



Parish of
St Peter Woking
St Peter's · St Mark's · All Souls'



Sunday 11th April Second Sunday of Easter

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

All and also with you

Welcome

Hymn **367 Jesus is Lord**

Jesus is Lord! Creation's voice proclaims it,
for by His power each tree and flower was planned and made.

Jesus is Lord! The universe declares it;
sun, moon and stars in heaven cry: 'Jesus is Lord!'

Jesus is Lord! Jesus is Lord!

Praise Him with hallelujahs, for Jesus is Lord!

Jesus is Lord! Yet from His throne eternal
in flesh He came to die in pain on Calvary's tree.

Jesus is Lord! From Him all life proceeding,
yet gave His life a ransom thus setting us free.

Jesus is Lord . . .

Jesus is Lord! O'er sin the mighty conqueror,
from death He rose and all His foes shall own His name.

Jesus is Lord! God sends His Holy Spirit
to show by works of power that Jesus is Lord.

Jesus is Lord . . .

Words and music by David J Mansell
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Opening activity *Drawing challenge*

Confession

Leader The sacrifice of God is a broken spirit;
a broken and contrite heart God will not despise.
Let us come to the Lord, who is full of compassion,
and acknowledge our transgressions in penitence and faith.

All Lord God, we have sinned against you;

**we have done what is evil in your sight.
We are sorry and repent.
Have mercy on us according to your love.
Wash away our wrong doing and cleanse us from our sin.
Renew a right spirit within us
and restore us to the joy of your salvation,
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

Absolution (*The priest proclaims God's forgiveness*)

Leader 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.

All Amen.

Collect (*Prayer for the day*)

Leader 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.

All Amen

Everyday faith *Jenny Carter, St Peter's*

Song **Give You Everything I've Got**

Jesus You walked upon the waters
Jesus turned water into wine
Jesus You fed five thousand people
There is no one like you

Chorus

*With all my heart and soul
I worship you
With all my mind and strength
I cheer for you
With everything I have
I give you praise
I give you everything I've got*

Jesus You are the greatest hero
Jesus the only one who saves
Jesus You are my friend forever
There is no one like you

Bridge

*If all I've got is pots and pans
I'll praise you I'll praise you
If all I've got is a traffic jam
I'll praise you I'll praise you
If all I've got is a bin and broom
I'll praise you I'll praise you
If all I've got is my front room
I'll praise you I'll praise you
If all I've got is a bucket and mop
I'll Praise You I'll praise you
If all I've got is a cold bus stop
I'll Praise You I'll praise you
If all I've got is a croaky voice
I'll praise you I'll praise You
With my whole life I'll give you praise
I'll praise you I'll praise You
I'll praise you I'll praise you*

*Even in the dark I'll praise you
I'll praise you I'll praise you
I am not alone I'll praise you
I'll praise you I'll praise you
Even in the dark I'll praise you
I'll praise you I'll praise you Yeah*

*Heart soul mind and strength
Give you everything I've got
Heart soul mind and strength
Give you everything I've got*

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Bible readings

John 20:19-end – Kay Dodds, St Mark's

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

²¹Again Jesus said, "Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you." ²²And with that he breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit. ²³If you forgive anyone his sins, they are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven."

²⁴Now Thomas (called Didymus), one of the Twelve, was not with the disciples when Jesus came. ²⁵So 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 it."

²⁶A 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!" ²⁷Then 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."

²⁸Thomas said to him, "My Lord and my God!"

²⁹Then Jesus told him, "Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."

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

Acts 4:32-35 – Angela Quitmann, All Souls'

³²All the believers were one in heart and mind. No one claimed that any of his possessions was his own, but they shared everything they had. ³³With great power the apostles continued to testify to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and much grace was upon them all. ³⁴There were no needy persons among them. For from time to time those who owned lands or houses sold them, brought the money from the sales ³⁵and put it at the apostles' feet, and it was distributed to anyone as he had need.



Sermon – Sarah Thomas – *When doubt assails*

Have you ever arrived late to a party, or missed a really big moment? A child's first steps, or the exchange of vows at a wedding? Left with a crashing sense of disappointment; the feeling that somehow others always seem to have it better than you, or even, that life works better for them, but not you. If so, this story, may resonate with you.

John, who recorded the story, and Thomas were both eye-witnesses of the ministry of Jesus from the start, but their experiences were not identical. John was regularly called apart by Jesus to witness moments of particular significance - but Thomas was not; John's brother was a fellow disciple, but Thomas's sibling was not; John was with the disciples when Jesus came and stood among them for the first time and Thomas was not.

Whereas John's Gospel reveals John to be imaginative, intuitive and able to connect with the symbolic, Thomas does not appear over-gifted with imagination; he is questioning, logical and direct. Thus, In John chapter 14, at the Last Supper, Jesus has been talking obliquely about going away and that they will know the way to him. Thomas observes bluntly. 'Lord, we don't know where you are going, so how can we know the way?' We also know Thomas had 'pluck.' In John 11, Thomas is the first to volunteer to accompany Jesus back to Judea, though the visit may be hazardous; the other disciples follow his lead, so I think Thomas, despite his questions and observations is always committed to following the truth, bravely.

It's the day of Jesus' resurrection, the Sunday after the hideous Friday. The disciples are a stunned, frightened band hiding for fear of their lives. They know the tomb is open, not closed, and that it's empty, not occupied, so they are, presumably, praying, eating, arguing or speculating - all day. But, they take no further significant action; they stick together and 'Bolt the doors!' Only Mary, propelled I suppose by love, doesn't hide. She stays near the tomb, woeful at being unable to see and touch Jesus one last time. But then, her world somersaults and she comes a second time to the disciples, bearing startling news! 'I have seen the Lord.' They, however, are in no great haste to believe her. And Thomas is absent, in the evening, at least. We don't know why. To avoid all the talk, or go to get bread? Had he even made it back to the group after the scattering that fateful Thursday night?

But then, as dusk falls, something wonderful, both unexpected and longed for, happens. 'Jesus comes and stands among them and says, 'Peace be with you!' One moment, there's absence, the next, presence. One moment, bewilderment, the next clarity. One moment, grief and the next, joy. One moment anguish and shame, the next forgiveness and peace. Jesus doesn't break the door down or arrive with trumpets. As he came humbly to Bethlehem, so he came quietly to them, with grace, bearing gifts; the Holy Spirit to enliven and unite them and peace to put away the burdens of the last few days. Gone are the fear and shame of his friends for their individual and collective failures before the horrors of the Cross. 'Peace be with you, says Jesus.'

And then, surely, there was a party like no other. Verse 20 says 'The disciples were overjoyed when they saw the Lord.' I bet this was a good night. Tears, laughter, crying, shouting? Fancy missing this! Poor Thomas; you can imagine him returning to an entirely different atmosphere from the one he'd left, and being unable to celebrate, to share and join in, feeling left out.

Now, the dogged spirit which made Thomas so loyal to Jesus in the face of danger works up a desperate determination not to be 'taken in', the natural consequence of having suffered crushing disappointment.

So dogged is he, that a whole week elapses? What was that like? Did everyone pressure him, or chide him? Did they say 'Oh, you'll understand when it happens to you'. But then, Jesus does come to Thomas – and it's very much, just for Thomas. Jesus uses Thomas's own statement back to him, as an invitation to him – and to convey that he knows Thomas individually.

Have we met Jesus in a memorable and real way? Or are we like Thomas, feeling that others have something we don't have? Your Heavenly Father knows the thoughts of your hearts. Most of us need more of the Holy Spirit and more of Jesus; but fail in the asking. Thomas missed out on seeing Jesus the first time; he also missed out on receiving the Holy Spirit, who makes Jesus seem lovely to us and, makes heaven close and the things of earth assume their proper perspective. Thomas needed the Holy Spirit for when Jesus would not be standing in front of him and so do we; let us ask God to pour his Holy Spirit into our hearts daily, so we may know the Lord.

How do we come to Jesus? How do we ask for more of the Holy Spirit? Through simple prayers. Here are life-changing prayers by other Christians; 'I'm sorry Jesus, you went to the cross.' 'If you're there, God, show me.' 'I will follow you, Jesus.' Without my prayer and my own encounter with Jesus and receiving God's Holy Spirit, when I was 21 years old, I don't think I would have continued on as a Christian for so many years, especially in days like these, when love for Jesus in Britain has grown so cold and many folk are uninterested and unconcerned.

What is it all for anyway? In our society, most people do get to live a long life; 'Why', some say, 'Is death still such a big deal to Christians? Let us live for a while and then shuffle off this planet with grace when our time comes!' Easy for us to say, living in a reasonably free country. Shall we really forget what the power of death makes possible? The deep and abhorrent injustice that enslaves and oppresses human beings with great cruelty? Shall we overlook individuals suffering imprisonment in the 21st Century, for wanting freedom and democracy; individuals kept as hostages simply to pressurise their governments back home?

The power of every corrupt system rests firmly upon its willingness to measure out death to the individual, to coerce and control them. Nothing but the Resurrection has the power to confront this. Jesus himself died a hopeless, solitary, humiliating and public death at the

hands of such systems, but just days later Thomas proclaimed him 'My Lord and My God', not because Jesus lived a good life, not because his ideas are nice and Jesus is a good moral example, but because he didn't stay dead. A good example never shook foundations of societies. Only the Resurrection can do this.

I think we have a responsibility to seek truth in all fields of life, not just spiritual, but political, scientific, sporting, artistic, relational and institutional for the benefit of our national life. These days, that includes seeking the truth about the COVID vaccine, a matter of life and death. How much more, the truth about the Resurrection? We learn from Thomas, that other people's experience is not enough to satisfy our desire for truth, though it can make us hungry for it. Thomas is not just a doubter; he is a truth-seeker and a truth-follower. Time will tell if Thomas, and the first disciples, were right, whether the king, who never meted out death to anyone, never coerced or controlled them, locked them up or tortured them, whether he is the True and Coming King.

Doubting is rather like peering through a misty window on a train journey; the landscape is rushing by, but we are not at all sure what it is we are seeing, we struggle to make sense of it all. Questioning and wanting to know the truth, (including being willing to bear it even if it's difficult), is rather like rubbing a little window in the mist. You won't see the whole picture, but you'll have a sense of where you're going and whether the sky is blue out there - and you'll know when the train is stopped and it's time to get off!

Hymn **Open the eyes of my heart, Lord**

Open the eyes of my heart, Lord,
open the eyes of my heart.

I want to see You,
I want to see You.

Open the eyes of my heart, Lord . . .

*To see You high and lifted up,
shining in the light of Your glory.
Pour out Your power and love,
as we sing, 'Holy, holy, holy.'*

Open the eyes of my heart, Lord . . .

To see You high and lifted up . . .

Holy, holy, holy,
holy, holy, holy,
holy, holy, holy,
I want to see You.
Holy, holy, holy . . .

Words and music by Paul Baloche

Creed

**All 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 ~ *Patrick Phillipps, All Souls'*

As we continue cautiously to come out of lockdown, let us pray for guidance, patience and compassion in the challenges ahead.

The response to the words
"Risen Lord" is "**hear our prayer**"

Merciful God, last week we celebrated the ultimate triumph of Your Son Jesus Christ in overcoming the darkness of sin and death and the advent of renewed hope and salvation for us all. As we now continue to face up to the challenges of this troubled world help us to remember the experience of those early Christians and those around them who faced feelings of doubt and even despair as Christ died and then miraculously of reassurance and joy at his resurrection. Remind us of the words of Your Son that with You all things are possible.

Risen Lord

Hear our prayer

Loving Father, many of us at this time feel anxious about the future and what lies ahead of us. Some more vulnerable people may feel that so many things will be different that they will find even day to day tasks a major challenge. Be with them Lord and give them the strength and confidence they need and the rest of us the patience and understanding to be aware of their needs and help them when we can Help them and all of us always to remember that this remains your world and that whatever the circumstances you are and always will be the same Lord.

Risen Lord

Hear our prayer

Almighty God, we bring before you at this time our leaders both in this country and beyond who face huge and difficult decisions as they look for ways to control and manage the effects of the current pandemic which threatens so many parts of our world. Grant them courage, wisdom and above all a willingness to work together to resolve the difficult issues involved. Help them always to give proper weight to the sometimes desperate needs of those in countries already suffering as the result of conflicts, droughts and other disasters and in particular Syria, Myanmar, Yemen and elsewhere. Help us to



remember that we as a world are all in this struggle together and none of us are safe until we are all safe.

Risen Lord

Hear our prayer

Lord God, we ask at this time for your strength and guidance for our Queen Elizabeth and her family as they look for ways to resolve the particular difficulties which they as a family face arising from recent events and the publicity which has been given to them

We pray for the continued recovery of the Duke of Edinburgh such that he and the other members of the family may continue to support Her Majesty in reaching solutions for the benefit of all members of the family and the good standing of the role which she fills in the country as a whole.

Risen Lord

Hear our prayer

Lord God, we remember that the first word that our Lord spoke on his appearance to his followers following his resurrection was "Peace"

We pray that in the coming weeks as we continue to look for ways out of the restrictions and difficulties following the lockdown all of us at every level will look for the ways of peace as we respond to events as they develop.

We pray that our politicians of all persuasions will put aside personal and political considerations and look for answers which will help to unite us all as a nation to overcome our difficulties.

We pray that all leaders of society and persuasions in our country will be prepared to listen to others and make compromises where this will bring the greatest benefit to us all.

Risen Lord

Hear our prayer

Merciful God, we lay before you at this time of change the needs of our Parish and your wider Church.

We pray for those who lead us at every level as they face difficult choices. We remember the long standing issues of past abuses, of gender related issues and unity of different beliefs. Grant them all wisdom, compassion and understanding as we and they debate the difficulties which affect us all.

Nearer to home we ask for your blessing on all that our Parish leaders led by Jonathan are striving to achieve in South Woking. We remember Sam and his family as he faces the challenges of finding a new post at the end of his curacy. Strengthen them all in their faith in all that they do.

Risen Lord

Hear our prayer

Loving Father let us take a moment of silence as we think of all those who are suffering whether by reason of ill health, loss of loved ones or whatever cause remembering particularly the family and friends of Enid Hardman, and those who are unwell - Eileen and Peter Bliss, Patrick Chapman, John Hunter, Lynda Kirk, Trevor Lloyd, Catherine McCormack, Olive Park, Joy Storkey and our Mission Partner Malcolm Pritchard

Help them to find the comfort they need and the peace which Your Son so vividly demonstrated to us by his life, his death and his resurrection

Risen Lord

Hear our prayer

The Lord's prayer

Leader As our Saviour has taught us so we pray.

**All Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come, your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.**

Give us today our daily bread.

Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.

Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.

**For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours
now and for ever. Amen.**

Notices – see *N&N*

Hymn **77 Christ triumphant**

Christ triumphant, ever reigning,
Saviour, Master, King,
Lord of heaven, our lives sustaining,
hear us as we sing:
*Yours the glory and the crown,
the high renown, the eternal name.*

Word incarnate, truth revealing,
Son of Man on earth!
power and majesty concealing
by Your humble birth:
Yours the glory . . .

Suffering servant, scorned, ill-treated,
victim crucified!

death is through the cross defeated,
sinners justified:

Yours the glory . . .

Priestly King, enthroned for ever
high in heaven above!
sin and death and hell shall never
stifle hymns of love:

Yours the glory . . .

So, our hearts and voices raising
through the ages long,
ceaselessly upon You gazing,
this shall be our song:

Yours the glory . . .

Blessing

Leader God the Father,
by whose love Christ was raised from the dead,
open to you who believe the gates of everlasting life.
God the Son,
who in bursting from the grave has won a glorious victory,
give you joy as you share the Easter faith.
God the Holy Spirit,
who filled the disciples with the life of the risen Lord,
empower you and fill you with Christ's peace.
And the blessing ... **Amen.**

Leader We are raised to new life with Christ.
Go in his peace. Alleluia, alleluia.

All Thanks be to God. Alleluia, alleluia.

Worshipping ▶ Loving ▶ Sharing ▶ Growing

