



# The St J's Group

## HOLY COMMUNION

10.30am - Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> April 2024 - Fifth Sunday of Easter

**‘Paul replied, ‘Short time or long – I pray to God that not only you but all who are listening to me today may become what I am, except for these chains.’ (Acts 26:29)**

### Welcome/Notices

#### Hymn

Come, now is the time, to worship,  
Come, now is the time  
to give your heart;  
Come just as you are to worship;  
Come, just as you are before  
Your God. Come

One day every tongue  
will confess you are God.  
One day every knee will bow.  
Still the greatest treasure remains  
for those who gladly choose you now.

#### Confession

**Lord God, we have sinned against you; we have done evil in your sight. We are sorry and repent. Have mercy on us according to your love. Wash away our wrongdoing and cleanse us from our sin. Renew a right spirit within us and restore us to the joy of your salvation; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

#### Communion

Gratitude, praise, hearts lifted high voices full and joyful; these you deserve. For when we were nothing, you made us something; when we had no name and no faith and no future, you called us your children; when we lost our way or turned away, you did not abandon us; when we came back to you, your arms opened wide in welcome. And, look, you prepare a table for us offering not just bread, not just wine, but your very self so that we may be filled, forgiven, healed, blessed, and made new again. You are worthy to receive all our praise. So we join our voices to those of the Church on earth and in heaven;

**Holy, holy, holy, God of power and might, Heaven and earth are full of your glory, Hosanna in the highest.**

Lord Jesus Christ, present with us now, for all that you have done and all that you have promised what have we to offer?

**Our hands are empty, our hearts are sometimes full of wrong things. we are not fit to gather up the crumbs from under your table. But with you is mercy and the power to remake us. So as we do in this place what you did in an upstairs room, send down your Holy Spirit on us and on these gifts of bread and wine that they may be to us your body and your blood, healing, forgiving and making us whole; And grant that we may become, for you, your body, loving and caring in the world until your kingdom comes. Amen**

that means, and to be ready to fulfil that calling when the opportunity arises. Grant your wisdom, guidance and inspiration, **so that many will hear and respond.**

Loving God, you call us all to be witnesses for Christ, but there are some you set apart for a particular calling evangelists, ministers, preachers and teachers of your word, each with a special responsibility to lead others to you. Grant your wisdom, guidance and inspiration, **so that many will hear and respond.**

You call others to more specialised ministries working in industry or shops, prisons or hospitals, the armed forces, sport, youth work, charities, or ecumenical projects. Grant your wisdom, guidance and inspiration, **so that many will hear and respond.**

You call others again to missionary service, either at home or overseas, to share the Gospel through their preaching and teaching, or through offering practical skills as a testimony to the love and compassion of Christ. Grant your wisdom, guidance and inspiration, **so that many will hear and respond.**

Loving God, we thank you for all who in different ways strive to fulfil the great commission, taking the Gospel to the ends of the earth. Teach us to see their work as our work, their needs as our needs, their opportunities as our opportunities; and so challenge us and your people everywhere to support them always, through our prayers, our money and our love, demonstrating our appreciation of their work and our concern for your kingdom. Grant your wisdom, guidance and inspiration, **so that many will hear and respond,**

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

#### Hymn Tune:Fulda LM

1 We have a gospel to proclaim,  
good news for all throughout the earth;  
the gospel of a Saviour's name:  
we sing his glory, tell his worth.

4 Tell of that glorious Easter morn:  
empty the tomb, for he was free.  
He broke the power of death and hell  
that we might share his victory.

2 Tell of his birth at Bethlehem  
not in a royal house or hall  
but in a stable dark and dim,  
the Word made flesh, a light for all.

5 Tell of his reign at God's right hand,  
by all creation glorified.  
He sends his Spirit on his Church  
to live for him, the Lamb who died.

3 Tell of his death at Calvary,  
hated by those he came to save,  
in lonely suffering on the Cross;  
for all he loved his life he gave.

6 Now we rejoice to name him King:  
Jesus is Lord of all the earth.  
This gospel-message we proclaim:  
we sing his glory, tell his worth.

#### Dismissal

**Let us return now to the world, for Christ is there, waiting to meet us and greet us. Let us go back with eyes open to see him, ears open to hear him, and a mind open to receive him, and a heart open to serve him, for his name's sake. Amen.**

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord. **In the name of Christ. Amen.**

**You are most welcome to stay for coffee after the end of service**

**Song**

Jesus, name above all names  
Beautiful Saviour, glorious Lord.  
Emmanuel, God is with us.  
Blessed Redeemer, Living word.

**First Reading - 1 Corinthians 11:23-26**

The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, "This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me." In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me." For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

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

*Bread & Wine is shared*

Lord Jesus Christ, you have put your life in our hands. Now we put our lives in yours.

**Take us, shake us, remake us; no longer is what we have been important; it is what, with you, we can be, starting now. Amen.**

**Second Reading – Acts 26:1-18**

1 So Paul motioned with his hand and began his defence: 2 'King Agrippa, I consider myself fortunate to stand before you today as I make my defence against all the accusations of the Jews, 3 and especially so because you are well acquainted with all the Jewish customs and controversies. Therefore, I beg you to listen to me patiently. 4 'The Jewish people all know the way I have lived ever since I was a child, from the beginning of my life in my own country, and also in Jerusalem. 5 They have known me for a long time and can testify, if they are willing, that I conformed to the strictest sect of our religion, living as a Pharisee. 6 And now it is because of my hope in what God has promised our ancestors that I am on trial today. 7 This is the promise our twelve tribes are hoping to see fulfilled as they earnestly serve God day and night. King Agrippa, it is because of this hope that these Jews are accusing me. 8 Why should any of you consider it incredible that God raises the dead? 9 'I too was convinced that I ought to do all that was possible to oppose the name of Jesus of Nazareth. 10 And that is just what I did in Jerusalem. On the authority of the chief priests I put many of the Lord's people in prison, and when they were put to death, I cast my vote against them. 11 Many a time I went from one synagogue to another to have them punished, and I tried to force them to blaspheme. I was so obsessed with persecuting them that I even hunted them down in foreign cities. 12 'On one of these journeys I was going to Damascus with the authority and commission of the chief priests. 13 About noon, King Agrippa, as I was on the road, I saw a light from heaven, brighter than the sun, blazing around me and my companions. 14 We all fell to the ground, and I heard a voice saying to me in Aramaic, "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me? It is hard for you to kick against the goads." 15 "Then I asked, "Who are you, Lord?" "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting," the Lord replied. 16 "Now get up and stand on your feet. I have appeared to you to appoint you as a servant and as a witness of what you have seen and will see of me.

17 I will rescue you from your own people and from the Gentiles. I am sending you to them 18 to open their eyes and turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, so that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me." This is the word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

**Song**

Turn your eyes upon Jesus,  
Look full in his wonderful face;  
And the things of earth will grow strangely dim  
In the light of his glory and grace

**Third Reading – Acts 26:19-32**

19 'So then, King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the vision from heaven. 20 First to those in Damascus, then to those in Jerusalem and in all Judea, and then to the Gentiles, I preached that they should repent and turn to God and demonstrate their repentance by their deeds. 21 That is why some Jews seized me in the temple courts and tried to kill me. 22 But God has helped me to this very day; so I stand here and testify to small and great alike. I am saying nothing beyond what the prophets and Moses said would happen – 23 that the Messiah would suffer and, as the first to rise from the dead, would bring the message of light to his own people and to the Gentiles.' 24 At this point Festus interrupted Paul's defence. 'You are out of your mind, Paul!' he shouted. 'Your great learning is driving you insane.' 25 'I am not insane, most excellent Festus,' Paul replied. 'What I am saying is true and reasonable. 26 The king is familiar with these things, and I can speak freely to him. I am convinced that none of this has escaped his notice, because it was not done in a corner. 27 King Agrippa, do you believe the prophets? I know you do.' 28 Then Agrippa said to Paul, 'Do you think that in such a short time you can persuade me to be a Christian?' 29 Paul replied, 'Short time or long – I pray to God that not only you but all who are listening to me today may become what I am, except for these chains.' 30 The king rose, and with him the governor and Bernice and those sitting with them. 31 After they left the room, they began saying to one another, 'This man is not doing anything that deserves death or imprisonment.' 32 Agrippa said to Festus, 'This man could have been set free if he had not appealed to Caesar.' This is the word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

**Talk - A prisoner's defence – Matthew Street**

**Hymn**

*Go tell it on the mountain,  
Over the hills and everywhere  
Go, tell it on the mountain  
That Jesus Christ is Lord*

2 Then he made me a watchman  
Upon a city wall  
To tell of his salvation  
That Jesus died for all *Chorus*

1 O when I was a seeker  
I sought both night and day  
I asked the Lord to guide me  
And he showed me the way *Chorus*

3 Go tell it to your neighbour  
In darkness here below;  
Go with the words of Jesus  
That all the world may know *Chorus*

**Prayers of Intercession**

Loving God, you call us all to the task of mission, to make known the Good News of Christ, to proclaim the Gospel to all we meet through word and deed. Teach us what