



Share the Joy of Easter !

Christ is Risen – He is risen indeed Alleluia!

Easter Sunday 10.30 St Michael & All Angels Lambourn. A Benefice service with the lighting of the Paschal candle and outside singing before and after the service – all welcome!

For those who would prefer to worship at home the links are . . .

St Paul's Wokingham

<https://spauls.co.uk/easter-dawn-service> at 6am

<https://spauls.co.uk/easter-sunday-4th-april-930> at 9.30

Oxford Diocese Church at Home <https://oxforddiocese.online.church/>

Prayers for

Those in need: Charmaine Pike, Rosemary Blake, Pauline Ilott, Jim, Audrey Green, Kate and Ollie.

The Departed that they may rest in peace and rise in glory Pat, Mary Corbridge, Mary Pengilly and James Parker.

Readings

Acts 10.34–43, John 20.1–18

Collect

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.

The Lambourn Valley Benefice Zoom links

- Morning Prayer (8.30 am)
- Compline (8.30pm)
- Wednesdays @ 7
- Sunday morning coffee from 11.10am

Below is the full link for everything including Morning Prayer and Compline. You'd be very welcome to join in any time - look forward to 'seeing' you!

Morning Prayer is at 8.30 am every morning except Sunday.
Compline is at 8.30 pm every evening.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/9042057860?pwd=eGVhZFYwNDA5L09LdnhkaWN0dEtRZz09>

Meeting ID: 904 205 7860

Passcode: Enru0Bmal

One tap mobile

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+44 203 051 2874 United Kingdom

+44 203 481 5237 United Kingdom

+44 203 481 5240 United Kingdom

+44 203 901 7895 United Kingdom

Meeting ID: 904 205 7860

Passcode: 420968

Here is a link to the CofE web page for morning and evening prayer.

There are links to the daily liturgy (we use the contemporary morning prayer and night prayer) and at the bottom of the page are links to the Apple and Google apps so you can follow the service on your phone or tablet if you want.

<https://www.churchofengland.org/prayer-and-worship/join-us-service-daily-prayer>

In the name of our risen Lord, Father Son and Holy Spirit Amen

“Christ is Risen! He is Risen, indeed Alleluia”

With Paschal candle, Easter lilies and “Alleluias”, we proclaim the great triumph of Christ’s rising from the dead.

We delight in our Risen Lord, the shared joy, the affirmation of our Baptismal promises - the Paschal candle plunged into the waters of baptism . . . this is simply the very best dawn of the whole year – the triumphant, joyful acclamation of Jesus’s miraculous rising. “Christ is Risen! He is Risen, indeed!”

Yet . . . the Gospel passage begins . . . *“Early in the morning, while it was still dark...”* That’s where Easter truly begins. It begins in darkness, with fear, bewilderment, pain, and a profound loss of certainty. What came first was hope in the midst of struggle.

Our gospel speaks of what happens when ordinary people brush up against an extraordinary God.

Here’s what it looks like when broken, hungry humanity encounters a bizarre and inexplicable Love in the half-light of dawn . . . a dawn that was rather different . . . Imagine the scene . . . on that third day after the crucifixion, the disciples stumbled around in the half-light – maybe confused, maybe afraid. *Was* it an angel, sitting in that unlit tomb? Were those shadows in the corner really grave clothes? That quiet stranger lingering outside – was he a gardener? Or someone else? Why did he look vaguely familiar?

Sometime in the predawn hours of that Sunday morning, a great mystery transpired. No sunlight illuminated the event. No human being witnessed it. Even now, two thousand years later, no human narrative can contain it.

It exceeds all of our attempts to pin it down, because it’s a mystery known only to God. Whatever the resurrection was and is, its fullness lies in holy darkness, shielded from our eyes. All we can know is that in an ancient tomb God worked to bring life out of death.

Wondrously, from the heart of loss and misery, God enacted salvation. Out of darkness came the light, the alpha and the omega.

The resurrection narratives tell of profoundly individual encounters with Christ. The encounters don’t look identical. Peter sees the empty tomb and runs away. The beloved disciple sees it and believes without comprehension and Mary . . . ?

Mary Magdalene sees Jesus first because she chooses to remain in the darkness. . . even when what is real feels unbearable, even when she was bewildered and bereft.

It would have been simple to leave – but she lingered . . . are we willing to linger in hard and barren places, places where the usual platitudes fall flat, and all easy answers prove inadequate.

Good Friday, Holy Saturday and Easter Sunday form a narrative – one that helps each one of us make sense of our own life, particularly our disappointments, our sadness and our failings.

The risen Christ, the light of the world remains an abiding reality, ever with us even in our own Good Friday.

We come to the empty tomb as ourselves, our vulnerabilities, our joys, our sorrows.

And wonderfully in the empty tomb we find hope, hope for our own struggles, losses and disappointments.

And as we live out that hope, that joy in the rich, fertile ground of our own hearts, our own stories, where ever they lead us - may the Christ who rose in the darkness lead us into new life, new light, new hope.

May we know him in the shadowlands, in the challenging places, in the daily round and in the joyful places as His light shines into our lives . . . as His light shines into our lives as a church, into our lives as individuals.

And may we, Baptised into the light of Christ, witness to that hope, witness to that eternal light, light that shines even into the darkest places.

Wishing you a happy and joyful Easter!

Christ is risen. He is risen indeed Alleluia.

Amen

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