



# The Methodist Church

## Bury St Edmunds Circuit.

Worship Sheet for Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> April 2021

### Welcome to worship

We still ourselves ready for worship, to focus on God and his loving presence with us. You may wish to light a candle before you begin.

### Call to Worship:

We come from a world confused about truth.

We come with our own uncertainties.

Let us bring the darkness of human understanding into the presence of God, who is light.

Let us bring the story of our search for truth and share in fellowship the things we have heard and seen and touched.

### Hymn: StF 323 I will sing

[I will sing the wondrous story - YouTube](#)

I will sing the wondrous story  
Of the Christ Who died for me;  
How He left His home in glory  
For the cross of Calvary.

### Refrain:

Yes, I'll sing the wondrous story  
Of the Christ Who died for me,  
Sing it with the saints in glory,  
Gathered by the crystal sea.

I was lost, but Jesus found me,  
Found the sheep that went astray,  
Threw His loving arms around me,  
Drew me back into His way.

I was bruised, but Jesus healed me,  
Faint was I from many a fall,  
Sight was gone, and fears possessed me,  
But He freed me from them all.

Days of darkness still come o'er me,  
Sorrow's path I often tread,  
But His presence still is with me;  
By His guiding hand I'm led.

He will keep me till the river  
Rolls its waters at my feet;  
Then He'll bear me safely over,  
Where the loved ones I shall meet.

(Francis Harold Rowley)

### Prayer of Thanksgiving

The love you give is our inspiration; the light you give, our illumination along the path we walk with you this day. It is our witness to the world to be of one mind in heart body and soul, a blessing to friend and stranger, bringing your grace to those in need and good news to the lost and the seeker. For the love, light and all the blessings of this life, we offer our grateful thanks. **Amen.**

### Prayer of Adoration

We have the message of Jesus to proclaim to the world. The Word of God, eternal truth confined within frail human flesh. The Son of God who for this world poured out his love upon the cross. The light of life, by whom we feel the grace of God setting us free. We have the message of Jesus to proclaim to the world. **Amen.**

### Prayer of confession and assurance of forgiveness

It would be wrong, Lord for us to say that we have no doubts, for this world is trying to deny all that we hold dear. There are days when like your dear friend Thomas, we need to reach out and touch the hand that has led us these long years to see the place where spear and nails made their marks. Forgive our doubts and in times of temptation, be our confidence, so close, that like Thomas we might joyfully declare, my Lord, my God. **Amen.**

### Assurance of forgiveness

**When we are true to ourselves and to God, we know that all our sins are forgiven in His gracious name. Amen. Thanks be to God.**

### Psalm 133: A Song of Ascents.

<sup>1</sup> How very good and pleasant it is  
when kindred live together in unity!

<sup>2</sup> It is like the precious oil on the head,  
running down upon the beard,  
on the beard of Aaron,

running down over the collar of his robes.

<sup>3</sup> It is like the dew of Hermon,  
which falls on the mountains of Zion.

For there the LORD ordained his blessing,  
life for evermore.

## **Gospel Reading: John 20: 19-31**

### **Jesus Appears to the Disciples**

<sup>19</sup> 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.' <sup>20</sup> After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. <sup>21</sup> Jesus said to them again, 'Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you.' <sup>22</sup> When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, 'Receive the Holy Spirit. <sup>23</sup> If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained.'

### **Jesus and Thomas**

<sup>24</sup> But Thomas (who was called the Twin), one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. <sup>25</sup> 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.'

<sup>26</sup> 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.' <sup>27</sup> 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.' <sup>28</sup> Thomas answered him, 'My Lord and my God!' <sup>29</sup> 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.'

### **The Purpose of This Book**

<sup>30</sup> Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book. <sup>31</sup> 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.

## **Hymn: StF 316 When Easter to the dark world came**

[When Easter to this dark world came - YouTube](#)

When Easter to the dark world came,  
fair flowers glowed like scarlet flame:  
*at Eastertide, at Eastertide,  
O glad was the world at Eastertide.*

When Mary in the garden walked,  
and with her risen Master talked:

When John and Peter in the gloom  
met angels at the empty tomb:

When ten disciples met in fear,  
then 'Peace' said Jesus, 'I am here.'

When Thomas' heart was hurt was hurt and  
grieved,  
then Jesus' wounds his doubt relieved:

And friend to friend in wonder said:  
'The Lord is risen from the dead!'

This Eastertide with joyful voice  
We'll sing: 'The Lord is King! Rejoice!'  
*At Eastertide, at Eastertide,  
O sing, all the world, for Eastertide.*

(W. H. Hamilton 1886-1958)

### **Reflection: By Rev Rita Carr**

This week we have the familiar story of Thomas or as he has become known 'doubting Thomas'. We live in sceptical world where seeing is believing. And so, the story of Thomas wanting to reach out and touch Jesus makes sense to us, because we too can understand why he needed proof. It was probably quite frustrating for Thomas at the time. He had not been with the other disciples when Jesus first appeared to them. I expect he felt that very human emotion of disbelief. How many times have we missed the main event and only had to rely on the testimony of others. How we wished we had been there. Thomas was adamant that unless he saw, touched, and felt Jesus then it wasn't true. How could he believe in something he had not seen for himself?

For us Christians we have to be able to do the exact opposite to Thomas. For us believing leads to seeing. This is an act of faith. That is what our faith in Christ Jesus is founded on. We see because we believe. I wonder what Thomas might have thought of that. If we could have a conversation with him and tell him that even though we haven't seen Jesus in the flesh we have begun our journey of walking with Jesus, that we have seen the light.

This puzzling story reminds me of the animated film Polar Express with the conductor voiced by Tom Hanks. In one scene the conductor says these words 'Seeing is believing, but sometimes the most real things in the world are the things we can't see'. This really resonates with us today and how we come to know Jesus. When we live each day with the assumption that there is a good and loving God, changes can take place. We become aware of purpose in life and we are better people for it. Jesus made it clear to Thomas that proof was a privilege and not a right. Jesus knew that by appearing to Thomas the word of his resurrection would have greater meaning and Thomas would spread the word, shout from the rooftops even, that Jesus was alive. And after more than 2,000 years Thomas can still share this story with us today. There is a Saviour, He is Risen and He is alive. With that belief forming the basis by which we live, and just as Thomas reached out and touched Jesus we will be able reach out our hand and see Jesus for believing is seeing. **Amen.**

### **Hymn: 303 I know that my redeemer lives**

[I KNOW THAT MY REDEEMER LIVES Hymn Lyrics Words Sing Along Song DUKESTREET - YouTube](#)

I know that my Redeemer lives;  
What joy the blest assurance gives!  
He lives, He lives, who once was dead;  
He lives, my everlasting Head.

He lives triumphant from the grave,  
He lives eternally to save,  
He lives all glorious in the sky,  
He lives exalted there on high.

He lives to silence all my fears,  
He lives to wipe away my tears,  
He lives to calm my troubled heart,

He lives all blessings to impart.

He lives, all glory to His Name!  
He lives, my Saviour, still the same.  
What joy the blest assurance gives,  
I know that my Redeemer lives!

(Samuel Medley 1738-1799)

### **Prayers of Intercession**

Sing to the Lord a new song

**For he has done marvellous things.**

Lord Jesus Christ you announce peace to your disciples, breathe into your church the Holy Spirit that new things may spring forth this Eastertide. Give to all faith for doubt and boldness to fainting hearts.

Sing to the Lord a new song

**For he has done marvellous things.**

Lord Jesus Christ, you announce peace to the world, breathe upon the nations the desire for harmony and concord. May nations cease to battle within and may they become beacons for peace and reconciliation. Strengthen the fearful and who all seek to reconcile peace and conflict.

Sing to the Lord a new song

**For he has done marvellous things.**

Lord Jesus Christ, you announce peace to our communities, breathe upon our common life your generosity may each person know that they are loved and cared for through the work of charitable organisations. By your grace open all our hearts to share our riches with those who live in poverty.

Sing to the Lord a new song

**For he has done marvellous things.**

Lord Jesus Christ, you announce peace to injured and battered peoples. Breathe upon all of special need your healing presence, remembering all those who are unwell at this time. Those having to wait for treatment due to delays and those completing their treatment and living through a time of mental and spiritual recovery. Anoint each one of us with all your great goodness.

Sing to the Lord a new song  
**For he has done marvellous things.**

Lord Jesus Christ, you announce peace in the face of death. Breathe upon all who have died your life and forgiveness. We pray for those who are bereaved and their families struggling to start their new normal. Bring light to the darkness of death and rejoicing to the place of tears.

Sing to the Lord a new song  
**For he has done marvellous things.**

We ask these and all our prayers in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

We say together **Our Father...**

### **Blessing of our Gifts**

May the love of the Lord rest upon your soul.  
May his love dwell in you throughout every day.  
May his countenance shine upon you and be gracious to you.  
May his Spirit be upon you as you leave this place. (StF 771)  
We ask that these gifts are blessed for your service that your church on earth may continue to flourish. **Amen.**

**Hymn: StF 347 Crown him with many crowns**  
[Crown Him With Many Crowns - Robin Mark - lyrics - YouTube](#)

Crown him with many crowns,  
The Lamb upon his throne.  
Hark! How the heavenly anthem drowns  
All music but its own.  
Awake, my soul, and sing of him  
Who died for thee,  
And hail him as thy matchless King  
Through all eternity.

Crown him the Lord of life,  
Who triumphed over the grave,  
And rose victorious in the strife  
For those he came to save.  
His glories now we sing,  
Who died, and rose on high,  
Who died eternal life to bring,  
And lives that death may die.

Crown him the Lord of peace,  
Behold his hands and side,  
Those wounds, yet visible above,  
In beauty glorified.  
No angel in the sky  
Can fully bear that sight,  
But downward bends his burning eye  
At mysteries so bright.

Crown him the Lord of peace,  
Whose power a scepter sways  
From pole to pole, that wars may cease,  
And all be prayer and praise.  
His reign shall know no end,  
And round his piercèd feet  
Fair flowers of paradise extend  
Their fragrance ever sweet.  
(Matthew Briggs and Godfrey Thring)

### **A prayer of dismissal**

The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face to shine in you and be gracious to you; the Lord look on you with kindness and give you peace. **Amen.**

**God be gracious to us and bless us, and make his face to shine upon us. Amen.**

**THE GRACE** We say together...

**May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all ever more. Amen.**



(Image from: Children's sermons today)

Some prayers adapted from: Roots on the web. Some prayers adapted from 'The Act of Prayer' by John Birch, and Intercessions adapted from Intercessions for years A, B, C by Ian Black. CCLI:7749.