

Church at Home

Sixth Sunday of Easter



Before the Service

Love one another

Welcome to Church at Home for the sixth Sunday of Easter. In our service we will be exploring the theme of providing love and hospitality, especially to those who are viewed by mainstream society as not deserving God's love. We are delighted to have as our president today the Right Revd Olivia Graham, Bishop of Reading, and that our reflection is given by the Venerable Canon Stephen Pullin, the Archdeacon of Berkshire. Huge thanks to everyone from across the diocese who has contributed ideas, prayers and action to this week's Church at Home. You have made this service possible.

In ancient times, on or just before this (Rogation) Sunday, days of prayer and fasting were observed in Western Christianity. Ironically, one of the ancient customs also marked at this time is 'beating the bounds', during which parishes would go on a procession to protect public right of way from agricultural or other expansion. However, as someone said, if the Christian faith is instead compared to a dance, then our mission is for a constant expansion of the dancefloor, to include those on the margins.

Our gospel reading calls us to a fruitful love of the other like Jesus does us - a love that's in it for the long haul. The Jesus of the gospels lived at the edges of polite society. He was out in the wild untamed places of the community, as if in perpetual search for the 'other', the one who didn't 'belong.' The Jewish leaders of his day, who considered his self-sacrificial vocation absurd, could not get their heads around such love. A love that not only frolics with lambs, but wrestles with wolves too.

It is true that we illustrate what we value by what we're willing to pay a price for, and demonstrate what's important to us by what we're willing to endure. Jesus did, and now it's our turn. As we worship, let us reflect on the costly love of the 'other' that we celebrate in Eastertide, calling to mind the love that flows from God through Jesus. Let us summon the courage to live it by providing love and hospitality, as we participate in the abundance of that goodness in every moment of the day, now and always.

He is risen indeed. Alleluia!

Video before the service

'Born to fly'

Produced and recorded by Josh Green (2021)

Available online [youtube.com/watch?v=xXDMUfQm9EU](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xXDMUfQm9EU)

Shocking statistics show that in the last 12 months across the Thames Valley Police Area, 593 knife/weapons offences involving young people under 25 years old were recorded. 62 of the offences were carried out in Reading.

Tragically, a number of these resulted in fatalities. Young people carrying knives across the UK and in Reading is a growing problem that cannot be ignored.

A music video filmed and produced in Reading for Redeeming Our Communities' No More Knives initiative has been released, with support from the Diocese of Oxford, Reading Football Community Trust and the Thames Valley Police.

It highlights the difficulties and effects of knife crime on young people and offers a positive message - everyone has a chance to live for more, since they were born to fly.

“Many of our young people live in fear of becoming a victim of knife crime. We have to ask ourselves why our young people are carrying knives. What is it telling us about ourselves and our society?”

“This powerful song, which we were delighted to help fund, carries a powerful message that we are all born for greater things. It deserves to be seen widely, so please do share it in with your congregation and local community.”

- Rt Revd Olivia Graham,
Bishop of Reading

Greeting

President In the name of the Father,
and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit.

All **Amen.**

President The Lord be with you.

All **And also with you.**

President Alleluia, Christ is Risen

All **He is risen indeed. Alleluia!**

The president welcomes the congregation gathered online and introduces the service.

Hymn

I give to you a new commandment

**I give to you a new commandment,
that you love one another,
as I have loved you.**

Amen.

*Music: Peter Nardone, Words: John 13:34-35
Recorded by the director, organist, and choir
of St Peter and St Paul, Great Missenden*

Prayers of Penitence

President God calls us in Christ and encourages us to live the resurrection belief, in our love and hospitality to those society refuses to see.

Lord Jesus Christ,
we confess we have failed you as did your first disciples.
We ask for your mercy and your help.

For the times we have behaved as if we are not your people,
Lord have mercy.

All **Lord have mercy.**

President For the times we have not allowed space in our lives for true faith to grow,
Christ have mercy.

All Christ have mercy.

President For the times when we have said no to your love or have limited its flow,
Lord have mercy.

All Lord have mercy.

Absolution

President May almighty God,
who sent his Son into the world to save sinners,
bring you his pardon and peace, now and for ever.

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

President Let us pray.

Silence is kept.

President Risen Christ,
by the lakeside you renewed your call to your disciples:
help your Church to obey your command
and draw the nations to the fire of your love,
to the glory of God the Father.

All **Amen.**

Reading

Acts 10.44-48 (NRSV)

Read by René Chuka (Berkshire)

Reader A reading from the Acts of the Apostles.

While Peter was still speaking, the Holy Spirit fell upon all who heard the word.

The circumcised believers who had come with Peter were astounded that the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out even on the Gentiles, for they heard them speaking in tongues and extolling God. Then Peter said,

‘Can anyone withhold the water for baptising these people who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?’

So he ordered them to be baptised in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they invited him to stay for several days.

Reader For the word of the Lord.

All **Thanks be to God.**

Gradual Hymn

Inspired by Love and Anger

**Inspired by love and anger,
disturbed by need and pain,
Informed of God's own bias,
we ask him once again:**

**"How long must some folk suffer?
How long can few folk mind?
How long dare vain self-interest
turn prayer and pity blind?"**

**From those forever victims
of heartless human greed,
their cruel plight composes
a litany of need:**

**"Where are the fruits of justice?
Where are the signs of peace?
When is the day when prisoners
and dreams find their release?"**

**God asks, "Who will go for me?
Who will extend my reach?
And who, when few will listen,
will prophesy and preach?**

**And who, when few bid welcome,
will offer all they know?
And who, when few dare follow,
will walk the road I show?"**

**Amused in someone's kitchen,
asleep in someone's boat,
Attuned to what the ancients exposed,
proclaimed and wrote.**

**A saviour without safety,
a tradesman without tools
Has come to tip the balance
with fishermen and fools.**

*Irish traditional melody, Music: Salley Gardens,
arr: Benjamin Britten, Words: John L. Bell; Graham Maule 1987
© WGRG / The Iona Community (admin. GIA Publications, Inc.)
Recorded by Adrian Boynton, director of music (City Church of Milton Keynes)*

Gospel Reading

John 15.9-17 (NRSV)

*Read by the Revd Angela Brennan
(curate, Thatcham Team Ministry)*

Deacon The Lord be with you.

All **And also with you.**

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

All **Glory to you, O Lord.**

As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you; abide in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. I have said these things to you so that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be complete.

'This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends. You are my friends if you do what I command you. I do not call you servants any longer, because the servant does not know what the master is doing; but I have called you friends, because I have made known to you everything that I have heard from my Father. You did not choose me but I chose you. And I appointed you to go and bear fruit, fruit that will last, so that the Father will give you whatever you ask him in my name. I am giving you these commands so that you may love one another.'

Deacon This is the Gospel of the Lord.

All **Praise to you, O Christ.**

Reflection

The Venerable Canon Stephen Pullin
Archdeacon of Berkshire

The Creed

President Let us affirm our faith in God.

President Do you believe and trust in God the Father,
source of all being and life,
the one for whom we exist?

All **I believe and trust in him.**

President Do you believe and trust in God the Son,

who took our human nature,
died for us and rose again?

All **I believe and trust in him.**

President Do you believe and trust in God the Holy Spirit,
who gives life to the people of God
and makes Christ known in the world?

All **I believe and trust in him.**

President This is the faith of the Church.

All **This is our faith.
We believe and trust in one God,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
Amen.**

Prayers of Intercession

*Led by the Schneider family
(the Revd Catherine Schneider, curate, Dorchester Team Churches;
Stephen Schneider, Dorchester Team Churches;
Helen Schneider, St Matthew's Church, Oxford)*

The response to the prayers is:

Intercessor Lord, in your mercy,
All **hear our prayer.**

At the end we say:

Intercessor Merciful Father,
All **accept these prayers
for the sake of your Son,
our Saviour, Jesus Christ.
Amen.**

The Peace

President We are all one in Jesus Christ.

We belong to him through faith,
heirs of the promise of the Spirit of peace.

President The peace of the Lord be always with you.
All **And also with you.**

*Christians have shared a sign of peace since the very earliest days of the Church.
Although we are separated by distance, we are one Body of Christ; the Spirit moves
among us as we share Christ's peace.*

Offertory Song

Cornerstone

**My hope is built on nothing less
Than Jesus' blood and righteousness
I dare not trust the sweetest frame
But wholly trust in Jesus' name**

**Christ alone, Cornerstone
Weak made strong in the Saviour's love
Through the storm He is Lord
Lord of all**

**When darkness seems to hide His face
I rest on His unchanging grace
In every high and stormy gale
My anchor holds within the veil**

**When he shall come with trumpet sound
Oh may I then in Him be found
Dressed in His righteousness alone
Faultless stand before the throne**

*Words & Music: Edward Mote, Reuben Timothy Morgan, Jonas Myrin,
Carl Gustaf, Eric Oskar Liljero, William Bachelor Bradbury
Hillsong Music Publishing Australia (2012)
Recorded by the 4U-Team, Marlow*

Preparation of the Table

President With this bread that we bring,
All **we shall remember Jesus.**

President With this wine that we bring,
All **we shall remember Jesus.**

President Bread for His body,
wine for His blood,
gifts from God to His table we bring.
All **we shall remember Jesus.**

The Eucharistic Prayer

President The Lord be with you.
All **And also with you.**

President Lift up your hearts.
All **We lift them to the Lord.**

President Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
All **It is right to give thanks and praise.**

Why is it right to give thanks and praise?
Listen, and we will hear.

President Lord of all life,
you created the universe,
where all living things reflect your glory.
You give us this great and beautiful earth,
to discover and to cherish.

You made us part of your plan
and give us love to do your work
like the branches of a vine
which grow heavy with your fruit.

And so with angels and archangels,
and all the powers of creation,
we join the eternal 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.

President We thank you, loving Father,
because, when we turned away,
you sent Jesus, your Son.
He gave his life for us on the cross
and shows us the way to live.

Send your Holy Spirit,
that these gifts of bread and wine
may be for us Christ's body and his blood.

Why do we share this bread and wine?

Listen, and we will hear.

President On the night before he died,
when darkness had fallen,
Jesus took bread.
He gave thanks, broke it,
and shared it with his disciples, saying:
'This is my body, given for you.
Do this to remember me.'

After they had eaten, he took the cup of wine,
gave thanks, and shared it with his disciples, saying:
'This is my blood, poured out for you and for many,
for the forgiveness of sins.'

So Father, with this bread and this cup
we celebrate his love, his death, his risen life.
As you feed us with these gifts,
send your Holy Spirit,
and change us more and more
to be like Jesus, our Saviour.

How do we follow Jesus Christ?

Listen, and we will hear.

President Help us, Father, to love one another,
as we look forward to that day
when suffering is ended,
and all creation is gathered in your loving arms.

And now with all your saints,
we give you glory,
through Jesus Christ,
in the strength of the Spirit,
today and for ever.

All **Amen.**

The Lord's Prayer

President As our Saviour taught us, so we pray:
All **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.**

Breaking of the Bread

The president breaks the consecrated bread.

President 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.**

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.

Invitation to Communion

President God's holy gifts for God's holy people.
All **Jesus Christ is holy,
Jesus Christ is Lord,
to the glory of God the Father.**

The president receives the bread and wine on behalf of the community as we make our 'spiritual communion'; taking time to notice God's presence with us and trust that, as we desire communion with God, God will meet us in our hearts by faith. There are no special words or actions required for this; only true desire, lively faith and genuine love. If you find it helpful you may wish to use the following prayer, or simply listen to the music and meditate upon God's love for you.

Lord, you stand at the door of my heart and knock. You wait for me and only I can let you in. I believe and trust in you and ask you now to fill me with your presence. Feed me with your body and unite me in your blood, that I may be your blessing to a world in need. Amen.

Music During Communion

Is He worthy

**Do you feel the world is broken? (We do)
Do you feel the shadows deepen? (We do)
But do you know that all the dark won't stop
the light from getting through? (We do)
Do you wish that you could see it all made new? (We do)**
**Is all creation groaning? (It is)
Is a new creation coming? (It is)
Is the glory of the Lord to be
the light within our midst? (It is)
Is it good that we remind ourselves of this? (It is)**

**Is anyone worthy? Is anyone whole?
Is anyone able to break the seal and open the scroll?
The Lion of Judah who conquered the grave,**

**He is David's root and the Lamb who died
to ransom the slave,**

**Is He worthy?
Of all blessing and honour and glory
Is He worthy of this?
He is.**

**Does the Father truly love us? (He does)
Does the Spirit move among us? (He does)
And does Jesus, our Messiah,
hold forever those He loves? (He does)
Does our God intend to dwell again with us? (He does)**

**From every people and tribe,
Every nation and tongue,
He has made us a kingdom and priests to God,
To reign with the Son.**

Words & Music: Andrew Peterson (2018)

Recorded by the Revd James Dwyer (St Andrew's Church, Oxford)

Prayer after Communion

President Let us pray.

God our Father,
whose Son Jesus Christ gives the water of eternal life:
may we thirst for you,
the spring of life and source of goodness,
through him who is alive and reigns, now and for ever.
Amen.

Blessing and Dismissal

President May the Father, from whom every family
in earth and heaven receives its name,
strengthen you with his Spirit in your inner being,
so that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith;
and the blessing of God almighty,
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be among you and remain with you always.

All **Amen.**

President
All

Go in the peace of Christ. Alleluia, alleluia.
Thanks be to God. Alleluia, alleluia.

Hymn

All My Hope on God is Founded

**All my hope on God is founded,
he doth still my trust renew.
Me through change and chance he guideth,
only good and only true.
God unknown, he alone
calls my heart to be his own.**

**God's great goodness aye endureth,
deep his wisdom, passing thought:
splendour, light, and life attend him,
beauty springeth out of naught.
Evermore, from his store
newborn worlds rise and adore.**

**Daily doth the Almighty giver
bounteous gifts on us bestow;
his desire our soul delighteth,
pleasure leads us where we go.
Love doth stand, at his hand;
joy doth wait on his command.**

**Still from earth to God eternal
sacrifice of praise be done,
high above all praises praising
for the gift of Christ his Son.
Christ doth call, one and all:
ye who follow shall not fall.**

Words: Joachim Neander (c. 1680), trans. Robert Bridges (c. 1899)

Music: Herbert Howells (c. 1930)

Recorded by the Virtual Voices (Waltham St Lawrence)

Director, Simon Shaw; Organist, Dr Camilla Jarnot

With huge thanks to all our contributors:

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the Venerable Canon Stephen Pullin, the Archdeacon of Berkshire;
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the Revd James Dwyer, St Andrew's Church, Oxford;
the Virtual Voices, Waltham St Lawrence, with director Simon Shaw and
organist Dr Camilla Jarnot.

Our lead liturgist this week was the Revd Fr Darren McFarland, vicar, St Andrew's Church, Headington. The producer was the Revd Dr Leonard Onugha, curate, St Barnabas Church, Emmer Green, Reading.

Church at Home is produced each week by the Revd Charlotte Bannister-Parker, associate chaplain to the Bishop of Oxford; and Steven Buckley, director of communications; with the help of Emma Thompson, digital communications officer, and Mark Robinson of Digital Creative.

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COME AND EAT

**Take time to contemplate the profound,
wonderful meal of Holy Communion.**

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