

Sunday 17th May – Morning Worship for Easter 7

Led by Sue Nelms, LLM

<https://zoom.us/j/82311473640>

LORDSBRIDGE TEAM
OF CHURCHES



Opening Words

Lift up your eyes, and look around!
God's people are gathering.

cf Psalm 60.4

So let us worship God.

Glory to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit;
**as it was in the beginning is now
and shall be for ever. Amen.**

cf Revelation 19.6,7

Gathering Prayer

Here are words you may trust.
Remember Jesus Christ, risen from the dead:
he is our salvation, our eternal glory.
If we die with him, we shall live with him;
if we endure, we shall reign with him.
If we deny him, he will deny us;
if we are faithless, he keeps faith.
For he has broken the power of death
and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.

cf 2 Timothy 2.11–13

Hymn – Alleluia, sing to Jesus!

I Alleluia, sing the Jesus!
His the sceptre, his the throne;
alleluia, his the triumph,
his the victory alone:
hark, the songs of peaceful Sion
thunder like a mighty flood;
Jesus out of every nation
hath redeemed us by his blood.

2 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 promised,
'I am with you evermore'?

3 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, plead for me,
where the songs of all the sinless
sweep across the crystal sea.

4 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.

William Chatterton Dix (1837-1898)

Saying Sorry

Christ died to sin once for all, and now he lives to God.
Let us renew our resolve to have done with all that is evil
and confess our sins in penitence and faith.

cf Romans 6.10

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.

May the God of love and power
forgive us and free us from our sins,
heal and strengthen us by his Spirit,
and raise us to new life in Christ our Lord.
Amen

Readings by Ann Griffiths

Acts 1:6-14

⁶ So when they had come together, they asked him, ‘Lord, is this the time when you will restore the kingdom to Israel?’ ⁷ He replied, ‘It is not for you to know the times or periods that the Father has set by his own authority.

⁸ But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.’

⁹ When he had said this, as they were watching, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight. ¹⁰ While he was going and they were gazing up towards heaven, suddenly two men in white robes stood by them. ¹¹ They said, ‘Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking up towards heaven? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven.’

¹² Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a sabbath day’s journey away. ¹³ When they had entered

the city, they went to the room upstairs where they were staying, Peter, and John, and James, and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James son of Alphaeus, and Simon the Zealot, and Judas son of James. ¹⁴ All these were constantly devoting themselves to prayer, together with certain women, including Mary the mother of Jesus, as well as his brothers.

For the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

John 17.1 - 11

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew

Glory to you, O Lord.

17 After Jesus had spoken these words, he looked up to heaven and said, 'Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son so that the Son may glorify you, ² since you have given him authority over all people, to give eternal life to all whom you have given him. ³ And this is eternal life, that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent. ⁴ I glorified you on earth by finishing the work that you gave me to do. ⁵ So now, Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had in your presence before the world existed. ⁶ 'I have made your name known to those whom you gave me from the world. They were yours, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word. ⁷ Now they know that everything you have given me is from you; ⁸ for the words that you gave to me I have given to them, and they have received them and know in truth that I came from you; and they have believed that you sent me. ⁹ I am asking on their behalf; I am not asking on behalf of the world, but on behalf of those whom you gave me, because they are yours. ¹⁰ All mine are yours, and yours are mine; and I have been glorified in them. ¹¹ And now I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them in your name that you have given me, so that they may be one, as we are one.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Reflection by Sue Nelms, LLM

Father we come together this morning to glorify your name. Be with me this morning as I speak your words. Be with us all as we hear your words and be with us as we go out into your world to live in your praise and glory. Amen.

On Thursday we celebrated Jesus's ascension, his return to his Heavenly Father and we recap on those events in this morning's first reading which ends with the disciples constantly devoting themselves to prayer.

This morning's gospel reading, however, takes us back to Jesus's final meeting with the disciples before his arrest and betrayal. He has been preparing the disciples for the events to come, promising that they will not be left alone, giving them the peace that comes from knowing God's love through Jesus. They are ready to face persecution, knowing that they can take courage because they will face that persecution in a world that their beloved Jesus has already conquered.

And now, like the disciples in our first reading, Jesus prays. He prays to God for his beloved disciples and he prays to glorify God.

Have we ever really thought about how and why we pray? When we are in Church, the words 'let us pray' encourage us to kneel or sit perhaps lean forward, maybe covering our heads or eyes and looking downwards. When we are at home we may also pray quietly. Have we ever wondered why we do this? Perhaps it is because we see God as an awesome, all powerful Creator whose presence we are not worthy to be in. Maybe we think of the words from Matthew's gospel where Jesus said 'But whenever you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you' (Matthew 6.6). Or perhaps we have simply grown up being told we should get down on our knees and put our hands together and pray? I certainly remember being told at school that I had to put my hands together to pray and we still see images of children doing that today.

On this occasion in our reading Jesus does none of those things. To begin with he is standing – not sitting or kneeling. He is not ashamed to be seen

praying or trying to do it quietly and unobtrusively. Then he lifts his eyes (and possibly his hands too) up to Heaven as though he is searching out his Father in Heaven. Reaching out to God. Visible and open about what he is doing. Opening his heart to God, talking to Him as though he is standing next to him. Jesus is praying the way that he has taught us to pray, beginning with the word Father and looking to Heaven. Think of the words of the Lord's Prayer – 'Our Father in Heaven'.

Moving on in the Lord's Prayer, we use the line 'Hallowed be Your name, on earth as in Heaven'. In our reading Jesus's prayer talks about glorifying God on earth by finishing the work he was given to do, and asks God to glorify him in return, welcoming him back to the relationship they had before he came to earth, the relationship they enjoyed before the earth was created.

However, he doesn't just ask for glorification for himself, he also prays for glorification for those whom God gave him from the world, in other words, the disciples. Under Jesus's teaching they too have kept God's word by listening to and accepting it from Jesus. Notice that Jesus is not at this moment asking for the world as a whole, but instead for the people God chose for Jesus to teach and prepare to share God's love with the world once he was no longer with them. The people who have listened and believed, and in doing so have glorified Jesus, and in his turn God. This is a huge moment for the disciples because it signifies to us their total trust in God; trust that Jesus has enabled them to build through his teaching.

The disciples have arrived at the moment in time when Jesus will no longer be with them. Finally they are ready to be the people that Jesus and his teaching has enabled them to be. But this is not going to be a static position for them. Jesus will be returning to his Father and they now will take his place, speaking out to the world, sharing God's love to all who will receive it.

As Jesus talks about glorifying God, what does it mean to us here today to glorify God in our lives?

Prayer is important. There are so many ways in which we can pray – quietly, noisily, silently, talking, listening, moving, being still, the list goes on. Jesus prayed frequently. We often hear how he took himself away, sometimes to somewhere high, and he prayed - sometimes all night, possibly looking and maybe reaching to God as he did in today's reading. I suspect that most of us would struggle to spend all night praying, but we all need to work out how we can glorify God in our prayer lives. I know that I pray but do I glorify him? I thank him for the daily wonders that I experience but do I glorify or is that still a work in progress?

A good place to start is by making sure that the first and last thing we do every day is to glorify God in prayer. It doesn't need to be complicated – just share your innermost thoughts and the things you are grateful for with Him and things will grow from there.

If we re-read the gospel, however, we see that glorifying God is not just something we do in our prayers. It is something that we should be doing in our lives. Glorifying God should run through everything we think, say or do. Jesus said that he glorified God on earth by finishing the work that God gave him to do. Can we honestly say that we are always doing the work that God gave us to do and that by doing so we glorify him? In the Radio 4 Sunday morning service a couple of weeks ago, one speaker said that he sometimes asked himself a question. That question was, if people visited his Church would they later leave saying 'Wow! If this is how the servants behave, how does the master behave? I can't wait to meet him!'

There are lots of ways to glorify God. Enjoy the gifts he has given us and take joy in the world and our lives here. Whatever we do in life, we should do our best to glorify God through it. We will never be perfect – only Jesus managed that – but if we are doing our best to be the child of God he created us to be, then we too will be seen to glorify him.

May we all glorify God today and every day. Amen

Affirmation of Faith

We say together in faith

**Holy, holy, holy
is the Lord God almighty,
who was, and is, and is to come.**

We believe in God the Father,
who created all things:

**for by his will they were created
and have their being.**

We believe in God the Son,
who was slain:

**for with his blood,
he purchased us for God,
from every tribe and language,
from every people and nation.**

We believe in God the Holy Spirit:
**the Spirit and the Bride say, 'Come!'
Even so come, Lord Jesus!
Amen.**

cf Revelation 4.8, 11; 5.9; 22.17, 20

Prayers of Intercession prepared by Michaela McNeill

When I say He is Risen, please respond Alleluia Alleluia.

Let us pray for the Church and for the world, and let us thank God for his goodness.

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, you promised through your Son Jesus Christ to hear us when we pray in faith.

We pray for the witness of the Church this week, particularly in places where the Christian faith is ignored and forgotten. We pray for those who carry major responsibilities as bishops and church leaders, and are always expected to know what to say and do, whatever the situation. Give the compassion, wisdom and the mind of Christ. (Pause)

Strengthen Sarah our bishop and all your Church in the service of Christ; that those who confess your name may be united in your truth, live together in your love, and reveal your glory in the world.

He is Risen **Alleluia Alleluia**

We pray for Christians working in places of power and influence who make decisions which may affect many people. We pray for Christians in politics, media, advertising and the financial markets, that they may know how to act and what to say, in order to be true to Christ. We pray too that we may examine our own power over others, at home or work, and use it responsibly, by offering to the One who aside his power and took the form of a servant. (Pause)

We pray for our world leaders, governments, politicians and all those called to serve in society. Let us envision a world where they seek to work for all, especially for people who are poor and marginalised. We pray that they strive to act justly and show kindness and understanding, remembering that they are called to serve those they represent. May our collective prayers ignite a spark of positive change in their hearts and actions.

He is Risen **Alleluia Alleluia**

We pray for those whom we love, the special people you have given to us, wherever they may be. We pray for our friends, the close ones and those we sometimes forget, those with a special problem and those who need you. We thank you for each of them and what they give to us, Keep us faithful to them as you are faithful to us. (Pause)

Give grace to our families and friends, and to all our neighbours; that we may serve Christ in one another, and love as he loves us.

He is Risen **Alleluia Alleluia**

We pray for those for whom this day will seem long and hard, for those in hospital or ill at home, those struggling with despair or depression, those waiting for a job, or important news, or a friend to call. We name in our hearts any people we know in special need.

(Pause)

Comfort and heal all those who suffer in body, mind or spirit; give them courage and hope in their troubles; and them the joy of your salvation.

He is Risen **Alleluia Alleluia**

We remember with deep gratitude those who have left their mark on our lives by giving us love and laughter, but have now gone before us to be with Christ. We hold them in our hearts, knowing that you, Lord, hold them in yours. (Pause)

As we wait with hope for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, let us give thanks for the Easter journey we have made together within the Lordsbridge Team. We give thanks for the riches we have received, and the many blessings God has bestowed on us.

He is Risen **Alleluia Alleluia**

Rejoicing in the fellowship of all your saints, we commend ourselves and all Christian people to your unfailing love.

Merciful Father, **accept these prayers for the sake of your son Jesus Christ. Amen.**

Collect

O God the King of glory,
you have exalted your only Son Jesus Christ
with great triumph to your kingdom in heaven:
we beseech you, leave us not comfortless,
but send your Holy Spirit to strengthen us
and exalt us to the place where our Saviour Christ is gone before,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

Amen

The Lord's Prayer

As our Saviour taught us, so we pray:

**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 forever.
Amen.**

Hymn – At the name of Jesus

- 1 At the name of Jesus
every knee shall bow,
every tongue confess him
King of Glory now:
'tis the Father's pleasure
we should call him Lord,
who from the beginning
was the mighty Word:
- 2 Humbled for a season,
to receive a name
from the lips of sinners
unto whom he came,
faithfully he bore it
spotless to the last,
brought it back victorious
when from death he passed.
- 3 Name him, Christians, name him,
with love strong as death,
but with awe and wonder,
and with bated breath;
he is God the Saviour,
he is Christ the Lord,

ever to be worshipped,
trusted and adored.

- 4 Surely, this Lord Jesus
shall return again,
with his Father's glory,
with his angel train;
for all wreaths of empire
meet upon his brow,
and our hearts confess him
King of Glory now.

Caroline Maria Noel (1817-1877)

Notices

Blessing

Lord Jesus Christ,
you humbled yourself in taking the form of a servant,
and in obedience died on the cross for our salvation:
give us the courage to follow you
and to proclaim you as Lord and King,
to the glory of God the Father.
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 peace to love and serve the Lord. Alleluia, alleluia.
In the name of Christ. Alleluia, alleluia.