



# ST NICHOLAS CHURCH, SUTTON

**19 APRIL 2020 2<sup>ND</sup> SUNDAY OF EASTER**

Please join me for our

**Service on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Easter at 10.30am on Sunday**

(or at another convenient time) by following the Order of Service and singing in your own home.

I will be thinking of you all and praying for you at The Rectory at the same time and longing for our future reunion in Church.



Christ is risen  
**He is risen indeed. Alleluia.**  
*Frances*

Duty Warden: deputy Matthew Phillips

Server: Henry Sawyerr

Sidespersons: Rebecca Phillips, Peter Wilson

Welcomer: Jean Chappell, Sylvia Cowling

Sound desk: Clive Orton

Refreshments: Margaret Ager, Glynis Osborne

Here is a view of St Nic's from The Rectory garden at 10.28am on Easter Day



**St. Nicholas, Sutton**  
**Worship on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Easter**  
**at 10.30am on 19 April 2020**  
led by Revd Frances Arnold, Priest-in-Charge

*The Gathering*

**The Greeting**

*President*

The Lord be with you  
**and also with you.**

Alleluia. Christ is risen.  
**He is risen indeed. Alleluia.**

*Hymn* We hail thy presence glorious

**Prayer of Preparation**

*We sit or kneel*

**Almighty God,  
to whom all hearts are open,  
all desires known,  
and from whom no secrets are hidden:  
cleanse the thoughts of our hearts  
by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit,  
that we may perfectly love you,  
and worthily magnify your holy name;  
through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

### **Prayers of Penitence**

Our Lord Jesus Christ said:

The first commandment is this:

'Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is the only Lord.

You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart,  
with all your soul, with all your mind,  
and with all your strength.'

The second is this: 'Love your neighbour as yourself.'

There is no other commandment greater than these.

On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.

**Amen. Lord, have mercy.**

Christ our passover lamb has been sacrificed for us.

Let us therefore rejoice by putting away all malice and evil  
and confessing our sins with a sincere and true heart.

*1 Corinthians 5.7,8*

**Most merciful God,  
Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,  
we confess that we have sinned  
in thought, word and deed.  
We have not loved you with our whole heart.  
We have not loved our neighbours as ourselves.  
In your mercy  
forgive what we have been,  
help us to amend what we are,  
and direct what we shall be;  
that we may do justly,  
love mercy,  
and walk humbly with you, our God. Amen.**

*President*

Almighty God,  
who forgives all who truly repent,  
have mercy upon *you*,  
pardon and deliver *you* from all *your* sins,  
confirm and strengthen *you* in all goodness,  
and keep *you* in life eternal;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

*Glory to God is said or sung*

**Glory to 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 Collect**

*President says 'Let us pray'.*

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.**

*The Liturgy of the Word*

**Readings**

*First reading* Acts 2.14a, 22-32

**Peter addresses the crowd**

*read by Jenny Gillbe*

*Second reading* 1 Peter 1.3-9

**A living hope**

*read by Jenny*

*At the end the reader says*

This is the word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

*Hymn* The day of resurrection!

**Gospel Reading** John 20. 19-end

**Jesus and Thomas**

*read by Alistair Cruickshank*

*The reader says*

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to *John*.

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

*At the end*

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, O Christ.**

**Sermon** *The Revd Frances Arnold*

The risen Christ came and stood among his disciples and said, 'Peace be with you.'

Then were they glad when they saw the Lord. (John 20. 19, 20)

Today's introduction to sharing the peace recalls our gospel reading: the appearance of the risen Lord to his disciples on the evening of the first Easter Day.

Although the disciples are glad to see Jesus, not all of them are present. Thomas is absent – and when he does hear the good news from the others, he can't rejoice with them, because he has not seen the risen Jesus for himself. He is the only one of the eleven missing on that first day, when Jesus appears in the house where the disciples are locked in behind closed doors and their own fears.

Maybe the disciples recognise Jesus first because he greets them with the familiar words 'Peace be with you', echoing his promise of peace at the Last Supper (14.27, 16.33). But then he shows them the marks on his body, including the wound from the spear still visible in his side - a sign of the identity of his risen body with his earthly body. Only Jesus himself could do this. And only Jesus would know that Thomas, like Mary Magdalene and Peter and all of us, needs to make sense of things in his own way and at his own pace.

In our current situation we are well placed to understand Thomas' challenge - his insistence on seeing and touching Jesus' wounds - as arising from a particularly difficult experience of a missed opportunity, akin to missing the chance to be present at the deathbed of a loved one. For days he has been pondering on the fact of the empty tomb and the seemingly unbelievable stories that the other disciples have told about seeing Jesus risen from the dead.

Now it seems that Jesus is in no hurry to relieve Thomas but has waited a whole week before appearing to him. When he does appear, he goes straight to the heart of Thomas' need, encouraging him to touch and to believe. We are not told whether or not Thomas did take up Jesus' invitation to put his finger in the marks in his hands and the wound in his side, but the impression is given that the *sight* of the marks itself proved sufficient.

No modern doubter could make a more sceptical comment than Thomas. He speaks for all those of us who trust only our own experience. But when he is offered physical proof, he realises that that is not what really matters. At the sight of the marks of suffering, he is so overcome with awe and reverence that he responds with *faith* and with the words: 'My Lord and my God!', the only place in the Bible, where Jesus is directly addressed as 'God.' Like the tortoise in Aesop's fable (of the Hare and the Tortoise), he has been a long way behind, but he ends up in front.

We know that Thomas and the other apostles, who had been Jesus' close companions for three or more years, were so sure that he had been raised from the dead that, rather than deny that conviction, they were prepared to go 'into all the world' and even to death. In early Christian tradition, Thomas went furthest, first to Edessa in Syria, and then, in AD 52, to India where the Mar Thoma Syrian Church (with which the Church of England is in communion) claims him as its founder. There he was martyred by being stabbed to death.

In John's account of Easter, the empty tomb and the appearance of the glorified Lord to his disciples are awesome and wonderful miracles. They can, of course, be the subject of discussion. But, as the story of Thomas demonstrates, their purpose goes further. Jesus' appearance to his disciples is, like all the signs in John's gospel, a demonstration of the loving, saving, critical but merciful concern of God for his children (20.22-23). The sign is incomplete unless and until it receives the appropriate response from us, because '...these (signs) 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 20.31). **Amen.**

## The Creed

*We stand*

Do you believe and trust in God the Father,  
source of all being and life,  
the one for whom we exist?

**We believe and trust in him.**

Do you believe and trust in God the Son,  
who took our human nature,  
died for us and rose again?

**We believe and trust in him.**

Do you believe and trust in God the Holy Spirit,  
who gives life to the people of God  
and makes Christ known in the world?

**We believe and trust in him.**

This is the faith of the Church.

**This is our faith.**

**We believe and trust in one God,  
Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.**

## Prayers of Intercession

In the power of the Spirit and in union with Christ,  
let us pray to the Father.

Almighty God, our heavenly Father,  
you promised through your Son Jesus Christ  
to hear us when we pray in faith.

Strengthen *Christopher & Jonathan* our bishops and all your Church in the service of  
Christ,  
that those who confess your name may be united in your truth,  
live together in your love, and reveal your glory in the world.

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

Bless and guide *Elizabeth our Queen*; give wisdom to all in authority;  
and direct this and every nation in the ways of justice and of peace;  
that we may honour one another, and seek the common good.

Lord, in your mercy...

Give grace to us, our families and friends, and to all our neighbours,  
that we may serve Christ in one another, and love as he loves us.

Lord, in your mercy...

*We hold in prayer all those affected by the Coronavirus and especially our chaplains,  
volunteers and NHS health workers, nursing and medical staff caring for increasing  
numbers....*

Comfort and heal all those who suffer in body, mind, or spirit ...;  
give them courage and hope in their troubles;  
and bring them the joy of your salvation.

Lord, in your mercy...

Hear us as we remember those who have died in the faith of Christ ...;  
according to your promises,  
grant us with them a share in your eternal kingdom.

Lord, in your mercy...

Rejoicing in the fellowship of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Nicholas and all your saints,  
we commend ourselves and the whole creation to your unfailing love.

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

## **The Peace**

*President*

The risen Christ came and stood among his disciples  
and said, 'Peace be with you.'

Then were they glad when they saw the Lord. Alleluia.

*John 20.19,20*

The peace of the Lord be always with you  
**and also with you.**

*Let us pray*

**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.**

**Almighty God, Father of all mercies,  
we your unworthy servants, give you most humble and hearty thanks  
for all your goodness and loving kindness.  
We bless you for our creation, preservation, and all the blessings of this life;  
but above all for your immeasurable love  
in the redemption of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ,  
for the means of grace, and for the hope of glory.  
And give us, we pray, such a sense of all your mercies  
that our hearts may be unfeignedly thankful,  
and that we show forth your praise,  
not only with our lips but in our lives,  
by giving up ourselves to your service,  
and by walking before you in holiness and righteousness all our days;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord,  
to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit be all honour and glory,  
for ever and ever. Amen.**

**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.**

*Blessing*

The God of peace,  
who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus,  
that great shepherd of the sheep,  
through the blood of the eternal covenant,  
make you perfect in every good work to do his will,  
working in you that which is well-pleasing in his sight;  
and the blessing of God almighty,  
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,  
be among you and remain with you always. **Amen.**