

ST ANDREWS CHURCH - MOSCOW

EASTER SERVICE – 20th APRIL, 2025



EASTER: AN INTRODUCTION TO THE SEASON

The Great Fifty Days of Eastertide form a single festival period in which the tone of joy created at the Easter Vigil is sustained through the following seven weeks, and the Church celebrates the gloriously risen Christ:

*Triumphant in his glory now, his sceptre ruleth all,
earth, heaven and hell before him bow,
and at his footstool fall.*

(Fulbert of Chartres)

Early Christians gave the name Pentecost to this whole fifty-day span of rejoicing, which Tertullian calls ‘this most joyful period’ (laetissimum spatium). It is sometimes also called ‘Great Sunday’. In those places where the custom of lighting the Easter Candle at the beginning of Easter is followed, the lit candle stands prominently in church for all the Eastertide services. The Alleluia appears frequently in liturgical speech and song; Morning Prayer begins with the traditional collection of Pauline texts known as the Easter Anthems, and white or gold vestments and decorations emphasize the joy and brightness of the season.

On the fortieth day there has from the late fourth century been a particular celebration of Christ's ascension. He commissions his disciples to continue his work, he promises the gift of the Holy Spirit, and then he is no longer among them in the flesh. The ascension is therefore closely connected with the theme of mission. The arrival of the promised gift of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost completes and crowns the Easter Festival.

CALL TO WORSHIP

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.

Processional Hymn: 91- Christ the Lord is risen today

THE GATHERING

Words of welcome - introduction

THE GREETING

The president greets the people:

Alleluia. Christ is risen.

He is risen indeed. Alleluia.

Praise the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ:

The light and peace of Jesus Christ be with you

and also with you.

The glory of the Lord has risen upon us.

Let us rejoice and sing God's praise for ever.

PRAYER OF PREPARATION

All: Almighty God,

to whom all hearts are open,

all desires known,

and from whom no secrets are hidden:

cleanse the thoughts of our hearts

by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit,

**that we may perfectly love you,
and worthily magnify your holy name;
through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

PRAYERS OF PENITENCE (*All Sit or Kneel*)

INVITATION TO CONFESSION

Christ our Passover lamb has been sacrificed for us.
Let us therefore rejoice by putting away all malice and evil
and confessing our sins with a sincere and true heart. (*1 Corinthians 5.7,8*)

All: **God of mercy,
we acknowledge that we are all sinners.
We turn from the wrong
that we have thought and said and done,
and are mindful of all that we have failed to do.
For the sake of Jesus, who died for us,
forgive us for all that is past,
and help us to live each day
in the light of Christ our Lord. Amen.**

ABSOLUTION

May the God of love and power
forgive *you* and free *you* from *your* sins,
heal and strengthen *you* by his Spirit,
and raise *you* to new life in Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

GLORIA IN EXCELSIS (*All Stand*)

**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.**

THE COLLECT

Lord of all life and power,
who through the mighty resurrection of your Son
overcame the old order of sin and death
to make all things new in him:
grant that we, being dead to sin
and alive to you in Jesus Christ,
may reign with him in glory;
to whom with you and the Holy Spirit
be praise and honour, glory and might,
now and in all eternity. **Amen.**

THE LITURGY OF THE WORD (*All Sit*)

First Reading: Acts 10: 34-43

³⁴Then Peter began to speak: “I now realize how true it is that God does not show favouritism ³⁵but accepts from every nation the one who fears him and does what is right. ³⁶You know the message God sent to the people of Israel, announcing the good news of peace through Jesus Christ, who is Lord of all. ³⁷You know what has happened throughout the province of Judea, beginning in Galilee after the baptism that John preached—³⁸how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and power, and how he went around doing good and healing all who were under the power of the devil,

because God was with him. ³⁹We are witnesses of everything he did in the country of the Jews and in Jerusalem. They killed him by hanging him on a cross, ⁴⁰but God raised him from the dead on the third day and caused him to be seen. ⁴¹He was not seen by all the people, but by witnesses whom God had already chosen—by us who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead. ⁴²He commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one whom God appointed as judge of the living and the dead. ⁴³All the prophets testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name.”

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Psalm 118:14-24:

¹⁴The LORD is my strength and my defence;
he has become my salvation.

¹⁵Shouts of joy and victory resound in the tents of the righteous:
“The LORD’s right hand has done mighty things!

¹⁶The LORD’s right hand is lifted high;
the LORD’s right hand has done mighty things!”

¹⁷I will not die but live, and will proclaim what the LORD has done.

¹⁸The LORD has chastened me severely,
but he has not given me over to death.

¹⁹Open for me the gates of the righteous;
I will enter and give thanks to the LORD.

²⁰This is the gate of the LORD through which the righteous may enter.

²¹I will give you thanks, for you answered me;
you have become my salvation.

²²The stone the builders rejected has become the cornerstone;

²³the LORD has done this, and it is marvellous in our eyes.

²⁴The LORD has done it this very day; let us rejoice today and be glad.

**Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning is now and shall be for ever. Amen.**

Second Reading – I Corinthians 15:19-26:

¹⁹ If only for this life we have hope in Christ, we are of all people most to be pitied. ²⁰ But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. ²¹ For since death came through a man, the resurrection of the dead comes also through a man. ²² For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive. ²³ But each in turn: Christ, the firstfruits; then, when he comes, those who belong to him. ²⁴ Then the end will come, when he hands over the kingdom to God the Father after he has destroyed all dominion, authority and power. ²⁵ For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. ²⁶ The last enemy to be destroyed is death.

This is the word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

Gradual Hymn: 10 - Alleluia, alleluia, hearts to heaven and voices raise

GOSPEL READING: John 20: 1-18 (All Stand)

Alleluia, alleluia.

Jesus said to them, 'I am the bread of life.

Whoever comes to me will never be hungry,

and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty.'

(John 6.35)

Alleluia.

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

Glory to you, O Lord.

¹ Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene went to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the entrance. ² So she came running to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one Jesus loved, and said, "They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we don't know where they have put him!" ³ So Peter and the other disciple started for the tomb. ⁴ Both were running, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first.

⁵ He bent over and looked in at the strips of linen lying there but did not go in. ⁶ Then Simon Peter came along behind him and went straight into the tomb. He saw the strips of linen lying there, ⁷ as well as the cloth that had been wrapped around Jesus' head. The cloth was still lying in its place, separate from the linen. ⁸ Finally the other disciple, who had reached the tomb first, also went inside. He saw and believed. ⁹ (They still did not understand from Scripture that Jesus had to rise from the dead.) ¹⁰ Then the disciples went back to where they were staying.

¹¹ Now Mary stood outside the tomb crying. As she wept, she bent over to look into the tomb ¹² and saw two angels in white, seated where Jesus' body had been, one at the head and the other at the foot. ¹³ They asked her, "Woman, why are you crying?"

"They have taken my Lord away," she said, "and I don't know where they have put him." ¹⁴ At this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not realize that it was Jesus. ¹⁵ He asked her, "Woman, why are you crying? Who is it you are looking for?" Thinking he was the gardener, she said, "Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have put him, and I will get him."

¹⁶ Jesus said to her, "Mary." She turned toward him and cried out in Aramaic, "Rabboni!" (which means "Teacher"). ¹⁷ Jesus said, "Do not hold on to me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father. Go instead to my brothers and tell them, 'I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.'" ¹⁸ Mary Magdalene went to the disciples with the news: "I have seen the Lord!" And she told them that he had said these things to her.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON (*All Sit*)

THE CREED *(All Stand)*

**We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God, begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father;
through him all things were made.**

**For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven,
was incarnate from the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary
and was made man.**

**For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.**

**On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the Scriptures;
he ascended into heaven**

and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

**He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son is worshipped and
glorified, who has spoken through the prophets.**

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.

We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.

**We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION *(All sit or kneel)*

This response is used:

Lord in your mercy: **Hear our prayer.**

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

THE LITURGY OF THE SACRAMENT

THE PEACE (*All Stand*)

The risen Christ came and stood among his disciples and said, 'Peace be with you.'

Then were they glad when they saw the Lord. Alleluia.

The peace of the Lord be always with you

and also with you. Alleluia.

Let us offer one another a sign of peace.

Offertory Hymn: 683 - To God be the glory

PRAYERS AT THE PREPARATION OF THE TABLE

Creator of all, you wash away our sins,

you give us new birth by the Spirit,

and redeem us in the blood of Christ.

As we celebrate the resurrection,

renew your gift of life within us.

We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ the risen Lord. **Amen.**

THE EUCHARISTIC PRAYER

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 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.

**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.**

Lord God, you are the most holy one,
enthroned in splendour and light,
yet in the coming of your Son Jesus Christ
you reveal the power of your love
made perfect in our human weakness.
Amen. Lord, we believe.

Embracing our humanity,
Jesus showed us the way of salvation;

loving us to the end,
he gave himself to death for us;
dying for his own,
he set us free from the bonds of sin,
that we might rise and reign with him in glory.

Amen. Lord, we believe.

On the night he gave up himself for us all
he 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.

Amen. Lord, we believe.

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.

Amen. Lord, we believe.

Therefore we proclaim the death that he suffered on the cross,
we celebrate his resurrection, his bursting from the tomb,
we rejoice that he reigns at your right hand on high
and we long for his coming in glory.

Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.

As we recall the one, perfect sacrifice of our redemption,
Father, by your Holy Spirit let these gifts of your creation
be to us the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ;
form us into the likeness of Christ
and make us a perfect offering in your sight.

Amen. Come, Holy Spirit.

Look with favour on your people
and in your mercy hear the cry of our hearts.
Bless the earth,
heal the sick,
let the oppressed go free
and fill your Church with power from on high.
Amen. Come, Holy Spirit.

Gather your people from the ends of the earth
to feast with St. Andrew all your saints
at the table in your kingdom,
where the new creation is brought to perfection
in 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.
Amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

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

**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.

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

THE AGNUS DEI

Jesus, Lamb of God, have mercy on us.

Jesus, bearer of our sins, have mercy on us.

Jesus, redeemer of the world, grant us your peace.

GIVING OF COMMUNION

Draw near with faith.

Receive the body of our Lord Jesus Christ
which he gave for you,
and his blood which he shed for you.

Eat and drink in remembrance that he died for you,
and feed on him in your hearts by faith with thanksgiving.

THE PRAYER OF HUMBLE ACCESS

**We do not presume
to come to this your table, merciful Lord,
trusting in our own righteousness,
but in your manifold and great mercies.**

**We are not worthy
so much as to gather up the crumbs under your table.**

**But you are the same Lord
whose nature is always to have mercy.**

**Grant us therefore, gracious Lord,
so to eat the flesh of your dear Son Jesus Christ
and to drink his blood,
that our sinful bodies may be made clean by his body
and our souls washed through his most precious blood,
and that we may evermore dwell in him,
and he in us. Amen.**

The president and people receive communion.

Authorized words of distribution are used and the communicant replies
Amen.

*All who would normally receive Communion in another Christian Church are welcome to do so here today. If you prefer, you may receive only BREAD. **Please do not INTINCT (dip your wafer in the wine).** If you do not wish to receive Communion, we invite you to come forward to receive a blessing; please carry your service sheet or keep your hands folded in front of you so that the minister/s will know that is your desire. Please follow the directions of the stewards as you come forward.*

Hymn during Communion: 17 – All in an Easter garden

CONCLUSION

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Silence is kept.

God of Life, who for our redemption gave your only-begotten Son to the death of the cross, and by his glorious resurrection have delivered us from the power of our enemy:
grant us so to die daily to sin,
that we may evermore live with him in the joy of his risen life;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

**God of our salvation, you have restored us to life,
you have brought us back again into your love
by the triumphant death and resurrection of Christ.
Continue to heal us, as we go to live and work
in the power of your Holy Spirit,
to your praise and glory. Amen.**

NOTICES

Closing Hymn: 660 – Thine be the glory

THE BLESSING AND DISMISSAL

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. **Amen,**

Go in the peace of Christ. Alleluia, alleluia.

All: **Thanks be to God. Alleluia, alleluia.**