

Sunday 27th April 2025: First Sunday of Easter

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

Theme for today is “living as Easter People”

Opening words:

Christ is Risen!

He is risen indeed alleluia!

Hymn StF 293 All heaven declares the glory of the risen Lord

Opening prayers:

Glory to you, O God: you raised Jesus from the grave, bringing us victory over death and giving us eternal life.

Glory to you, O Christ: for us and for our salvation you overcame death and opened the gate to everlasting life.

Glory to you, O Holy Spirit: you lead us into the truth and breathe new life into us.

Glory to you, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, now and for ever. **Amen.**

If we have fallen into despair, **Lord, forgive us.**

If we have failed to hope in you, **Lord, forgive us.**

If we have been fearful of death, **Lord, forgive us.**

If we have forgotten the victory of Christ, **Lord, forgive us.**

Silence

May the living God raise us from despair, give us victory over sin and set us free in Christ. **Amen.**

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 in the unity of the Holy Spirit be praise and honour, glory and might, now and in all eternity. **Amen.**

Hymn StF 309 See what a morning, gloriously bright

Bible readings: Acts 5: 27-32 Revelation 1: 4-8 John 20: 19-31

Reflection

Rev Anne reflects on the reading from the book of the Revelation

The Easter Eggs have been eaten, and we don't want to see another Hot Cross Bun until next year! After the Lenten journey, culminating in Holy Week and then celebrating Easter Sunday, we are ready to return to a bit of normality. Except everything changed at Easter.

The writer of Revelation begins his letter to the seven churches in Asia with a reminder of who Jesus is, what he has done for us and what he calls us into: the faithful witness (revealing God to us, showing us how to live a full human life) the first born of the dead (taking away fear of death and giving us eternal life) the ruler of the kings of the earth (They don't all know it though!) who loves us (who else would die for us?) and freed us from our sins by his blood (giving us a new start and forgiveness) who made us to be a kingdom (bringing us into a new community) who made us priests serving God. (yes, not just the ministers but all of us!)

Wow! That's quite a list! These verses almost read like a creed.

If we believe this, we need to live it too. People need to see what it is to have an authentic Christian life - they need to see the love of God at work in our lives that transforms every experience. They need to know it's for them too. Like the women who first saw the empty tomb and ran to tell others, we need to share this good news.

This passage in Revelation also reminds us that this is not the end of the story, for Jesus will come again. "I am the Alpha and the Omega", says the Lord God, who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty" AMEN!?.

Hymn StF 297 Christ is alive! Let Christians sing



Prayers of Intercession:

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

Let us pray.

Remember, O Lord, in your love the Church throughout the world . . . those recently baptized and confirmed . . . those who minister to others . . .

Silence

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 . . . those who strive for justice and peace among the nations . . .

Silence

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 . . .

Silence

May all in need find comfort, strength and freedom in the living Christ.

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

Remember in your love those who have died: those who have confessed the faith and those whose faith is known to you alone.

Silence

May all your children receive grace and light according to their needs and come at last to share with all the saints in life eternal.

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

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

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

Hymn: StF 313 H&P 212 Thine be the glory

Closing blessing –

God the Father, by whose glory Christ was raised from the dead, strengthen us to walk with him in his risen life; and may almighty God bless us, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

Amen.