



ANGLICAN DIOCESE OF WANGARATTA
PAROCHIAL DISTRICT OF WANGARATTA WEST & THE WARBYS

11.00am Ante Communion
The Second Sunday of EASTER
April 7th 2024 (also called Low Sunday)

GATHERING IN GOD'S NAME

Opening Hymn: AHB 290 / TiS 370 [tune: St George's Windsor]

1. **Christ the Lord is risen today:
Let the whole creation say:
Raise your joys and triumphs high:
Sing now, heaven, and earth reply:
Love's redeeming work is done;
fought the fight, the battle won;
vain the stone, the watch, the seal:
Christ has burst the gates of hell.**
2. **Lives again our glorious king;
where, O death, is now your sting?
Once he died our souls to save;
where your victory, O grave?
Soar we now where Christ has led,
following our exalted Head;
made like him, like him we rise:
ours the cross, the grave, the skies.**

Charles Wesley 1707–88 alt.
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Greeting

Open our lips, O Lord,
and we shall declare your praise.

This is the day that the Lord has made,
we will rejoice and be glad in it.

Alleluia! Christ is risen!
He is risen indeed. Alleluia!

Let us pray.

**Father of glory, holy and eternal,
look upon us now in power and mercy.
May your strength overcome our weakness,
your radiance transform our blindness,
and your Spirit draw us to that love
shown and offered to us by your Son,
our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.**

The Sentence

‘Peace be with you,’ says the Lord.
‘As the Father has sent me, so I send you.’

John 20.21

The Confession & Absolution

In baptism we died with Christ,
so that as Christ was raised from the dead,
we might walk in newness of life.
Let us receive new life in him
as we confess our sins in penitence and faith

cf Romans 6.4

**Almighty God, our heavenly Father,
we have sinned against you
in thought, and word, and deed,
and in what we have failed to do.
Have mercy on us,
forgive us all that is past,
and grant that we may serve you
and live a new life to your glory;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

The minister stands and declares God's forgiveness

God desires that none should perish,
but that all should turn to Christ, and live.
In response to his call we acknowledge our sins.
God pardons those who humbly repent, and truly
believe the gospel.
Therefore we have peace with God,
through Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

In this is love, not that we loved God,
but that he loved us and sent his Son
to be the perfect offering for our sins.

1 John 4.10

All stand. The minister says

Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good.
His steadfast love endures for ever!

Grace and peace be with you
and also with you.

All may exchange a Greeting of Peace.

The Hymn of Praise is said or sung.

**Glory to God in the highest,
and peace to God's 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 minister says the Collect

Risen Christ,
whose absence leaves us in despair
but whose presence is overwhelming:
breathe on us with your abundant life,
that where we cannot see
we may have courage to believe
that we may be raised with you. **Amen.**

THE MINISTRY OF THE WORD

A Reading from the Acts of the Apostles [4. 32-37]

Now the whole group of those who believed were of one heart and soul, and no one claimed private ownership of any possessions, but everything they owned was held in common. With great power the apostles gave their testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all. There was not a needy person among them, for as many as owned lands or houses sold them and brought the proceeds of what was sold. They laid it at the apostles' feet, and it was distributed to each as any had need.

There was a Levite, a native of Cyprus, Joseph, to whom the apostles gave the name Barnabas (which means 'son of encouragement'). He sold a field that belonged to him, then brought the money, and laid it at the apostles' feet.

Hear the word of the Lord,
thanks be to God

Psalm 133

**Behold how good and how lovely it is:
when families live together in unity.**

**It is fragrant as oil upon the head,
that runs down over the beard:
fragrant as oil upon the beard of Aaron,
that ran down over the collar of his robe.**

**It is like a dew of Hermon:
like the dew that falls upon the hill of Zion.**

**For there the Lord has commanded his blessing:
which is life for evermore.**

A Reading from the First Letter of John [1. 1—2.2]

We declare to you what was from the beginning, what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we have looked at and touched with our hands, concerning the word of life— this life was revealed, and we have seen it and testify to it, and declare to you the eternal life that was with the Father and was revealed to us— we declare to you what we have seen and heard so that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ. We are writing these things so that our joy may be complete.

This is the message we have heard from him and proclaim to you, that

God is light and in him there is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with him while we are walking in darkness, we lie and do not do what is true; but if we walk in the light as he himself is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he who is faithful and just will forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.

My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and he is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world.

Hear the word of the Lord
thanks be to God.

Gospel Hymn: AHB 276 / TiS 360– Part 2. tune, Lasst Uns Erfreuen

- 6. That Eastertide with joy was bright,
the sun shone out with fairer light,
alleluia, alleluia!
when to their longing eyes restored
the apostles saw their risen Lord.
*alleluia, alleluia, alleluia,
alleluia, alleluia!***
- 7. He showed to them his hands, his side,
where yet the glorious wounds abide:
the tokens true which made it plain
their Lord indeed was risen again.**
- 8. Jesus, the king of gentleness,
come now yourself our hearts possess,
that we may give you all our days
the tribute of our grateful praise.**

Anon., Latin
tr. John Mason Neale 1818-66 *alt*

The Gospel of Our Lord Jesus Christ According to John [20. 19-31]
Glory to you Lord Jesus Christ.

When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors of the house where the disciples had met were locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, 'Peace be with you.' After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then

the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. Jesus said to them again, 'Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you.' When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, 'Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained.'

But Thomas (who was called the Twin), one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. So the other disciples told him, 'We have seen the Lord.' But he said to them, 'Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands, and put my finger in the mark of the nails and my hand in his side, I will not believe.'

A week later his disciples were again in the house, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were shut, Jesus came and stood among them and said, 'Peace be with you.' Then he said to Thomas, 'Put your finger here and see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it in my side. Do not doubt but believe.' Thomas answered him, 'My Lord and my God!' Jesus said to him, 'Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe.'

Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book. But these are written so that you may come to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through believing you may have life in his name.

For the Gospel of the Lord,
praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ

Let us reaffirm our faith.

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.**

**On the third day he rose from the dead;
he ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of the Father;
from there he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

A time for reflection

Offertory Hymn: AHB 281/TiS 363 (tune: O Filii Et Filiae)

Introduction: Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

1. **My daughters and my sons hear tell —
The king of heav'n, the glorious king
is risen today from death and hell. *Alleluia, alleluia.***
4. **His followers huddle in despair,
when suddenly he's in the room,
saying, 'My peace is yours to share.' *Alleluia, alleluia.***
5. **But Thomas, lonely in his grief,
hears only later, 'He is risen',
and simply cannot find belief. *Alleluia, alleluia.***
6. **'Look, Thomas, see my wounded side.
Reach out, and touch my feet and hands,
then dare believe that I'm alive.' *Alleluia, alleluia.***
7. **And now he knows it is the Lord.
He sees the hands, the feet, the side.
He cries for joy, 'You are my God!' *Alleluia, alleluia.***
8. **How happy those who come to faith,
although they have not seen the Lord
for they shall have eternal life — *Alleluia, alleluia.***

Jean Tisserand d.1494. tr. Janet Wootton 1952–
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Offertory Prayer

Blessed are you, Lord God of all creation.
In your loving care you spread before us the table of life
and give us the cup of salvation to drink.
Keep us always in the fold of our Saviour and our Shepherd,
your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Blessed be God for ever.

THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

The Lord calls us to examine the wounded hands and feet of the Risen One and to know the depth of his love for us.

Lord our Father, as Jesus entered the locked room to show his disciples the beginning of a new world, so enter our hearts and move us to faith in Jesus as the Risen One.

Convince us of the reality and significance of the resurrection, and free us from all manner of fears and phobias.

Give us courage in the face of death, knowing that this is the gateway to new resurrected life for those who trust in Christ.

Risen Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Bring peace to all parts of the earth. Wherever nations are at war and people are divided, visit and bring true reconciliation.

We offer prayers for Israel and Palestine, Sudan, Yemen.

We pray this week for the nations of Bulgaria, Hungary, Romania, for their people, for their leaders and for your church in these places.

Help your people in these nations to influence their country for the good of all.

Risen Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Be with your church throughout the world so that its preaching and works of love may continue to testify to our Lord's resurrection.

Wherever your church is faithless and lacking in courage to do the work that Jesus has given, visit it and build it up with your Spirit.

We pray within the ACA for The Diocese of Brisbane, Archbishop Jeremy Greaves (*Josie*) Regional Bishops: Cameron Venables (*Kate*) & John Roundhill (*Frances*). The Clergy and people.

The Society of the Sacred Advent & The Society of St Francis.

We pray for Bishop Clarence, Michelle and family on holiday.

The Parochial District of Wangaratta West and the Warbys, Priest in Charge: Neil Hicks (*Sue*) the Parish leaders and communities at: St Michael's, St Paul's, & St George's.

Risen Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Wherever homes are disrupted by anger and bitterness, and wherever relationships are distorted and dulled, visit and bring peace and harmony.

Wherever young people are gathered in your name, visit and guide them with your holy word and wisdom.

Risen Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Visit and comfort the sick and suffering too, dear Lord.

Heal and strengthen weak bodies, calm and correct confused minds.

We pray for those we know with particular needs including: Margaret G. Zoe. Robert P. Nina Colson. Melanie. Wayne. Warren G. Kaye McKenzie. Josef.

Support them all with your great love and mercy.
Risen Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We remember those whose Year's Mind occurs this week:
Graeme Hicks. Florence Wallis. Ronald Bray. Kenneth Still.
May Stanton. Olive Edwards. Ian Gladstone. Elizabeth Goldsmith.
Rosemary Graham.

Rest eternal grant unto them, O Lord.
and let light perpetual shine upon them.

Accept our prayers through Jesus Christ our Lord,
who taught us to pray,

**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.

Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil.

**For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours
now and forever. Amen.**

THE SENDING OUT OF GOD'S PEOPLE

Notices may be given at this point

Let us pray

Lord Jesus Christ,

**send us out with confidence in your word
to tell the world of your saving acts,
and bring glory to your name. Amen.**

Concluding Hymn: AHB 279 [tune: St Fulbert]

- 1. Ye choirs of new Jerusalem,
your sweetest notes employ,
the Paschal victory to hymn
in strains of holy joy.**
- 2. For Judah's Lion burst his chains,
and crushed the serpent's head;
and brought with him,
from death's domains,
the long-imprisoned dead.**

3. **From hell's devouring jaws the prey
alone our leader bore;
his ransomed hosts pursue their way
where he hath gone before.**
4. **Triumphant in his glory now
his sceptre ruling all,
earth, heaven, and hell before him bow,
and at his footstool fall.**
5. **While joyful thus his praise we sing,
his mercy we implore,
into his palace bright to bring
and keep us evermore.**
6. **All glory to the Father be,
all glory to the Son,
all glory, Holy Ghost, to thee,
while endless ages run.**

St Fulbert of Chartres d 1028
tr: Robert Campbell, 1814--68, alt

May the Lord bless you and keep you;
May the Lord make his face to shine upon you,
and be gracious to you.
May the Lord lift up his countenance upon you,
and give you peace. **Amen.**

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.
Alleluia! Alleluia!

In the name of Christ. Amen.
Alleluia! Alleluia!

(Continued from page 12)

Barnabas's sale of a field was as important, symbolically, as Jeremiah's buying of one (Jeremiah 32). It was a sign of that fellowship, that partnership (*koinonia*, another great bell-like word), of which John's first letter speaks, again with disarming and deceptive simplicity. Life, light, fellowship, forgiveness: these, among many others, make up the overtones that give the great bell of Shalom its particular note.

ACTS 4:32–35

The respect that the apostles were universally accorded in Jerusalem (v. 34) is essential to Luke's idealized conception. The community members lived in peace, holding all things in common and distributing "to each according to his need from each according to his means." That, at least, was the way the socialist Friedrich Engels remembered it from his Sunday school boyhood. No one went without the necessities. It became a watchword in European communism, a utopian scheme in its origins. The apostles were the first distributors of goods (v. 35) until the number of disciples grew so large as to make the designation of assistants necessary (6:2f.). The account is so heavily romanticized that the appearance of Ananias and Sapphira (5:1–11), with its little touch of larceny comes almost as a relief in the otherwise oppressive idyll. This passage among others in early Acts has been the charter of countless idealist sects and Christian primitivists bent on doing "exactly as it was done" in Christianity's earliest days. Such has been their assumption without realizing the much later reconstruction of events that Luke was engaged in.

The narrative conveys successfully a pervasive charity and mutual support, the work of the Holy Spirit, which is truer to the Acts account than any literal attempts to replicate it.

Sloyan, G. S. (2003).
Preaching from the Lectionary: An Exegetical Commentary (pp. 316–317).
Fortress Press.

The Second Sunday of Easter

Wright, N. T. (2002). Twelve Months of Sundays: Reflections on Bible Readings, Year B (p. 56). Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge.

‘Peace be with you’, said Jesus. And again, two verses later, ‘Peace be with you.’ Like a great bell, a single note with multiple overtones, the promise of peace tolls out across the world. Not just an inner peace of heart for every individual who hears and believes. Not just an agenda for peace for a warring world. The old Hebrew word *Shalom* speaks of a quality of life which includes but transcends both: rich and fruitful human living, God’s new creation bursting into many-coloured flower.

The peace declaration is flanked with simple but profound actions. Jesus shows the disciples his hands and his side, the marks of the love which had loved them to the uttermost, the signs that the bill had been paid (compare 19:30, where ‘It is finished’ means, among other things, ‘the price is paid’). Easter means, amidst much else, that peace, never other than costly, has truly been purchased on the cross.

As often in John, we move quickly from love’s evidence to love’s commission. New creation again: Jesus breathes on the disciples, as God breathed on the first human pair, to make them living beings of a new sort, peace-bringers, sin-forgivers. ‘As the Father sent me, so I send you’: the highest possible ecclesiology, grounded in the highest possible Christology, made effective by the gift of the Spirit. Peace is not so much a state of being, more a power let loose upon the world.

For Thomas, peace comes in person to confront the warring spirits of doubt. Scepticism was not born in the eighteenth century; believing in Jesus’ resurrection is not a matter of the ancient world struggling to convince the modern one, but of the creator’s power confronting the age-old assumption of all humankind—the potter, you might say, confronting the clay. But if Easter peace brings order to the world’s confusion, it also brings glorious confusion to the world’s order, opening up undreamed-of possibilities, not so much of random miracles but of new creation in place of decay, new peace in place of war.

The Church perceived very quickly what this might mean. To sell ancestral property and share the proceeds was not a matter of primitive communism. It was a renunciation of one of the central Jewish symbols. It went alongside the rejection of the Temple as the centre, the Torah as the defining charter, and Jewish ethnicity as the necessary qualification, of God’s people. Jesus and the Spirit took the place of all, in a new symbolic universe appropriate for the new covenant and the new creation.

(Continued on page 11)