

# **Easingwold with Raskelf**



## **The Season Of Easter Service of the Word 2021**

*Welcome*

*Hymn*(stand) *This joyful Eastertide*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J7TFuqp97cs>/target="\_blank

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### *The Greeting*

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, \_  
and of the Holy Spirit.

**Amen.**

Grace, mercy and peace from God our Father  
and the Lord Jesus Christ be with you  
**and also with you.**

### *Prayer of Preparation*

**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*(sit or kneel)

In baptism we died with Christ, so that as Christ was raised from the dead,  
we might walk in newness of life.  
Let us receive new life in him as we confess our sins in penitence and faith

**Most merciful God,  
Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,  
We confess that we have sinned in thought word and deed.  
We have not loved you with our whole heart.  
We have not loved our neighbours as ourselves.  
In your mercy forgive what we have been.  
Help up to amend what we are,  
And direct what we shall be;  
That we may do justly, love mercy,  
And walk humbly with you, our God. Amen.**

### *Absolution*

May the God of healing and forgiveness  
draw you to himself,  
that you may behold the glory of his Son,  
the Word made flesh,  
and be cleansed from all your sins,  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**



### *The Gloria*

**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* (sit)

Risen Christ, your wounds declare your love for the world and the wonder of your risen life:  
give us compassion and courage to risk ourselves for those we serve, to the glory of God the  
Father, **Amen.**

## *The Ministry of the Word*

### **Acts 8:26-40**

Then an angel of the Lord said to Philip, 'Get up and go towards the south\* to the road that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza.' (This is a wilderness road.) So he got up and went. Now there was an Ethiopian eunuch, a court official of the Candace, queen of the Ethiopians, in charge of her entire treasury. He had come to Jerusalem to worship and was returning home; seated in his chariot, he was reading the prophet Isaiah. Then the Spirit said to Philip, 'Go over to this chariot and join it.' So Philip ran up to it and heard him reading the prophet Isaiah. He asked, 'Do you understand what you are reading?' He replied, 'How can I, unless someone guides me?' And he invited Philip to get in and sit beside him. Now the passage of the scripture that he was reading was this:

'Like a sheep he was led to the slaughter and like a lamb silent before its shearer, so he does not open his mouth. In his humiliation justice was denied him. Who can describe his generation? For his life is taken away from the earth.'

The eunuch asked Philip, 'About whom, may I ask you, does the prophet say this, about himself or about someone else?' Then Philip began to speak, and starting with this scripture, he proclaimed to him the good news about Jesus. As they were going along the road, they came to some water; and the eunuch said, 'Look, here is water! What is to prevent me from being baptized?\*' He commanded the chariot to stop, and both of them, Philip and the eunuch, went down into the water, and Philip\* baptized him. When they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord snatched Philip away; the eunuch saw him no more, and went on his way rejoicing. But Philip found himself at Azotus, and as he was passing through the region, he proclaimed the good news to all the towns until he came to Caesarea.

This is the word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

## *The Gospel* (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 *Luke*.

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

## **John 15:1-8**

'I am the true vine, and my Father is the vine-grower. He removes every branch in me that bears no fruit. Every branch that bears fruit he prunes to make it bear more fruit. You have already been cleansed by the word that I have spoken to you. Abide in me as I abide in you. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me.

I am the vine, you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing. Whoever does not abide in me is thrown away like a branch and withers; such branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask for whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit and become my disciples.

This is the gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, O Christ.**

### *The Sermon*

"As they were going along the road they came to some water and the eunuch said to Philip, 'Look here is water. What is to prevent me from being baptized?'"

Water, an everyday liquid that we cannot do without. The lack of rain over the past few weeks have made us value the rain that we have had over recent days, the temperature has gone down but the gardeners and the farmers are very grateful to see it.

How often do we think of water and think of Baptism? Probably not that much, but it was what Philip was thinking about. Why did he think about it? What was he looking for? What parts of his life needed to drown so that something new could arise?

I like many of you was very small when I was baptised, I was about 5 weeks old so don't remember it. It was something that was my parents' decision so it was nothing that I was looking for myself but that doesn't mean to say that there are not other baptisms in my life, and I am not talking about taking a baptism service.

When we look at our lives we will see when there have been events in our lives when we have opened ourselves up to others or seen something that has made us a better person.

I think about when I met Tim, it was at a Ceilidh, I really don't remember Tim dancing much since then as look at the trouble it got him in. It was a baptism of an encounter that changed our lives.

I think of family holidays, and one in particular in Ireland where we had the most glorious sunshine. We had hired a horse drawn caravan for the week. It is the main holiday that we all remember the best, and it is one that both of our children want to do again as adults. It was a time when we all worked together as a family, looking after

the horse, tacking and untacking him, walking the roads from one location to the next with a huge horse pulling the caravan walking along side us, listening to his feet going clip clop on the road. It was a holiday where we had baptism of working together as a family and it wasn't about Mum and Dad doing everything.

Throughout my working life, whether it was for the NHS or for the church, I have had many conversations with people whether it has been about their eyes or their faith that have subtly changed the person that I am. Each of these encounters has been a baptism for me that have formed my priesthood. Some of these encounters have been difficult and some have been a privilege to be part of, some have left me feeling broken and some have left me feeling positive, some of these waters of baptism have been water of tears but all of them opportunities for a new way of being and living.

Each experience has been a way in which either I opened up the world for myself or the world was opened up for me. I was different and I grew and through it I was able to see God at work in my life.

There is only one baptism in church, where we are baptised in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit but the process of baptism cleanses us and makes up at one with God.

But the process of recognising God in our life is not limited to our baptism. We are renewed every day by events which help us see God at work in our lives and in the lives of others.

Every time we come to those places in our life, those people, and those relationships, that open to us and invite us to be more fully ourselves, we are being baptized. Every time we experience something that cleanses our eyes and we see more clearly, we are being baptized. Every time something happens in our heart and we love more deeply, we are being baptized. Every time we begin to live from a new place of wisdom or gratitude, we are being baptized.

That one baptism that happens in the church was never intended to be exclusive. It's archetypical. It is the pointer to all the other baptisms in our world and our life. The waters of baptism are everywhere. Our marriage and relationships, our parenting, our friendships are all baptismal waters. Our work and vocation are baptismal waters. Our passions, dreams, and creativity are waters of baptism. Our concerns for justice and human dignity are baptismal waters. Our pain, brokenness, sorrows, and losses are baptismal waters.

Unfortunately, there are sad times in our lives, there are times when we feel absolutely broken and God feels so far away from us. We may not appreciate what God is letting us go through at that point in times but whatever the situation we learn and grow. God is seen in the action of others helping us when we are down.

We eventually are able to look back as the dark, bleak times and see how that friend did far more than was ever expected. We are baptised in lessons of humility as we accept their offers of help. This helps us in our brokenness bringing us closer to God and giving us hope when we feel abandoned.

The water of baptism is not contained solely in the fonts of our churches. The world is our baptismal font and our relationships, the people in our lives, our experiences are the holy waters in which we are baptized.

I have given a few of my own examples but I am sure that you have your own thoughts on how you have been baptized by your experiences. But what baptismal experience is before us now? What parts of our lives need to be healed or renewed?

In our communion hymn today, we hear the words of our souls longing for you. The deer pants for the water, the life-giving water that helps renew that deer so it can live. Our souls also long for that water of baptism and we find it in our experiences both good and bad.

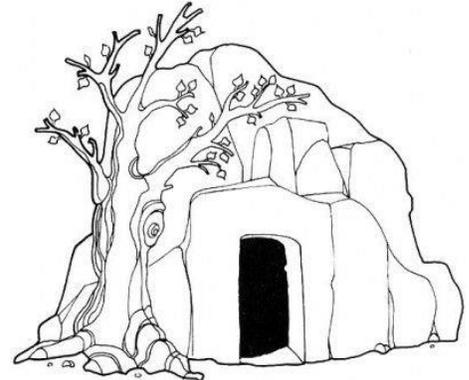
### *The Creed* (stand)

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,  
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,  
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary,  
suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead.**

**On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven;  
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,  
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy catholic Church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and the life everlasting. Amen.**



### *Prayers of Intercession* (sit or kneel)

Lord, We pray to Jesus who is present with us to eternity.  
Jesus, light of the world,  
bring the light and peace of your gospel to the nations ...  
Jesus, Lord of life,  
**in your mercy, hear us.**

Jesus, bread of life,  
give food to the hungry ...  
and nourish us all with your word.  
Jesus, Lord of life,  
**in your mercy, hear us.**

Jesus, our way, our truth, our life,  
be with us and all who follow you in the way ...  
Deepen our appreciation of your truth  
and fill us with your life.  
Jesus, Lord of life,  
**in your mercy, hear us.**

Jesus, Good Shepherd who gave your life for the sheep,  
recover the straggler, bind up the injured,  
strengthen the sick and lead the healthy and strong to new pastures.  
Jesus, Lord of life,  
**in your mercy, hear us.**

Jesus, the resurrection and the life,  
we give you thanks for all who have lived and believed in you ...  
Raise us with them to eternal life.  
Jesus, Lord of life,  
**in your mercy, hear us,  
accept our prayers, and be with us always.  
Amen.**

### *The Peace* (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.**

### *Hymn* Jesus I have promised

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=svgHDdzP5xY>

### *Blessing*

God, who through the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ has given us the victory,  
give you joy and peace in your faith; and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the  
Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among you and remain with you always.  
**Amen.**

### *The Dismissal*

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.  
**In the name of Christ. Amen.**

