



COLLECT, READINGS AND REFLECTION
SUNDAY 12 APRIL 2026 – Second Sunday of Easter

COLLECT

Almighty Father,
you have given your only Son to die for our sins
and to rise again for our justification:
grant us so to put away the leaven of malice and wickedness
that we may always serve you
in pureness of living and truth;
through the merits of your Son Jesus Christ our Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

Psalm 16

- 1 Preserve me, O God, for in you have I taken refuge; ♦
I have said to the Lord, 'You are my lord,
all my good depends on you.'
- 2 All my delight is upon the godly that are in the land, ♦
upon those who are noble in heart.
- 3 Though the idols are legion that many run after, ♦
their drink offerings of blood I will not offer,
neither make mention of their names upon my lips.
- 4 The Lord himself is my portion and my cup; ♦
in your hands alone is my fortune.
- 5 My share has fallen in a fair land; ♦
indeed, I have a goodly heritage.
- 6 I will bless the Lord who has given me counsel, ♦
and in the night watches he instructs my heart.
- 7 I have set the Lord always before me; ♦
he is at my right hand; I shall not fall.
- 8 Wherefore my heart is glad and my spirit rejoices; ♦
my flesh also shall rest secure.
- 9 For you will not abandon my soul to Death, ♦
nor suffer your faithful one to see the Pit.
- 10 You will show me the path of life;
in your presence is the fullness of joy ♦
and in your right hand are pleasures for evermore.

A reading from the first epistle of Peter, chapter 1, verses 3-9.

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! By his great mercy he has given us a new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and into an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, who are being protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. In this you rejoice, even if now for a little while you have had to suffer various trials, so that the genuineness of your faith—being more precious than gold that, though perishable, is tested by fire—may be found to result in praise and glory and honour when Jesus Christ is revealed. Although you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and rejoice with an indescribable and glorious joy, for you are receiving the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls.

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

At Morning Prayer, the Gospel is simply the second reading, people sit to hear it and is introduced in the same way as the first:

The second reading is John, chapter 20, verses 19-31.

and then at the end:

For the word of the Lord

Thanks be to God.

For Eucharists/ Communion people stand to hear the Gospel. Everywhere except Fitz introduces it with an Acclamation (the blue bit), and then we all use the introduction and ending (the green bit):

Alleluia. **Alleluia.**

This is the day that the Lord has made. We will rejoice and be glad in it.

Alleluia.

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, according to John, chapter 20, verses 19-31.

Glory to you, O Lord

And then at the end:

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors of the house where the disciples had met were locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, 'Peace be with you.' After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. Jesus said to them again, 'Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you.' When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, 'Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained.'

But Thomas (who was called the Twin), one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. So the other disciples told him, 'We have seen the Lord.' But he said to them, 'Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands, and put my finger in the mark of the nails and my hand in his side, I will not believe.'

A week later his disciples were again in the house, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were shut, Jesus came and stood among them and said, 'Peace be with you.' Then he said to Thomas, 'Put your finger here and see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it in my side. Do not doubt but believe.' Thomas answered him, 'My Lord and my God!' Jesus said to him, 'Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe.'

Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book. But these are written so that you may come to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through believing you may have life in his name.

A Reflection from Hannah

Does breathing on something open up possibilities, or close them down?! As a child, I would loudly and deliberately breathe on the plated-up pudding I wanted, so that neither of my siblings would then go for it! I hope I'm not alone in such dastardly behaviour...

To be breathed on, or into, by God is quite the opposite- life-giving and enabling a staggering level of participation in the ever-renewing love of God in this world- now. On Easter Day, we thought of Jesus going on ahead of us, to Galilee. A week on, we are reminded that God in Christ is also *in* us, by God's Spirit. In John's Gospel, this is the Pentecost moment. The text goes to the trouble of reminding us again that it is the first day of the week- a new world has been birthed, and this moment in the upper room, is just as much a part of it as the empty tomb and the running disciples. On the first day of the week, Jesus, speaking peace as he arrives, breathes the Holy Spirit into his friends. It echoes the creation narrative, where God breathed life into humanity. But now, through Christ, a new kind of life is born- and it is, just as fully for us today, the life of Easter renewal and hope. The charge is astonishing:

'Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained.'

Are we are given the authority to forgive and retain sins?! That feels too much. Actually, it is the Holy Spirit in us, who has that authority. We are invited to become a home for God's unfolding love- and to join in with the peace-filled, joy-filled wonder that it brings. It means that God is with us, just as much as God was with those first followers- there is no difference in that, only perhaps, in the extent to which we *feel* that to be true. Indeed, at the end of this passage and as an encouragement to you and me, John breaks the fourth wall and addresses us directly:

'But these are written so that you may come to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through believing you may have life in his name.'

Not only that, but St Peter also encourages us, as those who have not 'seen' Jesus-

'Although you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and rejoice with an indescribable and glorious joy, for you are receiving the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls.'

And Jesus even gifts us a beatitude-

'Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe.'

So as we get on with this business of Easter faith- of living life with God, in prayer and praise that brings inclusion, joy and peace- be encouraged, and be blessed!