

Sunday 19th April

Third Sunday of Easter

Today's Collect

Almighty Father, who in your great mercy gladdened the disciples with the sight of the risen Lord: give us such knowledge of his presence with us, that we may be strengthened and sustained by his risen life and serve you continually in righteousness and truth; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

Post Communion Prayer

Living God, your Son made himself known to his disciples in the breaking of bread: open the eyes of our faith, that we may see him in all his redeeming work; who is alive and reigns, now and for ever.

Next Week Services: Sunday 26th April

10:00am	Harvington	Holy Communion
10:00am	Norton & Lenchwick	Morning Prayer
10:00am	Rous Lench	Holy Communion
11:00am	Church Lench	Morning Prayer
3:30pm	Harvington	Messy Church

Mid-week Eucharist: 11:00am Wednesdays at St James', Harvington

Upcoming Events

- Community Coffee Morning – 25th April 10am-12pm, Church Lench VH
- Quingo! (Quiz & Bingo) – 16th May 5pm, St James' Church Harvington.
- Open Exhibition: 10am-4pm everyday (Except Fri Morning and Sun)
The Knitted Bible - 21st May - 5th June, Evesham Methodist Church.
- Rous Lench Annual Pig Roast – 27th June. Willing helpers can contact Fran on Herdmanfrances@gmail.com.
- Flower Festival Weekend – 26th, 27th and 28th June.

This Week's First Reading: *Acts 2.14a, 36-41.*

¹⁴ But Peter, standing with the eleven, raised his voice and addressed them: 'Men of Judea and all who live in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and listen to what I say.³⁶ Therefore let the entire house of Israel know with certainty that God has made him both Lord and Messiah, this Jesus whom you crucified.'

³⁷ Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and to the other apostles, 'Brothers, what should we do?'

³⁸ Peter said to them, 'Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ so that your sins may be forgiven; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. ³⁹ For the promise is for you, for your children, and for all who are far away, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to him.'

⁴⁰ And he testified with many other arguments and exhorted them, saying, 'Save yourselves from this corrupt generation.'

⁴¹ So those who welcomed his message were baptized, and that day about three thousand persons were added.

This Week's Second Reading: *1Peter 1.17-23,*

¹⁷ If you invoke as Father the one who judges all people impartially according to their deeds, live in reverent fear during the time of your exile.¹⁸ You know that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your ancestors, not with perishable things like silver or gold,¹⁹ but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without defect or blemish.²⁰ He was destined before the foundation of the world, but was revealed at the end of the ages for your sake.

²¹ Through him you have come to trust in God, who raised him from the dead and gave him glory, so that your faith and hope are set on God.²² Now that you have purified your souls by your obedience to the truth so that you have genuine mutual love, love one another deeply from the heart. ²³ You have been born anew, not of perishable but of imperishable seed, through the living and enduring word of God.

This Week's Gospel Reading: *Luke 24.13-35.*

¹³ Now on that same day two of them were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem,¹⁴ and talking with each other about all these things that had happened.¹⁵ While they were talking and discussing, Jesus himself came near and went with them,¹⁶ but their eyes were kept from recognizing him.

Continued: Luke 24.13-35.

¹⁷ And he said to them, 'What are you discussing with each other while you walk along?' They stood still, looking sad.¹⁸ Then one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answered him, 'Are you the only stranger in Jerusalem who does not know the things that have taken place there in these days?'

¹⁹ He asked them, 'What things?' They replied, 'The things about Jesus of Nazareth, who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people,²⁰ and how our chief priests and leaders handed him over to be condemned to death and crucified him.²¹ But we had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel. Yes, and besides all this, it is now the third day since these things took place. ²² Moreover, some women of our group astounded us. They were at the tomb early this morning,²³ and when they did not find his body there, they came back and told us that they had indeed seen a vision of angels who said that he was alive.²⁴ Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said; but they did not see him.'

²⁵ Then he said to them, 'Oh, how foolish you are, and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have declared!²⁶ Was it not necessary that the Messiah should suffer these things and then enter into his glory?'

²⁷ Then beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them the things about himself in all the scriptures.²⁸ As they came near the village to which they were going, he walked ahead as if he were going on.²⁹ But they urged him strongly, saying, 'Stay with us, because it is almost evening and the day is now nearly over.'

So he went in to stay with them.³⁰ When he was at the table with them, he took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them.³¹ Then their eyes were opened, and they recognized him; and he vanished from their sight.

³² They said to each other, 'Were not our hearts burning within us while he was talking to us on the road, while he was opening the scriptures to us?'

³³ That same hour they got up and returned to Jerusalem; and they found the eleven and their companions gathered together.³⁴ They were saying, 'The Lord has risen indeed, and he has appeared to Simon!'

³⁵ Then they told what had happened on the road, and how he had been made known to them in the breaking of the bread.

Next Weeks Readings: *Acts 2.42-end, Psalm 23, 1Peter 2.19-end, John 10.1-10.*

Prayer of Intercession

Lord, we rejoice that you were with us every step of the way, even if we couldn't see you. You were there in moments of pain and sorrow as well as deep joy and fun. We thank you that you are always present, whatever our circumstances, whether we can feel your presence or not. As we go into a new week, help us to look more closely for your presence.

Lord, help us to recognise the signs:

and open our eyes to see your presence.

Lord, you are here with us, as you are there in the big events in the world. We bring to you now the places and people who have made the headlines this week. We continue to remember Ukraine, The middle East, The placed in Africa where peace cannot be found, you see these places even when they are out of the news.

Lord, help us to recognise the signs:

and open our eyes to see your presence.

Lord, we pray for those who need a sign of your presence with them this week. We lift to you our young people back at school and all those who are preparing for exams. We pray for pupils, students and teachers in this very busy term.

We pray for those who are sick in body, mind or spirit. We ask for your comforting presence to aid them in their pain. We pray for patience and courage for all those who look after them. We pray for the lonely, isolated and the housebound. For all who are carers, paid or unpaid; known or unknown. And we pray for those who are sorrowful today. Help them to know that your resurrection means that there is hope for the future.

Lord, help us to recognise the signs:

and open our eyes to see your presence.

And lead us ever onwards into your light. **Amen.**