

## The Gathering – first video

### **Welcome - [KELVIN]**

Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Hello and welcome to the online worship from St Mary's Cathedral, Glasgow. My name is Kelvin Holdsworth and I'm the provost here.

This week, we continue to meet the Risen Christ. He appears to the disciples in unexpected places - in this week's gospel, meeting them on a road as they walk.

In keeping with that theme, some of the pictures that we will see during this service will be photographs that members of the congregation have taken around the city.

Most streets are much quieter than usual. God surprised the first disciples in the ways that Jesus appeared to them. And God is surprising us week by week as we meet in ways previously unimagined. The same risen Jesus Christ will meet us wherever we are today.

### **Confession - [KELVIN & OLIVER]**

[OLIVER] God is love and we are God's children.

There is no room for fear in love.  
We love because God loved us first.

Let us confess our sins in penitence and faith.

[Silence]

[OLIVER] God our Father, we confess to you and to our fellow members in the Body of Christ that we have sinned in thought,

word and deed, and in what we have failed to do. We are truly sorry. Forgive us our sins, and deliver us from the power of evil, for the sake of your Son who died for us, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

[KELVIN] God, who is both power and love, forgive you and free you from our sins, heal and strengthen you by the Holy Spirit, and raise you to new life in Christ our Lord.

## **Gloria**

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.

## **Collect - [KELVIN]**

O God of mystery,  
out of death you delivered Christ Jesus  
and he walked in hidden glory with his disciples.

Stir up our faith,  
that our hearts may burn within us  
at the sound of his word,  
and our eyes be opened to recognize him in the breaking of bread.

Grant this through Jesus Christ, the first-born from the dead,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God for ever and ever.  
Amen

## The Ministry of the Word – second video

### Gospel - [JO RUSSELL]

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke.

**Glory to Christ our Saviour.**

Now on that same day two of them were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem, and talking with each other about all these things that had happened. While they were talking and discussing, Jesus himself came near and went with them, but their eyes were kept from recognizing him. And he said to them, 'What are you discussing with each other while you walk along?' They stood still, looking sad. 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?' 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, and how our chief priests and leaders handed him over to be condemned to death and crucified him. 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. Moreover, some women of our group astounded us. They were at the tomb early this morning, 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. 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.' Then he said to them, 'Oh, how foolish you are, and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have declared!

Give thanks to the Lord for his glorious Gospel.

**Praise to Christ our Lord.**

### **Sermon [OLIVER]**

What is 'resurrection'? Well, I suppose it depends on who you ask. The Gospel presents several descriptions of experiences of resurrection. There's the experience of an empty tomb with folded graveclothes. There's the experience of Mary, seeing someone she supposed was the gardener, only to recognise him as Jesus when he called her name. And there's the account from today's Gospel. It tells of a meeting with a stranger on the road, only recognised by the disciples as the risen Lord when he broke bread and gave it to them. In the Gospel stories, people had different experiences of the same thing.

There are different experiences people are having now of the same thing. We're not sure of an exact number of COVID-19 cases, but for those for which we have confirmed diagnoses, people have different stories of their encounters. Some people report only a mild cough. Others recount having had symptoms of nasty flu. And still, others find themselves in Intensive Care wards, on a ventilator, fighting for their lives. It's the same thing—the same virus—but people experience it—for whatever reason—differently.

Some are asking themselves, 'Have I had the virus already?' or 'Do I have it now?' There are no clear answers to these questions while self-isolating at home. In fact, for some, symptoms may disappear just as mysteriously as they appeared. 'Was that Coronavirus?' they'll wonder, and it may be some folk will never know if what they had was COVID-19 or something else.

Therefore, some conclude this must be a dream; it must be made up. Some call this whole thing a hoax. If there's no consensus, maybe it doesn't exist. If there's not one, universal experience and

definition, no precise, uncluttered explanation, there must be no such thing as Coronavirus.

That strikes me as a feeble understanding of biology. For, there is considerable genetic variation in our species. In our strands of DNA, clear communication doesn't always happen. Not every gene gets the same message or interprets it the same way. And *people* respond differently, too. I don't just mean some people will emotionally react differently to different stimuli. I mean that *physically* people, as organisms, will react and respond to things differently. For some, this virus will not take to their bodies. For others, it will take them down.

Understandably, folk are struggling to make sense of what's happening. There aren't clear, unequivocal answers right now. There are good theories, and there's proper research going on, but there are also a lot of different reports and responses. Our Gospel stories present a similar scenario in the aftermath of Jesus' death. People struggled with resurrection—what it looked like, how it worked. Why didn't the disciples recognise their best friend and teacher when they saw him? Why did folk struggle to talk about what happened? Why hasn't this happened again? The disciples might have asked themselves, 'Did I dream that? Was this some kind of projection?' And those are legitimate questions.

The questions we have of something or the variance it has from our expectations or own experiences does not mean that something didn't happen. Just because we don't understand something, or it's complicated and requires a considerable amount of investigation doesn't mean it isn't something worth examining ... and even taking seriously. And I submit to you that this—all of it—is worth taking seriously. The meaning of this life, our present situation, and how we got here deserves real engagement, not turning our heads away from what is going on.

People's experience of the resurrected Christ differs—just like so many things. We could choose to disregard the complexity of it, its

contradictions and incomprehensibility. We could seek to define something narrowly by only one manifestation and expression. We could imagine this whole experience as one big practical joke. Yes, we could ... but I, for one, will not.

To dismiss something out of hand for lack of harmony and unanimity of vision is to deny the reality of how the world works in our human experience. There are no easy answers, and if that's what you're looking for, you're going to struggle with a lot of things ... not least of which is resurrection. For it, along with God, cannot be so narrowly defined as to make no room for surprises or variance or transformation. Just because we don't fully understand something does not mean it's a con.

## **Intercessions**

Holy God you meet us on the roadside, in the unexpected welcome and the wisdom of the stranger. We pray that our minds and our hearts may be open to your vision and truth.

Holy God, we bring you our prayers for the world, in which our familiar patterns are turned upside down. In a world of plenty and of deep need, we pray for your vision in decisions about future economic plans.

Holy God, we pray for your church, called to witness 'Were not our hearts burning within us'. We pray for the Episcopal church in Jerusalem and the Middle East. Within our diocese we pray for Bishop Mark, Primus, and for Kevin, Bishop elect, for the people of Saint Cuthbert's Church, Cambuslang, and Saint Mark's, East Kilbride, the Reverend Paul Fletcher; and for the Mothers Union and Jill Cameron. We pray for the Student group within St Marys. As we find new ways of being community, may we remember You meet us.

Holy God you meet us in our neighbours, family and friends. We pray for those who celebrate at this time, for some whose celebrations are quieter than they would have planned; in their new

occasions may they know your joy. We pray for those who are struggling with new situations, poor health or loss; we pray that they may know that you walk with them.

Holy God we pray for those that serve our community in Police, Fire, Rescue and Ambulance services, for the personnel of the Armed Forces, and chaplains on active service. May they know themselves supported and valued by the wider community; and may they find in encounters along the road your strength and your vision.

Thank you for those whose lives have shown us vision and hope, meetings with whom have been as with the Christ on the way; in our Year's Mind together we name George Downes and James Mann.

May they rest in peace and rise in glory.

God of New Life, may we find the Risen Christ in the people we meet on the road; those that walk alongside us for a time, and those who walk a different way; may our hearts be warmed by your word.

Amen.

## Communion – third video

Usually at this point in the service, I raise my hand and bless the money that is offered by people in the cathedral and the gift aid envelopes which represent those who have already given by standing order. The blessing is still there but the offering plates are empty.

If you have given to St Mary's this week, thank you for your gift. If you haven't already done so and are able to do so, please make an offering along with others who do so to sustain this ministry once you have

finished watching this video. Details of how to do so are on the cathedral website - [thecathedral.org.uk](http://thecathedral.org.uk)

As the grain once scattered in the fields  
And the grapes once dispersed on the hillside  
Are now reunited on this table in bread and wine,  
So, Lord, may your whole Church soon be gathered together  
From the corners of the earth  
Into your kingdom. Amen.

### **Eucharistic Prayer - [KELVIN]**

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.

**We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**It is right to give him thanks and praise.**

Worship and praise belong to you, Author of all being.  
Your power sustains, your love restores, our broken world.  
You are unceasingly at work,  
from chaos bringing order  
and filling emptiness with life.

Christ, raised from the dead,  
proclaims the dawn of hope.  
He lives in us that we may walk in light.

Your Spirit is fire in us,  
your breath is power  
to purge our sin  
and warm our hearts to love.

As children of your redeeming purpose,  
freed by him who burst from the tomb  
and opened the gate of life,  
we offer you our praise,  
with angels and archangels  
and the whole company of heaven,  
singing the hymn of your unending glory

**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.**

Praise and thanksgiving be to you,  
Lord of all,  
for by the Cross eternal life is ours  
and death is swallowed up in victory.  
In the first light of Easter glory broke from the tomb  
and changed the women's sorrow into joy.  
From the Garden the mystery dawned  
that he whom they had loved and lost  
is with us now in every place for ever.

Making himself known in the breaking of the bread,  
speaking peace to the fearful disciples,  
welcoming weary fishermen on the shore,  
he renewed the promise of his presence  
and of new birth in the Spirit  
who sets the seal of freedom on your sons and daughters.

Before he was given up to suffering and death,  
recalling the night of Israel's release,  
the night in which slaves walked free,  
at supper with his disciples  
he took bread and offered you thanks.

He broke the bread,  
and gave it to them, saying:  
"Take, eat.  
This is my Body: it is broken for you."

After supper, he took the cup,  
he offered you thanks,  
and gave it to them saying:  
"Drink this, all of you.  
This is my Blood of the new covenant;  
it is poured out for you, and for all,  
that sins may be forgiven.  
Do this in remembrance of me."

We now obey your Son's command.  
We recall his blessed passion and death,  
his glorious resurrection and ascension;  
and we look for the coming of his Kingdom.  
Made one with him, we offer you these gifts  
and with them ourselves,  
a single, holy, living sacrifice.

Hear us, most merciful Father,  
and send your Holy Spirit upon us  
and upon this bread and this wine,  
that, overshadowed by his life-giving power,  
they may be the Body and Blood of your Son,  
and we may be kindled with the fire of your love  
and renewed for the service of your Kingdom.

Help us, who are baptised into the fellowship of Christ's Body  
to live and work to your praise and glory;  
may we grow together in unity and love  
until at last, in your new creation,  
we enter into our heritage  
in the company of the Virgin Mary,

the apostles, and prophets,  
and of all our brothers and sisters living and departed.

Through Jesus Christ our Lord,  
with whom, and in whom,  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
all honour and glory be to you,  
Lord of all ages,  
world without end.

**Amen.**

### **Breaking of the Bread**

The living bread is broken for the life of the world.  
**Lord, unite us in this sign.**

### **Lord's Prayer [OLIVER]**

As our Saviour has taught us,  
so we pray:

**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.  
Do not bring us  
to the time of trial  
but deliver us from evil.  
For the kingdom, the power  
and the glory are yours,  
now and for ever. Amen.**

## **Communion**

Today we cannot each receive the bread and wine in person but God is present in this world.

As we gaze in our adoration we feed on God in our hearts and minds that we may in turn feed the world.

## **Music - The Love of God Comes Close**

The love of God comes close where stands an open door,  
to let the stranger in, to mingle rich and poor.  
The love of God is here to stay, embracing those who walk the Way;  
the love of God is here to stay.

The peace of God comes close to those caught in the storm,  
forgoing lives of ease to ease the lives forlorn.  
The peace of God is here to stay, embracing those who walk the Way;  
the peace of God is here to stay.

The joy of God comes close where faith encounters fears,  
where heights and depths of life are found through smiles and tears.  
The joy of God is here to stay, embracing those who walk the Way;  
the joy of God is here to stay.

The grace of God comes close to those whose grace is spent,  
when hearts are tired or sore and hope is bruised and bent.  
The grace of God is here to stay, embracing those who walk the Way;  
the grace of God is here to stay.

The Son of God comes close where people praise his name,  
where bread and wine are blest and shared as when he came.  
The Son of God is here to stay, embracing those who walk the Way;  
the Son of God is here to stay.

## **Blessing - [KELVIN]**

My thanks go to everyone who has contributed to the worship today either by appearing in the video or audio or by doing things to enable others to do so.

Particular thanks to those who have provided the pictures of roads and streets around the city for this service of worship. As you see the pictures, pray for the city and for one another.

Now, may the God of peace, who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the eternal covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well-pleasing in his sight; and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among you and remain with you always.

### **Voluntary**

Koraal (Suite Modale) – Flor Peeters played by Steven McIntyre on the organ of Dunblane Cathedral

*Young church materials are available on the online worship page - [www.thecathedral.org.uk/worship](http://www.thecathedral.org.uk/worship).*