

# *Bethesda Episcopal Church*

**The Sunday after Easter**

**7 April 2024**

## **HOLY COMMUNION at 8.00am**

*All stand as the ministers enter.*

### ***Easter Acclamation and Collect for Purity***

*Celebrant* Alleluia. Christ is risen.  
*People* **The Lord is risen indeed. Alleluia.**

Almighty God, unto whom all hearts be open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of thy Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love thee, and worthily magnify thy holy name; through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

### ***The Gloria in excelsis and Collect of the Day***

*Celebrant* Glory be to God on high,

*All* **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 sin of the world,  
have mercy upon us.  
Thou that takest away the sin 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.**

Let us pray. Almighty and everlasting God, who in the Paschal mystery hast established the new covenant of reconciliation: Grant that all who have been reborn into the fellowship of Christ's Body may show forth in their lives what they profess by their faith; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

### ***The Lesson***

*Acts 4:32-35*

Now the whole group of those who believed were of one heart and soul, and no one claimed private ownership of any possessions, but everything they owned was held in common. With great power the apostles gave their testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all. There was not a needy person among them, for as many as owned lands or houses sold them and brought the proceeds of what was sold. They laid it at the apostles' feet, and it was distributed to each as any had need.

*The Lector concludes  
The People respond*

The Word of the Lord.  
**Thanks be to God.**

All stand.

**The Holy Gospel**

*John 20:19-31*

*Celebrant  
People*

The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Saint John.  
**Glory be to thee, O Lord.**

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.

*Celebrant  
People*

The Gospel of the Lord.  
**Praise be to thee, O Christ.**

**The Nicene Creed**    *Said by all, standing.*

**I believe in one God,  
the Father Almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth,  
and of all things visible and invisible;  
And in one Lord Jesus Christ,  
the only-begotten Son of God,  
begotten of his Father before all worlds,  
God of God, Light of Light,  
very God of very God;  
begotten, not made;  
being of one substance with the Father;  
by whom all things were made;  
who for us men and for our salvation  
came down from heaven,  
and was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary,  
and was made man;  
and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate;  
he suffered and was buried;  
and the third day he rose again according to the Scriptures,**

and ascended into heaven,  
and sitteth on the right hand of the Father;  
and he shall come again, with glory,  
to judge both the quick and the dead;  
whose kingdom shall have no end.  
And I believe in the Holy Ghost, The Lord, and Giver of Life,  
who proceedeth from the Father and the Son;  
who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified;  
who spake by the Prophets.  
And I believe one holy Catholic and Apostolic Church;  
I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins;  
and I look for the resurrection of the dead,  
and the life of the world to come. Amen.

### *The Prayers of the People*

As we celebrate the good news of Our Lord's Resurrection, let us pray that the power of his risen life may be known throughout the world, and we pray especially at this time for the people of Ukraine and the Middle East. In our prayers for the Anglican Communion, we remember this week the Church of the Anglican Province of Alexandria; and in the Albany Diocese, our bishop, Jeremiah, and the staff serving the administrative office at Christ the King Center. We ask God's blessing on those celebrating birthdays and anniversaries this week; and those whose year's mind falls at this time.

In joy and hope, let us pray to the Lord, saying Lord, hear our prayer:

That our risen Savior may fill us with the joy of his glorious and life-giving resurrection, let us pray to the Lord: **Lord, hear our prayer.**

That isolated and persecuted churches may find fresh strength in the good news of Easter, let us pray to the Lord: **Lord, hear our prayer.**

That he may provide for those who lack food, work, or shelter, let us pray to the Lord: **Lord, hear our prayer.**

That by his power war and famine may cease through all the world, let us pray to the Lord: **Lord, hear our prayer.**

That he may strengthen with the light of his presence the sick, the weak, and the dying, let us pray to the Lord: **Lord, hear our prayer.**

That, according to his promises, all who have died in the faith of the resurrection may be raised on the last day, let us pray to the Lord: **Lord, hear our prayer.**

That he may send the fire of the Holy Spirit upon his people, so that we may bear faithful witness to his resurrection, let us pray to the Lord: **Lord, hear our prayer.**

*The Celebrant concludes with a Collect.*

We thank thee, heavenly Father, that thou has delivered us from the dominion of sin and death, and has brought us into the kingdom of thy Son; and we pray that, as by his death he has recalled us to life, so by his love he may raise us to joys eternal; who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

*Remain kneeling*

## ***The Confession and Absolution***

*Celebrant:* Let us humbly confess our sins to Almighty God.

**Almighty God,  
Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,  
maker of all things, judge of all men:  
We acknowledge and bewail our manifold sins and wickedness,  
which we from time to time most grievously have committed,  
by thought, word, and deed, against thy divine Majesty,  
provoking most justly thy wrath and indignation against us.  
We do earnestly repent,  
and are heartily sorry for these our misdoings;  
the remembrance of them is grievous unto us,  
the burden of them is intolerable.  
Have mercy upon us,  
have mercy upon us, most merciful Father;  
for thy Son our Lord Jesus Christ's sake,  
forgive us all that is past;  
and grant that we may ever hereafter  
serve and please thee in newness of life,  
to the honor and glory of thy Name;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

*The Celebrant says*

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, who of his great mercy hath promised forgiveness of sins to all those who with hearty repentance and true faith turn unto him, have mercy upon you, pardon and deliver you from all your sins, confirm and strengthen you in all goodness, and bring you to everlasting life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

*All stand. At the exchange of the Peace, please remain in your pew.*

## ***The Peace***

*Celebrant*      The peace of the Lord be always with you.  
*People*          **And with thy spirit.**

*The Altar is prepared for Holy Communion. When the Celebrant turns to face the people, all stand.*

## ***The Great Thanksgiving***

*People*            The Lord be with you.  
*Celebrant*      **And with thy spirit.**  
*People*            Lift up your hearts.  
*Celebrant*      **We lift them up unto the Lord.**  
*People*            Let us give thanks unto our Lord God.  
*Celebrant*      **It is meet and right so to do.**

*Then, facing the High Altar, the Celebrant continues*

It is very meet, right, and our bounden duty, that we should at all times, and in all places, give thanks unto thee, O Lord, holy Father, almighty, everlasting God. But chiefly we are bound to praise thee for the glorious resurrection of thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord; for he is

the very Paschal Lamb, who was sacrificed for us, and hath taken away the sin of the world; who by his death hath destroyed death, and by his rising to life again hath won for us everlasting life. Therefore with Angels and Archangels, and with all the company of heaven, we laud and magnify thy glorious Name; evermore praising thee, and saying,

**Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Hosts:  
Heaven 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.**

*All kneel. The Celebrant continues the Eucharistic Prayer.*

All glory be to thee, O Lord our God, for that thou didst create heaven and earth, and didst make us in thine own image; and, of thy tender mercy, didst give thine only Son Jesus Christ to take our nature upon him, and to suffer death upon the cross for our redemption. He made there a full and perfect sacrifice for the whole world; and did institute, and in his holy Gospel command us to continue, a perpetual memory of that his precious death and sacrifice, until his coming again.

For in the night in which he was betrayed, he took bread; and when he had given thanks to thee, 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." Likewise, after supper, he took the cup; and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, saying, "Drink this, all of you; for this is my Blood of the New Covenant, which is shed for you, and for many, for the remission of sins. Do this, as oft as ye shall drink it, in remembrance of me."

Wherefore, O Lord and heavenly Father, we thy people do celebrate and make, with these thy holy gifts which we now offer unto thee, the memorial thy Son hath commanded us to make; having in remembrance his blessed passion and precious death, his mighty resurrection and glorious ascension; and looking for his coming again with power and great glory.

And we most humbly beseech thee, O merciful Father, to hear us, and, with thy Word and Holy Spirit, to bless and sanctify these gifts of bread and wine, that they may be unto us the Body and Blood of thy dearly-beloved Son Jesus Christ.

And we earnestly desire thy fatherly goodness to accept this our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving, whereby we offer and present unto thee, O Lord, our selves, our souls and bodies. Grant, we beseech thee, that all who partake of this Holy Communion may worthily receive the most precious Body and Blood of thy Son Jesus Christ, and be filled with thy grace and heavenly benediction; and also that we and all thy whole Church may be made one body with him, that he may dwell in us, and we in him; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord;

By whom, and with whom, and in whom, in the unity of the Holy Ghost all honor and glory be unto thee, O Father Almighty, world without end. **Amen**

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

*Celebrant* And now, as our Savior Christ hath commanded and taught us, we are bold to say,

**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, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.**

## ***The Fraction***

*Celebrant  
People*

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

## ***The Agnus Dei***

**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.**

*Communion is distributed at the chancel step.*

*After Communion, all kneel. The Celebrant says*

## ***The Prayer after Communion***

Let us pray. Almighty and ever-living God, **we most heartily thank thee for that thou dost feed us, in these holy mysteries, with the spiritual food of the most precious Body and Blood of thy Son our Savior Jesus Christ; and dost assure us thereby of thy favor and goodness towards us; and that we are very members incorporate in the mystical body of thy Son, the blessed company of all faithful people; and are also heirs, through hope, of thy everlasting kingdom. And we humbly beseech thee, O heavenly Father, so to assist us with thy grace, that we may continue in that holy fellowship, and do all such good works as thou hast prepared for us to walk in; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom with thee and the Holy Ghost, be all honor and glory, world without end. Amen.**

## ***The Blessing and Dismissal***

The God of peace, who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every 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 amongst you, and remain with you always. **Amen.**

*Celebrant  
People*

Alleluia. Go into the world rejoicing in the power of the Spirit.  
**Thanks be to God. Alleluia.**

## **Notices**

Thank you to Bob Bullock for reading and leading the prayers this morning.

**TODAY at 10.00am** There will be a service of **Lessons and Carols for Easter**, with music by the choir and harpist, Elizabeth Huntley.

Our **Bible Study**, led by Dr Edele, resumes today at 9.20am. All welcome.

**Church Pews** At our Annual Meeting on 28 January, parishioners were informed of the Vestry's decision to remove three rows of pews (6 total) at the back of the church. This will open up the area around the Baptismal Font, and create additional space for parish events, including fellowship after Sunday worship, midweek study groups and meetings. Due to the number of pews already stored (languishing!) in the undercroft, the Vestry has also decided to make these pews available to interested parishioners. Please read the information sheet available at the back of the church, or speak to a warden.

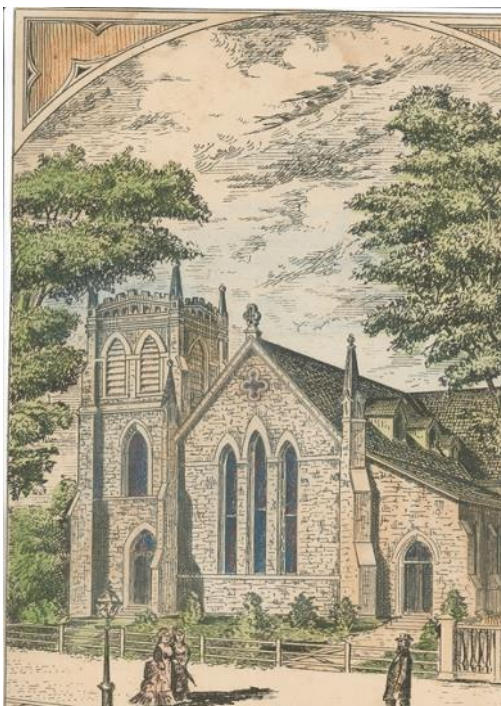
**April Special Envelope** supports the **Thomas T. Parke Music Fund**. Fr Parke was Rector of Bethesda from 1968 to 2012. In recognition of his commitment to the liturgical and musical life of the parish, a fund was established in his name which would provide additional financial support to our choral program throughout the year. Thank you for your generosity to the ministry of music at Bethesda.

**From Franklin Community Center to Bethesda Congregation:** *What a wonderful surprise! The gift of \$1204 from your recent monthly envelope directly fuels our mission, and enables us to provide low-income housing, wholesome meals and essential assistance of clothing and household items to those in need. You also make a difference in the lives of our Project Lift students by helping to create an environment where they can enjoy engaging activities, games and art that enhance their social and emotional skills. We cannot thank you enough for standing by our side! We are so grateful.*

The **church office** will be closed for two weeks, reopening on Tuesday, 16 April. Office emails and phone messages will be checked regularly.

**“We are Family”** On Sunday 14th April, there will be a special gathering to celebrate a new season of life in the Diocese of Albany. Bishop Jeremiah will join parishes of the Upper Hudson Deanery, which includes Bethesda Church, for a worship service at 5pm that will include music, readings from Scripture, and the sharing of uplifting testimonies. All are welcome. The event will take place at Christ Church, Ballston Spa, and the service is followed by dinner to which you are warmly invited. As a courtesy to Fr Derik Roy and the people at Christ Church, please *RSVP* to [office@stgeorgescp.org](mailto:office@stgeorgescp.org) by Wednesday, 10th April.

**Parking** The lot adjacent to the church offers free parking for the first two hours. You will require a credit card to enter and exit the lot which is accessible via Congress Street.





***Please place this form in the collection plate if you would like us to get in touch with you:***

*Name(s):*

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*Phone:*

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*Email address:*

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*Home address:*

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*Preferred contact method:*

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*Contact Reason(s):*

- Visitor or new resident
- Would like more information about the church and/or worship
- Interested in opportunities to serve
- Would like to speak with or have a visit from the priest
- Would like information about pledge envelopes or regular giving to Bethesda
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

***Sunday services during the year  
8am Holy Communion and 10am Sung Eucharist.  
All welcome!***

*The Reverend Charles Wallace, Priest-in-Charge*

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