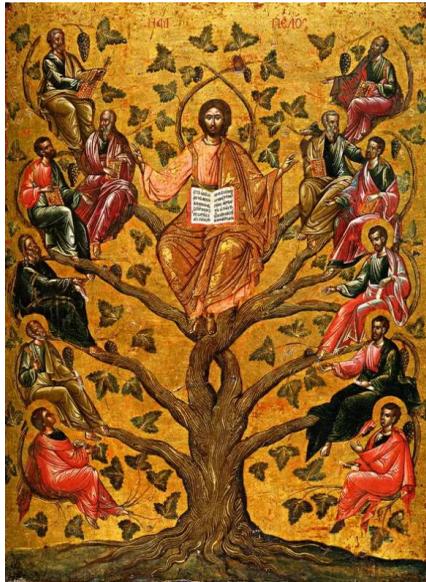


The Parish Church of St Matthew  
Northampton

## The Fifth Sunday of Easter



*Jesus said, 'I am the vine, you are the branches'*

**The Parish Mass**  
during the Coronavirus Pandemic

Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2021  
10.15 am



# ¶ Keeping everyone safe at St Matthew's

***If you have any of the recognized Covid-related symptoms, please self-isolate immediately and seek a test.***

*For all others, and in accordance with Government guidance and local decision, we respectfully require you to:*

**Go directly to a chair where there is an order of service booklet, and remain there.** Please fill up the chairs in the centre of the nave and transepts first - some chairs in the side aisles have a restricted view - and do not move the chairs, handle any other furniture, move from chair to chair, or remove a service booklet.

The wearing of a **face covering is mandatory** unless you belong to one of the medically exempted groups. This must cover both your mouth and your nose. (Plastic visors are not a substitute for a face covering and do not protect others).

The church **toilet facilities are available** for use. Please follow the instructions on the signs, leave the cubical light on, and the door open after use.

**At communion** - remain at your chair. You are respectfully asked to ensure that your face covering remains in place until the words of administration have been spoken, and you have responded by saying 'Amen'.

**After the service** - please **depart directly via the north door** whilst maintaining physical distancing. A monetary offering towards parish funds may be made there. Please sanitize your hands as you leave. Assistance is available for those who require help negotiating the steps. You may remove your face covering when you are clear of the building.

**We may gather on the green** at the east end of the church building in physically distanced groups of up to six people, or two households. We ask that you do not congregate either at the side of the church or the end of the Lady Chapel where ashes have been interred. Thank you.

\*\*\*\*\*

## Prayer

Lord, we thank you for the bond you formed with us,  
and for the bond that exists between us  
because of our union with you.

Thanks to this bond we have invisible riches  
to share with one another.

Grant that we may never be separated from you,  
so that we may produce in the world  
the fruits of faith, hope, and love.

## Setting

Communion Service in E flat

*L J White*

# Order of Service

## ¶ The Gathering

*Please stand at the sound of the bell*

Priest † In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.  
**All Amen.**

## The Greeting

**All** The Lord be with you  
**and also with you.**

## The Easter Proclamation

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

*The service is introduced*

## Invitation to Confession

Christ died to sin once for all, and now he lives to God.  
Let us renew our resolve to have done with all that is evil  
and confess our sins in penitence and faith.

## Kyrie Confession

**All** Lord Jesus, you are the vine, we are the branches.  
Lord, have mercy.  
**Lord, have mercy.**

**All** Separated from you and from one another our lives become barren.  
Christ, have mercy.  
**Christ, have mercy.**

United with you and with one another our lives become fruitful.  
Lord, have mercy.

**All**      **Lord, have mercy.**

## Absolution

May the Father of all mercies cleanse † us from all our sins,  
and restore us in his image  
to the praise and glory of his name,  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**All**      **Amen.**

## Gloria in Excelsis

*Choir*      *Glory be to God on high,  
and in earth peace, good will towards men.*

*We praise thee, we bless thee,  
we worship thee, we glorify thee,  
we give thanks to thee for thy great glory,  
O Lord God, heavenly King,  
God the Father almighty.*

*O Lord, the only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ;  
O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father,  
that takest away the sins of the world,  
have mercy upon us.  
Thou that takest away the sins of the world,  
receive our prayer.  
Thou that sittest at the right hand of God the Father,  
have mercy upon us.*

*For thou only art holy;  
thou only art the Lord;  
thou only, O Christ,  
with the Holy Ghost,  
art most high,  
in the glory of God the Father.  
Amen.*

## The Collect

Let us pray.

Almighty God,  
who through your only-begotten Son Jesus Christ  
have overcome death and opened to us the gate of everlasting life:  
grant that, as by your grace going before us  
    you put into our minds good desires,  
so by your continual help  
we may bring them to good effect;  
through Jesus Christ our risen Lord,  
who is alive and reigns with you,  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever.

**All**

**Amen.**

*Please be seated*

## ¶ The Liturgy of the Word

### The Acts of the Apostles

Acts 8.26-40

*Reader*      A reading from the Acts of the Apostles.

Then an angel of the Lord said to Philip, 'Get up and go towards the south to the road that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza.' (This is a wilderness road.) So he got up and went. Now there was an Ethiopian eunuch, a court official of the Candace, queen of the Ethiopians, in charge of her entire treasury. He had come to Jerusalem to worship and was returning home; seated in his chariot, he was reading the prophet Isaiah. Then the Spirit said to Philip, 'Go over to this chariot and join it.' So Philip ran up to it and heard him reading the prophet Isaiah. He asked, 'Do you understand what you are reading?' He replied, 'How can I, unless someone guides me?' And he invited Philip to get in and sit beside him. Now the passage of the scripture that he was reading was this:

'Like a sheep he was led to the slaughter,  
and like a lamb silent before its shearer,  
so he does not open his mouth.  
In his humiliation justice was denied him.  
Who can describe his generation?  
For his life is taken away from the earth.'

The eunuch asked Philip, 'About whom, may I ask you, does the prophet say this, about himself or about someone else?' Then Philip began to speak, and starting with this scripture, he proclaimed to him the good news about Jesus. As they were going along the road, they came to some water; and the eunuch said, 'Look, here is water! What is to prevent me from being baptized?' He commanded the chariot to stop, and both of them, Philip and the eunuch, went down into the water, and Philip baptized him. When they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord snatched Philip away; the eunuch saw him no more, and went on his way rejoicing. But Philip found himself at Azotus, and as he was passing through the region, he proclaimed the good news to all the towns until he came to Caesarea.

This is the word of the Lord.

**All Thanks be to God.**

### Psalm 22.25-31

From you comes my praise in the great congregation;  
I will perform my vows  
in the presence of those that fear you.  
The poor shall eat and be satisfied;  
those who seek the Lord shall praise him;  
their hearts shall live for ever.

**All Be not far from me, O Lord.**

All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to the Lord,  
and all the families of the nations shall bow before him.  
For the kingdom is the Lord's  
and he rules over the nations.

**All Be not far from me, O Lord.**

How can those who sleep in the earth bow down in worship,  
or those who go down to the dust kneel before him?  
He has saved my life for himself;  
my descendants shall serve him;  
this shall be told of the Lord for generations to come.  
They shall come and make known his salvation,  
to a people yet unborn,  
declaring that he, the Lord, has done it.

**All Be not far from me, O Lord.**

**Please stand**

# Holy Gospel

John 15.1-8

## Acclamation

Alleluia, alleluia.

Abide in me as I abide in you.

Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit.

**All Alleluia.**

The Lord be with you

**All and also with you.**

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

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

Jesus said to his disciples, 'I am the true vine, and my Father is the vine-grower. He removes every branch in me that bears no fruit. Every branch that bears fruit he prunes to make it bear more fruit. You have already been cleansed by the word that I have spoken to you. Abide in me as I abide in you. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me. I am the vine, you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing. Whoever does not abide in me is thrown away like a branch and withers; such branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask for whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit and become my disciples.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

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

## The Homily

***Please be seated***

## The Apostles' Creed

*Please stand*

Brothers and sisters,  
I ask you to profess the faith of the Church.

**All I believe in God, the Father almighty,  
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,  
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,  
born of the Virgin Mary,  
suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died, and was buried;  
he descended to the dead.  
On the third day he rose again;  
he ascended into heaven,  
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,  
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy catholic Church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and the life everlasting.  
Amen.**

*The Choir alone remain standing*

## Admission of Chorister

*The Director of Music presents the probationer*

Fr Nicholas, I present to you Roxanne Robson to be admitted  
as a chorister in the choir of St Matthew's Church.

*The Vicar asks the probationer*

Roxanne, do you wish to become a chorister here?

*Probationer*

**Yes, I do.**

As a chorister at St Matthew's Church you become part of a century-old tradition of worship offered to God in this place. Will you play your part in leading the worship of God's people to the best of your ability?

*Probationer*

**Yes, I will.**

St Paul said, 'I will sing with the spirit and with understanding also', we should offer our whole selves to God in his service. St Paul's words form the motto of the Royal School of Church Music to which St Matthew's Choir is affiliated. Roxanne, our prayer for you today is that you will always try to sing with the spirit and with understanding, and so enliven our worship together, giving glory to God.

Roxanne, I admit you as a chorister in the choir of this church, in the name of God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

**All Amen.**

*The Head Chorister clothes Roxanne with her surplice. The new chorister kneels at the rail*

The Lord has given you musical gifts; may he also give you happiness in his service; and may he † bless you and keep you from this day forward and give you his peace.

**All Amen.**

*The Choir joins with the new chorister in saying The Chorister Prayer*

*Choir* Bless, O Lord, us thy servants,  
who minister in thy temple.  
Grant that what we sing with our lips,  
we may believe in our hearts,  
and what we believe in our hearts,  
we may show forth in our lives.  
Through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**All Amen.**

*All return to their places*

## Prayers of the Faithful

*Priest* Christ wanted his followers to be united with him and with one another.  
Let us pray that this unity may become a reality.

*After each petition the following is used*

*Intercessor* Risen Lord, you abide in us;  
**All** **may we abide in you.**

*After the final petition*

*Priest* Almighty and ever-living God,  
fill our hearts with your love.  
Give us the grace to rise above our human weakness,  
and keep us faithful to you and to one another.  
We ask this through Christ our Lord.  
**All** **Amen.**

***Please stand***

## ¶ The Liturgy of the Sacrament

### Sign of Peace

Lord Jesus Christ, you said to your apostles,  
'I am the vine, you are the branches.  
Separated from me you can do nothing;  
united with me you will bear much fruit.'

Strengthen the bonds that unite us with you and with one another,  
so that we may enjoy the peace and unity of your kingdom  
where you live for ever and ever.

**All** Alleluia. The peace of the Lord be always with you  
**and also with you. Alleluia.**

With an appropriate gesture, let us offer one another  
a sign of Christ's peace.

## The Offertory

*The altar is prepared, **please be seated***

## Anthem

The Father's Love

*Simon Lole (b 1957)*

*Choir* As the Father has lov'd me, so have I lov'd you.  
Remain in my love.  
This is my commandment:  
that you love one another as I have lov'd you,  
then your joy will be complete.  
God is love, and those who live in love,  
live in God and God lives in them.

## Invitation to Prayer

***Please stand***

Pray, my brothers and sisters,  
that our sacrifice may be acceptable to God,  
the almighty Father.  
**All** **May the Lord accept the sacrifice at your hands  
for the praise and glory of his name,  
for our good, and the good of all his Church.**

## Prayer over the Gifts

O God, who by the wonderful exchange effected in this sacrifice have made us partakers of the one supreme Godhead, grant, we pray, that, as we have come to know your truth, we may make it ours by a worthy way of life. Through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**All Amen.**

## The Eucharistic Prayer

**All** The Lord be with you  
**and also with you.**

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

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

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, always and everywhere to give you thanks, almighty and eternal Father, and in these days of Easter to celebrate with joyful hearts the memory of your wonderful works.

For by the mystery of his passion Jesus Christ, your risen Son, has conquered the powers of death and hell and restored in men and women the image of your glory. He has placed them once more in paradise and opened to them the gate of life eternal.

And so, in the joy of this Passover, earth and heaven resound with gladness, while angels and archangels and the powers of all creation sing for ever the hymn of your glory:

*Choir*     *Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of hosts,  
eaven and earth are full of thy glory.  
Glory be to thee, O Lord most high.*

*Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.  
Hosanna in the highest.*

Lord, you are holy indeed, the source of all holiness;  
grant that by the power of your Holy Spirit,  
and according to your holy will,  
these gifts of bread and wine  
may be to us the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ;

who, in the same night that he was betrayed,  
took bread and gave you thanks;  
he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying:

Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you;  
do this in remembrance of me.

In the same way, after supper he took the cup and gave you thanks;  
he gave it to them, saying:

Drink this, all of you;  
this is my blood of the new covenant,  
which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins.  
Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.

*All*     Great is the mystery of faith:  
**Christ has died,  
Christ is risen,  
Christ will come again.**

And so, Father, calling to mind his death on the cross,  
his perfect sacrifice made once for the sins of the whole world,  
rejoicing in his mighty resurrection and glorious ascension,  
and looking for his coming in glory,  
we celebrate this memorial of our redemption.  
As we offer you this our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving,  
we bring before you this bread and this cup  
and we thank you for counting us worthy  
to stand in your presence and serve you.

Send the Holy Spirit on your people  
and gather into one in your kingdom  
all who share this one bread and one cup,  
so that we, in the company of Mary, the apostles, and all the saints,  
may praise and glorify you for ever,  
through Jesus Christ our Lord;  
by whom, and with whom, and in whom,  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
all honour and glory be yours, almighty Father,  
for ever and ever.

**All**      **Amen.**

*The Blessed Sacrament is elevated and bells are rung*

***Please be seated***

## The Lord's Prayer

Rejoicing in God's new creation,  
let us pray with confidence as our Saviour has taught us:

**All**      **Our Father, who art in heaven,  
hallowed be thy name;  
thy kingdom come;  
thy will be done;  
on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread.  
And forgive us our trespasses,  
as we forgive those who trespass against us.  
And lead us not into temptation;  
but deliver us from evil.**

**For thine is the kingdom,  
the power, and the glory,  
for ever and ever.  
Amen.**

## Breaking of the Bread

Jesus says, I am the bread of life,  
whoever eats this bread will live for ever.

**All**     **Lord, our hearts hunger for you;  
give us this bread always.**

## Agnus Dei

*Choir*     *O Lamb of God,  
that takest away the sins of the world,  
have mercy upon us.*

*O Lamb of God,  
that takest away the sins of the world,  
have mercy upon us.*

*O Lamb of God,  
that takest away the sins of the world,  
grant us thy peace.*

## Invitation to Communion

**All**     Alleluia. Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us.  
**Therefore let us keep the feast. Alleluia.**

## Giving of Communion

I am the true vine, and my Father is the vine grower.  
Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit,  
because apart from me you can do nothing, alleluia.

*Please stand at your chair to receive Holy Communion or a blessing*

## Spiritual Communion – for those at home

*It is an ancient practice of the Church that, when you are prevented from attending the Holy Eucharist, people are invited to express, in the words of St Thomas Aquinas, “an ardent desire to receive Jesus in the Holy Sacrament and a loving embrace as though we had already received Him.” Therefore, during this time you are invited to pray this prayer, which may be said as often as you desire:*

### Act of Reception

**All**      **In union, blessed Jesus,  
with the faithful gathered at every altar of your Church  
where your blessed Body and Blood are offered this day,**

*(and remembering particularly my own parish ...)*

**I long to offer you praise and thanksgiving,  
for creation and all the blessings of this life,  
for the redemption won for us by your life, death,  
and resurrection,  
for the means of grace and the hope of glory.**

*(and particularly for the blessings given me ...)*

**I believe that you are truly present in the Holy Sacrament,  
and, since I cannot at this time receive communion,  
I pray you to come into my heart.  
I unite myself with you and embrace you with all my heart,  
my soul, and my mind.  
Let nothing separate me from you;  
let me serve you in this life until, by your grace,  
I come to your glorious kingdom and unending peace.  
Amen.**

# Motet

The Call

*Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1985)*

*Choir* Come, my Way, my Truth, my Life:  
Such a Way, as gives us breath:  
Such a Truth, as ends all strife:  
Such a Life, as killeth death

Come, My Light, my Feast, my Strength:  
Such a Light, as shows a feast:  
Such a Feast, as mends in length:  
Such a Strength, as makes his guest

Come, my Joy, my Love, my Heart:  
Such a Joy, as none can move:  
Such a Love, as none can part:  
Such a Heart, as joys in love

## Prayer after Communion

Let us pray:

***Please stand***

Eternal God,  
whose Son Jesus Christ is the way, the truth, and the life:  
grant us to walk in his way,  
to rejoice in his truth,  
and to share his risen life;  
who is alive and reigns, now and for ever.

***All*** **Amen.**

**God of truth,  
we have seen with our eyes  
and touched with our hands the bread of life:  
strengthen our faith  
that we may grow in love for you  
and for each other;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.  
Amen.**

## Notices for the Community

### ¶ Sending Out

**All**           The Lord be with you  
**and also with you.**

### Solemn Blessing

**All**           May you be fruitful branches of Christ, the true Vine.  
**Amen.**

**All**           May your love not be mere words but something real and active.  
**Amen.**

**All**           May the Lord confirm your hearts in holiness  
so that you may be blameless in his sight.  
**Amen.**

**All**           And the blessing of God almighty,  
the Father, the Son †, and the Holy Spirit,  
be upon you and remain with you always.  
**Amen.**

*Please turn towards the Maddona and Child sculpture*

### Regina Caeli

**All**           **Joy to thee, O Queen of heaven, alleluia**           (9 rings)  
**He whom thou wast meet to bear, alleluia**  
**As he promised, hath arisen, alleluia**  
**Pour for us to God thy prayer, alleluia.**

**All** Rejoice and be glad, O Virgin Mary, alleluia  
**for the Lord is risen indeed, alleluia.**

(9 rings)

God of life, you have given joy to the world  
by the resurrection of your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ.  
Through the prayers of his mother, the Virgin Mary,  
bring us to the happiness of eternal life;  
we ask this through Christ our Lord.

**All** **Amen.**

## The Dismissal

**All** Go in peace to love and serve the Lord, alleluia, alleluia.  
**In the name of Christ, alleluia, alleluia.**

## Organ Voluntary

Prelude and Fugue No. 1 from Eight Short Preludes and Fugues

*J S Bach*

*The procession departs*

**Please take this booklet home with you**

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