

The Temple Church

SUNDAY 19 APRIL 2026

11.15 a.m.



The ceremony of the Holy Fire on the night of Holy Saturday in the Round Church of the Anastasis (Resurrection), Jerusalem.

Easter Carol Service

In AD 325 workmen in Jerusalem, working under instructions from the Emperor Constantine to clear the holy sites, uncovered under a pagan temple the grave of Christ. Over this empty grave Constantine built a round church, an imperial mausoleum: the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. Christ's grave, a low cave, is at the circle's centre.

The Knights Templar, 850 years later, built our Round Church to recreate the shape of Constantine's memorial and thereby the sanctity of the Holy Sepulchre itself. To the medieval mind, we are in Jerusalem, at the site of Christ's own burial.

Of all the holy places, that which in some way holds the first place, which one desires to see the most and where one feels (I can hardly describe it) a redoubling of piety, – is the place in which Christ rested after his death, rather than those in which he lived. The thought of his death – even more than the thought of his life – reawakens our piety. The life of Christ tells me how I should live my life; his death buys me back from death.

“Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection” (Romans 6. 3-5). What happiness for these pilgrims when, after the numberless fatigues of a long voyage and a crowd of dangers to which they have seen themselves exposed on land and on sea, it is at last permitted them to rest just there where the body rested of the Lord! It seems to me that, in the overflow of their joy, they no longer feel their tiredness and count as nothing the costs of their voyage; but, as if at last they have obtained the recompense for their pains and have won the prize for their race (to use the very expressions of Holy Scripture), they are flooded with happiness at having reached the tomb of the Saviour.

St Bernard of Clairvaux,
In Praise of the New Knighthood (The Knights Templar), ch. 11.

To that cave in Jerusalem the women came before sunrise on Easter morning. Here they found the tomb empty; here the angelic proclamation frightened, awed and inspired them; here the risen Jesus, as the sun rose, greeted Mary Magdalene by name.

In the East, Constantine's Church is named not for Christ's burial but for his rising from the dead: the Church of the Anastasis or Resurrection. In the Anastasis, at the ancient Ceremony of the Holy Fire, the torch of Easter takes fire each year in the Sepulchre of Christ. The fire is passed from candle to candle from the cave itself and throughout the Church. Within minutes the Anastasis is ablaze with light. As at every Easter for over 1,000 years the Holy Fire dissolves the darkness of death and illumines the world with the light of Christ.

This morning's readings will be intercalated with the *Five Mystical Songs* by Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1958) written between 1906 and 1911. The work sets four poems by George Herbert (1593-1633), from his collection *The Temple: Sacred Poems* (published in 1633 after Herbert's death), as follows:

1. Easter – Herbert's *Easter*
2. I Got Me Flowers – Herbert's *segue* to *Easter*
3. Love Bade Me Welcome – *Love (III)*
4. The Call – *The Call*
5. Antiphon – *Antiphon (I)*

The service is sung by Temple Singers. The soloist is Andrew Rupp.

Organ Music before the Service

Rhapsody in E

Harold Darke (1888-1976)

The congregation stands at the entrance of the choir and the clergy.

INTROIT *This joyful Eastertide*

Choir This joyful Eastertide,
Away with sin and sorrow!
My love, the crucified,
Hath sprung to life this morrow.

*Had Christ, that once was slain,
Ne'er burst his three-day prison,
Our faith had been in vain:
But now hath Christ arisen.*

My flesh in hope shall rest,
And for a season slumber:
Till trump from east to west
Shall wake the dead in number.

Death's flood hath lost his chill,
Since Jesus crossed the river:
Lover of souls, from ill
My passing soul deliver.

*Music: Charles Wood (1866-1926)
Words: G. R. Woodward (1848-1934)*

HYMN *Jesus lives*

All **Jesus lives! thy terrors now
Can no more, O death, appal us;
Jesus lives! by this we know
Thou, O grave, canst not enthrall us.
Alleluia!**

**Jesus lives! henceforth is death
But the gate of life immortal:
This shall calm our trembling breath,
When we pass its gloomy portal.
Alleluia!**

**Jesus lives! our hearts know well,
Naught from us his love shall sever;
Life nor death nor powers of hell
Tear us from his keeping ever.
Alleluia!**

**Jesus lives! to him the throne
Over all the world is given:
May we go where he is gone,
Rest and reign with him in heaven.
Alleluia!**

Music: John J. Gauntlett (1805-1876)
Words: *Jesus lebt, mit ihm auch ich*, Christian Fuerchtegott Gellert (1715-1769),
trans. Frances Elizabeth Cox (1812-1897)

The congregation sits.

LESSON *From Genesis 1.26, 2. 7-8, 15-17, 19-22, 25*

God creates humankind.

And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life. And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and the Lord God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it. And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.

And out of the ground the Lord God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air; and brought them unto Adam to see what he would call them: and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof.

But for Adam there was not found an help meet for him. And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam: and he took one of his ribs. And the rib, made he a woman. And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed.

Thanks be to God.

BIDDING PRAYER

We are gathered here in this most holy season to hear again the story of Easter, to join the disciples in their fear and awe and joy, to discover our own place, redeemed from death and unashamed, in a world reborn.

God in Christ fits us to bear afresh the image of God in which we were made, re-opens for us the gates of Paradise, and invites us to sit with him and eat. For *If any man be in Christ, he is a new creation: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.*

At this time of celebration, we give heartfelt thanks to God for all those who fill our daily lives with joy: for our families, for all those whom we most dearly love.

We pray for those whose lives are afflicted by war, civil strife and natural disaster; and we ask God's blessing on those who devote their lives to relieving need, restoring justice and promoting peace in the troubled places of the world.

Among those who have died, we remember especially before God, with love and thanksgiving, those whom we have loved and lost, entrusting them to God's infinite mercy.

All these prayers and thanksgivings we raise to God in the name of Jesus Christ and in words which he has taught us:

Our Father, which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy Name, Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done, in earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; And forgive us our trespasses, As we forgive them that 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.

Eternal God, you make all things through Christ and in him have made them new; remake us, we pray, to bear afresh that image of you for which you have created us. Make us in this life the faithful gardeners of your reborn world, that we may be ready to live with you, through all eternity, in the paradise of your heavenly home; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

The congregation stands.

HYMN *Jesus Christ is risen today*

All **Jesus Christ is risen today, Alleluia!
Our triumphant holy day, Alleluia!
Who did once, upon the cross, Alleluia!
Suffer to redeem our loss. Alleluia!**

**Hymns of praise then let us sing, Alleluia!
Unto Christ, our heavenly King, Alleluia!
Who endured the cross and grave, Alleluia!
Sinners to redeem and save. Alleluia!**

**But 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!**

Music: 'Easter Hymn' (Lyra Davidica, 1708)

Words: Lyra Davidica (1708) and the Supplement (1816)

The congregation sits for the lessons and anthems that follow.

LESSON *John 20. 1-10*

Mary Magdalene, Peter and the Beloved Disciple find the tomb of Jesus empty.

The first day of the week cometh Mary Magdalene early, when it was yet dark, unto the sepulchre, and seeth the stone taken away from the sepulchre. Then she runneth, and cometh to Simon Peter, and to the other disciple, whom Jesus loved, and saith unto them, They have taken away the Lord out of the sepulchre, and we know not where they have laid him.

Peter therefore went forth, and that other disciple, and came to the sepulchre. So they ran both together: and the other disciple did outrun Peter, and came first to the sepulchre. And he stooping down, and looking in, saw the linen clothes lying; yet went he not in. Then cometh Simon Peter following him, and went into the sepulchre, and seeth the linen clothes lie, and the napkin, that was about his head, not lying with the linen clothes, but wrapped together in a place by itself. Then went in also that other disciple, which came first to the sepulchre, and he saw, and believed.

For as yet they knew not the scripture, that he must rise again from the dead. Then the disciples went away again unto their own home.

Thanks be to God.

ANTHEM *Easter*

Choir 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;
That, as his death calcined thee to dust,
His life may make thee gold, and much more, just.

Awake, my lute, and struggle for thy part
With all thy art.
The cross taught all wood to resound his name
Who bore the same.
His stretched sinews taught all strings, what key
Is best to celebrate this most high day.

Consort both heart and lute, and twist a song
Pleasant and long:
Or since all music is but three parts vied,
And multiplied;
O let thy blessed Spirit bear a part,
And make up our defects with his sweet art.

LESSON *John 20. 11-18*

Mary Magdalene sees the risen Jesus in the garden of his burial.

But Mary stood without at the sepulchre weeping: and as she wept, she stooped down, and looked into the sepulchre, and seeth two angels in white sitting, the one at the head, and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain.

And they say unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? She saith unto them, Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him.

And when she had thus said, she turned herself back, and saw Jesus standing, and knew not that it was Jesus. Jesus saith unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? whom seekest thou?

She, supposing him to be the gardener, saith unto him, Sir, if thou have borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away. Jesus saith unto her, Mary. She turned herself, and saith unto him, Rabboni; which is to say, Master. Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God. Mary Magdalene came and told the disciples that she had seen the Lord, and that he had spoken these things unto her.

Thanks be to God.

ANTHEM *I got me flowers*

Choir I got me flowers to strew thy way;
I got me boughs off many a tree:
But thou wast up by break of day,
And brought'st thy sweets along with thee.

The Sun arising in the East,
Though he give light, and the East perfume;
If they should offer to contest
With thy arising, they presume.

Can there be any day but this,
Though many suns to shine endeavour?
We count three hundred, but we miss:
There is but one, and that one ever.

The congregation stands.

HYMN *Love's redeeming work is done*

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 his rise;
Christ has opened Paradise.**

**Lives again our glorious 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 our 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!**

Music: John Wesley (1703-1792), *Foundery Collection* (1742)

Words: Charles Wesley (1707-1788)

The congregation sits.

ANTHEM *Love bade me welcome*

Choir

Love bade me welcome; yet my soul drew back,
Guilty of dust and sin.
But quick-eyed love, observing me grow slack
From my first entrance in,
Drew nearer to me, sweetly questioning,
If I lacked anything.

A guest, I answered, worthy to be here:
Love said, you shall be he.
I, the unkind, ungrateful? Ah, my dear,
I cannot look on thee.

Love took my hand, and smiling did reply,
Who made the eyes but I?

Truth, Lord, but I have marr'd them: let my shame
Go where it doth deserve.
And know you not, says Love, who bore the blame?
My dear then, I will serve.
You must sit down, says Love, and taste my meat:
So I did sit and eat.

LESSON *Luke 24. 13-35*

Two disciples meet Jesus on the road to Emmaus.

And, behold, two of them went that same day to a village called Emmaus, which was from Jerusalem about threescore furlongs. And they talked together of all these things which had happened.

And it came to pass, that, while they communed together and reasoned, Jesus himself drew near, and went with them. But their eyes were holden that they should not know him. And he said unto them, What manner of communications are these that ye have one to another, as ye walk, and are sad?

And the one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answering said unto him, Art thou only a stranger in Jerusalem, and hast not known the things which are come to pass there in these days? And he said unto them, What things? And they said unto him, Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, which was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people: And how the chief priests and our rulers delivered him to be condemned to death, and have crucified him. But we trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel: and beside all this, today is the third day since these things were done. Yea, and certain women also of our company made us astonished, which were early at the sepulchre; And when they found not his body, they came, saying, that they had also seen a vision of angels, which said that he was alive. And certain of them which were with us went to the sepulchre, and found it even so as the women had said: but him they saw not.

Then he said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken: Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory? And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself.

And they drew nigh unto the village, whither they went: and he made as though he would have gone further. But they constrained him, saying, Abide with us: for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent. And he went in to tarry with them.

And it came to pass, as he sat at meat with them, he took bread, and blessed it, and brake, and gave to them. And their eyes were opened, and they knew him; and he vanished out of their sight.

And they said one to another, Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures?

And they rose up the same hour, and returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven gathered together, and them that were with them, Saying, The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon. And they told what things were done in the way, and how he was known of them in breaking of bread.

Thanks be to God.

The congregation stands.

HYMN *Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!*

All **Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!**
The strife is o'er, the battle done;
Now is the Victor's triumph won;
O let the song of praise be sung:
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

Death's mightiest powers have done their worst,
And Jesus hath his foes dispersed;
Let shouts of praise and joy outburst:
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

On the third morn he rose again
Glorious in majesty to reign;
O let us swell the joyful strain:
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

Lord! by the stripes which wounded thee,
From death's dread sting thy servants free,
That we may live and sing to thee.
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

Music: Melchior Vulpus (1560-1615)

Words: Symphonia Sirenum Selectarum (Cologne, 1695), trans. F. Pott (1832-1909)

The congregation sits.

ANTHEM *The Call*

Choir **Come, my Way, my Truth, my Life:**
Such a Way, as gives us breath:
Such a Truth, as ends all strife:
Such a Life, as killeth death.

Come, My Light, my Feast, my Strength:
Such a Light, as shows a feast:
Such a Feast, as mends in length:
Such a Strength, as makes his guest.

Come, my Joy, my Love, my Heart:
Such a Joy, as none can move:
Such a Love, as none can part:
Such a Heart, as joys in love.

LESSON *John 20. 19-31*

The risen Jesus appears to his disciples.

Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you. And when he had so said, he shewed unto them his hands and his side. Then were the disciples glad, when they saw the Lord. Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you. And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost: Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained.

But Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came. The other disciples therefore said unto him, We have seen the Lord. But he said unto them, Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe.

And after eight days again his disciples were within, and Thomas with them: then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace be unto you. Then saith he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing.

And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God. Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen and yet have believed.

And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.

Thanks be to God.

The congregation stands.

HYMN *Ye Choirs of new Jerusalem*

All **Ye choirs of new Jerusalem,
Your sweetest notes employ,
The paschal victory to hymn
In strains of holy joy.**

**For Judah's Lion bursts his chains,
Crushing the serpent's head;
And cries aloud through death's domains
To wake the imprisoned dead.**

**Devouring depths of hell their prey
At his command restore;
His ransomed hosts pursue their way
Where Jesus goes before.**

**Triumphant in his glory now
To him all power is given;
To him in one communion bow
All saints in earth and heaven.**

**While we, his soldiers, praise our King,
His mercy we implore,
Within his palace bright to bring
And keep us evermore.**

**All glory to the Father be,
All glory to the Son,
All glory, Holy Ghost, to thee,
While endless ages run.
Alleluia! Amen.**

Music: Sir Charles Villiers Stanford (1852-1924)

Words: Fulbert of Chartres (952-1028)

The congregation sits.

COLLECT FOR THE SECOND SUNDAY AFTER EASTER

Almighty God, who hast given thine only Son to be unto us both a sacrifice for sin, and also an ensample of godly life: Give us grace that we may always most thankfully receive that his inestimable benefit, and also daily endeavour ourselves to follow the blessed steps of his most holy life; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

COLLECT FOR EASTER DAY

Almighty God, who through thine only-begotten Son Jesus Christ hast overcome death, and opened unto us the gate of everlasting life; we humbly beseech thee, that, as by thy special grace preventing us thou dost put into our minds good desires, so by thy continual help we may bring the same to good effect; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost, ever one God, world without end. *Amen.*

LESSON *Matthew 28. 16-20*

Jesus commissions his disciples to teach all nations.

Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, into a mountain where Jesus had appointed them. And when they saw him, they worshipped him: but some doubted. And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. *Amen*

Thanks be to God.

All stand.

ANTHEM *Antiphon*

Choir Let all the world in every corner sing, my God and King!
The heavens are not too high, his praise may thither fly;
The earth is not too low, his praise there may grow.
Let all the world in every corner sing, my God and King!

Let all the world in every corner sing, my God and King!
The church with psalms must shout, no door can keep them out;
But, above all, the heart must bear the longest part.
Let all the world in every corner sing, my God and King!

All remain standing.

BLESSING

God our Father, by raising Christ your Son you have
conquered the power of death and opened for us the way
to eternal life. May this celebration today raise us up and
renew our lives by the Spirit that is within us. And may the
blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy
Ghost, be amongst you and remain with you always. Amen.

Organ Music after the Service

Saraband for the morning of Easter

Herbert Howells (1892-1983)

COLLECTION

***There will be a retiring collection. If you would prefer to
donate online, please scan the QR code below.***

