

# Parish of St. Thomas, Apostle & Martyr, Ipswich

## 16th May 2021 - Easter 7

### Collect:

Risen, ascended Lord, as we rejoice at your triumph, fill your Church on earth with power and compassion, that all who are estranged by sin may find forgiveness and know your peace, to the glory of God the Father. **Amen.**

### Psalm 1

1 Happy are those  
who do not follow the advice of the wicked,  
or take the path that sinners tread,  
or sit in the seat of scoffers;  
2 but their delight is in the law of the Lord,  
and on his law they meditate day and night.  
3 They are like trees  
planted by streams of water,  
which yield their fruit in its season,  
and their leaves do not wither.  
In all that they do, they prosper.  
4 The wicked are not so,



but are like chaff that the wind drives away.  
5 Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgement,  
nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous;  
6 for the Lord watches over the way of the righteous,  
but the way of the wicked will perish.

### A reading from the book of the Acts of the Apostles (1.15-17, 21-end)

In those days Peter stood up among the believers (together the crowd numbered about one hundred and twenty people) and said, 'Friends, the scripture had to be fulfilled, which the Holy Spirit through David foretold concerning Judas, who became a guide for those who arrested Jesus— for he was numbered among us and was allotted his share in this ministry.'

So one of the men who have accompanied us throughout the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, beginning from the baptism of John until the day when he was taken up from us—one of these must become a witness with us to his resurrection.' So they proposed two, Joseph called Barsabbas, who was also known as Justus, and Matthias. Then they prayed and said, 'Lord, you know everyone's heart. Show us which one of these two you have chosen to take the place in this ministry and apostleship from which Judas turned aside to go to his own place.' And they cast lots for them, and the lot fell on Matthias; and he was added to the eleven apostles.

**This is the word of the Lord. Thanks be to God.**

### Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John (17.6-19)

'I have made your name known to those whom you gave me from the world. They were yours, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word. Now they know that everything you have given me is from you; for the words that you gave to me I have given to them, and they have received them and know in truth that I came from you; and they have believed that you sent me. I am asking on their behalf; I am not asking on behalf of the world, but on behalf of those whom you gave me, because they are yours. All mine are yours, and yours are mine; and I have been glorified in them. And now I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them in your name that you have given me, so that they may be one, as we are one. While I was with them, I protected them in your name that you have given me. I guarded them, and not one of them was lost except the one destined to be lost, so that the scripture might be fulfilled. But now I am coming to you, and I speak these things in the world so that they may have my joy made complete in themselves. I have given them your word, and the world has hated them because they do not belong to the world, just as I do not belong to the world. I am not asking you to take them out of the world, but I ask you to protect them from the evil one. They do not belong to the world, just as I do not belong to the world. Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth. As you have sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world. And for their sakes I sanctify myself, so that they also may be sanctified in truth.'

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

## Reflection:

This morning's Gospel reading is from John 17. Although the set passage for this morning starts at verse 6, it is useful to first refer to verse 1. which starts "After Jesus had spoken these words, he looked up to heaven and said...." Although it does not specifically say, this gives the impression that he is praying aloud.

The words of Jesus in John 11 came into my mind, before He raised Lazarus to life: *"Jesus looked upwards and said, Father, I thank you for having heard me, I know that you always hear me, but I have said this for the sake of those standing here that they may believe that you sent me."* These words, and the nature of the praying words of Jesus in today's reading, makes me feel that Jesus, knowing that The Father always knows what is on his heart, meant the words of his prayer to be heard by others.

In verse 6 He prays about making the Father's name known to those that have been given to him by the Father. He says *"they were yours, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word."* This is talking about words from Christ to his disciples, and because they have listened, the result of his words on them. They have kept God's word. Because they kept God's word and did not reject or ignore it, Verse 7 tells us about the disciples now knowing that everything is from The Father.

Verse 8 tells us about the words being given by the Father to Jesus, and Jesus giving them to his disciples, who in receiving them came to know in truth, the truth that Jesus came from the Father, and they believed that the Father has sent him. The Father calls each one of us in different ways. Through Jesus, He opens the door and invites us closer. We have the choice to move closer or move away. All who have chosen to move closer and seek more, however small their understanding or knowledge may be, will find that in seeking to come closer we will find that the closer we are, the more that we will come to know the truth.

Jesus asks the Father to protect us. Saying *"protect them in your name that you have given me, so that they may be one, as we are one. That they may have my joy made complete with themselves"*

Jesus is talking about unity, with The Father and the Son, and also with each other.

He prays in v17. *"Sanctify them in your truth, your word is truth."* To be sanctified in truth, is best explained by the Words of Jesus in John 8.v 31-32. To the Jews who believed Him, Jesus said *"if you hold to my teaching you are really my disciples, Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."* Sanctification is said to refer to being set aside for Holiness or set apart to do God's will. And Jesus prays, *"as you have sent me into the world, so I have sent them and for their sakes I sanctify myself, so they may also be sanctified in truth."* By sanctifying himself, Jesus is setting himself apart to do God's will.

Looking back to verse 9, we have Jesus saying *"I am asking on their behalf, I am not asking on behalf of the world, but on behalf of those you gave me, because they are yours."* Words for the disciples there at the time? Or for us present day followers?

Having started the beginning of my talk this morning with a verse that comes before the set reading, I am now going to move into the two verses that follow it. V20 - and 21. Although not included in this morning's scheduled reading it feels very important to include them here. They are full of promise and fill me with excitement and joy. You may have noticed that I have sometimes referred this morning to the followers of Jesus as "them", and sometimes as "us". And this is why. In these two passages Jesus says: *"I ask not only on behalf of these, but also on behalf of those who will believe in me through their word."* (He is talking about the written words that we have been hearing today.) He says *"that they may all be one. As you Father are in me and I am in you, may they also be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me."*

Wow. Jesus was praying for us also. Praying that we also may be one with Jesus and the Father. And in that, saying that the prayers for being sanctified are also for us. Jesus had just spoken of the mission and the sanctification of his followers. He was confident that they would spread the Gospel, and he prayed for those who would believe as a result. All future believers are included in this prayer.

So how are we to "keep God's word"? By giving attention to what we already have heard, for example, to Love God and love one another, and seeking for deeper knowledge in prayerful listening or reading of the word, and praying for understanding of it.

So let us leave our gathering this morning with Joy in the knowledge of sanctification and the knowledge of being one with the Father and Son if we follow his teaching.

"Those that believe in me" - "That the world may believe". The unity of believers should have an effect on outsiders to convince them of the mission of Christ.

- Rev. Pat

**The Right Revd Martin Seeley, the Bishop of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich is delighted to announce that the next Priest in Charge of the benefice of St Thomas The Apostle and Martyr, Ipswich will be The Revd Rachel Revely, this is subject to the completion of legal formalities and it is hoped she will be licensed to her new post on Monday 2 August 2021 at 7.30pm.**

Rachel is presently Assistant Curate of the Cathedral Church of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Lincoln with an extended placement in the Benefice of Branston with Nocton and Potterhanworth in the Lincoln diocese.

Bishop Martin would like to thank the parish representatives and all those involved in the process of Rachel's appointment, and he assures you of his prayers. Please pray for Rachel as she prepares for her move.



“Hello everyone, I am thrilled to have been appointed as Priest in Charge of Thomas' and cannot wait to meet you all in August.

Meanwhile, you might like to know a bit about my background, I grew up in the North East of England, in Newcastle, where I also studied music at university. After graduating, I became a shop assistant then after that a singing teacher and a year 1 recorder teacher (not a job I recommend although it was not quite as bad as my next post of teaching year 3 violin). Whilst teaching music in schools, I was also a community choir leader in Edinburgh where I worked in a respite centre for people with HIV and Hepatitis C.

Not a Christian from birth, I fell into church rather accidentally through music and found my faith whilst singing in a choir and leading a worship band. Overtime, my sense of vocation and call to ordained ministry started to grow, so I then became a school chaplain and a pastoral assistant for a group of churches in Scunthorpe, a steel industry town in North Lincolnshire. It was a wonderful year where I learnt a lot about church life. Having been accepted for training, I studied for 3 years at Westcott House, Cambridge and was ordained in 2018. For the last three years, I have served as curate at Lincoln Cathedral and then also in my final year in three villages just south of the city. My academic interests include the intersection of popular culture and the church, the study of mission and liberation theologies.

My hobbies are spending time with friends, playing Dungeons and Dragons, playing board games although I have been banned from monopoly because 'apparently' I take it too seriously. I have a hearty interest in drinking tea and an extensive collection of colourful shoes!

I am looking forward to moving to Ipswich and getting to know you all.”

Revd Rachel Revely

## Notices:

**Change to pew sheet:** the admin and production of the pew sheet is changing. After this week, it will be slimmed down and no longer include the sermon. This will be reviewed further down the line after our new priest has taken up post.

**New Priest:** Our new Priest in Charge, Rev Rachel Revely, will be licensed on Monday 2nd August at 7.30pm. We hope you will be able to join us to welcome her and celebrate!

**Pentecost:** on Sunday 23rd at 4pm, the Cathedral's Pentecost Service 'Catching the Fire' can be watched on the cathedral facebook page ([facebook.com/stedscathedral](https://www.facebook.com/stedscathedral)) or you can attend in person by emailing [cathedralinvitations@stedscathedral.org](mailto:cathedralinvitations@stedscathedral.org) to book a place.

**Church-sitting:** we are looking for more people to do regular church-sitting while we are open for prayer, particularly on Thursdays 11.30-1.30. We are no longer restricting this to under-70s, it is open to anyone able and willing! If you can commit to one or both hours on a regular basis, please speak to Alison or Rev Cat.

**Charity giving:** as we have done in previous years we have allocated 2% of our income to go to charity. If you have any suggestions of local, national and international charities you will like us to donate to then please let Emma or Lucy know.

**Baby Bank:** the Suffolk baby bank we are hosting in the community room would welcome donations of tinned potatoes, instant mash, and dried/long-life milk.

**Booking for in-person services:** Sunday services must be booked into. **To book by phone, call 01473 742973** and leave a message saying your name, which service/s you are booking for, and how many (including yourself) you are booking for.

## **Pray for members of the St Thomas Congregation:**

*Michelle & Stephen Bennett; Gerald & Jenny Biggs; Pearl Bird; Margaret & Les Bloomfield; Naomi Bloomfield with Amelia, Lily, Archie & Dylan; Peggy Blyth; Carol Brown; Lyanne Brendt with Robert & Aaron; Keith Brisland & family*



Pam Everett (16th)  
Jenny Barfield (20th)

### **This Week:**

#### **Sunday 16th May**

**10am:** Eucharist with facebook livestream

#### **Monday 17th May**

**11.30-1.30:** Church open for prayer

#### **Tuesday 18th May**

**6.30-7.10pm:** Zoom Meditation Group. Contact Lucy for details & link:  
[lucydrake22@gmail.com](mailto:lucydrake22@gmail.com)

#### **Wednesday 19th May**

**10am:** Eucharist

**7.30pm:** Faith Pictures

#### **Thursday 20th May**

**11.30-1.30:** Church open for prayer

#### **Sunday 23rd May**

**10am:** Eucharist with facebook livestream

**6pm:** Youth Group (vicarage)

### ***Please pray for:***

**All who are affected by the Coronavirus:** *For all who have lost their jobs; all who are despairing and living with loss or anxiety. For hospital and health care workers.*

**Those with chronic or long-term illness:** Rosemary, Eric Dickerson, Jenny, Andrew Barfield, Kathy Steele, Andrew, Peggy, Margaret Christian, Natacha, Katie, Rex & Jill, Christine, Stephen, Samantha, Theresa

**Those undergoing treatment or currently ill:** Gloria Elmer, Leslie Bloomfield, Roger Dickerson, Vicky & Matt, Dagmar, Roy, Kenneth Leek, Angela, Helen Pratt

**Those who have recently died, and their families mourning their loss**

### **Church website:**

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

**Sunday Worship & other Worship resources on the Church Facebook page:**

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