



DIOCESE of OXFORD

A Christ-like Church for the sake of God's world



**Diocesan Eucharist
29 March 2020**

**Church at Home
for Passion Sunday**

Before the Service

A warm welcome from Bishop Steven to all those from around the diocese and beyond who will join him in his home in Kidlington. Our church doors are now sadly locked but the Church itself goes on - physically isolated but spiritually connected.

Today as we keep Passion Sunday and reflect on Jesus' journey to the Cross, and especially his raising of his friend, Lazarus, from the dead, we hope Bishop Steven will be joined live by Bishop Alan from Buckingham. If the technology works, we will also be led in prayer by Bishop Olivia and voices from all over our diocese who helped record things during the week. Please bear with us if there are a few bumps along the way – this act of worship has been prepared with love in the hope of supporting and drawing together stretched clergy and congregations but broadband signal is beyond even a bishop's control.

Going to church is not what makes us Christians but our love, prayer and service. May God bless us as we worship him together in this service but even more in our practical service and generous love the rest of the week.

Preparing for church at home

Joining in a streamed service will probably seem strange at first but there are a number of things you can do to help you engage more deeply today. Thank you to those who got in touch to say what they found helpful.

- Try to actively share in the service, not just have it on in the background.
- Some people last week found it helpful getting dressed ready for the service. Others enjoyed worshipping in their pyjamas. Make a conscious choice of whatever is right for you.
- Join in the words in bold.
- You may like to find some things around the house that will help you focus on God – a simple cross, a Bible, perhaps a candle (if you keep a careful watch and ensure it is safely away from small children and pets).
- Be aware of your eyes and your hands. Use them in the ways that will help you worship best.
- At the heart of the service is communion but communion we cannot physically share and so we are invited to each make a spiritual communion as the Prayer Book teaches.

To log on for the streams of this and other services around the Diocese:
www.oxford.anglican.org/coronavirus-covid-19/livestream/

The Gathering

As we gather together virtually in our homes, Steven Grahl, the Cathedral Organist, plays J.S. Bach's 'O Lamm Gottes, unschuldig' (BWV 619), recorded last week at Christ Church.

You may like to find a cross in your home (or make one from pieces of paper or sticks from the garden) and prepare yourself to lay down your burdens, worries and all that has been on your heart this week.

President As we gather, we lay at the foot of the cross our burdens,
our cares and all we need to entrust to God this day.

President The Lord be with you
All **And also with you.**

Bishop Steven welcomes the Congregation from around the diocese.

Minister Christ himself carried up our sins in his body to the tree,
so that, free from sins,
we might live for righteousness;
by his wounds we have been healed.

Let us confess our sins.

A time of silent reflection is kept.

All **Almighty God, our heavenly Father,
we have sinned against you
and against our neighbour
in thought and word and deed,
through negligence, through weakness,
through our own deliberate fault.
We are truly sorry
and repent of all our sins.
For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ,
who died for us,
forgive us all that is past
and grant that we may serve you in newness of life
to the glory of your name.
Amen.**

Absolution

President Almighty God,
who forgives all who truly repent,
have mercy upon you,
pardon and deliver you from all your sins,
confirm and strengthen you in all goodness,
and keep you in life eternal;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All **Amen.**

The Collect

President Let us pray.

Silence is kept.

President Gracious Father,
you gave up your Son
out of love for the world:
lead us to ponder the mysteries of his passion,
that we may know eternal peace
through the shedding of our Saviour's blood,
Jesus Christ our Lord.

All **Amen.**

The Liturgy of the Word

Sit comfortably to listen to God speaking through the Scriptures.

First Reading

Psalm 130 (CW)

A reading from psalm one hundred and thirty.

- 1 Out of the depths have I cried to you, O Lord;
Lord, hear my voice;
let your ears consider well the voice of my supplication.
- 2 If you, Lord, were to mark what is done amiss,
O Lord, who could stand?
- 3 But there is forgiveness with you,
so that you shall be feared.
- 4 I wait for the Lord; my soul waits for him;
in his word is my hope.
- 5 My soul waits for the Lord,
more than the night watch for the morning,
more than the night watch for the morning.
- 6 O Israel, wait for the Lord,
for with the Lord there is mercy;
- 7 With him is plenteous redemption
and he shall redeem Israel from all their sins.

Reader This is the word of the Lord.
All **Thanks be to God.**

Gospel Reading

John 11:1–45 (NRSV)

read by people from around the diocese

Narrator Now a certain man was ill, Lazarus of Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha. Mary was the one who anointed the Lord with perfume and wiped his feet with her hair; her brother Lazarus was ill. So the sisters sent a message to Jesus,

Martha ‘Lord, he whom you love is ill.’

Narrator But when Jesus heard it, he said,

Jesus ‘This illness does not lead to death; rather it is for God’s glory, so that the Son of God may be glorified through it.’

Narrator Accordingly, though Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus, after having heard that Lazarus was ill, he stayed two days longer in the place where he was.

Narrator Then after this he said to the disciples,

Jesus ‘Let us go to Judea again.’

Narrator The disciples said to him,

Disciple ‘Rabbi, the Jews were just now trying to stone you, and are you going there again?’

Narrator Jesus answered,

Jesus ‘Are there not twelve hours of daylight? Those who walk during the day do not stumble, because they see the light of this world. But those who walk at night stumble, because the light is not in them.’

Narrator After saying this, he told them,

Jesus ‘Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep, but I am going there to awaken him.’

Narrator The disciples said to him,

Disciple ‘Lord, if he has fallen asleep, he will be all right.’

Narrator Jesus, however, had been speaking about his death, but they thought that he was referring merely to sleep. Then Jesus told them plainly,

Jesus ‘Lazarus is dead. For your sake I am glad I was not there, so that you may believe. But let us go to him.’

Narrator Thomas, who was called the Twin, said to his fellow-disciples,

Thomas ‘Let us also go, that we may die with him.’

Narrator When Jesus arrived, he found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb for four days. Now Bethany was near Jerusalem, some two miles away, and many of the Jews had come to Martha and Mary to console them about their brother. When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went and met him, while Mary stayed at home. Martha said to Jesus,

Martha ‘Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. But even now I know that God will give you whatever you ask of him.’

Narrator Jesus said to her,

Jesus ‘Your brother will rise again.’

Narrator Martha said to him,

Martha ‘I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day.’

Narrator Jesus said to her,

Jesus ‘I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?’

Narrator She said to him,

Martha ‘Yes, Lord, I believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, the one coming into the world.’

Narrator When she had said this, she went back and called her sister Mary, and told her privately,

Martha ‘The Teacher is here and is calling for you.’

Narrator And when she heard it, she got up quickly and went to him. Now Jesus had not yet come to the village, but was still at the place where Martha had met him. The Jews who were with her in the house, consoling her, saw Mary get up quickly and go out. They followed her because they thought that she was going to the tomb to weep there. When Mary came where Jesus was and saw him, she knelt at his feet and said to him,

Mary ‘Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.’

Narrator When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who came with her also weeping, he was greatly disturbed in spirit and deeply moved. He said,

Jesus ‘Where have you laid him?’

Narrator They said to him,

Villagers ‘Lord, come and see.’

Narrator Jesus began to weep.

So the Jews said,

Villagers ‘See how he loved him!’

Narrator But some of them said,

Villagers ‘Could not he who opened the eyes of the blind man have kept this man from dying?’

Narrator Then Jesus, again greatly disturbed, came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone was lying against it. Jesus said,

Jesus ‘Take away the stone.’

Narrator Martha, the sister of the dead man, said to him,

Martha ‘Lord, already there is a stench because he has been dead for four days.’

Narrator Jesus said to her,

Jesus ‘Did I not tell you that if you believed, you would see the glory of God?’

Narrator So they took away the stone.

Narrator And Jesus looked upwards and said,

Jesus ‘Father, I thank you for having heard me. I knew that you always hear me, but I have said this for the sake of the crowd standing here, so that they may believe that you sent me.’

Narrator When he had said this, he cried with a loud voice,

Jesus ‘Lazarus, come out!’

Narrator The dead man came out, his hands and feet bound with strips of cloth, and his face wrapped in a cloth. Jesus said to them,

Jesus ‘Unbind him, and let him go.’

Narrator Many of the Jews therefore, who had come with Mary and had seen what Jesus did, believed in him.



Response to Scripture

A moment of silence is kept, the Bishops Steven repeats a verse from our Psalm in response to God’s Word moving in our midst.

President I wait for the Lord; my soul waits for him;
in his word is my hope.



Reflection

The Bishop of Buckingham

After the sermon we keep silence together for a few moments before affirming our faith together in the words of the Creed – words which have been said across the world for over fifteen hundred years in times of sorrow and of joy.

All

**We believe in one God,
the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is,
seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father;
through him all things were made.
For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven,
was incarnate from the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary
and was made man.
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.
On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the Scriptures;
he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory
to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit,
the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son
is worshipped and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come.
Amen.**

Prayers of Intercession

Our prayers today are led by the Rt Revd Olivia Graham, Bishop of Reading. If you have a particular prayer request, please be in touch with us through the website or email it to subdean@chch.ox.ac.uk at the Cathedral and the clergy of our Mother Church will pray all your prayers from their homes over the coming week.

Minister Let us pray.

You may like to adopt a prayer posture with your hands open and lifted up to God as we hold out all the prayers of our hearts to him.

The prayers end with:

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

The Liturgy of the Sacrament

The Peace

President Jesus says: 'Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you.
Do not let your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.'

President The peace of the Lord be always with you
All **and also with you.**

Bishop Steven signs the peace to us in British Sign Language (BSL), taught to him by our Lead Chaplain amongst Deaf People, the Revd Katie Tupling.

Wherever you are and whoever you're with, with family, on on your own or even in shielded household isolation, remember that Christ's peace is more than a handshake or a hug. It is something from the heart and, whether with a warm smile, a nod, a bow or a face on a screen, God's peace in the Spirit moves among us.

The Eucharistic Prayer

President The Lord be with you
All **and also with you.**

President Lift up your hearts.
All **We lift them to the Lord.**

President Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
All **It is right to give thanks and praise.**

President It is indeed right and just,
our duty and salvation,
always and everywhere
to give you thanks and praise,
almighty and everlasting Father,
whose hands enfold us all.

In Jesus Christ, your all sustaining love
stretches out through the whole creation,
bears our loss, becomes food for our souls.

Your Spirit calls us out with him
into the wilderness,
beyond familiar patterns
and into something new.
It binds the broken together,
bridges our isolation
and roots us in your hope.

And so from this house of prayer,
through our villages and towns,
your song of praise rings out.
Each home becomes a church,
beacons of service and of prayer,
light against the darkness,
with angels and archangels,
to glorify your name:

All **Holy, holy, holy
Lord God of hosts:
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.**

**Blessed is he who comes
in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.**

President Accept our praises, heavenly Father,
through your Son our Saviour Jesus Christ,
and as we follow his example and obey his command,
grant that by the power of your Holy Spirit
these gifts of bread and wine
may be to us his body and his blood;
who, in the same night that he was betrayed,
took bread and gave you thanks;
he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying:
Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you;
do this in remembrance of me.

In the same way, after supper
he took the cup and gave you thanks;
he gave it to them, saying:
Drink this, all of you;
this is my blood of the new covenant,
which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins.
Do this, as often as you drink it,
in remembrance of me.

Therefore, heavenly Father,
we remember his offering of himself
made once for all upon the cross;
we proclaim his mighty resurrection and glorious ascension;
we look for the coming of your kingdom,
and with this bread and this cup
we make the memorial of Christ your Son our Lord.

President Jesus Christ is Lord.

All **Lord, by your cross and resurrection
you have set us free.
You are the Saviour of the world.**

President Accept through him, our great high priest,
this our sacrifice of thanks and praise,
and as we eat and drink these holy gifts
in the presence of your divine majesty,
renew us by your Spirit,
inspire us with your love
and unite us in the body of your Son,
Jesus Christ our Lord.

Through him, and with him, and in him,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
with all who stand before you in earth and heaven,
we worship you, Father almighty,
in songs of everlasting praise:

All **Blessing and honour and glory and power
be yours for ever and ever.
Amen.**



The Lord's Prayer

President In times of hope, in times of trouble,
in times of sorrow, in times of praise,
as our Saviour taught us, so we pray:

All **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.**

Breaking of the Bread

The President breaks the consecrated bread.

All **Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world,
have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world,
have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world,
grant us peace.**

Giving of Communion

The President says the Invitation to Communion.

President Jesus is the Lamb of God
who takes away the sin of the world.
Blessed are those who are called to his supper.

All **Lord, I am not worthy to receive you,
but only say the word, and I shall be healed.**

For most of us watching from home, this will be a very strange experience of being invited to Communion not through the physical bread and wine we can touch but a Spiritual Communion with the God who always comes to meet us wherever we are. There are no special words or prayers for this, all the Church has ever thought necessary is true desire, lively faith and genuine love.

Come honestly before God the way you know how. You may like to listen to Cuddesdon ordinand, Em Kolltveit (whose deaconing has been postponed until Michaelmas), sing Stuart Townend's beautiful version of Psalm 23, recorded specially for the diocese from her home this week.

“

Lord, you stand at
the door of my heart
and knock.
You wait for me and
only I can let you in.
I believe and trust in
you and ask you now
to fill me with your
presence.
Feed me with your
body and unite me in
your blood, that I
may be your blessing
to a world in need.
Amen.



- SPIRITUAL COMMUNION

Prayer after Communion

President Let us pray.

A time of silent prayer is kept.

All **You have opened to us the Scriptures, O Christ,
and you have made yourself known
in the breaking of the bread.
Abide with us, we pray,
that, blessed by your royal presence,
we may walk with you
all the days of our life,
and at its end behold you
in the glory of the eternal Trinity,
one God for ever and ever.
Amen.**

The Dismissal

Blessing

President God the Father hold you in his tender care
surround you with his kindly love
and comfort and encourage you in all that lies ahead;
and the blessing of God almighty,
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be among you and remain with you always.

All **Amen.**

President Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

All **In the name of Christ. Amen.**

Service after the Service

Important as coming together for worship, even virtually through our phones, screens and devices, may be, it is not the heart of being a Christian. It's an old saying that, 'after the service, the real service begins'. Many of us may not be able to leave our homes, other than for essential reasons, but we can still be Christ's hands and feet to others.



Prayer for the Week

God of compassion,
be close to those who are ill,
afraid or in full isolation.
In their loneliness,
be their consolation;
in their anxiety, be their hope;
in their darkness, be their light;
through him who suffered alone
on the cross,
but reigns with you in glory,
Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

A range of prayers and other
spiritual and discipleship
resources are available on both
the Church of England and
diocesan websites.

The painting of the raising of Lazarus at Bethany used throughout this service is by Tom Bower and hangs as inspiration behind the altar at the now empty chapel in Church House Oxford.

A huge thank you to all those across the diocese and beyond who contributed their time, talents and energies to helping craft this service for us. Gregory, Sim, Beth, Cam, Em, Emily, Polly, Tom, Chris, Miranda, Alan, Joe, Sarah, Steven, Paul, Grant, Sarah, Ian, Olivia, Philippa, Clare, Gavin, Adam and Steven – your gifts are truly valued and your support of all that we do as church together very much appreciated. Apologies to those whose labours did not quite come to fruition this time – we may use them in future.

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A Psalm for people like us

Psalm 23 has been a source of strength for thousands of years. Let's pause and say it every day at 11 am through this crisis we now face.

When we are isolated and alone, we remember God is with us; we place our hands in his hands...

> The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want.

When we are tired and confused...

> He makes me lie down in green pastures; he leads me beside still waters;

When we are worn out with worry...

> He restores my soul. He leads me in right paths for his name's sake.

When we are sick and afraid and if we lose those we love...

> Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I fear no evil; for you are with me; your rod and your staff - they comfort me.

When we face difficulties today and we hope for a better tomorrow...

> You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.

In the face of trouble & difficulty of all kinds, we remember Jesus' promise of life beyond death...

> Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord my whole life long.



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Many helpful resources, inspiring stories and ways to worship, reflect and live as faithful Christians in challenging times are all available on the diocesan website:

www.oxford.anglican.org/coronavirus-covid-19/

www.facebook.com/dioceseofoxford

@oxforddiocese

Join us next week for Church at home
for Palm Sunday
5 April 10am



**Let's live hopefully,
love generously
and pray earnestly,
blessing each other
by the way we behave.**

Stay calm, stay at home and let people know that you care for them. Following Government instructions and supporting the NHS and emergency services are all signs of us being community together.