

The Parish Church of St Matthew
Northampton

The Third Sunday of Easter

Year C



Jesus said to them, 'Come and have breakfast'

All-age Mass for the Parish Family

Sunday 4 May 2025

10.15 am

Welcome to St Matthew's Parish Church



Safeguarding St Matthew's is committed to providing a safe environment for all who come. If you have any concerns, please speak with one of our welcomers or a churchwarden who may be identified by their lanyard. They will be happy to help you.

Live streaming Please note that this service is being streamed. You may sit where you wish. If, however, you prefer not to be seen online, please sit in a side aisle. The administration of Holy Communion will not be shown.

GDPR Some of St Matthew's services (most Sunday mornings and some special services) are live-streamed or recorded for those who cannot attend church in person. Under GDPR, the church must gain the consent of anyone whose image may be captured, as this constitutes collection of "personal data". This includes clergy, readers/intercessors, musicians and congregation. Whilst every attempt is made not to capture the faces of members of the congregation, this may occasionally happen if people turn around or move around the church during the service. The exception is communion, when the congregation is not filmed. The side aisles and back of the nave are so far as possible film-free areas not covered by the camera. Any-one whose personal data is collected must give their consent. Consent forms are available both in church and on the website. The full policy can be read on our parish website or on the noticeboards in church.

Toilet and baby changing facilities may be found at the base of the church tower. There is also a small servery.

For younger children In the north aisle (nearest to Collingwood Road), a carpeted is provided for infant children. Please feel free to make use of these facilities.



Collection - 'Building a Generous Church'



Our response to God's generosity

We believe in a generous God, who longs for us to share his generosity with others. A generous life is therefore a hallmark of our faith and a testament to it, as the more generous we are, the more we reflect the generous God we believe in. Generosity is, therefore, at the heart of our faith, and our own generosity is a sure sign of our faith in action. Generosity is a spiritual gift, and we need to encourage people to seek this gift as they grow in their faith. The ministry and mission of St Matthew's is largely funded through the incredible generosity of those who give to it.

* * * * *

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. If you are a taxpayer please use the envelopes in the chairs, and fill out the details in order that our parish may also benefit from the Gift Aid (an extra 25p for every pound given) associated with your giving.

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.



This morning's themes

This morning's Gospel shows that a constant feature of the resurrection stories is that Jesus is not recognised at once; it takes some word or familiar gesture for him to be known. This is an effective way of making the point that the resurrection is not a return to earthly life - Jesus has risen to a new life beyond death. He is the same Jesus, yet transformed. He is not as he was; but he is still who he was.

The miraculous catch of fish symbolises the mission of the apostles to fish for people. The large catch shows how successful the disciples can be with Jesus' help. The meal symbolises the eucharistic meal in which Jesus is present among them and feeds them. Peter, who three times denied his Master, is now given three chances to profess his love, and then is given a mandate to care for the Lord's flock. In giving authority to the man who denied him, Jesus wanted to show that he was establishing his Church not on human strength, but on his own love and faithfulness.

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 may be found helpful:

Reflection

It can happen that we lose interest in people,
and even become blind to their strengths,
when we discover their limitations.
During his passion Jesus discovered the limitations of Peter.
Yet he didn't write him off.
He continued to believe in him,
and in time he came good.
Like Peter, we are weak human beings,
who are inconstant in our beliefs.
We need someone who understands our weaknesses,
who realises that it may take time for us to overcome them,
and who doesn't write us off
because we don't produce the goods at once.

Order of Service

¶ Gathering to Worship God

S All stand at the sound of the bell

Call to Worship

Priest In spite of his threefold denial, Jesus did not write off Peter, but confirmed him as chief shepherd of his flock. Jesus doesn't write us off when we fail. He gives us a chance to cancel out our failures by love. Let us sing our praises to the risen Lord.

Hymn

S The procession enters and the flags are presented

All **CHRIST the Lord is risen again!
Christ hath broken every chain!
Hark, the angels shout for joy,
Singing evermore on high,
Alleluya!**

**He who gave for us his life,
Who for us endured the strife,
Is our Paschal Lamb today!
We too sing for joy, and say
Alleluya!**

**He who bore all pain and loss
Comfortless upon the cross,
Lives in glory now on high,
Pleads for us, and hears our cry.
Alleluya!**

He whose path no records tell,
Who descended into hell;
Who the strong man armed hath bound,
And in highest heaven is crowned.
Alleluya!

Now he bids us tell abroad
How the lost may be restored,
How the penitent forgiven,
How we too may enter heaven.
Alleluya!

Thou, our Paschal Lamb indeed,
Christ, today thy people feed;
Take our sins and guilt away,
That we all may sing for ay,
Alleluya!

Words German, Michael Weisse c1480-1534 Music Württemberg
tr Catherine Winkworth 1827-1878

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

The Greeting

All The Lord be with you
 and also with you.

The Easter Acclamation

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

Our celebration is introduced

Washing away our Sins

Father God,
your gift of water brings new life to the earth;
in baptism it is a sign of the washing away of our sins
and the gift of life in heaven.
Bless † this water.
Renew the river of life within us,
that we may be free from sin, healthy and strong to follow you,
through Christ our Lord.

All **Amen.**

The congregation is sprinkled with holy water

Water of Life



Choir All you who thirst, come to the waters;
and you will never be thirsty again. **Refrain**

As rain from heaven, so is God's word,
it waters the earth and brings forth life. **Refrain**

Dying with Christ, so we shall rise with him,
death shall no longer have power over us. **Refrain**

Turn to the Lord, cast off your wickedness,
you will find peace in his infinite love. **Refrain**

God's Forgiveness

Priest May the God of love and power
 forgive † and free us from our sins,
 heal and strengthen us by his Spirit,
 and raise us to new life with Jesus our Lord.
All **Amen.**

The Opening Prayer

Let us pray.

Risen Christ,
you filled your disciples with boldness and fresh hope:
strengthen us to proclaim your risen life
and fill us with your peace,
to the glory of God the Father.

All **Amen.**

§ Sit

¶ The Liturgy of the Word

First Reading

Reader A reading from the Acts of the Apostles.

Saul, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest and asked him for letters to the synagogues at Damascus, so that if he found any who belonged to the Way, men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem. Now as he was going along and approaching Damascus, suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him. He fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to him, 'Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?' He asked, 'Who are you, Lord?' The reply came, 'I am Jesus, whom you are

persecuting. But get up and enter the city, and you will be told what you are to do.'

Acts 9.1-6

This is the word of the Lord.

All **Thanks be to God.**

S *Stand*

Gospel Reading

Acclamation



Choir Christ is risen: he who created all things,
and has granted his mercy to his children.

All **Alleluia.**

S *We turn to face the Book of the Gospels*

All The Lord be with you
and also with you.

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



Jesus showed himself again to the disciples by the Sea of Tiberias; and he showed himself in this way. Gathered there together were Simon Peter, Thomas called the Twin, Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, the sons of Zebedee, and two others of his disciples. Simon Peter said to them, 'I am going fishing.' They said to him, 'We will go with you.' They went out and got into the boat, but that night they caught nothing.

Just after daybreak, Jesus stood on the beach; but the disciples did not know that it was Jesus. Jesus said to them, 'Children, you have no fish, have you?' They answered him, 'No.' He said to them, 'Cast the net to the right side of the boat, and you will find some.' So they cast it, and now they were not able to haul it in because there were so many fish. That disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, 'It is the Lord!' When Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he put on some clothes, for he was naked, and jumped into the lake. But the other disciples came in the boat, dragging the net full of fish, for they were not far from the land, only about a hundred yards off.

When they had gone ashore, they saw a charcoal fire there, with fish on it, and bread. Jesus said to them, 'Bring some of the fish that you have just caught.' So Simon Peter went aboard and hauled the net ashore, full of large fish, a hundred and fifty-three of them; and though there were so many, the net was not torn. Jesus said to them, 'Come and have breakfast.' Now none of the disciples dared to ask him, 'Who are you?' because they knew it was the Lord. Jesus came and took the bread and gave it to them, and did the same with the fish. This was now the third time that Jesus appeared to the disciples after he was raised from the dead.

When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, 'Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?' He said to him, 'Yes, Lord; you know that I love you.' Jesus said to him, 'Feed my lambs.' A second time he said to him, 'Simon son of John, do you love me?' He said to him, 'Yes, Lord; you know that I love you.' Jesus said to him, 'Tend my sheep.' He said to him the third time, 'Simon son of John, do you love me?' Peter felt hurt because he said to him the third time, 'Do you love me?' And he said to him, 'Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you.' Jesus said to him, 'Feed my sheep. Very truly, I tell you, when you were younger, you used to fasten your own belt and to go wherever you wished. But when you grow old, you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will fasten a belt around you and take you where you do not wish to go.' (He said this to indicate the kind of death by which he would glorify God.) After this he said to him, 'Follow me.'

John 20:19-31

This is the Gospel of the Lord.



Hymn

S During which the choir move to the nave

All I danced in the morning when the world was begun,
And I danced in the moon and the stars and the sun,
And I came down from heaven and I danced on the earth,
At Bethlehem I had my birth.

*Refrain: Dance, then, wherever you may be,
I am the Lord of the Dance, said he,
And I'll lead you all, wherever you may be,
And I'll lead you all in the dance, said he.*

I danced for the scribe and the pharisee,
But they would not dance and they wouldn't follow me.
I danced for the fishermen, for James and John,
They came with me and the Dance went on. *Refrain*

I danced on the Sabbath and I cured the lame;
The holy people said it was a shame.
They whipped and they stripped and they hung me on high;
And they left me there on a cross to die. *Refrain*

I danced on a Friday when the sky turned black,
It's hard to dance with the Devil on your back.
They buried my body and they thought I'd gone;
But I am the Dance, and I still go on. *Refrain*

They cut me down and I leapt up high;
I am the life that'll never, never die;
I'll live in you if you'll live in me,
I am the Lord of the Dance, said he. *Refrain*

Words and music Sydney Carter 1915-2004

Talk - Presentation

S Sit

The themes of the day are briefly explored

We Believe

S Stand

Let us declare our shared faith in the Risen Lord.

Do you believe and trust in God the Father,
source of all being and life,
the one for whom we exist?

All **I believe and trust in him.**

Do you believe and trust in God the Son,
who took our human nature,
died for us and rose again?

All **I believe and trust in him.**

Do you believe and trust in God the Holy Spirit,
who gives life to the people of God
and makes Christ known in the world?

All **I believe and trust in him.**

This is the faith of the Church.

All **This is our faith.**

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

Our Prayers to God

Priest Let us pray to God, who through the resurrection of his Son,
strengthens us in hope and in love.

S Kneel

Intercessor Lord, we thank you for calling us to follow you
and to share in your outreach to all peoples.
We ask your blessing upon all who go out to preach the word,
upon all pastors and shepherds of your flock.
Give us all the wisdom to follow in your steps
and to bring others to know and love you.
We pray for all who are involved in mission
and in spreading the Good News through teaching and example.

All Hear us, O Lord, and have mercy upon us;
O Lord, be our helper.

We give you thanks that you give us strength
and courage through your presence.
We pray for all whose work appears to be meaningless
or fruitless.
We remember those who are virtually slaves
and work for a very small income.
We ask your blessing upon all who have been made redundant
and all who are unemployed.

All Hear us, O Lord, and have mercy upon us;
O Lord, be our helper.

We praise you, O God, for the love and protection of our homes.
We ask your blessing upon each of our loved ones,
our families and friends.
We pray for homes where there is little joy or love.
We remember all who are struggling with their relationships
and all who feel lonely or unwanted.

All Hear us, O Lord, and have mercy upon us;
O Lord, be our helper.

Lord, we ask your blessing upon all who are discouraged
or despondent at this time,
upon all who feel that life is not worthwhile.
May they know of your love and your presence.
We pray for all who are ill at home or hospital,
(*the acutely ill ...*)
all who are fearful of the future
and anxious about others.

All Hear us, O Lord, and have mercy upon us;
O Lord, be our helper.

We give thanks for the risen Lord,
ever-present and welcoming us to the fullness of eternal life.
We pray for those who are departed from us;
(*the recently departed ... anniversaries ...*).
May they share with your saints in the joy of your kingdom.

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

[Uniformed Organisations]

*At this point, members of the uniformed organizations
may be invested or presented with awards etc.*

¶ The Liturgy of the Sacrament

A collection is taken. Please give as you are able. Thank you.

§ Stand

Hymn

All

ALLELUYA! Alleluya!
Hearts to heaven and voices raise;
Sing to God a hymn of gladness,
Sing to God a hymn of praise;
He who on the cross a victim,
For the world's salvation bled,
Jesus Christ, the King of glory,
Now is risen from the dead.

Christ is risen, Christ, the first-fruits
Of the holy harvest field,
Which will all its full abundance
At his second coming yield;
Then the golden ears of harvest
Will their heads before him wave,
Ripened by his glorious sunshine,
From the furrows of the grave.

Christ is risen, we are risen;
Shed upon us heavenly grace,
Rain, and dew, and gleams of glory
From the brightness of thy face;
That we, Lord, with hearts in heaven
Here on earth may fruitful be,
And by angel-hands be gathered,
And be ever safe with thee.

Alleluya! Alleluya!
Glory be to God on high;
To the Father, and the Saviour,
Who has gained the victory;
Glory to the Holy Spirit,
Fount of love and sanctity;
Alleluya! Alleluya!
To the Triune Majesty. Amen.

Words Christopher Wordsworth 1807-1885

Music Lux eoi

Invitation to Prayer

Pray, my brothers and sisters,
that our sacrifice may be acceptable to God,
the almighty Father.

All **May the Lord accept the sacrifice at your hands
for the praise and glory of his name,
for our good, and the good of all his Church.**

Prayer over the Bread and Wine

Be present, Lord Jesus Christ,
our risen high priest;
make yourself known in the breaking of bread.

All **Amen.**

The Eucharistic Prayer

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.

In this Easter season
we celebrate with joyful hearts your risen life.
As our Shepherd may you take us through the door
that leads to heaven
where we may sing the song of praise with the angels:

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 the apostles we give you glory,
through Jesus Christ,
in the strength of the Spirit,
today and for ever.

All **Amen.**

S If you are able, please remain standing

The Lord's Prayer

Let us pray to God who is our resurrection and our life:

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.**

Sharing Christ's Peace

May God feed and fill our hearts with love, peace, and hope,
and keep us connected to the life of Christ.
Sharing God's life, we offer one another Christ's peace.

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

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

Breaking of the Bread

All **Lord, we died with you on the cross.
Now we share in your risen life.**

Invitation to Communion

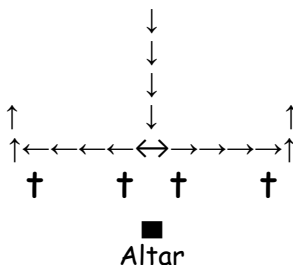
All Alleluia. Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us.
Therefore let us keep the feast. Alleluia.

The clergy receive Holy Communion

Giving of Communion

Jesus said to his disciples: Come and eat;
and he took bread and gave it to them, 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.



Spiritual Communion - *for those watching 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.

The choir sing Lamb of God

Motet

Choir Sing choirs of heaven! Let saints and angels sing!
Around God's throne exult in harmony!
Now Jesus Christ is risen from the grave!
Salute your king in glorious symphony.

Sing choirs of earth! Behold your light has come!
The glory of the Lord shines radiantly,
Lift up your hearts, for Christ has conquered death!
The night is past the day of life is here!

Sing church of God! Exult with joy outpoured.
The gospel trumpets tell of victory won!
Your Saviour lives: he's with you evermore!
Let all God's people shout the long Amen.

S All sit for a period of silent reflection and thanksgiving

Prayer after Communion

Let us pray.

S Stand

All **Living God,
your Son made himself known to his disciples
in the breaking of the bread:
open the eyes of our faith,
that we may see him in all his redeeming work;
who is alive and reigns, now and for ever.
Amen.**

Hymn

All **LOVE'S redeeming work is done,
Fought the fight, the battle won:
Lo! Our Sun's eclipse is o'er;
Lo! He sets in blood no more.**

**Vain the stone, the watch, the seal!
Christ has burst the gates of hell;
Death in vain forbids him rise;
Christ has opened paradise.**

**Lives again our victorious King;
Where, O death, is now thy sting?
Dying once, he all doth save;
Where thy victory, O grave?**

**Soar we now where Christ has led?
Following out exalted head;
Made like him, like him we rise,
Ours the cross, the grave, the skies!**

Hail the Lord of earth and heaven!
Praise to thee by both be given:
Thee we greet triumphant now;
Hail, the Resurrection thou!

Words Charles Wesley 1707-1788

Music Savannah (Herrnhut)

Notices for the Community

§ Sit

¶ Going out to serve the Lord

§ Stand

All The Lord be with you
and also with you.

God's Blessing

All God, who through the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ
has given us the victory,
give you joy and peace in your faith;

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

The image shows two staves of musical notation. The first staff is for the Deacon and the second is for the All. Both staves are in G-clef, 4/4 time, and feature a melody with eighth and sixteenth notes. The lyrics are written below the notes, with hyphens indicating syllables spread across measures.

All are asked to turn and face the Madonna and Child

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

Trumpet Major

Christopher Tambling b 1964

- S Please remain standing until the procession has departed*
- S Those leaving immediately are asked to be aware of those who wish to listen to the organ voluntary.*
- S Refreshments are served after Mass in the parish centre. Please do join us.*

*Our thanks are due to Mandy and Mark Ludlow
who have generously financed
the production of this week's service booklet.*

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

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