

Stoke Poges Church

St Giles' and St Andrew's



Sunday 11th April 2021

Led by Simon McDowell

Welcome to our service of Morning Prayer.

Notices can be found on your [Friday Email](#), on our [website](#), [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#). At the end of the service sheet, you will find our Going Deeper and Children's Activity Sheets. Our Easter Trail in St Giles' Churchyard will be there for the rest of the school holidays.

Thanks to Heather McDowell for choosing our music today.

Please join in today's service using the words in **bold**.

Opening Hymn

"This Joyful Eastertide"

This joyful Eastertide,
away with sin and sorrow.
My Love, the Crucified,
has sprung to life this morrow:

*Had Christ, that once was slain,
Ne'er burst his three-day prison,
Our faith had been in vain:*

*But now hath Christ arisen,
Arisen, arisen, arisen!*

My flesh in hope shall rest,
and for a season slumber:
till trump from east to west:
shall wake the dead in number:

Chorus

Death's flood hath lost its chill,
since Jesus crossed the river:
lover of souls, from ill
my passing soul deliver:

Chorus

George Ratcliffe Woodward (1848-1934)

Sung by St Martin's Voices, used with permission from the Church of England's resource hub

Prayer of Preparation

Grace, mercy and peace
from God our Father
and the Lord Jesus Christ
be with you
and also with you.

This is the day that the Lord has made
Let us rejoice and be glad in it.

We have come together in the name of Christ
to offer our praise and thanksgiving,
to hear and receive God's holy word,
to pray for the needs of the world,
and to seek the forgiveness of our sins,
that by the power of the Holy Spirit
we may give ourselves to the service of God.

Prayers of Penitence

Jesus says, "Repent for the kingdom of heaven is close at hand"
So let us turn away from our sin and turn to Christ,
confessing our sins in penitence and faith.

Almighty and most merciful Father,
we have wandered and strayed from your ways like lost sheep.
We have followed too much the devices and desires of our own hearts.
We have offended against your holy laws.
We have left undone those things that we ought to have done;
and we have done those things that we ought not to have done;
and there is no health in us.
But you, O Lord, have mercy upon us sinners,
Spare those who confess their faults.
Restore those who are penitent,
according to your promises declared to mankind
in Christ Jesus our Lord.
And grant, O most merciful Father, for his sake,
that we may live a disciplined, righteous and godly life,
to the glory of your holy name. Amen.

May the Father of all mercies
cleanse us from our sins,
and restore us in his image
to the praise and glory of his name,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen

As we rejoice in the gift of this new day,
so may the light of your presence, O God,
set our hearts on fire with love for you;
now and for ever.
Amen

Song

“Meekness and Majesty”

Meekness and majesty manhood and deity
In perfect harmony the Man who is God
Lord of eternity dwells in humanity
Kneels in humility and washes our feet

O what a mystery meekness and majesty
Bow down and worship for this is your God
This is your God

Father's pure radiance perfect in innocence
Yet learns obedience to death on a cross
Suffering to give us life

Conquering through sacrifice
And as they crucify prays Father forgive

O what a mystery meekness and majesty
Bow down and worship for this is your God
This is your God

Wisdom unsearchable God the invisible
Love indestructible in frailty appears
Lord of infinity stooping so tenderly
Lifts our humanity to the heights of His throne

O what a mystery meekness and majesty
Bow down and worship for this is your God
This is your God
This is your God

Lyric source: Musixmatch

Songwriters: Graham Kendrick Copyright 1986 Thankyou Music, Used with kind permission from
grahamkendrick.co.uk Lockdown Resources

Psalm

Psalm 36.5-10

- ⁵Your love, LORD, reaches to the heavens,
your faithfulness to the skies.
- ⁶Your righteousness is like the highest mountains,
your justice like the great deep.
You, LORD, preserve both people and animals.
- ⁷How priceless is your unfailing love, O God!
People take refuge in the shadow of your wings.
- ⁸They feast in the abundance of your house;
you give them drink from your river of delights.
- ⁹For with you is the fountain of life;
in your light we see light.
- ¹⁰Continue your love to those who know you,
your righteousness to the upright in heart.

**Glory be to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning is now
and shall be for ever. Amen**

Scripture Reading John 20:19-31 Read by Pam Blewett

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 Didymus^[a]), 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.'

³⁰ Jesus performed many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book. ³¹ But these are written that you may believe^[b] that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

This is the word of the Lord

Thanks be to God

Sermon Nigel Lowe is opening God's word for us today

Response

"God so loved the world"

God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son,
that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.
For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world,
but that the world through him might be saved.

Sung by St Martin's Voices, used with permission from the Church of England's resource hub

The Creed

I believe in God, The Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died and was buried;
he descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again;
He ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.

Prayers

Prepared and read for us by Richard Beckingsale
The response is: In you O Lord ~ **do we put our trust**

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name;
your kingdom come;
your will be done;
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
And forgive us our sin,
As we forgive those who sin against us.
And lead us not into temptation;
but deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours
Now and forever. Amen.

The Collect for the Second Sunday of Easter

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

Final Hymn

“It is a thing most wonderful”

- 1 It is a thing most wonderful,
almost too wonderful to be,
that God's own Son should come from heav'n,
and die to save a child like me.
- 2 And yet I know that it is true:
He chose a poor and humble lot,
and wept and toiled and mourned and died
for love of those who loved Him not.
- 3 But even could I see Him die,
I could but see a little part
of that great love which, like a fire,
is always burning in His heart.
- 4 It is most wonderful to know
His love for me so free and sure;
but 'tis more wonderful to see
my love for Him so faint and poor.
- 5 And yet I want to love Thee, Lord;
O light the flame within my heart,
and I will love Thee more and more,
until I see Thee as Thou art.

William Walsham How (1823-1897)

Sung by St Martin's Voices, used with permission from the Church of England's resource hub

The Blessing

Grant, we beseech you, merciful Lord,
to your faithful people pardon and peace,
that they may be cleansed from all their sins
and serve you with a quiet mind;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.


Amen

Intro/outro music by www.purple-planet.com

Note To contact the church please email office@stokepogeschurch.org or phone 01753 642331.
Please do not come to the office in person without checking that someone will be there, as we are once again working from home.

Thank you for joining us today

Testing truth

 John 20.19-31

Where we find Jesus appearing to the disciples after his resurrection. They are all there except Thomas, who arrives after this miraculous event. However, when he is told what happened he refuses to believe until he has seen it himself. A week later Jesus appears again and invites Thomas to touch his hands and side. Jesus says that Thomas believed once he could physically see, but that those who believe without seeing will be equally blessed.

Now read John 20.19-31 see p.2 for text.

A note on the passage

Thomas needs to see the evidence for himself. What makes the story really interesting is that Jesus gives Thomas exactly what he needs. He allows him to touch the scars, to feel where the nails pierced his hands. Jesus knew what Thomas needed and he met him in that need. He showed him the truth. Do you empathise with Thomas? We can't see Jesus in the way Thomas did, but does he still meet us where we are? Have you experienced the presence of Jesus in a way which helped you believe?



You will need: paper, pens or paint.

Either make a handprint on a piece of A4 paper with paint or draw round one of your hands, and write Thomas' words 'My Lord and my God' next to the print or outline. Put your artwork somewhere you will see it, as a reminder of the truth Thomas discovered – that Jesus is alive.

GAME

Sometimes it's hard to explain something to someone else. It can take several attempts before they understand the truth of what you're saying. Find a picture of an animal and let one person look at it without showing it to the other person. Then ask them to sit back to back. The player who looked at the image will now carefully describe it without saying what the image is; the other player will draw what is being described. The idea is to see if the person drawing can identify the animal and draw it from the quality of the description. You could also do this over a video call or on the 'phone.

WATCH

What does trusting and believing look like? Both are familiar themes in films. Look through your collection of films or find some on a streaming platform. See if you can find a good example of trusting or believing, in one of the films (Disney™ is often a good place to start, something like *Aladdin* [PG], or *Beauty and the Beast* [PG] will work well).

ARTWORK

Find a picture of Caravaggio's 'The Incredulity of St Thomas'.

Look at the painting and then either discuss with someone or reflect and think about what you can see: the different emotions conveyed by the artist and how you feel about the picture. Spend some time wondering how Thomas felt when Jesus asked him to feel his wounds.

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Incredulity_of_Saint_Thomas_\(Caravaggio\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Incredulity_of_Saint_Thomas_(Caravaggio))



Share and pray

Thomas is famous for doubting, but sometimes we also have doubts. Share some of your doubts with someone else and spend time praying about them.

As you share, eat some ring doughnuts – if you'd like to – to remind you of the holes in Jesus' hands and the truth of his resurrection.



If someone asked, what is your 'evidence' for your faith?

Choose a version of the passage to read. The first is the ROOTS version for children, the second is the NRSV text which may be suitable for older children, young people and adults.

The return of Jesus from the dead was all the disciples could talk about. Every one of them was so excited about it. Well, not exactly every one of them. Thomas wasn't excited, because Thomas had missed it. 'Unless I see the marks the nails made in his hands, I won't believe he's alive,' Thomas said.

A week earlier, Jesus had appeared to ten of the disciples. They were gathered together, hiding because they were afraid they would be killed next. Although they were in a locked room, Jesus appeared and said, 'Peace be with you.' As the disciples rejoiced, Jesus said, 'As God the Father sent me, now I send you.' Then he breathed on them, saying, 'Receive the Holy Spirit. When you forgive people their sins, they are forgiven. When you find people guilty, they are guilty.'

Thomas was with the others in the house now. 'I'll only believe if I put my finger in the marks and my hand in his side,' he said. The doors were closed, just as they had been before, but again, Jesus appeared. He said, 'Peace be with you.' Then he spoke to Thomas: 'Look at my

hands and put your finger in the holes. Put your hand in the wound on my side. Do not doubt, but believe.' Thomas was suddenly as excited as the rest of the disciples. 'My Lord and my God!' he cried.



Jesus asked Thomas, 'Have you only believed because you have seen me? God blesses all those who believe even though they haven't seen me.' This is why the story of Jesus was written down; so that people may believe that he is the Messiah, the Son of God. All who believe in Jesus will have life through him.

John 20.19-31

Did you know?

- Sin is the bad things that people do, that go against what God wants.
- The word Messiah means the 'anointed one', someone chosen by God to save the Jewish people. It's also a title used for Jesus.

John 20.19-31 (NRSV)

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."

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.

Name _____

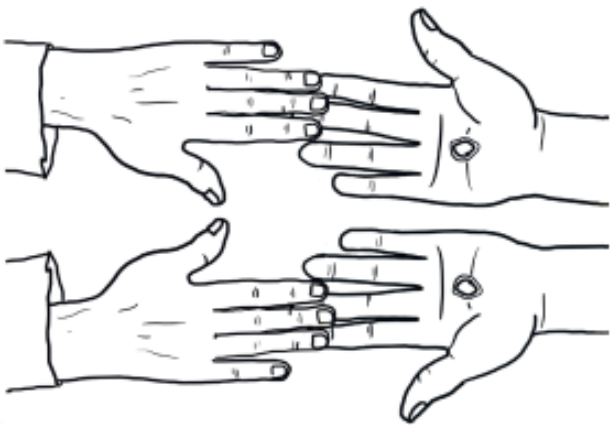
ROOTS Activity Sheet

11-17 April 2021



John 20.19-31

Jesus breathes the Holy Spirit on the disciples. Thomas sees the proof that Jesus is alive and he believes.



When Thomas touched Jesus he said,
"My Lord and my God!"



Use the picture clues to work out what Thomas said to Jesus.



“

”



Can you crack the code to work out the hidden message?

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z	?
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

23 08 01 20 08 05 12 16 19 25 15 21 02 05 12 09 05 22 05 27



Which line leads to the truth?



Once you have solved the code to find out what you are being asked, write your answer in the box below.

Write answer: What helps you believe?