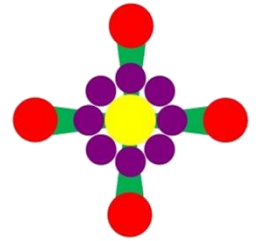


**The Benefice of  
Harden, Wilsden, Cullingworth, Denholme  
12<sup>th</sup> April 2026**



The Second Sunday of Easter  
Today's Liturgy Prepared by Liz

**Call to worship**

The light and peace of Jesus Christ be with you  
**and also with you.**

The glory of the Lord has risen upon us.

**Let us rejoice and sing God's praise for ever.**

Almighty God,

Your Son has opened for us

a new and living way into your presence.

Give us new hearts and constant wills

to worship you in spirit and in truth;

through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

**Confession**

Christ our Passover lamb has been sacrificed for us.

Let us therefore rejoice by putting away all malice and evil

And confessing our sins with a sincere and true heart.

***Silence for reflection***

Jesus Christ, risen Master and triumphant Lord,

we come to you in sorrow for our sins,

and confess to you our weakness and unbelief.

We have lived by our own strength,

and not by the power of your resurrection.

In your mercy, forgive us.

**Lord, hear us and help us.**

We have lived by the light of our own eyes,

as faithless and not believing.

In your mercy, forgive us.

**Lord, hear us and help us.**

We have lived for this world alone,  
and doubted our home in heaven.

In your mercy, forgive us.

**Lord, hear us and help us.**

May the God of love and power  
Forgive you and free you from your sins  
Heal and strengthen us by his Spirit  
And raise us to new life in Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

Alleluia. Christ is risen.

**He is risen indeed. Alleluia.**

Praise the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

**He has given us new life and hope.**

**He has raised Jesus from the dead.**

God has claimed us as his own.

**He has brought us out of darkness.**

**He has made us light to the world.**

Alleluia. Christ is risen.

**He is risen indeed. Alleluia.**

**Collect**

Risen Christ,  
for whom no door is locked, no entrance barred:  
open the doors of our hearts,  
that we may seek the good of others  
and walk the joyful road of sacrifice and peace,  
to the praise of God the Father. **Amen.**

**First reading: Acts 2: 14a, 22-32**

But Peter, standing with the eleven, raised his voice and addressed them.  
‘You that are Israelites, listen to what I have to say: Jesus of Nazareth, a man  
attested to you by God with deeds of power, wonders, and signs that God did  
through him among you, as you yourselves know— this man, handed over to  
you according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and  
killed by the hands of those outside the law.

But God raised him up, having freed him from death, because it was impossible for him to be held in its power. For David says concerning him, "I saw the Lord always before me, for he is at my right hand so that I will not be shaken; therefore my heart was glad, and my tongue rejoiced; moreover, my flesh will live in hope. For you will not abandon my soul to Hades, or let your Holy One experience corruption. You have made known to me the ways of life; you will make me full of gladness with your presence."

'Fellow Israelites, I may say to you confidently of our ancestor David that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us to this day. Since he was a prophet, he knew that God had sworn with an oath to him that he would put one of his descendants on his throne. Foreseeing this, David spoke of the resurrection of the Messiah, saying, "He was not abandoned to Hades, nor did his flesh experience corruption." This Jesus God raised up, and of that all of us are witnesses.

**Second reading: John 20: 19-end**

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.

### Reflection with Brenda

The reading from John’s Gospel from today goes to the heart of the Christian faith. Here are witnesses to Jesus’s claim to be the Son of God, The Messiah. He has shown Himself to His followers.

Here is the evidence. Jesus in the flesh

After death. Even to His initial doubter Thomas.

As King David prophesied God had promised him. God would send The Messiah from the house of David. Here was that descendant Jesus of Nazareth. A young man from humble beginnings but King of Kings exalted and Glorified above any earthly King.

We, as Christians, believe this to be true. Jesus is Lord of all The Son of God.

Though I ask you my brothers and sisters Do you always believe, have you always believed ,or like Thomas have you sometimes doubted.

I was born in 1949 I attended a primary school in Bradford where religion and the story of Jesus Christ was part of our education We had daily assembly ,and a prayer at the end of the school day.

I loved the story of the Nativity and the lead up to the Christmas season. I understood less about the significance of Easter. This meant a long holiday, Easter bunnies, chocolate eggs. I was not brought up in a Church going family. My lovely Dad educated by what he described as cruel Catholic Nuns, was against religion.

So I had lots of negative messages about faith strangely though never about Jesus Christ. My Dad was a kind loving man, he actually lived out his life with Christian values, love tolerance acceptance a lack of judgement and forgiveness. I do remember in those days shops all closed on both Good Friday and Easter Sunday. I regret that shops no longer close on Good Friday After all both Good Friday and Easter Sunday go together They are the fundamental tenets of our faith. Sacrifice, Resurrection and Redemption.

I searched for Christ in my life for many years. It was only 14 years ago when I came to live in Harden that I found Him. He had always been there I just did not open my heart to Him.

I'm ashamed to confess I would say Christ Crucified in the same tone I may describe planning to catch a bus to Bingley. Until I met Mavis Neville. She mentored me and helped me see I had always been open to Jesus. I had ,like my Dad ,always followed Christ's teachings without realising He was in my heart. What changed?

The first Easter I attended Church s what changed when I attended the Vigil on Maundy Thursday. Suddenly the horror of Christs suffering ,what it must have felt like to be exalted, then betrayed, even by those who said they loved Him. To imagine what He was facing. To be tortured almost to death. Then hung and killed in the most ignominious way in those days.

Crucifixion The execution method for criminals and murderers. How He must have suffered. How His followers must have suffered to witness His agonising death and the grief at His loss. Then. The joy of His Resurrection. No wonder the Apostles. Peter initially, who found his voice and the courage to tell others. Then the other Disciples touched by the Holy Spirit in that locked room spread the word of Christ.

What of we Christians 2000 years later.

We have never seen Jesus in human flesh ,we were not able to be in the locked room when He appeared. We could not place our hands and fingers in His side. Yet for me at least I still believe. If you like me, do believe then ,as Jesus said, we are the Blessed ones, because we have not seen the physical evidence for ourselves.

Yet we still believe. He Is Risen Alleluia He is with us to the end of time. Amen.

### Affirmation of Faith

Let us declare our faith  
in the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ.

**Christ died for our sins**

**in accordance with the Scriptures;**

**he was buried;**

**he was raised to life on the third day**

**in accordance with the Scriptures;**

**afterwards he appeared to his followers,**

**and to all the apostles: this we have received, and this we believe. Amen.**

Heavenly Father, Lord of all creation, Lord of the empty tomb. We marvel at the work of your hands, often frustrated at the frailty of our own as we endeavour to put your will for us it into action. We come before you to with our prayers and petitions in the name of Him whom you sent for our Salvation, Jesus Christ.

Be with your church throughout the world so that its preaching and works of love may continue to testify to our Lord's resurrection. We pray for all Christian Churches, constantly adapting to an ever-changing world whilst holding onto and proclaiming what is timeless and universal. Let it never lose its vision of establishing your kingdom here on earth, that it may use every opportunity to speak boldly of the truth that is of a risen Lord and Saviour of all. And let it find unity in doing your will. Bless the work of this Church and benefice of our clergy Alison, Ian, Liz, Mary and all who hold office in leadership, guidance and counselling roles. Bless the work of the many groups who meet here week by week that those who pass through our doors may discover a friendship and fellowship that only comes from the love of Christ. We thank you and pray for those who, in following your example, show concern and compassion to others. We pray also for our own Methodist and Anglican organisations, working with children, young people, the elderly and with our brothers and sisters in developing countries. May those who give of their love to others know of your un-ending love in their own lives also.

### **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. Especially protect all Christian people in these nations where they are persecuted, help them to influence their country for the good of all. As the bombings, kidnappings and murders continue with no obvious signs of improvement we can but pray for those who have political, religious or military influence that a way to a just and lasting peace can be found. We remember all who work for peace between peoples and nations that they can draw inspiration from the life of Christ and so restore harmony where there once were discord and conflict. Remembering and praying for our own armed forces faced with military danger. As they act in our name we pray for a time soon when they can all come home.

Wherever homes are disrupted by anger and bitterness, and wherever relationships are distorted and dulled, visit and bring peace and harmony. Wherever people are gathered in your name, visit and guide them with your holy word and wisdom. We pray for the survivors and the victim's families, of ongoing conflicts around the world.

**Lord in Your mercy.**

**Hear our prayer.**

We pray for this our nation, especially for those both in national government and local councils and faced with the task of making difficult decisions which will affect us all. We pray that all our elected leaders or appointed officials will always work together for the good of all sections of the community with wisdom, humility and justice.

**Lord in Your mercy.**

**Hear our prayer.**

Lord Jesus, comforter and healer to those in both physical, mental and spiritual need we bring before you those known to us personally who are in that need at this time. We name them in our hearts in a moment of silence and are emboldened to ask that your healing will strengthen weak bodies, calm and correct confused minds. Support them all with your great love and mercy. May your touch be felt in their lives..... All these we hold up to you and commit to your loving care. We thank you Lord for the opportunities in the life of our church to offer support and comfort to the bereaved. We pray for those who face that pain of grief at the loss of a loved one; for we can boldly claim that. Jesus Christ is the Light of the World, a light which no darkness can quench. We remember before God those who have died and light a candle to symbolise the light of Christ which eternally shines and brings hope. You turn our darkness into light; in your light shall we see light.

Heavenly Father, we present these prayers through Jesus Christ our Lord, who is risen from the dead, and who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

**Merciful Father,**

**Accept these prayers for the sake of your Son, our Saviour, Jesus Christ.**

**Amen.**

As our Saviour taught us, so we 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.  
Lead us not into temptation  
but deliver us from evil.  
For the kingdom, the power,  
and the glory are yours  
now and for ever.  
Amen.**

### The Peace

The risen Christ came and stood among his disciples and said, 'Peace be with you.'  
Then were they glad when they saw the Lord. Alleluia.

### Closing prayer

Lord Jesus,  
walk with us through this week,  
support us when we try to see the truth  
in things that puzzle us.  
Give us courage to search for answers,  
and hold us in your unfailing and all-encompassing love,  
each and every day.  
**Amen.**

God, who through the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ  
has given us the victory,  
give us joy and peace in our faith;  
and the blessing of God almighty, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, be with us all  
today and always. **Amen**

We are raised to new life with Christ.  
Go in his peace. Alleluia, alleluia.  
**Thanks be to God. Alleluia, alleluia.**