

## Morning Service 19<sup>th</sup> April 2020

*Thank you for joining us for this morning service for the Sunday after Easter. Today and for the next few Sunday mornings we'll be focusing on people who encountered the risen Lord Jesus – today Thomas, next Sunday the two disciples on the road to Emmaus.*

**The Greeting** – *As the Easter Candle is lit*

Alleluia, Christ is risen!

**He is risen indeed, Alleluia!**

Praise to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ:

**He has given us new life and hope by raising Jesus from the dead!**

Alleluia, Christ is risen!

**He is risen indeed, Alleluia!**

Come, embrace the risen Christ.

Come, embrace the Prince of peace.

Come, embrace his pierced hands.

Come, meet your Lord and your God. **Amen.**

*Apologies for the live stream abrupt end on Easter Morning. As a result, we didn't get to sing 'Thine be the glory', so we start with it today instead!*

### Song

**1 Thine be the glory, risen, conqu'ring Son;  
endless is the vict'ry Thou o'er death hast won.  
Angels in bright raiment rolled the stone away,  
kept the folded grave-clothes where Thy body lay.  
*Thine be the glory, risen, conqu'ring Son;  
endless is the vict'ry Thou o'er death hast won.***

**2 Lo, Jesus meets us, risen from the tomb.  
Lovingly He greets us, scatters fear and gloom;  
let His church with gladness hymns of triumph sing,  
for the Lord now liveth; death hath lost its sting.  
*Thine be the glory, risen, conqu'ring Son;  
endless is the vict'ry Thou o'er death hast won.***

**3 No more we doubt Thee, glorious Prince of life!!  
Life is nought without Thee; aid us in our strife;  
make us more than conqu'rors, through Thy deathless love;  
bring us safe through Jordan to Thy home above.  
*Thine be the glory, risen, conqu'ring Son;  
endless is the vict'ry Thou o'er death hast won.***

### Opening Prayer

Jesus, our Lord and our God,  
we sing and shout  
because you rose from the dead.  
We rejoice and dance  
because you took away our sins.  
We give you praise and thanks  
because you invite us into your kingdom.  
Amen.

## Prayer of penitence

Jesus Christ, risen master and triumphant Lord,  
we come to you in sorrow for our sins,  
and confess to you our own 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 God who loved the world so much that He sent His Son to be our Saviour forgive us our sins and make us holy to serve Him in this world, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

## Prayer for Today

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 20:19-29 (NIV)*

19 On the evening of that first day of the week, when the disciples were together, with the doors locked for fear of the Jewish leaders, Jesus came and stood among them and said, 'Peace be with you!' 20 After he said this, he showed them his hands and side. The disciples were overjoyed when they saw the Lord.

21 Again Jesus said, 'Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you.' 22 And with that he breathed on them and said, 'Receive the Holy Spirit. 23 If you forgive anyone's sins, their sins are forgiven;

if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven.’ 24 Now Thomas (also known as ‘the Twin’), one of the Twelve, was not with the disciples when Jesus came. 25 So the other disciples told him, ‘We have seen the Lord!’ But he said to them,

‘Unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe.’

26 A week later his disciples were in the house again, and Thomas was with them. Though the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, ‘Peace be with you!’ 27 Then he said to Thomas, ‘Put your finger here; see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. Stop doubting and believe.’

28 Thomas said to him, ‘My Lord and my God!’ 29 Then Jesus told him, ‘Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.’

## Talk

Time is a strange concept. Sometimes it goes quickly – the psychologists say that’s when we’re in a state of absorption, in other words when we’re fully engaged with something. Sometimes slowly-especially when we were younger – dim and distant memories for many now are long journeys with the voice from the back seat ‘are we nearly there yet?’. How is time passing for you at the moment? On the one hand it’s been a long year already, but at the same time I can’t believe this is the 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday we’ve not met together in church and lived streamed services instead.

Our reading today follows on from last week’s encounter at the tomb of the Risen Lord Jesus and Mary – that reading seems almost a second-by-second, slow motion retelling of that event that changed Mary’s life as Jesus spoke her name and as she told the disciples she’d seen the Lord. Yet the events later in the day in the first half of our reading, then Thomas meeting Jesus sees a week pass by in an instant. Let’s see those two encounters and think how they might speak to us today. They resonate with me, as they bring to focus concern, anger, doubt, fear, isolation; being locked in. Like the disciples, we are hiding away behind locked doors for fear of the potential danger posed by the virus outside. As for them, so for us, the everyday events which we take for granted are currently denied us, and the normal everyday activities carry risk. As someone put it, after all the wild things I’ve done in my life, I’ll be gutted if I die because I touched my face. For the disciples, contact with the people outside following the resurrection of Jesus carries the risk of injury or even death by mob violence; for us, such contact may lead to illness and even death. All the emotions felt by the first followers of Jesus locked away in fear are fine to express. More than fine, it’s vital for our mental wellbeing. We should not feel guilty about these feelings.

Yet, as Christians we can learn a lot from this passage. Easter, unlike our many plans, is not put on hold. Easter in the person of the risen Lord Jesus, and although we may be locked in our homes (apart from our daily walk and getting the essentials if we’re able, of course) – the crucified, risen Lord Jesus still comes to us, as he came to those first followers. And how was that? Through the locked doors, speaking words of peace, not just once, notice – he repeats it in case they didn’t get it the first time. In our isolation, Jesus can still be there. He promises his peace into our fear, anger and concerns for ourselves and for those we love. And not just his peace, but the person of his peace, the presence of the Holy Spirit. I’ve been thinking about the presence of the Holy Spirit this week. It’s something I so easily forget. I need to pray again and again ‘come, Holy Spirit of Jesus’ – gift me as you gifted those first followers, with your peace, with your presence, with your power, enable me to share your good news with those I speak to. Because, did you notice, as Jesus spoke his peace, and poured out his Spirit, he also commissioned them to share his good news. I believe the current situation is causing a new sense of people wanting to know the peace of Jesus for themselves. Will you pray for opportunities for yourself and for others to know Jesus today?

People like Thomas – we don’t know where he was, why he was missing. As he returns, the disciples greet him as Mary had greeted them ‘we have seen the Lord’. Thomas’s response was not rational but full of

emotion. How dare Jesus meet with you while I was out! What a long week it must have been for Thomas until Jesus appears to him and the others again. And after Jesus again promises peace he says to Thomas 'go on then'! It is me, see the marks of the crucifixion. What would you have done? There's no evidence that Thomas took up Jesus challenge, but he does respond 'my Lord and my God'. Thomas has now seen, and the Lord Jesus considers that no less or no more than the response called for by every human being – Thomas's response. Ask the crucified, risen Lord to walk through your locked doors, into your feelings and emotions and allow him to speak words of peace to you. Go on, give it a try! He will be there for you, just as he was then. The marks of Jesus' wounds proved to Thomas that the Jesus who appeared to the Thomas and the others in their doubt and fear was the same Jesus who had been nailed to the cross. That same Jesus, who was willing to die to show us the height and breadth and depth of God's love, is willing to be with us in our times of doubt and fear. The Jesus who died also rose again, promising us eternal life whatever lies ahead for us and our loved ones on this earth. Jesus' suffering, death and resurrection are not the end of his story, and they are not the end of ours either. They are only the beginning.

*A prayer.*

Father God, by your Son Jesus' unexpected, amazing resurrection, you show his followers that suffering – and even death – are not the end. Be with us through the Spirit's presence in our times of doubt and fear, unite us through him with those whom we love, help us to proclaim your love, and when the darkness has gone, raise us through Jesus to new life;  
**Amen.**

**The Creed** *based on 1 Cor 15:3-7*

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.**

**Song**

From heaven you came, helpless babe,  
Entered our world, your glory veiled;  
Not to be served but to serve,  
And give your life that we might live.  
*This is our God, the Servant King,  
He calls us now to follow him,  
To bring our lives as a daily offering  
Of worship to the Servant King.*

There in the garden of tears,  
My heavy load he chose to bear;  
His heart with sorrow was torn,  
'Yet not my will but yours,' he said.  
*This is our God, the Servant King,  
He calls us now to follow him,  
To bring our lives as a daily offering  
Of worship to the Servant King.*

Come, see his hands and his feet,  
The scars that speak of sacrifice,  
Hands that flung stars into space  
To cruel nails surrendered.  
*This is our God, the Servant King,  
He calls us now to follow him,  
To bring our lives as a daily offering  
Of worship to the Servant King.*

So let us learn how to serve,  
And in our lives enthrone him;  
Each other's needs to prefer,  
For it is Christ we're serving.  
*This is our God, the Servant King,  
He calls us now to follow him,  
To bring our lives as a daily offering  
Of worship to the Servant King.*

## **The prayers**

Heavenly Father, we pray for all the places in the world that need your peace:  
places where Covid19 and other issues continue to threaten the stability and economy of the nations;  
all sheltering in their own homes and those who have no homes to shelter in.

Lord,

**Bring us your peace.**

Give wisdom to world leaders:

to presidents, prime ministers, politicians of all governments,  
that they may strive for lasting peace and true justice,  
not putting personal ambitions before the needs of their people.

We thank you for all those in caring services; the NHS, Care Homes, Police, Ambulance and all others.

Lord,

**Bring us your peace.**

We pray for those who need peace of mind:

those weighed down by the stresses and strains of everyday life,  
or who suffer with anxiety, or are oppressed by worry and fear;  
for those who find it hard to let go of things and simply trust.  
Especially we pray for those who are ill and the recently bereaved.

Lord,

**Bring us your peace.**

*After a moment of silence for our own prayers, we join together as Jesus taught us to pray:*

**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**

## **Closing prayer**

Lord Jesus,  
we pray for people who are alone,  
and for people who feel lonely;  
people who don't know what a loving hug feels like.  
We pray that you will come close to them  
and bring them into your embrace.  
**Amen.**

Alleluia, Christ is risen!  
**He is risen indeed, Alleluia!**

Praise to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ:  
**He has given us new life and hope by raising Jesus from the dead!**

Alleluia, Christ is risen!  
**He is risen indeed, Alleluia!**

## **Blessing**

May you feel the touch of peace,  
the touch of life,  
the touch of the risen Lord,  
beside you, behind you, and before you  
all the days of your life.  
**Amen.**

*Thank you for following our service today.*

*Details of our next services are found on our facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/PCDChurches/>  
where you can watch the service live or catch up later, and you'll find this week's notice sheet and other  
useful information on the church website [pcd.org.uk](http://pcd.org.uk)*

*Please also contact the Vicar, Rev John Musson if you need any help or just for a chat! [vicar@pcd.org.uk](mailto:vicar@pcd.org.uk)  
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