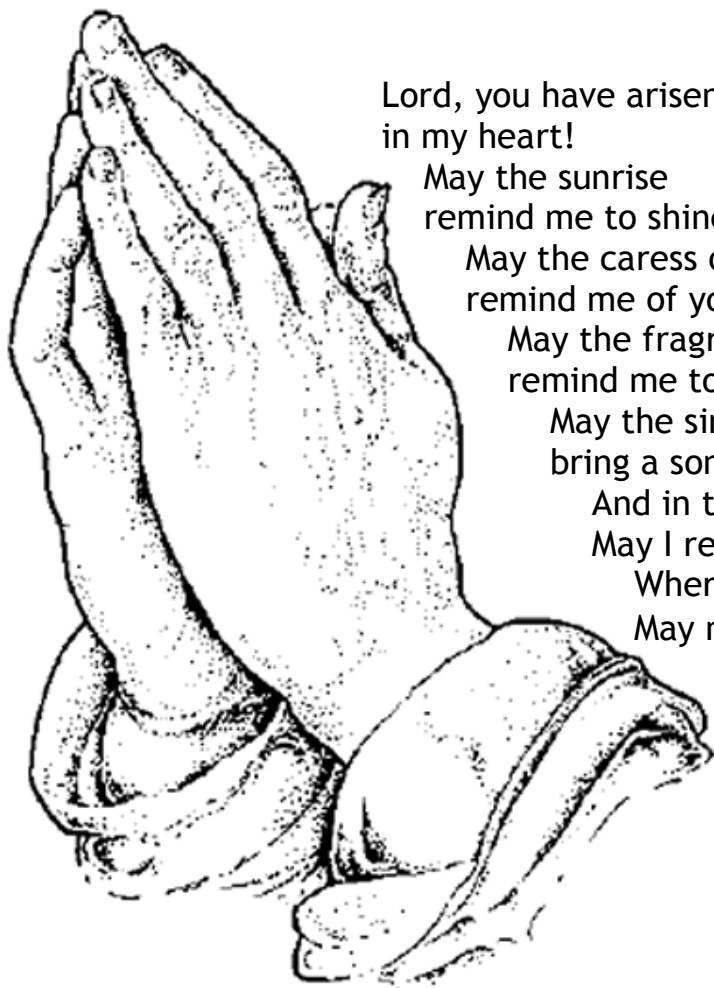


Prayer Leaflet

April 2007



Lord, you have arisen forever
in my heart!

May the sunrise
remind me to shine in your light.

May the caress of a gentle breeze
remind me of your compassion.

May the fragrance of a flower
remind me to blossom in your love.

May the singing of birds
bring a song of joy to my lips.

And in the closing of each day

May I remember to quietly pray.

Wherever I am, whatever I do

May my thoughts in joy return to you!

The Parish Church of St Mary the Virgin

Godmanchester

Incredible?

Acts 26:1-8

Agrippa said to Paul, 'You have permission to speak for yourself.' Then Paul stretched out his hand and began to defend himself:

'I consider myself fortunate that it is before you, King Agrippa, I am to make my defence today against all the accusations of the Jews, because you are especially familiar with all the customs and controversies of the Jews; therefore I beg of you to listen to me patiently.

'All the Jews know my way of life from my youth, a life spent from the beginning among my own people and in Jerusalem. They have known for a long time, if they are willing to testify, that I have belonged to the strictest sect of our religion and lived as a Pharisee. And now I stand here on trial on account of my hope in the promise made by God to our ancestors, a promise that our twelve tribes hope to attain, as they earnestly worship day and night. It is for this hope, your Excellency, that I am accused by Jews! Why is it thought incredible by any of you that God raises the dead?



If Jesus did not rise from the dead and there is no future day of resurrection for us, then life loses all its meaning. If this life is all there is – just a few years of alternate crying and laughing (mostly crying) and then darkness – with Paul we can say, " If for this life only we have hoped in Christ, we are of all people most to be pitied" (1 Corinthians 15:19).

Resurrection, however, is not an incredible, irrational idea. We can see illustrations of resurrection all around us in nature. For example, Egyptian garden peas that had been buried for 3,000 years were brought out and planted on June 4, 1844. Within a few days they had germinated and broken the ground. Buried for 3,000 years – then resurrected. That's amazing!

Why then should it be thought incredible that God should raise the dead? That was the surprised question of Paul to King Agrippa (Acts 26:8). If God could take some dust and breathe life into it to create a man (Gen 2:7), why would anyone think it incredible for this same God to raise someone from the dead?

Yes, it is most incredible that Jesus would arise. It would be incredible, if after the miraculous life he lived he had remained in the grave. Hallelujah! Christ arose!

Our Prayers in April are especially requested for:

In the Church

Holy Week and Easter – that this time may encourage spiritual growth and refreshment for those attending the various services.

Farewell to Ally (29th) – give thanks for everything we've received from Ally, and pray for her continuing ministry to the people of Buckden and Offord.

Events – APCM(15th); St George's Day Parade Service (22nd); – please pray for these events, and those who will attend them.

Mothers' Union – for The Worldwide Mothers' Union's "wave of prayer" (1st – 5th); and our links to branches in Juba, Maridi, Yambio & Yei in Sudan & Kigali in Rwanda.

Flower Guild – that the Easter flowers will enhance our worship.

St Mary's 0s-5s Group – give thanks for the generosity of new committee members who will enable the group to continue.

Pastoral Group – for all who give their time freely, visiting and ministering to all who need support through difficult times.

Magazine – give thanks for the leadership of our Editor.

In the World

Christian Solidarity Worldwide – Heavenly Father, we thank you that Jesus intimately knows the suffering that Christians face for their faith, and that he is always beside them. We pray especially for the people of Zimbabwe at this time and we praise you for our eternal future gained by Jesus' death and resurrection.

The charity the Church supports through the collection plate in April: **DISH**, provides an information and advice service to disabled people, carers and professionals in the Huntingdonshire area.

This month, in our Street Prayer Mission, we'll be praying for:

Week commencing Sunday 1 April:

West Street; Pinfold Lane; Granary Close; The Maltings; Oakleigh Crescent.

Week commencing Sunday 8 April:

Crow Hill; Thick Willow; Bergamont Close.

Week commencing Sunday 15 April:

St Anne's Lane; The Stiles; New Street; St Anne's Court.

Week commencing Sunday 22 April:

Bascraft Way; Mowlands; Lions Cross; Dovehouse Close.

Week commencing Sunday 29 April:

Croftfield Close; Peate Close.

Please remember the residents of these streets, those known to us, and especially those, as yet, unknown to us.

Some Prayers for April:

True and humble king,
hailed by the crowd as Messiah:
grant us the faith to know you and love you,
that we may be found beside you
on the way of the cross,
which is the path of glory.

Eternal God,
in the cross of Jesus
we see the cost of our sin
and the depth of your love:
in humble hope and fear
may we place at his feet
all that we have and all that we are,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

God of Glory,
by the raising of your Son
you have broken the chains of death and hell:
fill your Church with faith and hope;
for a new day has dawned
and the way to life stands open
in our Saviour Jesus Christ.

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.

Risen Christ,
you filled your disciples with boldness and fresh hope:
strengthen us also to proclaim your risen life
and fill us with your peace,
to the glory of God the Father.

Risen Christ,
faithful shepherd of your Father's sheep:
teach us to hear your voice
and to follow your command,
that all your people may be gathered into one flock,
to the glory of God the Father.

