



WYCHERT VALE BENEFICE

The licensing of **The Revd Cassa Messervy** as **Rector for the Wychert Vale Benefice** will take place on **22nd April at 7:30pm**

We look forward to welcoming Cassa as our new Rector and ask you to pray for her and her family as they prepare for their move.

Cross of witness

Our wooden cross is now in place on Oxford Road near the pond. It will stay there until Monday as a visual witness to passers-by. This has replaced our Good Friday walk of witness this year. You are welcome to leave a posy of flowers at the foot of the cross.



*Thankyou Jesus for your obedience to our Heavenly Father,
Make our hearts overflow with joy at your Resurrection,
Make our faces shine with the light of the good news!
May our joy be an infectious invitation for others to open their
hearts to receive your love too Amen*

Dear Friends,
Christ is Risen! - [our online service for Easter Sunday](#) - **is now available.**
Have a joyful Easter and have hope.

Phil Groves
Associate Rector in the Wychert Vale Benefice Phone 01296 748 390

We are hoping to return to holding our Sunday morning services in church from 18th April. This is the first Sunday after the next step on the Government roadmap for unlocking. This will of course depend on everything going to plan, so please check the website each week for any updates. It is difficult to get news out quickly to everyone so please remember those who do not use the internet and give them a call as well.

If you have been saving your loose change for Water Aid during Lent please bring it to church on 18th April where there will be a bucket for you to drop it in. Thankyou.

BELONG - BELIEVE - BUILD - WITH CHRIST AS THE CORNERSTONE



Wychert Vale Benefice
www.wychertvale.org



Parish of Stone, Dinton and Hartwell

Churches of: St. John Baptist, STONE; Ss Peter & Paul, DINTON; Assumption of St. Mary the Virgin, HARTWELL
www.stonedintonhartwell.com

St. John the Baptist STONE Sunday 4th April EASTER SUNDAY

10:30am Thanksgiving service led by David Pickup
THE LORD IS RISEN!

A celebration of the hope that the Easter message brings. This is an **outdoor service** in the north churchyard. We are allowed to sing together outdoors so we hope you are all in good voice! If you prefer to sit down please bring your own chair if you can. There will be an activity for the children. The service and hymn sheet are available to download from the website www.stonedintonhartwell.com/

NEXT WEEK – 10:30am OUTDOOR SERVICE (check website for updates)



EASTER ACTIVITY PACK

You can bring a little joy and hope to the village this Easter by decorating your house with whatever you can, and if you send in pictures of what you have done you may even win a prize! Details are on the website where there is an exciting Easter Activity Pack for all the family to enjoy.

<https://stonedintonhartwell.com/easter-activity-pack-2021/>

BELONG - BELIEVE - BUILD - WITH CHRIST AS THE CORNERSTONE

Easter Sunday reflection – based on John 20:1-18



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.

Last week in our reflection we were invited to make up our mind who Jesus really is – the Son of God or an impostor. Now we have reached the centrepiece of the gospels and the closest friends of Jesus are faced with another dilemma - an empty tomb. We are told that at this point they still did not understand from Scripture that Jesus had to rise from the dead. So at first they are more concerned that the body had been stolen.

No doubt you have read this passage many times before. Even if it is familiar it is still a powerful account of the first Easter morning. Read it again carefully and think about how each of the key witnesses might have been feeling at the time, and why they at first reacted in different ways.

- Mary Magdalene was devoted to Jesus who had saved her from a seedy and sinful past life. The risen Jesus chose to reveal himself first to her, a sign of hope for all who are struggling with past sin. But Mary wanted to hold on to the comfort of his physical presence. She did not understand that she would move on to a new and life giving relationship with Jesus even though she would no longer see him.
- Peter came more slowly to the tomb but went inside first. He had been one of Jesus’ inner circle of friends. Even so, after Jesus was arrested he denied ever knowing him. As he ran to the tomb he was probably still struggling with the guilt of having let Jesus down, and now it seemed that the body had been stolen as well. Have a look at the account of Jesus forgiving Peter for this (John 21:15-19). Jesus offers forgiveness to us when we are truly sorry for letting him down .
- The ‘other disciple’ rushed ahead but then hesitated outside the tomb, no doubt confused and astonished by what he saw. Yet he saw and believed. Was this a step of faith even though he did not understand? And who was he? It is thought this was John, the author of this gospel account. He had a close friendship with Jesus and maybe that is why his response was one of faith. If we set aside time to spend with Jesus and really get to know him, our faith in him will grow.

In 2019 I was fortunate to visit the Garden Tomb in Jerusalem. There is no claim that it is definitely the tomb of Jesus, but it could have been. It is a place of reverence, peace, and beauty. My abiding memory though is of the other visitors who came to sing praises in their own languages. So many different tongues worshipping God in the same place. We even came across a joyful Maori church from New Zealand praising God!

Since Mary’s excited proclamation ‘I have seen the Lord!’ the news of the risen Christ has gone around the world. We who have the benefit of the written gospels have every reason to be just as excited today to share the good news with others as she was. Let us make sure we do. <https://gardentomb.com/about> JP

BELONG - BELIEVE - BUILD - WITH CHRIST AS THE CORNERSTONE

BELONG - BELIEVE - BUILD - WITH CHRIST AS THE CORNERSTONE