

# The Parish of Christchurch

*The Priory Church of the Holy Trinity, Christchurch  
St George, Jumpers • St John at Purewell*



*for Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> April, 2020 – Easter Day*

Dear Friends,

This has been a Holy Week like no other. With our churches closed, and all of us staying at home in obedience to the government's directions, it has not been possible to come together as we normally would to celebrate the Holy Week and Easter liturgies, to hear the music and to meet one another in person. This may well feel like a form of bereavement; though we must acknowledge that this is nothing like the bereavement being experienced by the families and friends of those who have died as a result of the coronavirus. Our prayers are with them all, as they are with those who are fighting for their lives in hospital, and with the heroes of the NHS who are caring for them.

The unique circumstances of this Holy Week, however, have led us – and countless others – to try to work out how we may nevertheless 'keep the feast' together. Much of this has only been possible through technology, as Sunday and Holy Week services are recorded, edited and put on the parish website ([www.christchurchpriory.org](http://www.christchurchpriory.org)) and YouTube; a daily 'Pause for Prayer and a Prelude' and a Daily Reflection on the website; the posting of prayers and poems; and more besides. Many of the children and their families have been taking part in the Holy Week journey, through watching a daily video with a Bible reading and prayers; they have also been making lovely Easter window displays and Easter art, which can be seen on [www.facebook.com/parishofchristchurchchildrenandfamilies](https://www.facebook.com/parishofchristchurchchildrenandfamilies). This has involved a huge amount of work by a number of people. It has been a real team effort and I am very grateful to them all.

Though this Easter Day we are not in church, nevertheless the Church (which is the people) still celebrates the good news of Jesus' resurrection, and what it means for all who love him. We can read John chapter 20 and place ourselves in the garden with Mary Magdalene on that confusing, dramatic, glorious morning. We can read Paul's words, 'Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who have died ... for as all die in Adam, so all will be made alive in Christ.' (1 Corinthians 15.20, 22). And we can hear echoes of Paul's ringing proclamation of the resurrection in George Herbert's poem, 'Easter':

"Rise, heart, thy Lord is risen. Sing his praise  
without delays,  
Who takes thee by the hand, that thou likewise  
with him may'st rise:"

Resurrection is our story, too. We, too, can call to mind the risen Jesus' greeting to his incredulous, overjoyed disciples: "Peace be with you". And in these days when many are anxious in the face of Covid-19, perhaps we can hear him say to us, as he said to his disciples, "It is I; do not be afraid" (John 6.20).

I wish you all a truly blessed and happy Easter. Jesus Christ is still our crucified and risen Lord and nothing can take us out of his hands. Rest assured that when the restrictions are lifted, as one day they will be, as every Sunday is a celebration of the resurrection, we shall proclaim together (whatever Sunday it happens to be) the traditional Easter greeting: "Christ is risen – He is risen indeed. Alleluia!"

May the presence, joy and love of the living Christ be with you this Easter Day, this week and always.

*Charles Stewart*

**PTO**

## **Next Sunday**

Next Sunday, April 19<sup>th</sup>, we shall be putting a Songs of Praise on the website, around the time when Evensong would normally take place. If you would like a particular hymn to be sung, please send your choice to Simon Earl at [music@christchurchpriory.org](mailto:music@christchurchpriory.org) Though we can't guarantee everyone's choice will be included, Simon will record as many as possible in the time available. Thank you.

## **Wednesday Eucharist**

For a number of you, one of the midweek Eucharists has become your main act of worship in the week. To help this continue during the period in which our churches are shall, we shall be recording a said simple Eucharist which will be on the parish website ([www.christchurchpriory.org](http://www.christchurchpriory.org)) on Wednesday mornings, around 11.00am.

## **A reminder from our Planned Giving Officer**

Those of you who normally make your gift at one of our services, either through the blue envelope scheme or the collection plate, may wonder how you can continue to support the parish financially at a time when parish income is much reduced. You have two options:

- a) Click on the 'Donate' button at the foot of the parish website, [www.christchurchpriory.org](http://www.christchurchpriory.org) and donate through PayPal.
- b) Give by bank transfer to: PCC XCH Freewill; sort code: 52-21-34 ; account 52428036

Thank you for your support in these testing days.