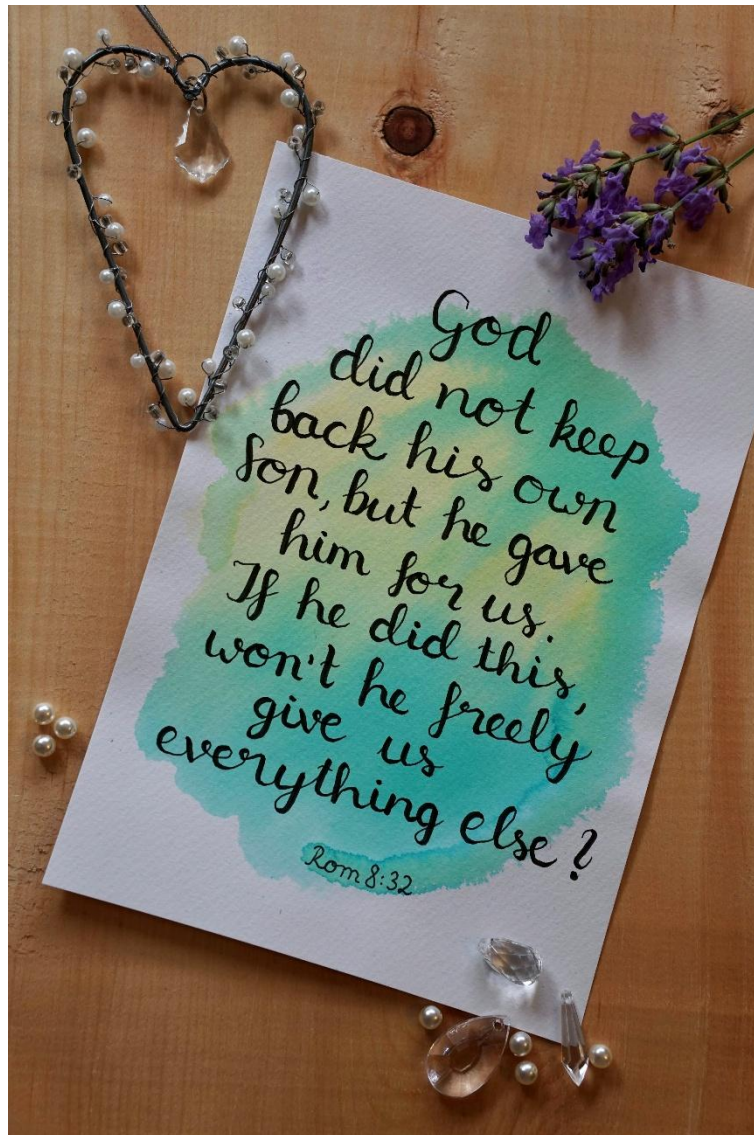


# Mears Ashby and Hardwick and Sywell with Overstone



**Prayers and Reflections  
for use at home**

**Sunday 12 April 2026**

**Easter 2**

Welcome to this week's Prayers and Reflections. Our Gospel reading starts on the evening of Easter Day. The disciples are sheltering in a room which is locked to keep out the Jewish leaders and guards. Jesus may be risen but the dangers are still out there. Events are unfolding one appearance at a time. Jesus comes bearing three gifts.

Enjoy pondering these offerings.

God bless,

**Revd Katrina**

**Vicar**

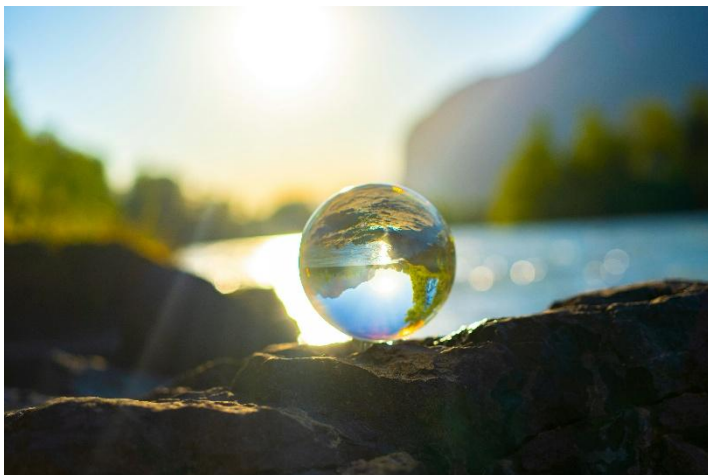
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*As you prepare to meet with our risen Lord in the Upper Room,  
open your heart to him.*



Alleluia! Alleluia!

Hearts to heaven and voices raise;  
sing to God a hymn of gladness,  
sing to God a hymn of praise;  
he who on the cross a victim  
for the world's salvation bled,  
Jesus Christ, the King of glory,  
now is risen from the dead.

*Christopher Wordsworth (1807-1885)*

**Prayers and Reflections  
for use at home on Easter 2  
God's Gifts**

**PREPARING OURSELVES**

*Take a moment to be still in God's presence, and feel his love. You may wish to light a candle as a sign of God's love - here, in this room. You may also wish to have a bowl of water ready for the time of letting go. When you are ready, say this opening prayer.*

Risen Lord Jesus,  
as I prepare to spend this time in worship,  
I invite you to come and fill this space,  
and my inner stillness,  
with your presence.

**Amen.**

**LETTING GO**

*If you come to this time of prayer and reflection with any regrets, with things that you wish you had not said, done or been, offer them to God in the silence of your heart. And, when you are ready, reflect on the second verse of this week's hymn.*

Christ is risen, Christ the first-fruits  
of the holy harvest field,  
which will all its full abundance  
at his second coming yield;  
then the golden ears of harvest  
will their heads before him wave,  
ripened by his glorious sunshine,  
from the furrows of the grave.

*Christopher Wordsworth (1807-1885)*



*If you wish, dip your finger into a bowl of water and make the sign of the cross on your palm.*

*Feel the Father's forgiveness.*

*Our verse invites us to look back to the first Easter and our Lord's return, his resurrection. It marks a new chapter in God's mission on earth. Rising to new life, Jesus will prepare and send his team out into the world to share the good news of God's love and grace. It is a huge mission – one which spans the globe, all time and all believers. God is patient, isn't he, in his seeding, watering, tending and growing his kingdom of joy and love, justice and peace.*

*If Jesus is the first fruit of this new and eternal kingdom, we are some of his second fruits. We came to faith through those who shared their faith with us. Think about when you first went to church. Who took you? Who inspired you by their living faith? Give thanks for them.*

*Others came or will come to faith through our living and sharing of the faith which shapes our lives. Think about who believes in the risen Jesus because of your faith and churchgoing. Pray for them.*

*Remember: You are living the commission Jesus gave to his team on Easter evening. You are one of his golden ears.*

## **PRAYING TODAY'S PRAYER (The Collect)**

*Today, this prayer is being said across our villages and the worldwide Church. Add your voice to the earthly cycle of prayer to our risen Lord who always listens to our prayers.*

Risen Christ,  
for whom no door is locked, no entrance barred:  
open the doors of our hearts,  
that we may seek the good of others  
and walk the joyful road of sacrifice and peace,  
to the praise of God the Father. **Amen.**

*What a beautiful prayer! I love the idea that nothing can stop Jesus visiting our hearts. No doubts... no shame... no worries... no sadness... no anger... no frustration can stop Jesus speaking to us. He can sidestep whatever is stopping us or our family, friends, neighbours or carers from drawing close to him. Nothing can bar his way to us. For he loves us, loves us with an unbreakable love.*

*Pause to ponder this.*

*Our prayer reminded me of this passage from the first letter of John. Faith in God leads to love. We love because God loves us. Ponder this as you read these verses.*

If anyone acknowledges that Jesus is the Son of God,  
God lives in them and they in God.

God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God,  
and God in them.

This is how love is made complete among us  
so that we will have confidence on the day of judgement:

in this world we are like Jesus.

We love because he first loved us.

*from 1 John 4:15-19*

*Love is why we live the second part of our prayer: seeking the good of others. Love is how we bring joy and peace and hope into the lives of those who touch our lives and our hearts. Ponder how you see this in your own life. Give thanks.*



Christ is risen, we are risen;  
shed upon us heavenly grace,  
rain, and dew, and gleams of glory  
from the brightness of thy face;  
that we, with our hearts in heaven,  
here on earth may fruitful be,  
and by angel-hands be gathered,  
and be ever, Lord, with thee.

*Christopher Wordsworth (1807-1885)*

## LISTENING TO GOD'S WORD

### **Peace be with you!**

On the evening of that first day of the week, when the disciples were together, with the doors locked for fear of the Jewish leaders, Jesus came and stood among them and said, 'Peace be with you!' After he said this, he showed them his hands and side. The disciples were overjoyed when they saw the Lord.

Again Jesus said, 'Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you.' And with that he breathed on them and said, 'Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive anyone's sins, their sins are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven.'

Now Thomas (also known as Didymus), one of the Twelve, was not with the disciples when Jesus came. So the other disciples told him, 'We have seen the Lord!'

But he said to them, 'Unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe.'

A week later his disciples were in the house again, and Thomas was with them. Though the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, 'Peace be with you!' Then he said to Thomas, 'Put your finger here; see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. Stop doubting and believe.'

Thomas said to him, 'My Lord and my God!'

Then Jesus told him, 'Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.'

Jesus performed many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book. But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

## Our Lord's giving...

*Picture the scene that Easter evening. The disciples know that the tomb is empty and Jesus is back. But they have still to see him. Each is filled with thoughts of the past three days – the most unique of Passover meals in this very room... Jesus' capture... one betraying... one denying... nine running for their lives... one watching as Jesus dies. Regrets, there are more than a few in this room. Yet, there is hope too. Jesus is alive.*

*Jesus knows his team. Each one of them – Peter, Andrew and James, Thomas and John, and the others. Each with their own story. Each with their own personality. He needs to open the doors of their hearts – cleanse them – so that they can go and share his good news. Go and be good news to those searching for meaning and hope. He comes bearing gifts – essential gifts. Gifts that we love to receive too.*

*Jesus brings **peace**. It is a peace that stills all their inner noise. He calms their restless and guilt-filled minds. It is as if Jesus is saying to them, 'All is OK. You are my friends. You are forgiven.' His Spirit speaks to theirs. Each one of the disciples are recalled to life – receiving back their place on his team.*

*Peace brings **joy**. Jesus is alive! You can feel the joy in the room. Each of the disciples feels this joy in their own unique way. For nine of the ten in the room, joy is mixed with relief – relief at being accepted by Jesus despite failing him badly. Joy leads to a **recommissioning** – a sending. Ponder these three gifts. Which would you like to receive?*



Alleluia! Alleluia!

Glory be to God on high;

Alleluia to the Saviour,

who has gained the victory;

Alleluia to the Spirit,

fount of love and sanctity;

Alleluia! Alleluia!

to the Triune Majesty. *Christopher Wordsworth (1807-1885)*

## OUR PRAYERS

*Here are some Eastertide prayers. Feel free to add your own.*

Risen Lord, when I sit in stillness and silence,  
you come and meet with me. When I am raging inside,  
and life feels like a storm, you can calm me. Today, fill me with peace...

Risen Lord, hear my prayer.

Risen Lord, the ten were hiding behind locked doors,  
fearing for their lives. You breathed your peace into them,  
sending them to be good news to others. Today, breathe peace into...

Risen Lord, hear my prayer.

Risen Lord, you gave your disciples the power to forgive,  
and the power not to forgive. Forgiveness is such a sensitive issue,  
and a painful one. Done well, it leads to peace. Today, bring peace to...

Risen Lord, hear my prayer.

*Offer your own heartfelt prayers and praise.*

### **The Lord's Prayer**

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.**

### **PRAYER OF BLESSING**

*A closing prayer of blessing for this week.*

Risen Lord, come and meet me where I am,  
this Eastertide. Fill me with love and joy and peace,  
so that I may offer your hope to others.  
Bless me and keep my loved ones safe, I pray. **Amen.**