

Morning Worship for the second Sunday of Easter

Preparation

Alleluia. Christ is risen.

He is risen indeed. Alleluia.

Praise the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

He has given us new life and hope.

He has raised Jesus from the dead.

Alleluia. Christ is risen.

He is risen indeed. Alleluia.

Opening Prayer

Faithful one, whose word is life:

come with saving power

to free our praise,

inspire our prayer

and shape our lives

for the kingdom of your Son,

Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Cast your burden upon the Lord:

And he will sustain you.

Create in us clean hearts O God:

And renew a right spirit within us.

Cast us not away from your presence:

And take not your Holy Spirit from us.

Give us the joy of your saving help:

And sustain us with your life-giving Spirit.

Blessed be the Lord day by day:

The God of our salvation who bears our burdens.

We confess our sins.

Jesus Christ, risen Master and triumphant Lord,

we come to you in sorrow for our sins,

and confess to you our weakness and unbelief.

We have lived by our own strength,

and not by the power of your resurrection.

In your mercy, forgive us.

Lord, hear us and help us.

We have lived by the light of our own eyes,
as faithless and not believing.

In your mercy, forgive us.

Lord, hear us and help us.

We have lived for this world alone,

and doubted our home in heaven.

In your mercy, forgive us.

Lord, hear us and help us.

May the God of love and power

forgive you and free you from your sins,

heal and strengthen you by his Spirit,

and raise you to new life in Christ our Lord. ***Amen.***

Praise

O Lord, open our lips:

And our mouth shall proclaim your praise.

Let us worship the Lord:

All praise to his name.

Gloria in Excelsis

Glorify 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 word of God

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles.

On the day of Pentecost, Peter, standing with the eleven, raised his voice and addressed the crowd, '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 2:14a, 22-32)

A reading from the gospel John.

When it was evening on 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. (John 20:19-31)

A reflection by Gordon Gray, Reader at St Mary's

It's four weeks since we all went into lockdown. Some of you haven't been seen outside the house in all that time whilst others may simply pop out from time to time for food or exercise. Our gospel story reflects similar circumstances in Jerusalem 2,000 years ago. The disciples were themselves in lockdown fearful, not of catching or spreading a deadly virus, but fearful for their lives, afraid that if they were caught out and about in the city then they, like Jesus, would find themselves crucified by the authorities. It would appear that, whilst most of the disciples stayed well-hidden, guilt ridden, sharing accusatory glances for having let down their Lord and master, Thomas was maybe one of those who went out for food and water; at least, he wasn't around when Jesus first appeared to the disciples. Now, after four weeks of lockdown you're probably getting to know the emotions involved in living in such circumstances. You may have experienced a range of emotions yourself – fear, aloneness, stress, maybe tensions running high and tempers running short, people close to you knowing exactly what buttons to press to bring someone to tears. The other disciples said they had seen the Lord so Thomas must have felt left out, excluded, angry, maybe he thought he was being teased. Perhaps he was in tears as he exclaimed that he doubted what the other disciples told him.

Thomas' story didn't end with him being left with all his mixed emotions for, a week on and everything was resolved when he saw his risen Lord and declared in that first creedal statement, "My Lord and my God". His fears, his tears were needed no longer and his story has been a lesson of hope to Christ's followers throughout history ever since.

We should not forget Thomas' story in our own circumstances. Whether we have to wait, like Thomas for a week, or it goes on for another month or two our situation will change and we will all be back

in church rejoicing – a glorious day when we worship together once again. Until that time, our fears, our tears will be quelled by the transforming emotion of hope if our trust is in our risen Lord.

Our faith

Let us declare our faith in the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ.

**Christ died for our sins
in accordance with the Scriptures;
he was buried;
he was raised to life on the third day
in accordance with the Scriptures;
afterwards he appeared to his followers,
and to all the apostles:
this we have received,
and this we believe. Amen.**

Prayers of intercession- Revd Joy Cousins

Father we praise you for the resurrection of your son Jesus Christ from the dead. Shed his glorious light on all Christian people that we may live as those who believe in the triumph of the cross. We pray for all our church leaders, for our Archbishops Justin and Sentamu and for our Bishops Alan, Richard and Michael. Bless them as they lead the church in these difficult times. We pray that as John writes in his gospel, we may believe that Jesus is the Messiah and have life in his name.

Lord in your mercy; **hear our prayer.**

We pray for those throughout the world facing the challenges of the coronavirus pandemic. Give wisdom to all political leaders, policy makers and advisers as they seek to find solutions to many pressing issues. Gracious God, give skill, sympathy and resilience to all who are caring for the sick and your wisdom to those searching for a cure. Strengthen them with your spirit that through their work many will be restored to health.

Lord in your mercy; **hear our prayer.**

From our parish prayer diary we remember all those who live in Edlesborough on Brownlow Avenue, Slickett's Lane, The Willows, Swansons and Townside. We give thanks for local community organisations, especially for the work of the Good Neighbours Scheme in supporting those who are unable to leave their homes at this time. We pray for all whom we love both near and far, that you will

protect and uphold them. We pray for all who are on their own and struggling with being in isolation.

Lord in your mercy; **hear our prayer.**

We pray for those whose eyes are wet with tears or tense with pain. Be with those who, like Thomas, find it hard to believe and trust at this time. Help them to sense your reassuring love which can bring us through the darkest of valleys. In a moment of quiet we offer to God those who are on our hearts at this time.

Lord in your mercy; **hear our prayer.**

Jesus is the first fruit of the new and eternal life we are promised. We commend to your love all who have recently died and those who mourn their passing. May they know your everlasting arms are there to hold them safe.

Lord in your mercy; **hear our prayer.**

Join our voices we pray Lord our God, to the songs of all your saints in proclaiming that you give us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Merciful Father accept these prayers for the sake of your son, our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.

Keep us, good Lord,
under the shadow of your mercy
in this time of uncertainty and distress.
Sustain and support the anxious and fearful,
and lift up all who are brought low;
that we may rejoice in your comfort
knowing that nothing can separate us from your love
in Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen.

We join together with Christians throughout the world in the prayer that Jesus taught us.

**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.**

Conclusion

The Collect for the day

Almighty Father,
you have given your only Son to die for our sins
and to rise again for our justification:
grant us so to put away the leaven of malice and wickedness
that we may always serve you
in pureness of living and truth;
through the merits of your Son Jesus Christ our Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever. Amen.

God has claimed us as his own.
He has brought us out of darkness.
He has made us light to the world.
Alleluia. Christ is risen.
He is risen indeed. Alleluia.

*We end with the words of the Grace, an ancient Christian prayer of
fellowship, remembering that although we are not together in person,
nothing can separate us from the love of God found in Christ Jesus
our Lord.*

**The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ
and the love of God
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit
be with us all evermore. Amen.**



*If you would like us to pray for you during this time of stress and
anxiety, please leave a prayer request on the website email address
or contact Joy (vicar@stmaryseatonbray.org.uk)*

Reverend Joy Cousins
Reverend Stephen Burge

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