticing how this psalm, written 1000 years before, predicts Jesus' suffering on the cross

V1-5 His cry of abandonment by the Father who should be protecting him.

V5-8 How appropriate these words relating to Jesus, mocked by those around him at the foot of the cross. (Now read Mt 27.46, Mk 15.34)

V9-11 another cry to the Father

V12-18 How many references to his suffering on the cross here?

Who are 'the bulls' – those anxious/determined to see Jesus silenced?

Is this not describing Jesus on the cross? – he called out "I thirst" (John 19.2)

Dogs/evildoers are indeed circling around his wasting body.  
They divide his clothes among them (see. Mt27.35, Mk15.24, Luke 34.34 John V19ff  
Now see how the mood changes from despair to hope, proclamation and promise.

V24 He has *not* despised...disdained the suffering of *the afflicted one* hidden...but...

V25ff I will fulfil my vows...*so he can't be dead!* Nations will remember and turn to the Lord (*that is now Jesus?*)

V31 He has done it! "*It is finished*" Jn 19.30)

If this was a psalm of David, how amazing that it so accurately predicts Jesus' suffering on the cross and this role as the suffering servant (Isaiah 52.13-53)  
Was this any help to those in lockdown on Holy Saturday? Does it bring comfort to you in today's lockdown?

**Prayer before the cross** – *just place the cross before you as you pray*

There are those today, Lord, who are isolated, lonely and afraid

**Why have you forsaken us?**

There are those who have lost their freedom

**Why have you forsaken us?**

There are those suffering and dying with the corona virus, COVID-19

**Why have you forsaken us?**

There are those suffering with so many other diseases and injuries

**Why have you forsaken us?**

So many are suffering with depression, anxiety, and mental illness..

**Why have you forsaken us?**

So many of the carers are without the equipment they need

There are not enough carers to cope

**Why have you forsaken us?**

There are those grieving the death of those they love

**Why have you forsaken us?**

There are those who have lost their jobs, their income, their livelihood

**Why have you forsaken us?**

Yet, for some, life goes on without any care for others  
**Why have you forsaken us?**  
Lord we know you do not despise or disdain  
the suffering of any afflicted one. You hear our cry for help.  
We turn to you in our desolation, for dominion belongs to you.  
May we see your healing love through your Holy Spirit  
and through those who minister your healing grace.  
May, in Jesus's name, all suffering be turned into joy.  
Save us and comfort us,  
so that we might declare your righteousness,  
proclaiming that you, Lord, have done it! Amen!

*We remember that this was all part of God's amazing plan*  
**Christ suffered for us,**

**leaving us an example that we should follow in his steps**

He committed no sin, no guile was found on his lips;  
when he was reviled he did not revile in turn

**When he suffered he did not threaten,  
but he trusted himself to God who judges justly.**

Christ himself bore our sins in his body on the tree  
that we might die to sin and live to righteousness

**By his wounds we have been healed, for we were straying like sheep  
but have now returned to the shepherd and guardian of our souls.**

From 1 Peter 2.21-25

Come to visit us, O God, this night, so that by your strength we may  
rise with the new day, to rejoice in the resurrection of your Son, Jesus  
Christ our Saviour. Amen

May the life-giving cross be the source of all our comfort and our  
peace. Amen.

**Hymn suggestion      It is a thing most wonderful**

## **Easter day**, led by Rev. Peter Churcher

### **The Day of Resurrection**

You will need: A bible and a small bowl of water

#### **Introduction and Opening Prayer**

Alleluia. Christ is risen.

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

Lord of all life and power, who through the mighty resurrection of your Son overcame the old order of sin and death to make all things new in him: grant that we, being dead to sin and alive to you in Jesus Christ, may reign with him in glory; to whom with you and the Holy Spirit be praise and honour, glory and might, now and in all eternity.

#### **Today's theme**

Early, on Sunday morning, three women head towards Jesus' tomb. They intend to anoint Jesus' body with some more spices. If they were honest they hadn't thought this through – they knew there would be guards and a big, heavy stone in the way, and no way they could move it – but they just had to go. To pay their respects. To say one last good bye to their friend.

Yet when they got there the guards were asleep, the stone was rolled back, and a man was sat on top of it. 'Don't be alarmed,' he said. How could they not. Who was this man? Where was their Jesus? The women shook as the man continued. 'You are looking for Jesus the Nazarene, who was crucified. He has risen! He is not here. See the place where they laid him. But go, tell his disciples and Peter, "He is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see him, just as he told you."'

The women shook with terror and ran away as fast as they could.

Could it really be true? Could they really believe?

Could they really tell anyone?

And then they saw him. "Hello" Jesus said, "don't be afraid."



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.**

## **Reading Acts 10:34-43**

### **Renewal of our Baptism vow**

As we celebrate the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ from the dead, we remember that through the paschal mystery we have died and been buried with him in baptism. Therefore, if you have been baptised, I invite you to dip your finger into the water and make the sign of a cross on your forehead as a renewal of your baptism vows to die to self and be faithful to Christ.

Almighty God,  
we thank you for our fellowship in the household of faith  
with all who have been baptized in your name.  
Keep us faithful to our baptism,  
and so make us ready for that day  
when the whole creation shall be made perfect in your Son,  
our Saviour Jesus Christ.

**Amen.**

May Christ dwell in your hearts through faith,  
that you may be rooted and grounded in love  
and bring forth the fruit of the Spirit.

**Amen.**

## Prayers

We pray to Jesus who is present with us to eternity.  
Jesus, light of the world,  
bring the light and peace of your gospel to the nations ...  
Jesus, Lord of life,  
**in your mercy, hear us.**

Jesus, bread of life,  
give food to the hungry ...  
and nourish us all with your word.  
Jesus, Lord of life,  
**in your mercy, hear us.**

Jesus, our way, our truth, our life,  
be with us and all who follow you in the way ...  
Deepen our appreciation of your truth  
and fill us with your life.  
Jesus, Lord of life,  
**in your mercy, hear us.**

Jesus, Good Shepherd who gave your life for the sheep,  
recover the straggler,  
bind up the injured,  
strengthen the sick  
and lead the healthy and strong to new pastures.  
Jesus, Lord of life,  
**in your mercy, hear us.**

Jesus, the resurrection and the life,  
we give you thanks for all who have lived and believed in you ...  
Raise us with them to eternal life.

Jesus, Lord of life,  
**in your mercy, hear us,**  
**accept our prayers, and be with us always.**  
**Amen.**

## **The Lord's Prayer (Page 1)**

### **Blessing**

All our problems  
**we send to the cross of Christ.**

All our difficulties  
**we send to the cross of Christ.**

All the devil's works  
**we send to the cross of Christ.**

All our hopes  
**we set on the risen Christ;**  
and the blessing of God almighty,  
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,  
be among you and remain with you always.  
**Amen.**

### **A suggested song/hymn to use today:**

See, what a morning  
and if you'd like something very traditional: The Exsultet