

The Parish Church of St Matthew
Northampton

The Sixth Sunday of Easter

Year B



*Jesus said, 'This is my commandment,
that you love one another as I have loved you'*

All Age Mass for the Parish Family

Sunday 5th May 2024

Welcome to St Matthew's Parish Church

Jesus talks about the love that binds him to the Father, and the love that should bind the disciples to him and to one another. Jesus' love is modelled on that of the Father. The disciples should model themselves on the Son: as he has observed the Father's commandments, so they should observe his.

Obedience arises out of love, and obedience is love. Now he is going to give them the supreme proof of his love - giving his life for them. He has chosen them and sent them into the world to bear fruit - the fruit of love.

It is our custom to spend some time in quiet preparation before the liturgy begins, and save further conversation until we meet socially for refreshments afterwards. The following reflection, based on today's themes, may be found helpful:

Reflection

For Christians, there is really only one failure -
the failure to love.

Lord, open our hearts when they are closed,
warm them when they are cold,
soften them when they are hard,
fill them when they are empty,
heal them when they are broken,
so that we, your disciples, may bear the fruits of love.

Setting

Mass of St Thomas

Thorne



An Assistant Choral Director

This morning we are delighted to welcome Paul Weston and his family to our worshipping community and so formalise a voluntary arrangement that has been benefitting our choir and music-making generally for some time.

Some biographical background

Paul Weston was born in Kettering and was a Chorister at Kettering Parish Church from the age of nine. At the age of thirteen he moved into the back row of the choir to sing alto. He went on to study for a music degree at Bath Spa University, and combined this with a Choral Scholarship at Bath Abbey working under Peter King. From 1998-2008 Paul was a Lay Clerk at Peterborough Cathedral, working with Christopher Gower and latterly Andrew Reid. This involved singing at seven services each week. During his time at Peterborough, the choir broadcast several times on BBC Radio 3 and BBC Television, including the 2008 BBC1 Christmas broadcast. He also took part in tours to Belgium, France, The Netherlands and Ireland. During this time he also spent a year as Acting Director of Music at Kettering Parish Church.

Paul is currently employed by Lincolnshire Music Service as an instrumental teacher; a role he has held since 2002. In this capacity he teaches the violin at several schools across South Lincolnshire including Bourne Grammar School where he conducts the school String Orchestra. Since 2022 he has been a Lead Tutor for the Music Service, and his duties include managing Spalding Music Centre. He also teaches violin at The King's (Cathedral) School, Peterborough, and conducts the school String Orchestra and coaches a String Quartet. Away from music, he is Chair of Governors at his local Primary School.

* * * * *

Order of Service

¶ Gathering to Worship God

All stand at the sound of the bell

Call to Worship

Reader Jesus commanded his followers to love one another, and promised to send the Holy Spirit to help them. As we worship together and rest in God's love, let us show that love to everyone we meet.

Hymn

During which the flags are presented

All **NOW is Christ risen from the dead,
Now are the powers of darkness fled,
Alleluya, alleluya!
Gone is the night of sin and gloom,
Jesus is risen from the tomb:
 *O praise him, O praise him,
 Alleluya, alleluya, alleluya!***

**Now is Christ risen from the dead,
Empty there lies his narrow bed,
O praise him, alleluya!
Christ and his cross have won the day,
Come, see the grave in which he lay:**

**Now is Christ risen from the dead,
He who his blood for sinners shed,
Alleluya, alleluya!
In him who died to bear our sins
Our resurrection-life begins:**

Now is Christ risen from the dead,
Risen and reigning as he said,
O praise him, alleluya!
Praise him who light and life restored,
Praise him, our ever-living Lord:
*O praise him, O praise him,
Alleluya, alleluya, alleluya!*

Words Timothy Dudley-Smith (born 1926) *Music* Lass runs Erfreuen

Priest † In the name of God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
All **Amen.**

The Greeting

All The Lord be with you
 and also with you.

The Easter Proclamation

All Alleluia, Christ is risen.
 He is risen indeed. Alleluia.

The service is introduced

Saying Sorry to God

Jesus left his disciples a commandment: 'Love on another as I have loved you.' Love is the heart of the Gospel.
Let us call to mind our failures to live by the commandment of love.

Confession

All **Heavenly Father,**
we are sorry and ashamed that sometimes
our words, deeds and thoughts are unworthy of you.
We have acted in our own interests,
ignoring the needs of others;
we have spoken harsh and unkind words,
forgetting the feelings of others;
we have harboured selfish and unworthy thoughts,
and put ourselves first.
Have mercy on us,
forgive our sins,
and help us to obey your commandment to love one another
as you love us,
in Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

God's Forgiveness

Priest **Almighty God,**
who receives and forgives all who turn to him in sorrow and faith,
have mercy on you,
forgive † you your sins,
and give you strength to obey his commands
and remain in his love,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All **Amen.**

Glory to God

All **Glory to God in the highest,
and peace to his people on earth.**

**Lord God, heavenly King,
almighty God and Father,
we worship you,
we give you thanks,
we praise you for your glory.**

**Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father,
Lord God, Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world:
 have mercy on us;
you are seated at the right hand of the Father:
receive our prayer.**

**For you alone are the Holy One,
you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ,
with the Holy Spirit,
in the glory of God the Father.
Amen.**

The Opening Prayer

Priest **Let us pray.**

**Risen Christ,
by the lakeside you renewed your call to your disciples:
help your Church to obey your command
and draw the nations to the fire of your love,
to the glory of God the Father.**

All **Amen.**

Please be seated

¶ Hearing and Responding to the Word of God

First Reading

Reader A reading from the Acts of the Apostles.

While Peter was still speaking, the Holy Spirit fell upon all who heard the word. The circumcised believers who had come with Peter were astounded that the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out even on the Gentiles, for they heard them speaking in tongues and extolling God. Then Peter said, 'Can anyone withhold the water for baptizing these people who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?' So he ordered them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they invited him to stay for several days.

Acts 10.44-48

This is the word of the Lord

All **Thanks be to God.**

All stand

Acclamation

1. Choir
2. Choir and Congregation

Fintan O'Carroll

Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia,
Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

Choir Jesus said, 'Those who love me will keep my word,
and my Father will love them,
and we will come to them and make our home with them.'

All **Alleluia, alleluia ...**

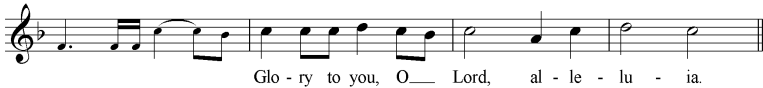
Gospel Reading

The Lord be with you

All **and also with you.**

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John.

All



Jesus said to the eleven, 'As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you; abide in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. I have said these things to you so that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be complete.

'This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends. You are my friends if you do what I command you. I do not call you servants any longer, because the servant does not know what the master is doing; but I have called you friends, because I have made known to you everything that I have heard from my Father. You did not choose me but I chose you. And I appointed you to go and bear fruit, fruit that will last, so that the Father will give you whatever you ask him in my name. I am giving you these commands so that you may love one another.'

John 15:9-17

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

All



Hymn

The choir come and sit in the Nave

All

**LORD of all power, I give you my will,
In joyful obedience your tasks to fulfil.
Your bondage is freedom, your service is song;
And, held in your keeping, my weakness is strong.**

Lord of all wisdom, I give you my mind,
Rich truth that surpasses my knowledge to find;
What eye has not seen and what ear has not heard
Is taught by your Spirit and shines from your word.

Lord of all bounty, I give you my heart;
I praise and adore you for all you impart,
Your love to inspire me, your counsel to guide,
Your presence to shield me, whatever betide.

Lord of all being, I give you my all;
If I ever disown you, I stumble and fall;
But, led in your service your word to obey,
I'll walk in your freedom to the end of the way.

Words Jack C Winslow (1882-1974)

Music Slane

Talk - Presentation

All sit

The themes of the day are briefly explored

We believe

All stand

Priest As God's family, let us declare the faith of the Church.

All We believe in God the Father,
from whom every family
in heaven and on earth is named.

We believe in God the Son,
who lives in our hearts through faith,
and fills us with his love.

We believe in God the Holy Spirit,
who strengthens us
with power from on high.

We believe in one God;
Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.

Appointment of an Assistant Choral Director

The vicar, director of music, and assistant choral director gather at the dais step.

The director of music provides the background to the creation of this honorary post, and introduces Paul Weston to the worshipping community

Director Father Nicholas, I present to you Paul Weston to become our Assistant Choral Director. Paul, together with his family, has been supporting our musicmaking here at St Matthew's. He has ably directed our choir at Choral Evensong, and on other occasions, and gained the confidence and respect of our singers.

Vicar Paul, do you wish to continue your service to music in this church?
Paul **Yes, I do.**

Vicar As our Assistant Choral Director here at St Matthew's you will be part of a century-old tradition of worship offered to God in this place. Do you promise to devote your effort and skill to helping others in their worship?

Paul **With the help of God, I will.**

Vicar Do you promise to perform your part in the worship of God to the best of your ability?

Paul **With the help of God, I will.**

Vicar Do you promise to support our director of music, and by your example faithfully fulfil all the duties involved in directing our choir?

Paul **With the help of God, I will.**

Vicar Paul, I appoint you as Assistant Choral Director to the choir of this Church, in the name of the Father, † and of the Son, and of Holy Spirit.

All **Amen.**

Paul is joined by his wife, Nicola, and their daughters, Rachel and Sarah

Vicar The Lord has given you musical gifts;
may he also give you happiness in his service;
may he bless you
and keep you from this day forward
and give you his peace.

All **Amen.**

**Bless, O Lord, your servants
who make music in this Church of St Matthew.
May they inspire our worship
and hold fast to the vision of a heavenly Jerusalem.
Grant that what they sing with their lips
they may believe in their hearts,
and that what they believe in their hearts
they may show forth in their lives;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.**

Our Prayers to God

Please kneel

Priest Blessed are you, Lord God,
who through your Son has revealed your great love for us
and in his resurrection gave us a Friend and a Saviour.
We rejoice in your presence this day
with the joy and the freedom of the children of God.
Blessed are you, our God for ever.

Intercessor As you have called us to be friends,
to reveal your love and the joy of your presence,
we come with sorrow for the divisions
of the Church and the world.
We seek forgiveness for rivalry and disunity within your Church.
Lord, strengthen us in love,
and lead us to a unity that reflects that we are one in you.
May any divisions within our community be healed
and well-being restored.
Lord, as you love us,
All **help us to love one another.**

We come before you as part of a world
caught up in violence, war, hatred, greed and hunger.
We pray for the people of the Middle East and Ukraine.
There are people who are oppressed and treated as slaves.
There are people who are counted as nothing,
rejected and unloved.
Lord, forgive us and change us.
Strengthen all who work for the peace and well-being of all.
May we share in the care of all suffering people.

Lord, as you love us,
All **help us to love one another.**

We give you thanks for our loved ones,
for their generosity and sacrifice for us.
We remember all who feel unloved and unwanted.
We pray for homes where there is hatred or violence,
where there is little respect for each other,
where there is neglect.
We ask your blessing upon all who have been taken into care.

All Lord, as you love us,
help us to love one another.

Lord of love, we remember before you all who are lonely.
We ask your blessing upon those who are ill or injured.
For the acutely ill ...
We pray for all who are raging against life
and all who are not at peace with themselves or the world.
We pray for all who have hardened their hearts against love.

All Lord, as you love us,
help us to love one another.

We rejoice in your saving love
and that you have called us to eternal life.
We remember the faithful departed.
For those who have died recently ...
And for those whose anniversary of death is this week ...
As we give thanks for their lives
we pray that they know you as their friend
in your eternal kingdom.

All Lord, as you love us,
help us to love one another.

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

[Uniformed Organisations]

[All sit]

Members of the uniformed organisations may be invested or presented with awards etc.

¶ Preparing to meet Jesus in Bread and Wine

Hymn

All stand

The choir return to their stalls, the bread and wine are brought forward, and the people's monetary collection is placed under the altar.

All

**LOVE is his word, love is his way,
Feasting with all, fasting alone,
Living and dying, rising again;
Love, only love, is his way.
*Richer than gold is the love of my Lord,
Better than splendour and wealth.***

**Love is his way, love is his mark,
Sharing his last Passover feast,
Christ at the table, host to the Twelve;
Love, only love, is his mark.**

**Love is his mark, love is his sign,
Bread for our strength, wine for our joy,
'This is my body, this is my blood.'
Love, only love, is his sign.**

**Love is his sign, love is his news,
'Do this,' he said, 'lest you forget
All my deep sorrow, all my dear blood.'
Love, only love, is his news.**

Love is his news, love is his name,
We are his own, chosen and called,
Sisters and brothers, parents and kin.
Love, only love, is his name.

Love is his name, love is his law,
Hear his command, all who are his:
'Love one another; I have loved you.'
Love, only love, is his law.

Love is his law, love is his word:
Love of the Lord, Father and Word,
Love of the Spirit, God ever one;
Love, only love, is his word.
*Richer than gold is the love of my Lord,
Better than splendour and wealth.*

Words Luke Connaughton (1917-1979)

Music Cresswell
Anthony Milner (1925-2002)

The children are invited to stand either side of the altar

Offering the Gifts of Bread and Wine

Children **Why do we give thanks and praise to God?**

Adults Because he has created all that is, and he has given us life.
He is Lord of all, and yet loves each of us.

Children **Why do we remember Jesus?**

Adults Because he was sent from God and he gave up his life for us
on the cross. God raised him from the dead so that we might
see that death is the beginning of a new life, the life Jesus
showed us how to live.

Children **Why do we use bread?**

Adults Because Jesus took bread at the Last Supper. It is a sign of
Jesus feeding us as we share with others around his table.

Children **Why do we drink wine?**

Adults Because this wine is a sign of Jesus' saving love, poured out
for us when he died on the cross.

Prayer over the Bread and Wine

All The Lord be with you
and also with you.

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

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

Children Why is it right to give thanks and praise?
Adults **Listen, and we will hear.**

Lord of all life, you created the universe,
where all living things reflect your glory.
You give us this great and beautiful earth,
to discover and to cherish.

You give us sun and moon and star-lit sky,
everything that gives us light,
light for our eyes, our hearts, our minds.

You sent Jesus, our risen Lord,
that we may abide in his love.
As his friends
may we learn to love one another as he loves us.

You made us all,
each wonderfully different,
to join with the angels and sing your praise:

All sing

**Holy, holy, holy Lord,
God of power and might,
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.**

We thank you, loving Father,
because, when we turned away, you sent Jesus, your Son.
He gave his life for us on the cross
and shows us the way to live.
Send your Holy Spirit that these gifts of bread and wine
may be for us Christ's body and his blood.

*Children
Adults*

**Why do we share this bread and wine?
Listen, and we will hear.**

On the night before he died,
when darkness had fallen, Jesus took bread.
He gave thanks, broke it,
and shared it with his disciples, saying:
'This is my body, given for you.
Do this to remember me.'

After they had eaten, he took the cup of wine,
gave thanks, and shared it with his disciples, saying:
'This is my blood, poured out for you and for many,
for the forgiveness of sins.'

So Father, with this bread and this cup
we celebrate his love, his death, his risen life.
As you feed us with these gifts,
send your Holy Spirit,
and change us more and more to be like Jesus our Saviour.

Children How do we follow Jesus Christ?
Adults **Listen, and we will hear.**

Help us, Father, to love one another,
as we look forward to that day when suffering is ended,
and all creation is gathered in your loving arms.
And now with Mary and all your saints
we give you glory,
through Jesus Christ,
in the strength of the Spirit,
today and for ever.

All **Amen.**

If you are able, please remain standing

The Lord's Prayer

Priest Rejoicing in God's new creation,
let us pray with confidence as our Saviour has taught us:

All **Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come;
thy will be done;
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation;
but deliver us from evil.**

**For thine is the kingdom,
the power, and the glory,
for ever and ever.
Amen.**

Sign of Peace

All stand

Priest We receive God's peace and joy deep within us
when we obey God's commands.
Therefore let us reach out to each other in love.

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

Let us offer one another a sign of Christ's peace.

The children return to their seats

Please kneel

Breaking of the Bread

All Jesus says, I am the bread of life,
whoever eats this bread will live for ever.
**Lord, our hearts hunger for you;
give us this bread always.**

Invitation to Communion

All Alleluia. Christ our passover is sacrificed for us.
Therefore let us keep the feast. Alleluia.

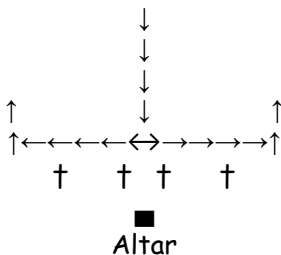
The clergy and other ministers receive Holy Communion

Giving of Communion

If you love me, you will keep my commandments, says the Lord,
and I will ask the Father, and he will send you the Holy Spirit
to be with you for ever. Alleluia.

Baptized persons who are communicant members of other Churches are warmly invited to receive Holy Communion, as shown below.

Alternatively, if you wish to receive a blessing, please bring this booklet with you.



The choir sings Lamb of God

Spiritual Communion - for those at home

Act of Reception

All In union, blessed Jesus,
with the faithful gathered at every altar of your Church
where your blessed Body and Blood are offered this day,

(and remembering particularly my own parish ...)

I long to offer you praise and thanksgiving,
for creation and all the blessings of this life,
for the redemption won for us by your life, death,
and resurrection,
for the means of grace and the hope of glory.

(and particularly for the blessings given me ...)

I believe that you are truly present in the Holy Sacrament,
and, since I cannot at this time receive communion,
I pray you to come into my heart.
I unite myself with you and embrace you with all my heart,
my soul, and my mind.
Let nothing separate me from you;
let me serve you in this life until, by your grace,
I come to your glorious kingdom and unending peace.
Amen.

After the distribution

Anthem

Hallelujah! - Chorus from Messiah

George Frideric Handel (1685-1759)

Hallelujah! for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth,
The King of this World is become the Kingdom of our Lord
and of His Christ; and He shall reign for ever and ever,
King of Kings, and Lord of Lords. Hallelujah!

Revelation 19.16; 11.15; 19.6

Prayer after Communion

Priest Let us pray.

All stand

All God our Father,
whose Son Jesus Christ gives the water of eternal life:
may we thirst for you,
the spring of life and source of goodness,
through Jesus who is alive and reigns,
now and for ever.
Amen.

Hymn

The flags are returned to their bearers

All

**JESUS lives! Thy terrors now
Can, O death, no more appal us;
Jesus lives! By this we know
Thou, O grave, canst not enthral us.
Alleluya!**

**Jesus lives! Henceforth is death
But the gate of life immortal;
This shall calm our trembling breath,
When we pass its gloomy portal.
Alleluya!**

**Jesus lives! For us he died;
Then, alone to Jesus living,
Pure in heart may we abide,
Glory to our Saviour giving.
Alleluya!**

**Jesus lives! Our hearts know well
Naught from us his love shall sever;
Life, nor death, nor powers of hell
Tear us from his keeping ever.
Alleluya!**

**Jesus lives! To him the throne
Over all the world is given;
May we go where he is gone,
Rest and reign with him in heaven.
Alleluya!**

Word German, Christian Fuerchtegott Gellert (1715-1769)
translated by Frances Elizabeth Cox (1812-1897)

Music St Albinus
Henry John Gauntlett (1805-1876)

After the notices

Please stand for God's blessing.

¶ Going out to serve God

The Lord be with you

All and also with you.

God's Blessing

May you never doubt God's love for you.

May you know the joy of loving others as God has loved you.

May you live in such a way that everyone will know
that you are disciples of Jesus.

And the blessing of God almighty,
the Father, the Son †, and the Holy Spirit,
be upon you and remain with you always.

All Amen.

Sending Out

Deacon

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia. —

All

In the name of Christ, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia. —

All are asked to turn toward the Madonna and Child sculpture

Regina Caeli

All **Joy to thee, O Queen of heaven, alleluya** *(9 rings)*
He whom thou wast meet to bear, alleluya
As he promised, hath arisen, alleluya
Pour for us to God thy prayer, alleluya.

All Rejoice and be glad, O Virgin Mary, alleluya,
for the Lord is risen indeed, alleluya. *(9 rings)*

God of life, you have given joy to the world
by the resurrection of your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ.
Through the prayers of his mother, the Virgin Mary,
bring us to the happiness of eternal life.
We ask this through Christ our Lord.

All **Amen.**

Organ Voluntary

Voluntary IX from Ten Voluntaries Op. 7

John Stanley (1713-1786)

The procession departs

Those leaving immediately are asked to be aware of those who wish to listen to the organ voluntary.

Café Guides are now serving refreshments in church, please do join us.

This evening at 5.30 pm
Choral Evensong

Collection - *responding to God's generosity*

We invite you to make a monetary offering towards the ministry and mission of St Matthew's Church. You may do so using any of the following methods:

Cash, cheques, stewardship envelopes - using the receptacle provided at the back of church. UK tax-payers are asked to use the gift-aid envelopes in the chairs, and fill out the details in order that our parish may claim an additional 25% of the donation from the government, at no additional cost to the donor. If you wish to give regularly, please contact the Parish Office (01604 791251) and ask for a member of our Stewardship Team.

Contactless giving - using the terminal provided. Just press the button for the amount you wish to give - £5, £10, or £20, and then hold your bank card over the reader.

Giving on your smart phone - using the QR code printed below. It gives you the option of any amount, Gift Aid, and making a regular payment.

Giving online - click the donate button on the parish website or Facebook page and follow the instructions.

Your generosity is gratefully received. Thank you.



Our thanks are due to 32nd St Matthew's Guides, Brownies
and Rainbows who have generously financed
the production of this week's service booklet.

Our next All Age Mass:

Sunday 9th June at 10.15

The Second Sunday after Trinity (Proper 5)

*Jesus calls people into a spiritual family,
into a new community, who do the will of God*

**Please take this booklet home
as an aid to prayer and reflection during the week,
and then re-cycle it.**

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