

Holy Communion for the Fifth Sunday of Easter



The Stour Valley Benefice
Cavendish, Clare, Hundon, Poslingford, Stoke-by-Clare & Wixoe

- A short introduction to the Season -

The Great Fifty Days of Eastertide form a single festival period in which the tone of joy created at the Easter Vigil is sustained through the following seven weeks, and the Church celebrates the gloriously risen Christ.

During this 'most joyful period' the lit Easter (or Paschal) Candle stands prominently in church for all the Eastertide services. The Alleluia appears frequently.

On the fortieth day, there has from the late fourth century been a particular celebration of Christ's ascension. He commissions his disciples to continue his work, he promises the gift of the Holy Spirit, and then he is no longer among them in the flesh. The ascension is closely connected with the theme of mission. The arrival of the promised Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost completes and crowns the Easter Festival.

This season of joy and brightness is represented in our use of White or gold liturgical decorations and vestments.

**Growing in God**

Spiritual Communion

The term 'Spiritual Communion' has been used historically to describe the means of grace by which a person, prevented for some serious reason from sharing in a celebration of the Eucharist, nonetheless shares in the communion of Jesus Christ.

In joining with Revd Mark today as he celebrates the Eucharist from his own home, you too are able to join with him in communion. The Book of Common Prayer instructs us that if we offer ourselves in penitence and faith, giving thanks for the redemption won by Christ crucified, we may truly 'eat and drink the Body and Blood of our Saviour Christ', although we cannot receive the sacrament physically in ourselves.

The Church of which we are members is not defined by the walls of a building but by the Body of Christ of which we are members. In making our communion spiritually, we are joining with Christians everywhere to be nourished by the one who tells us, 'I am the Bread of Life'.

Hymn: Jesus Christ is risen today

- 1 Jesus Christ is risen 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 heavenly King, *Alleluia.*
who endured the Cross and grave, *Alleluia.*
sinners to redeem and save. *Alleluia.*
- 3 But the pains that he endured, *Alleluia.*
our salvation have procured; *Alleluia.*
now above the sky he's King, *Alleluia.*
where the angels ever sing. *Alleluia.*

Surrexit Christus hodie
Anonymous Latin, Lyra Davidica (1708), Compleat Psalmodist (1749 Arnold),
Charles Wesley (1707-88)

The Gathering

Minister: In the name of the Father,
and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit.

All: Amen.

The Greeting

Minister: Alleluia! Christ is risen

All: He is risen indeed. Alleluia!

Minister: The Lord be with you.

All: and also with you.

Prayer of Preparation

**All: Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open,
all desires known, and from who no secrets are
hidden: cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the
inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may**

perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy name; through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Minister: 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)*

The Kyrie Confession

Minister: Like Mary at the empty tomb, we fail to grasp the wonder of your presence.
Lord, have mercy.

All: Lord, have mercy.

Minister: Like the disciples behind locked doors, we are afraid to be seen as your followers.
Christ, have mercy.

All: Christ, have mercy.

Minister: Like Thomas in the upper room, we are slow to believe.
Lord, have mercy.

All: Lord, have mercy.

Absolution

Minister: Almighty God, who forgives all who truly repent, have mercy upon you, pardon and deliver you from all your sins, confirm and strengthen you in all goodness, and keep you in life eternal; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

Gloria in Excelsis

All: Glory to God in the highest, and peace to his 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 Collect

Minister: Almighty God, who through your only-begotten Son Jesus Christ have overcome death and opened to us the gate of everlasting life: grant that, as by your grace going before us you put into our minds good desires, so by your continual help we may bring them to good effect; through Jesus Christ our risen Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

All: Amen.

The Liturgy of the Word

The first New Testament reading - Acts 7:55-end

Filled with the Holy Spirit, Stephen gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. 'Look,' he said, 'I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God!' But they covered their ears, and with a loud shout all rushed together against him. Then they dragged him out of the city and began to stone him; and the witnesses laid their coats at the feet of a young man named Saul. While they were stoning Stephen, he prayed, 'Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.' Then he knelt down and cried out in a loud voice, 'Lord, do not hold this sin against them.' When he had said this, he died.

Minister: This is the word of the Lord

All: Thanks be to God.

The second New Testament reading – 1 Peter 2:2-10

Like newborn infants, long for the pure, spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow into salvation - if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good.

Come to him, a living stone, though rejected by mortals yet chosen and precious in God's sight, and like living stones, let yourselves be built into a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. For it stands in scripture: 'See, I am laying in Zion a stone, a cornerstone chosen and precious; and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame.' To you then who believe, he is precious; but for those who do not believe, 'The stone that the builders rejected has become the very head of the corner', and 'A stone that makes them stumble, and a rock that makes them fall.' They stumble because they disobey the word, as they were destined to do.

But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people, in order that you may proclaim the mighty acts of him who called you out of darkness into his marvellous light. Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

Minister: This is the word of the Lord

All: Thanks be to God.

Gospel Reading

Minister: Alleluia, alleluia. I am the first and the last, says the Lord, and the living one; I was dead, and behold I am alive for evermore. *(cf Revelation 1:17,18)*

All: Alleluia.

Minister: Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John.

All: Glory to you, O Lord.

Jesus said to his disciples, 'Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house there are many dwelling-places. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, so that where I am, there you may be also. And you know the way to the place where I am going. 'Thomas said to him,

'Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?' Jesus said to him, 'I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. If you know me, you will know my Father also. From now on you do know him and have seen him.'

Philip said to him, 'Lord, show us the Father, and we will be satisfied.' Jesus said to him, 'Have I been with you all this time, Philip, and you still do not know me? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, "Show us the Father"? Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own; but the Father who dwells in me does his works. Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; but if you do not, then believe me because of the works themselves. Very truly, I tell you, the one who believes in me will also do the works that I do and, in fact, will do greater works than these, because I am going to the Father. I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If in my name you ask me for anything, I will do it.'

(John 14:1-14)

Minister: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

All: Praise to you, O Christ.

The Creed

**All: We believe in one God,
the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is,
seen and unseen.
We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father;
through him all things were made.
For us and for our salvation he came down from
heaven,**

**was incarnate from the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary and was made man.
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.
On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the Scriptures;
he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.
We believe in the Holy Spirit,
the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son is worshipped
and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic
Church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness
of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

Prayers of Intercession

Let us pray in faith to God for the Church and for the world.

Grant that the Church may always follow in the way of Christ, proclaim his truth and live his risen life. Keep Christian people in knowledge and service of the Father, that his will may be done on earth as it is in heaven.

As the disciples were led to understand and taught to seek God in prayer, so may those who are counted wise in the world learn where true wisdom is to be found. Teach those in positions of authority to know that all earthly power is given from above.

When our hearts are troubled, bless us with faith to offer strength and assurance in our homes and in our work. Bless those in this community who help by teaching or example to bring people to know God and to walk in his ways.

Hear the prayers of those who cry out for relief in their afflictions, in sickness, poverty, loneliness, uncertainty. Grant them the assurance that Christ, who has gone before them through suffering to glory, is near to them and will bring them home.

We pray for the departed who have come to the place which Christ has prepared for them, where they shall be with him for ever. We pray that we may so follow him in this world that we too shall be gathered into the Father's house.

We pray in the name of Christ the Way, the Truth, and the Life.

Minister: Merciful Father,

All: accept these prayers for the sake of your Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.

The Liturgy of the Sacrament

The Peace

Minister: 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. *(John 20:19,20)*

The peace of the risen Christ be always with you

All: and also with you. Alleluia.

Preparation of the Altar

Minister: Risen Lord Jesus Christ, we believe you, and all we have heard is true. When you break bread may we recognise you as the fire that burns within us, that we may bring light to your world.

All: Amen

The Eucharistic Prayer

Minister: The Lord be with you

All: and also with you.

Minister: Lift up your hearts.

All: We lift them to the Lord.

Minister: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

All: it is right to give thanks and praise.

Minister: It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, always and everywhere to give you thanks, almighty and eternal Father, and in these days of Easter to celebrate with joyful hearts the memory of your wonderful works.

For by the mystery of his passion Jesus Christ, your risen Son, has conquered the powers of death and hell and restored in men and women the image of your glory. He has placed them once more in paradise and opened to them the gates of life eternal.

And so, in the joy of this Passover, earth and heaven resound with gladness, while angels and archangels and the powers of all creation sing for ever the hymn of your glory.

All: Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

Minister: We praise and bless you, loving Father, through Jesus Christ, our Lord; and as we obey his command, send your Holy Spirit, that broken bread and wine outpoured may be for us the body and blood of your dear Son.

On the night before he died he had supper with his friends and, taking bread, he praised you. He broke the bread, gave it to them and said: Take, eat; this is my

body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of me.

When supper was ended, he took the cup of wine. Again he praised you, gave it to them and said: Drink this, all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant, which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.

So, Father, we remember all that Jesus did, in him we plead with confidence his sacrifice made once for all upon the cross.

Bringing before you the bread of life and cup of salvation, we proclaim his death and resurrection until he comes in glory.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus:

**All: Dying you destroyed our death,
rising you restored our life:
Lord Jesus, come in glory.**

Minister: Lord of all life, help us to work together for that day when your kingdom comes and justice and mercy will be seen in all the earth.

Look with favour on your people, gather us in your loving arms and bring us with St Mary the Virgin, St Peter, St Paul, St John the Baptist, St Leonard, and All the Saints to feast at your table in heaven.

Through Christ, and with Christ, and in Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all honour and glory are yours, O loving Father, for ever and ever.

All: Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

Minister: Let us pray with confidence as our Saviour has taught us

All: **Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come;
thy will be done;
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who 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.**

Breaking of the Bread

Minister: We break this bread to share in the body of Christ.

All: **Though we are many, we are one body, because
we all share in one bread.**

The Agnus Dei

All: **Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world,
have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world,
have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world,
grant us peace.**

Giving of Communion

Minister: Jesus is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the
world. Blessed are those who are called to his supper.

All: **Lord, I am not worthy to receive you, but only say
the word, and I shall be healed.**

All: **Most merciful Lord, your love compels us to come
in. Our hands were unclean, our hearts were
unprepared; we were not fit even to eat the crumbs
from under your table. But you, Lord, are the God of**

our salvation, and share your bread with sinners. So cleanse and feed us with the precious body and blood of your Son, that he may live in us and we in him; and that we, with the whole company of Christ, may sit and eat in your kingdom. Amen.

Prayer after Communion

Minister: Eternal God, whose Son Jesus Christ is the way, the truth, and the life: grant us to walk in his way, to rejoice in his truth, and to share his risen life; who is alive and reigns, now and for ever. Amen.

All: Father of all, we give you thanks and praise, that when we were still far off you met us in your Son and brought us home. Dying and living, he declared your love, gave us grace, and opened the gate of glory. May we who share Christ's body live his risen life; we who drink his cup bring life to others; we whom the Spirit lights give light to the world. Keep us firm in the hope you have set before us, so we and all your children shall be free, and the whole earth live to praise your name; through Christ our Lord. Amen.

The Blessing

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

All: Amen.

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

All: Amen.

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

All: Amen.

Minister: And the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be amongst you and remain with you always.

All: Amen.

The Dismissal

Minister: With the power that raised Jesus from the dead at work within you, go in peace to love and serve the Lord.
Alleluia, alleluia.

All: In the name of Christ. Amen. Alleluia, alleluia.

Hymn: Jesus lives! thy terrors now

1 Jesus lives! thy terrors now
can, O death, no more appal us;
Jesus lives! by this we know
thou, O grave, canst not enthrall us.
Alleluia.

2 Jesus lives! henceforth is death
but the gate of life immortal:
this shall calm our trembling breath,
when we pass its gloomy portal.
Alleluia.

3 Jesus lives! for us he died;
then, alone to Jesus living,
pure in heart may we abide,
glory to our Saviour giving.
Alleluia.

4 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.

5 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.

Jesus lebt, mit ihm auch ich
Christian Fuerchtegott Gellert (1715-1769), Frances Elizabeth Cox (1812-1897)

For more information about our Benefice, including details of upcoming special services, events and activities for all the family, please visit:

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Although not all of us are able to meet in church for services, it is important to remember that the work of the Church continues, as do many of the ongoing costs in maintaining our historic buildings, as well as supporting the ministry in this benefice and the wider church. If you are able to make a gift please contact your church warden or Revd Mark.

Remember that if you are able, please Gift Aid your donation as it means that we can claim an extra 25p for every £1 you donate from the Government at no extra cost to you – resulting in your £20 donation now being worth £25!

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**Clare with
Poslingford**



Stoke by Clare



Cavendish



Wixoe



Hundon

