



Heacham Parish Church

To find Heacham Parish Church on Youtube search for Heacham Parish Church and all songs and previous services. Also Spring Harvest Home can be found too.

Sunday 19th April 2020

Alleluia. Christ is risen.
He is risen indeed. Alleluia!

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

Hymn. 799 All I once held dear.
All I once held dear, built my life upon
All this world reveres, and wars to own
All I once thought gain I have counted loss
Spent and worthless now, compared to this

Knowing you, Jesus
Knowing you, there is no greater thing
You're my all, you're the best
You're my joy, my righteousness
And I love you, Lord

Now my heart's desire is to know you more
To be found in you and known as yours

To possess by faith what I could not earn
All-surpassing gift of righteousness

Oh, to know the power of your risen life
And to know You in Your sufferings
To become like you in your death, my Lord
So with you to live and never die

Reading John 20 vs19-31.

Reflection and prayer from John Whitbread

We have gone through a Holy Week and Easter Day like none other. It seems strange not to meet to remember Jesus' death and then to celebrate, with others, the time of Jesus' wonderful resurrection.

Why didn't Jesus tell us about the main people who knew about His resurrection? If you added together all to people who knew you have about 514 men not counting the women and children.

These three stories from John chapter 20 have been recorded to awaken faith in us.

If that is the case what is so special about these three stories? I think they show the barriers to faith of grief, fear and doubt.

Grief - Mary Magdalene could not see Jesus for her grief.

Fear-The disciples were in fear of their lives as they shut themselves behind locked doors.

Doubt-As you read on when hear the story on Thomas. He could not believe that Jesus was risen from the dead because it was something outside his experience.

A report, (although ten years old,) claimed that more than 30 million Britons believe that Jesus Christ rose from the dead - and the conclusion of the article was " what the survey does show is that the great majority of people still clearly care about Jesus and regard him highly."

But regarding Jesus highly is not enough! We are called to be his disciples, to live as he taught, and to have a relationship with him 24/7. A simple intellectual belief in the Resurrection is not enough.

When the Bible uses the term belief, it means more than our modern day meaning.

It would be better translated 'belief that results in action'.

When Thomas believed it drove him to his knees to confess "My Lord and my God", not simply an intellectual assent, to the proposition that Jesus rose from the dead. In our Gospel reading today, what Thomas asked for was very reasonable and so Jesus gave him what he needed for his faith.

There are times when we all need a special touch from God, especially now in these times of grief, fear and doubt. Jesus deals with each person's needs differently. He treats us as individuals. Mary simply needed to hear Jesus 'voice and her grief was healed.

The disciples needed to experience the presence of Jesus – and receive His peace to release them from their fear.

Thomas needed to touch the Risen Christ. He felt he needed to put his hand in Jesus 'side before he would believe. (There is no evidence that he actually did so.)

Each of us has different needs, we all ask different questions, but there is only one solution a touch, a word a sign from the Risen Lord.

Heavenly Father we thank for the way you let your Son go to the cross for each of us.

We thank you that when he rose from the dead claiming his victory' over all he had to conquer. He showed himself to the disciples and strengthened their faith and our faith. Farther this morning we pray for these who are in hospital suffering for this virus, we also include those at home who are on the road to recovery. We pray for hospital staff who work so hard. We pray for own community here in Heacham for those who are lonely and fearful. We pray for those who support us in our daily lives. To the people who delivery us our medications, van drivers who bring us food, the shop workers, the carers, the refuge collectors and many others who try and make life a little bit more bearable.

We thank you for our church, for Veronica and her team of volunteers who help us and the whole village at this time of troubles. May the people see the "light shine" with Jesus word and actions?

If we are grieving may we hear your voice speaking to us.

If we are in fear may we seek the presence and peace of Jesus in our lives

If we have doubt, may we experience a touch from you

We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord Amen

We pray together the Lords Prayer

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