



Chet Valley Churches

Morning Worship

Sunday 24th May 2020

Morning Worship 24th May, Easter 7

*Good morning and welcome to this Service of the Word on the seventh Sunday of Easter.
This is the Sunday after Ascension and this will be the theme of our worship.*

Christ is risen.

He is risen indeed. Alleluia.

Christ has ascended on high.

He reigns forever. Alleluia.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord. Alleluia.

We have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens.

We come boldly to the throne of grace.

♪ Hymn: All hail the power of Jesu's name

**All hail the power of Jesu's name;
Let angels prostrate fall;
Bring forth the royal diadem
To crown him, crown him, crown him,
Crown him Lord of all.**

**Crown him, ye morning stars of light,
Who fixed this floating ball;
now hail the Strength of Israel's might,
And crown him Lord of all.**

**Crown him, ye martyrs of your God,
Who from his altar call;
Praise him whose way of pain ye trod,
And crown him Lord of all.**

**Sinners, whose love can ne'er forget
The wormwood and the gall,
Go spread your trophies at his feet,
and crown him Lord of all.**

**Let every tribe and every tongue
To him their hearts enthral,
Lift high the universal song
And crown him Lord of all.**



Let us pray

Almighty God, your Son has opened for us
a new and living way into your presence.
Give us new hearts and constant wills
to worship you in spirit and in truth:
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Let us give thanks to the God of our Lord Jesus Christ,
who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing.
Before the world was made, God chose us in Christ,
that we might be holy and blameless before him.
Let us praise God for the glory of his grace,
for the free gift he gave us in his dear Son.

To Father, Son and Holy Spirit
give praise and dominion, honour and might,
for ever and ever. **Amen.**

Jesus is our high priest, tempted like us, yet without sin.
He lives forever in heaven to intercede for us.
Through him we approach the throne of grace
with confidence and confess our sins.

**Loving God, we have sinned against you
in what we have thought, said and done.
We have not loved you with our whole heart;
we have not loved our neighbours as ourselves.
We are truly sorry and turn away from what is wrong.
Forgive us for the sake of your Son,
Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

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

♪ **Hymn: All Over the World the Spirit is Moving**

**All over the world the Spirit is moving;
All over the world as the prophet said it would be.
All over the world there's a mighty revelation
Of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.**

**All over His church God's Spirit is moving
All over His church as the prophet said it would be.
All over His church there's a mighty revelation
Of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.**

**Right here in this place the Spirit is moving;
Right here in this place as the prophet said it would be.
Right here in this place there's a mighty revelation
Of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.**

📖 Reading: Ezekiel 36:24-28

I will take you from the nations, and gather you from all the countries, and bring you into your own land. I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and you shall be clean from all your uncleannesses, and from all your idols I will cleanse you. A new heart I will give you, and a new spirit I will put within you; and I will remove from your body the heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh.

I will put my spirit within you, and make you follow my statutes and be careful to observe my ordinances. Then you shall live in the land that I gave to your ancestors; and you shall be my people, and I will be your God.

🎵 Hymn: Alleluiah! Sing to Jesus

**Alleluia! Sing to Jesus;
His the sceptre, His the throne.
Alleluia! His the triumph,
His the victory alone.
Hark! The songs of peaceful Zion
Thunder like a mighty flood;
"Jesus out of ev'ry nation
Has redeemed us by His blood."**

**Alleluia! Not as orphans
Are we left in sorrow now.
Alleluia! He is near us;
Faith believes, nor questions how.
Though the cloud from sight received Him
When the forty days were o'er,
Shall our hearts forget His promise,
"I am with you evermore"?**

The word "alleluia" is written in a vibrant, multi-colored cursive font. Each letter is filled with a different color, including shades of green, yellow, orange, red, purple, and blue, creating a rainbow-like effect. The letters are slightly overlapping and have a soft, glowing appearance.

**Alleluia! Bread of angels,
Thou on earth our food, our stay.
Alleluia! Here the sinful
Flee to Thee from day to day.
Intercessor, Friend of sinners,
Earth's Redeemer, hear our plea
Where the songs of all the sinless
Sweep across the crystal sea.**

**Alleluia, King eternal,
Thee the Lord of lords we own;
Alleluia, born of Mary,
Earth thy footstool, heaven thy throne:
Thou within the veil hast entered,
Robed in flesh, our great High Priest;
Thou on earth both Priest and Victim
In the Eucharistic feast.**

 Reading: Acts 1:6-14

When the apostles met together with Jesus, they asked him, “Lord, will you at this time give the Kingdom back to Israel?”

Jesus said to them, “The times and occasions are set by my Father's own authority, and it is not for you to know when they will be. But when the Holy Spirit comes upon you, you will be filled with power, and you will be witnesses for me in Jerusalem, in all of Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” After saying this, he was taken up to heaven as they watched him, and a cloud hid him from their sight.

They still had their eyes fixed on the sky as he went away, when two men dressed in white suddenly stood beside them and said, “Galileans, why are you standing there looking up at the sky? This Jesus, who was taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way that you saw him go to heaven.”

Then the apostles went back to Jerusalem from the Mount of Olives, which is about half a mile away from the city. They entered the city and went up to the room where they were staying: Peter, John, James and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James son of Alphaeus, Simon the Patriot, and Judas son of James.

They gathered frequently to pray as a group, together with the women and with Mary the mother of Jesus and with his brothers.

Sermon

May I speak in the name of God who is Father Son and Holy Spirit.

Have you ever stood on a station platform and watched a train carrying someone you love until it disappears from sight? It's gone from view and yet you linger staring at the empty track, until you turn away, perhaps feeling sad that that person has gone from you, to get on with your life. Gone where? Out of sight certainly but the train is still travelling on until it reaches its destination with your loved one on board.

It's hard to imagine what the disciples felt on that mountain top. Did they know Jesus was about to leave them for a second time? They'd got him back once and had spent the days since the resurrection in his company while he taught them about the kingdom. They knew something was going to happen but after all Jesus had taught them about God's Kingdom they still didn't get it! They ask Jesus, "Is this the time when you will restore the kingdom to Israel?"

Their country hadn't been an independent nation for many years and one powerful country after another had conquered Israel and made it a vassal state. No wonder they looked for a king to restore their independence. Despite Jesus telling them that his kingdom was not of this world, they still hope. Their question is met by a rebuke. "It is not for you to know the times or periods that the Father has set by his own authority". Then Jesus gives them a promise. "You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you." And what are they to use this power for? They are to use it for the mighty task to be his witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judaea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.

A witness can testify to the truth. A witness can say what really happened. The disciples have seen Jesus do amazing things and heard him speak wonderful words. Their job is now to bear witness to all of this, to tell people all about him.

No wonder they stand staring after him as he disappeared into the cloud. No doubt there was sadness because the friend whose company they'd shared for the past three years was leaving them. There'd be no more shared meals, no more boat rides across Galilee, no more stories, no more

challenging encounters. Life was going to be different. But truth be told it had been different from the moment Jesus said, "Follow Me". There would be no going back to their old way of life fishing in Galilee. The two mysterious men who appeared ask them, "Why do you stand staring into the heavens?" They have something far more important to do. Get on with it!

First, they are to wait for the power of the Holy Spirit and then they are to be Jesus' witnesses as he told them, starting in Jerusalem, then Judaea and Samaria and to the ends of the earth. This is much bigger than restoring the kingdom of Israel! This is to be a world-wide mission reaching out to the ends of the earth. This can't be done in their own strength.

Luke says at the beginning of Acts that in his first book we call the Gospel of Luke, he wrote about all that Jesus did. Now he's writing about what Jesus continued to do through his disciples. He may have gone from their sight but he was not going from their lives. Jesus had to leave them physically so that he could be with them spiritually in a way that was even closer than before. So they leave the mountain top to go to the Upper room to wait prayerfully to be empowered by the Holy Spirit. Then the great adventure could begin.

When Jesus returned to heaven he took our humanity with him because his body had been raised to immortality. He reigns in heaven but he is still involved in what's happening here on earth. We can enjoy an intimate relationship with him just as the first disciples and countless Christians have done so through the ages. And he needs us to continue his work until he returns as the men in white said he would. St. Theresa of Avila said,

Christ has no body now but yours. No hands, no feet on earth but yours. Yours are the eyes through which he looks compassion on this world. Yours are the feet with which he walks to do good. Yours are the hands through which he blesses all the world. Yours are the hands, yours are the feet, yours are the eyes, you are his body. Christ has no body now on earth but yours.

The Creed

Let us declare our faith in God.

**We believe 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.**

**We believe in one God;
Father, Son and Holy Spirit.**



♪ Hymn: *Jesus Shall Rein Where're the Sun*

**Jesus shall reign where'er the sun
Does his successive journeys run;
His kingdom stretch from shore to shore,
'Till moons shall wax and wane no more.**

**For him shall endless prayer be made,
And praises throng to crown his head;
His name like sweet perfume shall arise
With every morning sacrifice.**

**People and realms of every tongue
Dwell on his love with sweetest song,
And infant voices shall proclaim
Their early blessings on his name.**

**Blessings abound where'er he reigns:
The prisoner leaps to lose his chains;
The weary find eternal rest,
And all the sons of want are blest.**

**Let every creature rise and bring
Peculiar honours to our King;
Angels descend with songs again,
And earth repeat the loud Amen.**

Prayers

Let us pray

Blessed are you, Lord our God, for in the ascension of your Son
you have raised us on high and given us a glimpse of eternal life

and the promise of your abiding presence.
Blessed are you Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Risen and ascended Lord,
you have promised to be with us always.
Help us to rejoice in your presence
and to proclaim you saving power.



We ask your blessing upon all who preach the Good News,
all who teach from the Scriptures
and all who witness to you in their daily lives
in this country and throughout the world.

Ascended Lord, King of kings,
rule in our hearts and in the world.

Risen and ascended Lord, you are the King of kings.
We pray for the time when the kingdoms of this world
will be seen as your kingdom.

We ask your blessing upon all rulers, leaders and politicians,
that at this time of suffering throughout the world,
they may be guided by your wisdom.

We pray for all who are in captivity through injustice or tyranny
remembering those suffering because of their faith.

Ascended Lord, King of kings,
rule in our hearts.

Risen and ascended Lord, we rejoice that you are with us
in our homes and in our daily lives especially, at this time of self isolation.
May we be at home with you and know your presence with us,
helping us to cope.

We remember all who live in bad housing,
squalor or deprivation.

We pray for all who have been made homeless
and for any who are suffering from broken relationships.

Ascended Lord, King of kings,
rule in our hearts and in the world.

Risen and ascended Lord, we remember before you all who have lost hope
and have no vision of glory.

We pray for those who live mediocre lives
and all who are caught up in crime, vice or drugs.

We ask your blessing upon all who are ill from the virus in hospitals and
care homes, and those who are ill for other reasons.

We pray for your protection for all health workers and carers and we
thank you for their dedication and skill.

We pray for those who are nearing death that they will not be anxious or
afraid, and for those who minister to them.

Ascended Lord, King of kings,
rule in our hearts and in the world.

Risen and ascended Lord,
you have opened for us the gate of glory.
We rejoice in the fellowship of the saints
and the faithful departed.

As we ask your blessing
upon our loved ones departed from us,
we commit this world, each other and ourselves
to your unfailing love.

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

Let's say the Lord's Prayer together.

**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: Majesty! Worship His Majesty

**Majesty, Worship His majesty.
Unto Jesus Be all glory,
honour and praise.**

**Majesty, Kingdom authority,
Flow from His throne Unto His own;
His anthem raise.**

**So exalt, lift up on high
The name of Jesus
Magnify, come glorify
Christ Jesus the King.**

**Majesty Worship His majesty
Jesus who died, now glorified
King of all kings**

The Blessing

Christ our ascended King
pour upon you the abundance of his gifts
and bring you to reign with him in glory;
and the blessing of God Almighty,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit be upon you
and those whom you love wherever they may be.
Amen

