



Welcome to **St Andrew's Stewton Church Community** Post 60. We gather, apart, and together glad and joyful at the fact of Christ's resurrection which pervades all life, and in union with the worldwide Church, with our faith strengthened and our doubts weakened. Across the world no one is untouched by the pandemic. We have been made sharply aware of our connectedness with each other and with the whole of creation. The death of HRH The Duke of Edinburgh also underlines the impact one person has on the lives of so many people and nations and we thank God for the positive and faithful contribution Prince Philip has had on our national life.

By the power of God, Christ died and destroyed death; he rose and revealed eternal life. For when our eyes fail to see and our hearts doubt what we see let us seek the Lord's pardon and forgiveness.

God is light. In him there is no darkness.

Lord, have mercy.

If we confess our sins, he who is faithful and just will forgive us.

Christ, have mercy.

If we walk in the light then we have fellowship with one another.

Lord, have mercy.

The Readings from Scripture set for today:

Acts 4:32-35

The first believers put their faith in the testimony of the apostles and their lives are transformed as they share their possessions.

1 John 1:1 – 2:2

God has been revealed through the Incarnation. God is pure light. We are called to live in that light. This light binds us as a community and we are charged with sharing it.

John 20:19-31

The risen Jesus reveals himself among the disciples banishing Thomas's doubts.

Reflection for today:

We've all experienced being in a discussion group or class situation, feeling like the only one who just doesn't get it, however hard we try. A good teacher doesn't shout or lose their temper with the student for being dense or not paying attention properly. Instead they go over it again, perhaps giving an illustration of what they are trying to explain until finally we reach that "Eureka" moment. The light dawns.

If you look up the phrase "doubting Thomas" you will find a description like "one who habitually or instinctively doubts or questions". Someone described as a 'doubting Thomas' is seen rather negatively, suspicious of others or unenlightened. So why at this season of Easter, a time of utmost joy and celebration do we turn our attention to the rather negative moment of Thomas, the man who said to his friends, *"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"*?

When Jesus does appear he does not tell Thomas what a faithless fool he was. This story cuts right to the very heart of the Christian faith, to the relationship between God and humanity. Of all the disciples, Thomas shows the most humanity when asked to believe something unbelievable without any proof. When his friends tell him what has happened he doesn't believe them. Which of us can honestly say that, in the same situation, we would have believed? What **do** we believe about the resurrection? How would you explain it or do you feel at a loss, with some sympathy for Thomas?

The fact is, the resurrection is neither unbelievable or irrational. It requires us to open our eyes and look. To open our hearts and feel. To open our lives and allow the light of God to shine in.

We can think of the resurrection as God's way of telling us that God can take the worst thing in the world, the killing of the God-Human Jesus, and transform it into the best thing: the redemption of the world.

Believing that Jesus was raised from the dead is not really a leap of faith at all. Resurrection, new life, renewal is in fact, the universal and observable pattern of everything. At Eastertime we use ordinary terms like "springtime," "regeneration," "healing," "forgiveness," "life cycles," "darkness," and "light" with images of bunnies, chicks and eggs. If incarnation (God becoming human) is real and if the spirit of God is in all material creation then we expect and experience resurrection in countless forms. Or to paraphrase a statement attributed to Albert Einstein, **'it is not that one thing is a miracle, but that the whole thing is a miracle!'** The resurrection is not a one-time event in the body of Jesus, as Western Christianity has so often felt it needed to prove but couldn't. The Risen Christ is not a one-time miracle but the revelation of a universal pattern hidden in plain sight.

Quite simply, if death is not possible for Jesus the Christ, then it is not possible for anything that "shares in the divine nature" (2 Peter 1:4). God is by definition eternal, and God is Love (1 John 4:16), which is also eternal (1 Corinthians 13:8), and this same Love has been planted in our hearts (Romans 5:5; 8:9) by the Spirit dwelling within each of us. Peter states this rather directly: "By raising Jesus Christ from the dead, we have a sure hope and the promise of an inheritance that can never be spoiled or soiled or fade away. It is being kept for you in the heavens . . . and will be fully revealed at the end of time" (1 Peter 1:3-5).

Resurrection is about the whole of creation; it's about history; it's about every human who has ever been conceived, sinned, suffered, and died; every animal that has lived and died a tortured death; every element that has changed from solid, to liquid, to gas, over great expanses of time. It's about you and it's about me. It's about everything. The "Christ journey" is indeed another name for everything.

Our job as 'church' is to take to heart the words of Jesus to Mary Magdalene on Easter morning when the 'the penny dropped, the light dawned' for her and eventually all the disciples – GO! AND TELL!

Keep safe. Keep well, and live in the light of the resurrection

Alan

Doubting Thomas by Mark Acton

I went to church but I couldn't really believe in God.
The trouble was my mind was closed to the possibility.
I could not accept that there was something more to our existence.
Something impacting our lives that we can't see or touch?
Most of all, I wanted to make my own choices
And not think they were wrong.
I killed God within me, all by myself.

Thomas, the Apostle, did not believe others.
They told him, "We have seen the Lord"!
But Thomas couldn't accept truth. He said,
"Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hand
And put my finger into the nailmarks and
Put my hand into his side, I will not believe."
God showed up and gave him the chance.

I always wanted proof like Thomas received.
Didn't really want to put my hands into terrible wounds...
That sounded a bit disgusting.
I had no understanding that my wounds were His wounds.
As I lived with deceit and rejection and dishonesty
I WAS placing my hand into His nailmarks.
When we least expected it, God will show up.

"Weeping comes for the night; but at dawn there will be rejoicing." Psalm 30:6



For one another, for the Church and for the whole world, let us offer our prayers to the Father.

We pray for people throughout the world who put their faith in Christ, praying especially for those for whom to celebrate the joy of the resurrection means the risk of persecution and death. May their faith strengthen them and give them comfort. In the Anglican Worldwide Communion we pray today for our brothers and sisters in the Province of the Indian Ocean.

We pray for all whose experiences have caused their faith to fade or to disappear. We pray for the victims of abuse, of war, of natural disasters, and we give thanks for all who seek to ease their pain and suffering and to restore their faith in God and humanity.

We pray for the communities of which we are each a part, may they be places of friendship and inclusion. We remember the other members of St Andrew's Stewton Church Community whether or not we know who they all are and for the other church communities in Louth and the surrounding area.

We pray for all who are afflicted in mind, body or spirit; for those who feel alone, abandoned or exploited by others. We pray for all who care for them or about them that they may all be comforted and share in the bounty of God's love for all. We continue to remember those commended to the prayers of our community: *Joyce Terrett, David Barker, Ed Cox, Paul Clifford, Phyllis Clifford, Denise and Caroline, Mary, Lisa and Chris*

We pray for the departed, mindful that into God's arms we are born and in God's arms we die. Trusting in the power of Christ's victory over death we commend to God's keeping those who have recently died: HRH Prince Philip Duke of Edinburgh and the Revd Robert Bell who died recently. May those who have loved and lost be strengthened in the knowledge that love itself can never die. We remember Her Majesty the Queen and all the Royal Family at this time.

May the God who raised Christ from the dead, bless us. May the risen Christ break through the locked doors of our lives and strengthen our faith. May the Holy Spirit who entered the disciple's hearts, banish our doubts and bless our lives and the lives of all who are near and dear to us. Amen

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.

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.



The Readings for next Sunday

April 18th 2021

3rd Sunday of Easter

Acts 3:12-19

1 John 3:1-7

Luke 24:36b-48





Lord Jesus, you are the Bread of Life,
may we always hunger for your word,
for your presence in our lives,
for the peace you alone can give,
and for the courage and confidence you inspire
without which in these times
we cannot live as your disciples in the world.
May we never forget you,
never walk away from you,
but always trust in you and remain close by you,
and may we be united with you for ever. Amen.

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.



Been a busy week. We got some Linseed drilled but had difficulty seeing across the field as there was a snow blizzard at the time! Linseed is a very delicate seed, so decided to drill only one field, and wait for a bit warmer weather for the rest.

Got some more land worked ready to drill as this picture shows. Office busy this week with yearend paperwork, made a start anyway. Let's hope it warms up a bit soon, and dare I say we could also do with a drop of rain!



Jane x



NEIGHBOURS KITCHEN

The world is shifting, yet again, as we tentatively start to open up a little and some lockdown rules are loosened. We'll come out, blinking and a bit wary into the light and cautiously make our way forward. The Neighbours Kitchen is evolving with the times. We are starting to shift the emphasis to providing healthy produce boxes to enable people to cook for themselves. Obviously, we will continue to cook meals for those who are unable to cook for themselves, but with the prospect of families reuniting and being in a position to help, the produce boxes seem like the right step to support people as we come out of lockdown. The fresh food boxes usually go out on Wednesdays and Fridays. They are publicised via Facebook and word of mouth. The need is very real, huge and heart-breaking. Families with no food in the cupboard to feed their children... People can find it hard to ask for help, which is why the focus at the Neighbours Kitchen is that this is **NOT** charity...it is about being good neighbours. As simple as that. Nothing is expected in return... just that anyone who is given a neighbourly boost will do something to help someone else later on, when they find themselves in a position to do so.

Meanwhile, there is planning and preparation happening for a future, permanent Neighbours Kitchen base in town. This would be a space with a vibrant community café; space for storage and redistribution of donations in partnership with Lighthouse, ECHO, UFOP, EDAN, Salvation Army, and Trinity Food Bank...; a community arts space; bookable rooms for workshops/courses; signposting to agencies who can offer support... so many possibilities! It will be run **by** local people **for** local . It would be marvellous to have offers of support donations of money and/or time or skills to bank.

Thanks to YOU, your support and prayers, there are people who can feed their families tonight!

A massive "thank you" is in order!



THANKS TO YOU



We are able to support people in the community who are struggling.

So far thanks to the big hearts of the community, businesses and all the volunteers we have delivered over **25000** free hot meals to the doors of your neighbours who need them most. We have also redistributed in excess of **50000** meals to food banks and community groups around East Lindsey. This is just a sticking plaster and for many sadly the struggle continues. However, there are lots of ways you can make a difference but if you are not in a position to help right now don't forget that just being a good neighbour is what originally inspired and will always drive the Neighbours Kitchen Louth.



Food donations of day-to-day essentials like UHT milk, tinned vegetables and meat, toiletries, chicken and cereals really help.

There are a variety of ways a few hours of your time can benefit the community. Find out more at www.priorylouth.co.uk follow the GET INVOLVED section.



Neighbours Kitchen CIC sort code 60-83-71 acc no 6234 4998
A small monthly standing order will make a huge difference
or **JustGiving - neighbourskitchen2021**

 [theneighbourskitchenlouth](https://www.instagram.com/theneighbourskitchenlouth)

 [@serendipityrocks](https://www.tiktok.com/@serendipityrocks)

 [neighborskitchenlouth](https://www.facebook.com/neighborskitchenlouth)

By sharing, commenting on, and liking our posts on Instagram, Facebook and Tiktok you will help spread positivity and hope.



All we ask of anyone we support is that one day when you are back on their feet that you support someone else to get stronger...

DO YOU NEED SUPPORT?
TEXT SUPPORT to 07894087539

STRUGGLING WITH YOUR MENTAL HEALTH
Text 'SHOUT' to 85258 FREE support for you 24/7

 SCAN ME



REG NO 12616598

NEIGHBOURS KITCHEN

WE SHARE OUR FOOD DONATIONS WITH SOME AMAZING GROUPS AROUND EAST LINDSEY AS WELL AS ACTING AS A DROP-OFF POINT FOR - THE FOOD BANK, ECHO, LIGHTHOUSE, EDAN AND SALVATION ARMY AMONGST OTHERS



And finally to bring us back to earth...



