

Sunday April 24th 2022: 2nd Sunday of Easter

For use by the Central Norfolk Circuit at 10.30 am or other suitable time.



Hymn StF 314 H&P 213

This joyful Eastertide, what need is there for grieving?
Cast all your cares aside and be not unbelieving:
*come, share our Easter joy that death could not imprison,
nor any power destroy, our Christ, who is arisen!*



No work for him is vain, no faith in him mistaken,
for Easter makes it plain his kingdom is not shaken: *Come, share our Easter joy...*

Then put your trust in Christ, in waking or in sleeping.

His grace on earth sufficed; he'll never quit his keeping: *Come, share our Easter joy...*

Fred Pratt Green (1903 – 2000) CCL no. 5365402

Prayer

Give thanks for new life and new hope – wherever it is to be found.

Make your confession to God before knowing that you are forgiven and loved.

Psalm set for today: Psalm 150

To think about

If you had to sum this Psalm up in one sentence, what would it be?

Hymn StF 65

Sing of the Lord's goodness, Father of all wisdom / come to him and bless his name.
Mercy he has shown us, his love is for ever / faithful to the end of days.

*Come then, all you nations, sing of your Lord's goodness, melodies of praise and thanks to God.
Ring out the Lord's glory / praise him with your music / worship him and bless his name.*

Courage in our darkness, comfort in our sorrow / Spirit of our God most high;
solace for the weary, pardon for the sinner / splendour of the living God.

Praise him with your singing, praise him with the trumpet,
praise God with the lute and harp:
praise him with the cymbals, praise him with your dancing,
praise God till the end of days.

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Gospel Reading set for today: John 20 v 19 – 31

Message from a Circuit friend

Our Gospel begins as an evening text for Easter Sunday. The disciples were taking refuge behind closed doors which they barred against the world outside. Presumably this nameless house would have been somebody's home and a safe place. It is within this setting that the risen Lord Jesus manifests himself to his band of close followers. Three days previously he had told them, "Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God, believe also in me", thus he utters the everyday greeting, 'Shalom' – 'Peace be to you' – 'May you be saved from trouble' – 'May God give you every good thing.' Jesus shows them the visible marks of his Passion before sending them out, freshly inspired with God's Spirit; empowered to act *in loco parentis* with authority to forgive or to retain "the sins of any ..." and, presumably, the necessary discernment to judge between ... for had he not previously declared that the Father and he were "one" and elsewhere demonstrated that he had "authority on earth to forgive sins."

But Thomas was not present. He didn't directly witness the revelation nor, apparently, receive the gift of the Spirit. Consequently he refused to believe : 'Unless I see – unless I touch – I will not believe'! Seven days later, and in God's perfect timing, the risen Lord appears once again with the sole purpose of satisfying that human craving for visible and tangible proof of mysteries beyond our understanding. The greatest compliment which the Gospels pay to those beyond their day is found in Jesus' response to Thomas, "Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to belief." So this anonymous location, this nameless house, becomes the place where God's Rule and God's Reign are seen and Eternity is encountered in the person of the Risen Lord whose enduring influence we celebrate this Eastertide.

Elizabeth Wright (Local Preacher and Member of Saham Hills Methodist Church)

Prayers of Intercession

In the power of the resurrection we offer our prayers to God.

Remember, O Lord, in your love, the Church throughout the world...

Those recently baptised and confirmed... and those who minister to others.

May your whole Church know your power and be a sign that Christ is risen.

Lord of life, **hear us in your love.**

Remember in your love the world you have made... those who seek a fair and proper use of the world's resources... and those who strive for justice and peace among the nations.

May the whole earth be transformed by mercy and rejoice in hope.

Lord of life, **hear us in your love.**

Remember in your love those who suffer... the victims of violence and injustice... those who mourn
May all in need find comfort, strength and freedom in the living Christ.

Lord of life, **hear us in your love.**

Gracious God, we ask these prayers through Jesus Christ, our risen Lord and Saviour. Amen.

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Offer to God your offertory for the week, and say the Lord's Prayer...

Hymn StF 312 H&P 209

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 heaven affords / is his, is his by right,
the King of kings and Lord of lords / and heaven's eternal light.

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

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.

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May the blessing of God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit be with us, and all those we love, this day and always, Amen.

