

*The Benefice of St Mary the Virgin,
Higham Ferrers with St John the Baptist,
Chelveston-cum-Caldecott*

Online worship



**For the Second
Sunday of Easter**



Welcome as we continue to celebrate the exciting news of Jesus alive for ever after his resurrection. The Easter season lasts for six weeks before Ascension Day and Pentecost so we have plenty of rejoicing to come

Today's service was recorded by members of The Ministry Team, with contributions from church members here and from the former St Christopher's Church in Spain who regularly share in our worship since their congregation closed.

Thanks to Paul and Beryl Turner, Jenny Hoskins, Phil and Pat Cornelius and to the Betts family for the Affirmation of Faith

Today's theme follows events on the evening of Easter Day and asks "Is seeing really believing?" or what evidence can we reasonably ask for about the truth of Christ's return from death. Our special guest is Don Merrifield, who was a Northamptonshire police officer for many years, retiring in the rank of Chief Inspector. He explains the basis of evidence that the police are taught to look for.

This service had been prepared before we received the sad news of the death of the Prince Philip and it was too late to make major changes.

The service does, however, start with Michelle paying a short tribute to the Duke of Edinburgh

Please join in with the prayers and hymns.

THE GATHERING

Alleluia. Christ is risen!
He is risen indeed. Alleluia!

Grace, mercy and peace from God our Father
and the Lord Jesus Christ be with you
and also with you.

This is the day that the Lord has made.
Let us rejoice and be glad in it.

O Lord, open our lips
and our mouth shall proclaim your praise.



Hymn

**The day of resurrection!
Earth, tell it our abroad,
The passover of gladness,
The passover of God.
From death to life eternal,
From sin's dominion free,
Our Christ has brought us over
With hymns of victory.**

**Let hearts be purged of evil
That we may see aright
The Lord in rays eternal
Of resurrection light
And, listening to his accents,**

**May hear, so calm and plain,
His own "All Hail!" and, hearing,
May raise the victor strain.**

**Now let the heavens be joyful,
Let earth its song begin,
Let all the world keep triumph
And all that is therein.
Let all things, seen and unseen,
Their notes of gladness blend;
For Christ the Lord has risen,
Our joy that has no end!**

An invitation to worship

We have come together in the name of Christ
to offer our praise and thanksgiving,
to hear and receive God's holy word,
to pray for the needs of the world,
and to seek the forgiveness of our sins,
that by the power of the Holy Spirit
we may give ourselves to the service of God.

Jesus says, 'Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is close at hand.'
So let us turn away from our sin and turn to Christ,
confessing our sins in penitence and faith.

**Lord God,
we have sinned against you;
we have done evil in your sight.
We are sorry and repent.
Have mercy on us according to your love.
Wash away our wrongdoing and cleanse us from our sin.
Renew a right spirit within us
and restore us to the joy of your salvation;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

May the Father of all mercies
cleanse you from your sins,
and restore you in his image
to the praise and glory of his name,
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

COLLECT FOR 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.

GOSPEL FOR THE DAY

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John
Glory to You, O Lord

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. But these are written so that you may come to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through believing you may have life in his name.

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

A Reflection on the Gospel from Brenda

Anthem – I KNOW THAT MY REDEEMER LIVES

I know that my Redeemer lives, and ever prays for me;
a token of his love he gives, a pledge of liberty.
I find him lifting up my head; he brings salvation near;
his presence makes me free indeed and he will soon appear.

He wills that I should holy be: who can withstand his will?
The counsel of his grace in me he surely shall fulfil.
Jesus, I hang upon your Word: I steadfastly believe
you will return and claim me, Lord, and to yourself receive.
Your love I soon expect to find in all its depth and height
To comprehend the eternal mind and grasp the infinite

When God is mine and I am His, of paradise possessed,
I taste unutterable bliss, and everlasting rest.

Words by Charles Wesley, Music by Paul Leddington-Wright

An Inspector Calls in the Evidence

Don Merrifield explains the rules of evidence

Hymn

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

**In the grave they laid him, Love whom men had slain,
thinking that he never would awake again,
laid in the earth like grain that sleeps unseen:
*Love is come again, like wheat that springs up green.***

**Forth he came at Easter, like the risen grain,
he that for the three days in the grave had lain,
back from the dead my risen Lord is seen:
*Love is come again, like wheat that springs up green.***

**When our hearts are wintry, grieving, or in pain,
then your 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 springs up green.***

John Macleod Campbell Crum (1872-1958) © Oxford University Press

We affirm our faith IN the Risen Christ at its heart

Do you believe and trust in God the Father, source of all being and life, the one for whom we exist?

We believe and trust in him.

Do you believe and trust in God the Son, who took our human nature, died for us and rose again?

We believe and trust in him.

Do you believe and trust in God the Holy Spirit, who gives life to the people

of God and makes Christ known in the world?

We believe and trust in him.

This is the faith of the Church.

This is our faith. We believe and trust in one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.

We pray for our world, church and families

Creator of the universe,
you made the world in beauty,
and restore all things in glory
through the victory of Jesus Christ.

We pray that, wherever your image is still disfigured
by poverty, sickness, selfishness, war and greed,
the new creation in Jesus Christ may appear in justice, love, and peace,
to the glory of your name. **Amen.**

Holy God, you have called us to follow in the way of your risen Son,
and to care for those who are our companions,
not only with words of comfort, but with acts of love.
Seeking to be true friends of all, we offer our prayers
on behalf of the church and the world.

Guide us in the path of discipleship,
so that, as you have blessed us, we may be a blessing for others,
bringing the promise of the kingdom near by our words and deeds. **Amen.**

Lord God our Father, through our Saviour Jesus Christ
you have assured your children of eternal life
and in baptism have made us one with him:
deliver us from the death of sin and raise us to new life in your love,
in the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ.

And so gathering our prayers and praises into one, let us pray with
confidence as our Saviour 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 share the Peace

May the peace of God, which passes all understanding, keep our hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. **Amen.**

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

Let us offer one another a sign of peace, God's seal on our prayers.

Hymn

**Jesus Is Lord! Creation's Voice Proclaims It,
For By His Power Each Tree And Flower
Was Planned And Made.
Jesus Is Lord! The Universe Declares It,
Sun, Moon And Stars In Heaven
Cry, 'Jesus Is Lord!'**

**Jesus Is Lord! Jesus Is Lord!
Praise Him With Hallelujahs
For Jesus Is Lord!**

**Jesus Is Lord! Yet From His Throne Eternal
In Flesh He Came To Die In Pain
On Calvary's Tree.
Jesus Is Lord! From Him All Life Proceeding,**

**Yet Gave His Life A Ransom
Thus Setting Us Free.**

**Jesus Is Lord! Jesus Is Lord!
Praise Him With Hallelujahs
For Jesus Is Lord!**

**Jesus Is Lord! Over Sin The Mighty Conqueror,
From Death He Rose, And All His Foes
Shall Own His Name.**

**Jesus Is Lord! God Sent His Holy Spirit
To Show By Works Of Power
That Jesus Is Lord.**

**Jesus Is Lord! Jesus Is Lord!
Praise Him With Hallelujahs
For Jesus Is Lord!**

The Blessing and Dismissal

God, who through the resurrection of the 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 remain with you always **Amen**

Go in the joy of the risen Christ, Alleluia, Alleluia

Thanks be to God, Alleluia, Alleluia

Music at the end

Nimrod from Elgar's Enigma Variations, played on the organ of Peterborough Cathedral

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