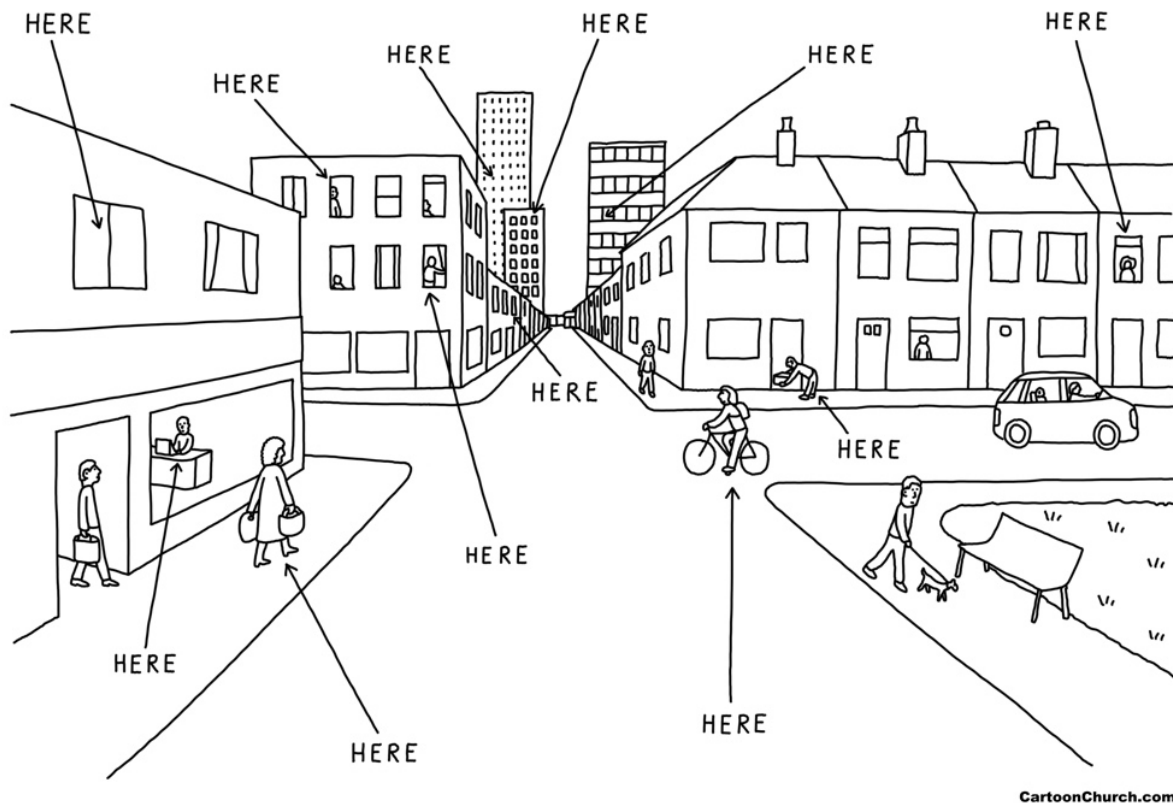


# WHERE THE CHURCH IS



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## Responses, Hymns, Readings and Sermon for Easter Sunday 2020

SHIRLEY PARISH



KNOWING CHRIST  
MAKING HIM KNOWN

# **We will use these responses and readings in conjunction with the Morning Worship booklet**

## Opening hymn

Jesus Christ is Risen today

1 Jesus Christ is ris'n today, Alleluia!  
our triumphant holy day, Alleluia!  
who did once upon the cross Alleluia!  
suffer to redeem our loss. Alleluia!

2 Hymns of praise then let us sing Alleluia!  
unto Christ our heav'nly King, Alleluia!  
who endured the cross and grave, Alleluia!  
sinners to redeem and save. Alleluia!

3 For the pains which he endured, Alleluia!  
our salvation have procured; Alleluia!  
now above the sky he's King, Alleluia!  
where the angels ever sing. Alleluia!

## Easter greeting:

Alleluia, Christ is risen!  
**He is risen indeed, Alleluia!**

## Canticle – The Easter Anthems

- 1 Christ our passover has been sacrificed for us:  
so let us celebrate the feast,
- 2 not with the old leaven of corruption and wickedness:  
but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

*1 Corinthians 5.7b, 8*

- 3 Christ once raised from the dead dies no more:  
death has no more dominion over him.
- 4 In dying he died to sin once for all:  
in living he lives to God.
- 5 See yourselves therefore as dead to sin:  
and alive to God in Jesus Christ our Lord.

*Romans 6.9–11*

- 6 Christ has been raised from the dead:  
the first fruits of those who sleep.
- 7 For as by man came death:  
by man has come also the resurrection of the dead;
- 8 for as in Adam all die:  
even so in Christ shall all be made alive.

*1 Corinthians 15.20–22*

**All Glory to the Father and to the Son  
and to the Holy Spirit;  
as it was in the beginning is now  
and shall be for ever. Amen.**

*Collect for Easter Day*

God of glory,  
by the raising of your Son  
you have broken the chains of death and hell:  
fill your Church with faith and hope;  
for a new day has dawned  
and the way to life stands open  
in our Saviour Jesus Christ.

## Readings

### Acts 10:34-43

Then Peter began to speak to them: 'I truly understand that God shows no partiality, but in every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him. You know the message he sent to the people of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ—he is Lord of all. That message spread throughout Judea, beginning in Galilee after the baptism that John announced: how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power; how he went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him. We are witnesses to all that he did both in Judea and in Jerusalem. They put him to death by hanging him on a tree; but God raised him on the third day and allowed him to appear, not to all the people but to us who were chosen by God as witnesses, and who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead. He commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one ordained by God as judge of the living and the dead. All the prophets testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name.'

### Colossians 3:1-4

So if you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth, for you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ who is your life is revealed, then you also will be revealed with him in glory.

### Gospel – John 20:1-18

Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the tomb. So she ran and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved, and said to them, 'They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him.' Then Peter and the other disciple set out and went towards the tomb. The two were running together, but the other

disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. He bent down to look in and saw the linen wrappings lying there, but he did not go in. Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb. He saw the linen wrappings lying there, and the cloth that had been on Jesus' head, not lying with the linen wrappings but rolled up in a place by itself. Then the other disciple, who reached the tomb first, also went in, and he saw and believed; for as yet they did not understand the scripture, that he must rise from the dead. Then the disciples returned to their homes.

But Mary stood weeping outside the tomb. As she wept, she bent over to look into the tomb; and she saw two angels in white, sitting where the body of Jesus had been lying, one at the head and the other at the feet. They said to her, 'Woman, why are you weeping?' She said to them, 'They have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid him.' When she had said this, she turned round and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not know that it was Jesus. Jesus said to her, 'Woman, why are you weeping? For whom are you looking?' Supposing him to be the gardener, she said to him, 'Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away.' Jesus said to her, 'Mary!' She turned and said to him in Hebrew, 'Rabbouni!' (which means Teacher). Jesus said to her, 'Do not hold on to me, because I have not yet ascended to the Father. But go to my brothers and say to them, "I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God." ' Mary Magdalene went and announced to the disciples, 'I have seen the Lord'; and she told them that he had said these things to her.

Sermon (from Rev Peter Law-Jones)

### **LIVING BY GRACE**

If anyone had said to me at my ordination in 1987 that my final sermon as a parish priest would be read by parishioners or watched over the Internet, I would have been incredulous. For one thing, there was no Internet then, but more importantly who could envisage a pandemic that is having such a profound effect on us all? As I write this, the Prime Minister is in intensive care, and the Queen has taken the step of addressing us on television, in a way that has not been seen or heard since 1940 – and then we were at war!

One of the features of life during the pandemic that has brought home its reality very powerfully is what has come to be known as social distancing. It makes sense, along with self-isolating (a kinder word than quarantine), to keep away from others. But it leaves us all in the situation where in order to work together to lessen the effects of and finally overcome Covid-19, we need to avoid other people. Which goes against the grain for all of us: even for the most self-contained person, the conscious decision by others to avoid us takes away the sense of making a choice and that is in itself difficult to deal with. It is a reminder of how little control we have over our lives and that is, to say the least, uncomfortable.

Most of us experience a desire to help when someone is in difficulty. We want to reach out to neighbours, friends, relatives. So to be told that the best way to help someone who is in need is to avoid them, goes against some of our best and deepest impulses as human beings.

So Mary Magdalene's desire to reach out and touch the risen Jesus finds deep and noble echoes in most of us. She has seen him die, she has come close to, has perhaps actually experienced, despair. And now! And now! So she wants to touch him, to reassure herself that her eyes are not deceiving her, to convince herself that her imagination is not playing tricks, that this is not wishful thinking. After all, it wasn't until he spoke her name that she dared to begin to believe at all.

And at that joyous moment of recognition, Jesus tells her she must keep her distance. In doing so he reminds her, as he reminds Thomas later, that the truth of his Resurrection, the reality of Grace, is not dependent on our senses, but on God's action in the world. True, the need to express that love becomes embodied in communities of faithful people praying and worshipping together. But it also becomes embodied in communities of the faithful who are remote from one another sending help.

Mary's experience in the garden, then, tells us that, yes, as human beings we want to touch, to embrace in order to express our humanity. But it also tells us that during those exceptional times when we must keep apart, the grace of

God in Jesus Christ is still at work, still prompting us to do what is right and good and just and prudent. It is telling us that we may be speaking to someone over the phone, or through their front window, but we can still say that we love them; we can still be the embodiment for them of God's grace. And yes, when the virus finally runs its course, we will be able to return to a life that is more recognisable as normal.

For now, though, in putting to one side our normal lives, by not coming together to worship on the great festival of Easter, we can pray that with Mary Magdalene we will learn once again to live by grace and in doing so add weight and conviction to our prayers for those who are lonely, afraid and suffering from the virus itself. And by that same grace, look forward with hope and thanksgiving. Christ is Risen! He is Risen indeed! Alleluia!

### *Final Hymn – Thine be the Glory*

1 Thine be the glory, risen, conqu'ring Son:  
endless is the vict'ry thou o'er death hast won;  
angels in bright raiment rolled the stone away,  
kept the folded grave-clothes where thy body lay.

Refrain:

Thine be the glory, risen, conqu'ring Son;  
endless is the vict'ry thou o'er death hast won.

2 Lo! Jesus meets us, risen from the tomb;  
lovingly he greets us, scatters fear and gloom;  
let the church with gladness, hymns of triumph sing,  
for her Lord now liveth, death hath lost its sting. [Refrain]

3 No more we doubt thee, glorious Prince of life;  
life is naught without thee: aid us in our strife;  
make us more than conqu'rors, thro' thy deathless love:  
bring us safe thro' Jordan to thy home above. [Refrain]

*Blessing and Dismissal*

God the Father,  
by whose love Christ was raised from the dead,  
open to you who believe the gates of everlasting life.

**Amen.**

God the Son,  
who in bursting from the grave has won a glorious victory,  
give you joy as you share the Easter faith.

**Amen.**

God the Holy Spirit,  
who filled the disciples with the life of the risen Lord,  
empower you and fill you with Christ's peace.

**Amen.**

And the blessing ...

He is not here. He is risen.

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord. Alleluia, alleluia.

**In the name of Christ. Amen. Alleluia, alleluia.**