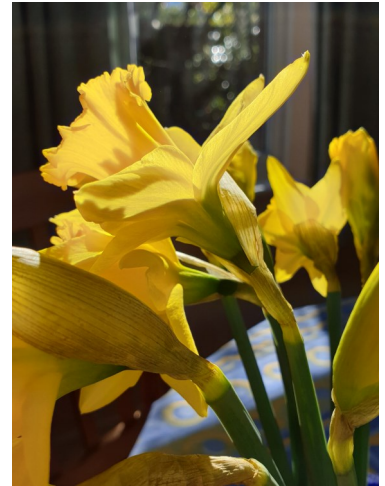


Parish of St. Thomas, Apostle & Martyr, Ipswich

19th April 2020 - Second Sunday of Easter

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. Amen.



Psalm 16: Song of Trust and Security in God

Protect me, O God, for in you I take refuge.
I say to the Lord, "You are my Lord; I have no good apart from you."
As for the holy ones in the land, they are the noble, in whom is all my delight.
Those who choose another god multiply their sorrows; their drink offerings of blood I will not pour out or take their names upon my lips.
The Lord is my chosen portion and my cup; you hold my lot.
The boundary lines have fallen for me in pleasant

places; I have a goodly heritage.
I bless the Lord who gives me counsel; in the night also my heart instructs me.
I keep the Lord always before me; because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved.
Therefore my heart is glad, and my soul rejoices; my body also rests secure.
For you do not give me up to Sheol, or let your faithful one see the Pit.
You show me the path of life. In your presence there is fullness of joy; in your right hand are pleasures forevermore.

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles But Peter, standing with the eleven, raised his voice and addressed them, "Men of Judea and all who live in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and listen to what I say. "You that are Israelites, listen to what I have to say: Jesus of Nazareth, a man attested to you by God with deeds of power, wonders, and signs that God did through him among you, as you yourselves know— this man, handed over to you according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of those outside the law. But God raised him up, having freed him from death, because it was impossible for him to be held in its power. For David says concerning him, 'I saw the Lord always before me, for he is at my right hand so that I will not be shaken; therefore my heart was glad, and my tongue rejoiced; moreover my flesh will live in hope. For you will not abandon my soul to Hades, or let your Holy One experience corruption. You have made known to me the ways of life; you will make me full of gladness with your presence.' "Fellow Israelites, I may say to you confidently of our ancestor David that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us to this day. Since he was a prophet, he knew that God had sworn with an oath to him that he would put one of his descendants on his throne. Foreseeing this, David spoke of the resurrection of the Messiah, saying, 'He was not abandoned to Hades, nor did his flesh experience corruption.' This Jesus God raised up, and of that all of us are witnesses. (Acts 2.14,22-32)

Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John (20.19-end)

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.

This is the gospel of the Lord. Praise to you, o Christ.

Reflection: The fear you can sense at the beginning of our gospel reading, the way the disciples' whole world had fallen apart, is perhaps more relatable to us now than it ever has been before. There they were, huddled in a locked room, shut away from everyone else, afraid of the outside finding its way in. They are caught in an unrecognisable unknown. Everything they had done for the last few years - spending every moment with Jesus, eating, talking, travelling together - has ended. They don't know what lies ahead, and they don't know how to move forwards. It's a disaster. It's pretty bleak. And oh how familiar this seems today!

But, it is here that we find the persistent, transforming hope of Easter. For in the midst of all this fear, the disciples find themselves experiencing Jesus again - who comes among them and says 'Peace be with you'. Put aside your fear, and be at peace. And we notice that Jesus' resurrection does not mean that things return to how they were. Jesus doesn't pick up where he left off, or carry on doing what he was before. No. The world *has* changed forever. But in this change and strangeness, Jesus gives the gift of the Holy Spirit, who will be present and remain with them from now on.

It's an encounter of hope that Thomas doesn't understand when he is told about it, because who would believe such a thing when you see no way out of the darkness? Thomas is surrounded with his grief and anger, and cannot imagine a new world. He cannot believe. But we are not left to struggle on our own. Jesus comes again, and gently enables Thomas to see, to understand that change does not always mean complete loss. This experience of Jesus coming into the midst of a group of frightened people, bringing hope, peace, and the gift of the Spirit, is like a promise. It's a promise that we are never alone when we are huddled in our own darkness and fears. It's a promise that even if the world has become strange and altered, as it has done so many times before through the ages, God walks alongside us through it all. In asking Thomas to touch his wounds, Jesus invites us to acknowledge and hold all that is broken and wounded, and to understand that God holds it too, embodied as carrying the pain in his very hands. Yet what persists is hope. Hope, peace, and the sure knowledge that even if things are never the same again, there will be a new way of being that is bound up in the gift of the Spirit and the unconquerable love of God in Jesus.

The resurrection is a promise that we are never alone. That God persists, offering life in the face of death. That in our darkest moments, Christ is among us, holding our fears in his hands and bringing us peace.

- Rev Cat

Here are the words of two hymns you may like to sing or pray this week

Alleluia, alleluia!

Hearts to heaven and voices raise:
sing to God a hymn of gladness,
sing to God a hymn of praise.
He, who on the cross a victim,
for the world's salvation bled,
Jesus Christ, the King of glory,
now is risen from the dead.

Christ is risen, Christ, the first fruits
of the holy harvest field,
which will all its full abundance
at his second coming yield:
then the golden ears of harvest
will their heads before him wave,
ripened by his glorious sunshine
from the furrows of the grave.

Christ is risen, we are risen!
Shed upon us heavenly grace,
rain and dew and gleams of glory
from the brightness of thy face;
that we, with our hearts in heaven,
here on earth may fruitful be,
and by angel hands be gathered,
and be ever, Lord, with thee.

Alleluia, alleluia!

Glory be to God on high;
Alleluia! to the Savior
who has gained the victory;
Alleluia! to the Spirit,
fount of love and sanctity:
Alleluia, alleluia!

Praise Him! Praise Him! Jesus, our blessed
Redeemer!
Sing, O Earth, His wonderful love proclaim!
Hail Him! Hail Him! Highest archangels in
glory;
Strength and honour give to His holy
Name!
Like a shepherd, Jesus will guard His
children,
In His arms He carries them all day long.

*Praise Him! Praise Him!
Tell of His excellent greatness;
Praise Him! Praise Him!
Ever in joyful song!*

Praise Him! Praise Him! Jesus, our blessed
Redeemer!
For our sins He suffered, and bled, and
died.
He our Rock, our hope of eternal salvation,
Hail Him! Hail Him! Jesus the Crucified.
Sound His praises! Jesus who bore our
sorrows,
Love unbounded, wonderful, deep and
strong.

Praise Him! Praise Him! Jesus, our blessed
Redeemer!
Heav'nly portals loud with hosannas ring!
Jesus, Saviour, reigneth forever and ever;
Crown Him! Crown Him! Prophet, and
Priest, and King!
Christ is coming! over the world victorious,
Pow'r and glory unto the Lord belong.

May you know the Peace of the risen Christ, who came and stood among his disciples and said 'Peace be with you'. Then were the disciples glad when they saw the Lord.

Alleluia! The peace of the risen Christ be always with you.

If you would like to chat, please give us a ring:

Revd Jutta: 07958 360 564 Rev Cat 07530 412988

Roger Elmer 07810 274586 Sylvia Dickerson 07903 739487

Malcolm Gibbs 07906 663530 Mary Bullass 625135 Gloria Elmer 745590

Rev Jackie Sears 07962172639 Revd Pat Wright 01473 464748

Please pray for: Eric Dickerson, Rosemary, Adam, Jenny and Andrew Barfield, Kathy Steele, Frank D., Andrew Derrett, Peggy (has not been well), Pat, Natacha, Clare Baxter, Christine, Stephen, Julie, Samantha, Jill, Rex, Molly Johansen, Mike Harding, Emily & family (9 years old with cancer), Tilly, Juliet Adams, Mark Eley, Matthew Hare, Gloria Elmer, Margaret Christian, Helen Harlow, Jean Dominy, Leslie Bloomfield, Pete Tanced, Val's niece (Covid19)

Thank you for Jim & Daphne 's recovery

Those who have recently died, among them : Alan Seeley R.I.P (+Martin's dad, funeral on 24 April)

Pray for all who are affected by the Coronavirus, their families and friends, in the UK and around the world; **for all health care staff and all who are working long hours in the service of others.**

For victims of conflict and natural disaster around the world, support agencies and peacemakers.



Thank you for your prayers for baby Dylan, born on 22 March & Naomi, his mum. They are doing very well, and 'Archie loves his little brother'.

Pray for members of the St Thomas Congregation (each week we will include a dozen names)

Karen & Nigel, Gemma & Darren (both carers) with Haydn & Harrison, Alison & Malcolm, Carole & Frank, Emma with Steve, Bradley & Esmae, Jill Last,



Birthdays this week:

Natacha Wilcox (23rd)



Online Church Services:

Sunday 19 April: 10am ZOOM Worship

**Tuesday 21 April: 7.30pm LiveStream Meditation on facebook/
StThomasPilgrimCommunity**

Please, look out for a worship video on our facebook page on Sunday morning

Church Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/sthomasipswich/>

Church website:

<http://sthomasipswich.org.uk/>

Contacts:

Priest in charge: Revd Jutta Brueck

m: 07958 360564

Email: jutta.brueck@cofesuffolk.org

Jutta's days off are: Fridays & Saturdays

Assistant Curate: Revd Cat Connolly

m: 07530 412988

Email: revcatconnolly@gmail.com

Cat's day off: Mondays

IMPORTANT REQUEST: NW Ipswich Big Local Trust Fresh Food Fridays support for Covid-19

Do you know of any people/ families in need who could benefit from the BLT Fresh Food Friday support scheme, to receive a box of fresh food for free?

If you know anyone in need in the Big Local Trust area of Whitton, Whitehouse or Castle Hill, **could you please let Jutta know as this works via referral.**

We would need to let the families know and then pass on their initials / surname or postcode to the BLT co-ordinator.

if you are aware of anyone who could benefit from this, please do let me know . Thank you. Jutta