

Worship at Home – 11th April 2021

The Second Sunday of Easter

Prepared by Rev Gareth Erlandson, Curate



Prayer to start

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

Bible Reading (John 20:24-29)

Jesus Appears to the Disciples

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."

Jesus and Thomas

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."

Thought

Is the name “Doubting Thomas” a fair description of this disciple, I wonder? After all, his friends had not believed the women who reported the resurrection on the Easter morning until they’d seen proof at the empty tomb – Thomas was asking for no more.

Let’s be honest, who hasn’t had some element of doubts over the last year, anyway? Things, at times, have felt pretty bleak and a wavering faith will have been quite understandable.

In this story, Jesus shows us that even when we have doubts and a rocky faith, he can still inspire us to rise above our doubts and do great things. You are probably familiar with Caravaggio’s depiction of this scene, found overleaf

We can see the look of awe on Thomas’s face, here. Provided with a little proof of Christ’s resurrection, Thomas is enthused to go on to do great things for the early church – indeed, tradition has it that he was the first Christian missionary in India. For Thomas, the encouragement Jesus gives is to show him his wounds. How might Jesus have encouraged us recently? It might be the glimmers of hope we’ve been given through community spirit, positive environmental impacts, and vaccines (to name but a few things) during the last thirteen months.

Let’s take a moment to reflect back on the drama of Holy Week and the wonderful things God has done for us through Jesus, culminating in the resurrection. Inspired by these events, can we think of what wonderful things God might be being calling us to do for our families, friends, neighbours, and beyond?

Prayers

May we live our lives as witnesses of the resurrection of Christ; sharing God’s love with those we meet, bringing hope to those who are in despair, living lives of gratitude and praise. And may the love of God, the peace of Jesus Christ, and the ongoing presence of the Holy Spirit be within us and among us until we meet again. Amen.

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done; on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

We hope you are safe and well. Please feel free to contact Rev Adam (01978 760439) or Rev Gareth (07731 827988) if we can help, but please note that we are both on annual leave the week after Easter. Thank you.