

BLESSING

May the glory and the promise of this joyous time of year
Bring peace and happiness to you and to those you hold most dear
And may Christ our risen Saviour always be there by your side
To bless you most abundantly and be your loving guide.

PARISH PRAYER LIST

Canon Ken, Bishop-elect George, Joyce, Eddie, Johnny,
Adam & Hayley, Cora, Gwen, Audra, Sylvia, Adam

Senior members resident in care homes

Nan, Isabel, Leslie, Lillian, Tom, Sally, Ronnie, Kay

Remember all who have been bereaved

We hold the Adair and Hill families in our prayers at this time following the death of Liz's husband Bobby and then her brother Brian. Pray for Liz and Pauline as they come to terms with the loss of their husbands, that they and their families will know God's comfort and peace.



Many of you are using the prayer about the coronavirus pandemic distributed the last time we were in church together. I've attached another copy in case you have mislaid yours. Please continue to pray for each other during this time of separation.

PARISH PRAYER LINE – TEL: 07553404711 (New)

*Delight yourself in the LORD, and he will give you the desires of your heart.
Commit your way to the LORD; trust in him, and he will act. Psalm 37:4,5*

**Please do not hesitate to contact Revd. Bobbie
or Canon Ken by telephone or email.**

**We would love to hear from you to know how you are getting on
and if you have specific prayer requests.**

**Don't forget to check the parish facebook page which is updated
regularly. www.facebook.com/staidansandyrow**

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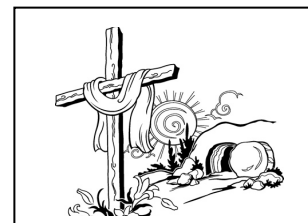
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St Aidan's Parish Church
Enabling people to find a Living Faith in a Loving God
by "Serving Christ in the Community"

19 April 2020 – Second Sunday of Easter

THE EASTER GREETING

Christ is risen.
The Lord is risen indeed. Alleluia!



SCRIPTURE VERSE

Jesus said to (Thomas),
'Have you believed because you have seen me?'
Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe.'
John 20:29

COLLECT OF THE DAY

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. **Amen**

CONCLUDING PRAYER

Bless us this day as we walk the path of faith we pray
Where the path is narrow guide our steps lest we fall
Where we struggle to catch sight of you, show yourself we pray
And may your peace go with us all. **Amen**

The Ministry of the Word

Psalm 16

Acts 2: 14a, 22-32

But Peter, standing with the eleven, raised his voice and addressed them: 'Men of Judea and all who live in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and listen to what I say. 22 'You that are Israelites, listen to what I have to say: Jesus of Nazareth, a man attested to you by God with deeds of power, wonders, and signs that God did through him among you, as you yourselves know—this man, handed over to you according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of those outside the law. But God raised him up, having freed him from death, because it was impossible for him to be held in its power. For David says concerning him,

"I saw the Lord always before me,
for he is at my right hand so that I will not be shaken;
therefore my heart was glad, and my tongue rejoiced;
moreover, my flesh will live in hope.
For you will not abandon my soul to Hades,
or let your Holy One experience corruption.
You have made known to me the ways of life;
you will make me full of gladness with your presence."

'Fellow Israelites, I may say to you confidently of our ancestor David that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us to this day. Since he was a prophet, he knew that God had sworn with an oath to him that he would put one of his descendants on his throne. Foreseeing this, David spoke of the resurrection of the Messiah, saying,

"He was not abandoned to Hades,
nor did his flesh experience corruption."

This Jesus God raised up, and of that all of us are witnesses.

John 20: 19-31

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.

Second Sunday of Easter

Gospel Reading John 20: 19-31

Do you remember the TV series 'One foot in the grave' and the cantankerous old grouch Victor Meldrew whose favourite expression was 'I don't believe it'?

This could very well have been the mind set of the disciples as they met behind locked doors in the upper room on the evening of that first Easter Sunday. It was certainly the declaration of Thomas. He needed proof, not just somebody else's say so.

He was not present when Jesus came--not there to receive Jesus' blessing--not there to receive the Holy Spirit. Later, the other disciples told him what had happened--that they had seen the risen Lord--but Thomas refused to believe. He said that he would need proof :

(1) He would need to see the print of the nails in Jesus' hands—(2) and he said that he would need to put his hand into the wound in Jesus' side. When Jesus came to Thomas, he offered him those two things exactly:

**"Reach here your finger, and see my hands.
Reach here your hand, and put it into my side.
Don't be unbelieving, but believing" (v. 27).**

I thank God for Thomas - Jesus gave him exactly what he needed in order to believe. He does the same for each of us in our times of unbelief and doubt.

This second Sunday of Easter is often called 'Low Sunday' coming after the high festival of Easter Day. It is quite possibly a 'low' time for many of us coping with the restrictions and anxieties about the impact of the coronavirus. God's word to us today speaks powerfully into our experience. The disciples were so afraid that they had locked themselves away. Is this not our experience? We are quite literally in lockdown to protect ourselves and others from the virus.

The good news is that the experience which set the disciples free and unlocked their fear was the presence of Jesus with them.

As he stood in their midst he said : **"Peace be to you."** Just as those words gave hope to those first disciples, they speak hope to each of us. When our faith wavers, as it will on occasion, and maybe particularly at this time, we remember how Jesus greeted the disciples in their weakness. Keep in mind that he did not condemn them for their fear or Thomas for his unbelief, but he blessed them. **"Peace be to you."** He gave them what they needed.

That tells us that as we live through these days, locked in as many of us are, we can expect Jesus to come to us--not to condemn us but to bless us--to encourage us--to give us peace.

John states the whole point of relating these events is so that we may believe.

Faith is a battle with unbelief. Mk.9:24 records the heart-cry of a father who asks Jesus to heal his son:

Lord I do believe, help me overcome my unbelief.

This morning Jesus speaks to each one of us :

Stop doubting and believe.

A prayer: Help us to remember the story of Thomas and never be afraid to announce the presence Jesus in our lives as our Lord and our God.

A Prayer in the Time of the Coronavirus

Lord Jesus Christ, you travelled through towns and villages "curing every disease and illness." At your command, the sick were made well. Come to our aid now, in the midst of the global spread of the corona virus, that we may experience your healing love.

Heal those who are sick with the virus. May they regain their strength and health through quality medical care. Heal us from our fear, which prevents nations from working together and neighbours from helping one another. Heal us from our pride, which can make us claim invulnerability to a disease that knows no borders.

Jesus Christ, healer of all, stay by our side in this time of uncertainty and sorrow. Be with the families of those who are sick or have died. As they worry and grieve, defend them from illness and despair. May they know your peace.

Be with the doctors, nurses, researchers and all medical professionals who seek to heal and help those affected and who put themselves at risk in the process. May they know your protection.

Be with the leaders of all nations. Give them the foresight to act with charity and true concern for the well-being of the people they are meant to serve. Give them the wisdom to invest in long-term solutions that will help prepare for or prevent future outbreaks. May they know your peace, as they work together to achieve it on earth.

Whether we are surrounded by many people suffering from this illness or only a few, Lord Jesus Christ, stay with us as we endure and mourn, persist and prepare.

Lord of all, in place of our anxiety, give us your peace. Amen.

George Davidson, Bishop designate.