

## **St Mary's, Barton-upon-Humber: Readings, prayers and notices for Easter week April 12-April 19**

*Alleluia! Christ is risen! Today we worship the risen Lord, who changes everything, who has even conquered death, and who leads us into new life.*

### **Easter Day Collects**

Lord of all life and power,  
who through the mighty resurrection of your Son  
overcame the old order of sin and death to make all things new in him:  
grant that we, being dead to sin and alive to you in Jesus Christ,  
may reign with him in glory;  
to whom with you and the Holy Spirit be praise and honour,  
glory and might, now and in all eternity.

or

God of glory,  
by the raising of your Son you have broken the chains of death and hell:  
fill your Church with faith and hope;  
for a new day has dawned and the way to life stands open  
in our Saviour Jesus Christ.

### **Easter Day readings**

Acts 10.34–43, Psalm 118.1–2, 14–24, Colossians 3.1–4, John 20.1–18 or Matthew 28.1–10

### **Meditation**

*'At dawn on the first day of the week, the women came to the tomb...'*

Which just goes to show that whoever was handling the publicity for the Resurrection should have been ashamed of himself....

In any *sensibly* and *efficiently* run organisation, the press release would have been handled so very differently. If you're launching a new product, Judaism Mark II, then you want it done properly, just before lunchtime, in full daylight, in the middle of town. You want people who *matter* to be there, the opinion-formers and influencers, the people everyone knows from YouParchment and InstaGrammarian. You want publicity, headlines in the national press, celebrity endorsements. *That's* the way to get people to sit up and take notice.

What you don't do is hold your launch presentation on the morning after a bank holiday, out in the corner of the allotments, while everyone is still sleeping off The Night Before. And you certainly don't push forward as your prime presenters those supreme examples of untrustworthiness and legal insignificance - *women*.

It really is a textbook of How Not To Do A Big Announcement. A properly planned campaign would have had Jesus appear, alive and well, round about coffee time, preferably to both the Roman authorities and to the Jewish leadership. Then there'd have been none of this stuff about snatched bodies and grave robbing and

double dealing in the dawn light. As the years went on, Christians tried to make good this fundamental PR blunder, issuing Gospels attributed to all sorts of unlikely people, including Pilate himself, people with a bit more *clout*, but by then the damage was done.. There were plenty of things the four official Gospels disagreed on, but on one thing they were unanimous: the first to find out something peculiar was happening apparently was a bunch of unstable, unreliable, insignificant women. There are some things so unlikely that you can't make them up – like England winning the third Ashes Test in 2019. Sometimes these improbable stories hang around because no-one dares to sponge them away in favour of something more credible, more weighty, because they carry too too much authority of their own. If you were trying to trick someone into belief this isn't where you'd start, so perhaps, just perhaps, this is – more or less – how it was. Not quite Sherlock Holmes' '*Once you eliminate the impossible, whatever remains, no matter how improbable, must be the truth,*' but heading a bit that way. Embarrassing though it was, Christians had always believed that the Good News of the Resurrection was delivered by obscure and insignificant people.

That isn't an attempt to 'prove' the Resurrection. Whatever the Resurrection is, it stands as a one-off and doesn't easily fit any of our categories. It's simply that there's something stubborn about this story of 'the women came to the tomb' which has seen off every attempt to shove them to the margins. Even those men who had, by the time the Gospels appeared, become honoured, venerable, holy had to continue to pay second fiddle to the story of events one Sunday dawn in a Jerusalem graveyard, a story which just wouldn't go away.

I wonder if that sets the matrix for the Gospel for all time, that the places where God is most likely to be found is not in the corridors of power, not in the glare of publicity, with the rich and the famous. It's to be found in obscure corners, among obscure people who sometimes go on to discover extraordinary things, stumbling on God at work in the dusty and neglected corners of the world. I wonder whether The Resurrection, in its out-of-the-way-ness and humility is the pattern for countless other resurrections, where God is found alive and well when we thought he was no more, appearing to Albanian nuns, or middle aged women in Norfolk, or a shepherd on the Northumbrian hills, or an English monk in a South African township.

The first Easter which shook the world was given to obscure folk in an obscure country in a grey dawn when no-one else was about. And in countless, incalculable ways it still is, to the likes of you and me, and still shakes the world today.

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## For your prayers

**Church:** Pray for the Peace of Jerusalem and the People of the Land of the Holy One. Chaplains in the NHS.

**World:** Health workers, all those involved in keeping essential services running. Our own political leaders. Those charged with peace-keeping and peace-making. The governments & peoples of China, Syria and the Middle East, North Africa. All seeking to resolve the issues surrounding protection of the environment, of infection control and of migrancy.

**Our Community:** Our Churches Together partners — Trinity, St Augustine's, the Salvation Army. Our twinned dioceses of Brugge & Tirunenveli. Christians unable to work ecumenically. Barton Evangelical Church.

**Those in need:** Those whose lives or livelihoods are endangered by Coronavirus. Those who fear the prospect of isolation. All who live in areas of conflict or tension; the homeless, the poor, the sick, the enslaved, the hungry and the abused. Victims of terrorism.

**Those for whom our prayers are asked:** Melissa Milbourn, Julie Newton, Penny Archer, Vicky Page-Chestney, Kate Eaton, Mike Page-Chestney, Henry Farrow, Brenda Skinner, Sally, Abby, Jan, Nell

**Departed:** Ron Fox, Henry Fell. Those who have died as a result of COVID-19 infection, especially those who work in the caring and medical communities.

### Next Sunday – the Second Sunday of Easter ('Low Sunday')

Acts 2.14a, 22–32; Psalm 16; 1 Peter 1.3–9; John 20.19–31

## Updates

**With support from Barton Town Council,** Barton Bike Night, Barton Lions, Barton Rotary, Barton Ukuleles and Wren, The Barton Ropewalk are providing meals to the elderly of Barton. Meals will be provided on Monday, Wednesday, Friday and Sunday and delivered to the door/outhouse/shed - where ever they can put it to avoid contact.

To book a meal ring the day before on 01652 660380 where you will be offered 2 options of soup and main course, the pudding only has 1 option. The meals come with full heating instructions for microwave or oven. The service is free although donations will be accepted.

An example menu of one of the days last week was:

*Broccoli & Stilton soup*

*Fish Pie or bean lasagne (veg)*

*Lemon Sponge & custard*

**Palm Sunday Crosses:** The Archbishops are keen that the Church be Responsible in the current situation and be seen to do nothing which might transmit the virus so have declared that palm crosses should not be distributed. They were be blessed on Palm Sunday and I'm working on a way of hygienic distribution – please keep an eye out for updates.

**Foodbank** is still operating, but unable to take donations in the usual manner. We are accepting cash donations to help run things slightly differently during the present situation.

**Stone the Crows!** Spellcheckers are wonderful things. Did you spot it had substituted 'Corvid' (the crow family of birds) for 'Covid' in last week's intercessions...?

**Christian Aid:** donations may still be made

**Those in need.** Please help us keep our intercessions up to date, and let the clergy know of any urgent needs for prayer. Obviously at the moment the usual pastoral work of our ministers, lay and ordained, is rather disrupted but it's still important that we know what's going on. Please do continue to leave requests for prayer – either by email to david.rowett@lincoln.anglican.org, or the phone, or even a note through my door, and encourage others likewise.

## Coronavirus Provisions

Now we can't keep St Mary's open, we'll be relying on a mix of things to keep in touch.

If you have internet access, aside from all the resources on the diocesan website there's also Barton FM's contributions from Fr Robert -

**Weekdays: 8am** – 'Prayer for the Day' - A short comment and prayer (different for each day), which opens the broadcasting day for the radio station.

**Midday** – 'The Lord's Prayer' – styled akin to that heard in Minsters and Cathedrals, The Lord's Prayer is prayed every lunchtime every day of the week.

**10pm (midnight on Weds & Sats)** – 'Night Prayer'

**Sundays: 8am** – 'Morning Prayer' from Common Worship

**Midday** – 'The Lord's Prayer'

**6pm** – 'Evening Prayer' from Common Worship

**10pm** – 'Night Prayer'

All prayers and services are available at all times on Barton FM - search YouTube for Barton FM Radio, where listeners can pick whatever they wish to listen to.

In the porch, on the website and available (we hope) through your letterbox, there's a set of prayers which you (or anyone else) might find helpful or useful, and a short order of worship which can be used in the home as you see fit. You may find it supportive if you pray at the normal time for 'your' church service, be it 8, 9.30 or 6, in the knowledge that other members of St Mary's will be joining you from their own homes. There is also a simple cycle of prayer drawn up for this time, which simply calls to mind different groups caught up in the emergency on a seven-day cycle. All of this can be emailed - if we have your email address!

### There will be an 8.00 service on Sundays on local radio

Our websites and FB pages contains details of how to join others online for prayer, worship, study, and community life. The Diocesan Website in particular carries material of all sorts, and our own website carries a number of resources also. David hopes to get some extra meditative material for Holy Week on to it for Monday

See: [www.lincoln.anglican.org](http://www.lincoln.anglican.org)  
[www.stmarysbarton.org.uk](http://www.stmarysbarton.org.uk)  
[www.facebook.com/StMarysChurchBarton](https://www.facebook.com/StMarysChurchBarton)  
[www.facebook.com/Bartonparishes/](https://www.facebook.com/Bartonparishes/)