

## Readings for the week

<b>Today</b>	Acts 2 v 14a & 22 - 32 John 20 v 19 - 31
Monday	Colossians 1 v 1 - 14
Tuesday	Colossians 1 v 15 - 29
Wednesday	Colossians 2 v 1- 15
Thursday	Ephesians 6 v 10 - 20
Friday	Colossians 3 v 12 - 4 v 1
Saturday	Acts 12 v 25 - 13 v 13



### Prayer

The Ministry Leadership Team would like you to pray for the following topics:

- This was to have been Adrian and Juliette's last Sunday with us. We are thankful that they are able to remain for a few more months at this difficult time. Pray for them and others whose plans have had to be postponed, that they may be able to cope with the uncertainty and trust in God for the future.*
- As the death toll rises, pray for all the bereaved who have been unable to say goodbye to their loved ones, that they may know God's comfort and peace.*

**If you want to volunteer, or need help, contact Alcester Community Resilience on Facebook or Tel: 0770 759 8379 or email [Alcester.response@outlook.com](mailto:Alcester.response@outlook.com)**

*Check out the website for resources to worship at home and, during the Coronavirus, you can also access the most current edition of Minster Matters and the Link from the Welcome Page of the website.*



Did you know that you can now 'LIKE' Alcester Minster on Facebook? Find details and pictures of events at [www.facebook.com/AlcesterMinster](http://www.facebook.com/AlcesterMinster) If you would like to submit event notices or photos to be published on the page then please email [administrator@alcesterminster.org](mailto:administrator@alcesterminster.org)



# Welcome to the Alcester Minster Group of Churches Sunday 19 April 2020

**Easter 2**    *White*

*"This Jesus God raised up, and of that all of us are witnesses."*

Acts 2 v 32

### 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.

### Alternative Collect

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.

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**Alcester Minster website:** [www.alcesterminster.org](http://www.alcesterminster.org)

**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/AlcesterMinster](http://www.facebook.com/AlcesterMinster)

## Easter 2 'Thought for the Day' presented by Pat

### Reading: John 20 v 19 – 21a

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

Again, Jesus said, "Peace be with you!"

*John 20:19- 21a (from the Gospel reading, John 20:19 – 31)*

### Thought for the Day

#### Christ is Risen!! He is risen indeed, Halleluia!

Did you enjoy, as Roger and I did, the great variety of worship and Easter programmes on radio, TV and online – including the one from Alcester Minster? It was a real Easter feast, with time for reflection and stillness in between.

It was good to lift our focus away from the daily Covid CV updates to worship and praise the living Lord Jesus. Worship is a wonderful weapon against doubt and fear and anxiety. It reminds us of God's goodness and love, that He is present with us, and that the Lord **Almighty** reigns!

My grandson wrote a poem about coronavirus; he called it, 'an unknown disease, stalking across the world like a silent shadow, filling people with fear'. How right he is.

Fear for those we love but can no longer see, fear for those we know who have contracted the virus, fear at the sudden loss of our normal life and wondering what the future will hold – and of course as the figures come out each day – where the disease will strike next.

Some fear is quite normal, but fear can overwhelm us, paralyse us so that we cannot think rationally or move forward. Fear doesn't empty tomorrow of its difficulties, but it empties today of its strength. 366 times the Bible tells us not to be afraid, often accompanied by, 'for I am with you'. Fear is the greatest obstacle to faith, because it focuses our mind on our circumstances instead of on the One who can move mountains. So cut down on the CV updates, but sing hymns and songs instead!

We can see from our reading that the disciples were gripped by fear. They had spent 3 years with Jesus, loved him dearly, built their lives around him, but they had witnessed his arrest, torture and cruel death, the taunts of the crowd and the authorities, and as they met together, they were indeed terrified - it was no wonder they firmly locked the doors. Would the same happen to them? What would life be like now?

Fear had paralysed and confused them so much, they had forgotten that Jesus said he would rise again, forgotten that John and Peter had found the tomb empty, that Mary Magdalen had reported 'I have seen the Lord!', that the two disciples from Emmaus had reported that they had walked and talked with him. In their grief and fear they had forgotten how He calmed the storm, how he turned water into wine, how He healed the sick, fed the 5000.....

Then Jesus miraculously appeared, came into all their fear, confusion and hopelessness, came with his familiar greeting – 'Peace be with you', and as they recognised their beloved Friend, you can almost feel the fear and confusion and forgettery falling away: 'they were overjoyed, when they saw the Lord! What a relief! What a Saviour! His familiar presence with them brought their security and their hope.

He does the same for us, when we ask Him into our fear and our uncertainties. When we '**see**' Him and recognise Him, we shall, like the disciples, be reminded of His love and faithfulness to us in the past, the answers to prayer, the way he can bring joy out of sorrow and good out of any situation. We shall remember the Easter story: Christ died and is risen so that even death cannot hold us. He is our anchor and like the disciples, we know can trust Him with the future.

Henri Nouwen said prayer is the place where the tears of God mingle with the tears of his people to become tears of hope. It would be good to spend time getting to know His heart, bringing Him our tears and fears.

### Prayer

Dear Lord Jesus, as you brought peace to the disciples on that Resurrection evening, by the power of your Holy Spirit, fill us to overflowing with your peace.

Lord, where people are grieving, hold them close, where there is suffering, come with your healing touch, where there is loneliness, be alongside, where there is hunger, poverty and despair bring relief, and to those who are exhausted pour in your strength and love.

Thank you that nothing is impossible for you; keep us firm in faith and confident in the Hope that is ours through your death and resurrection. For your name's sake, **AMEN**

*You are the King of glory,  
You are the Prince of Peace,  
You are the Lord of heaven and earth,  
You're the Son of righteousness.  
Angels bow down before you, worship and adore,  
for You have the words of eternal life,  
You are Jesus Christ the Lord.  
Hosanna to the Son of David!  
Hosanna to the King of kings!  
Glory in the highest heaven  
for Jesus the Messiah reigns!!*

