

# SERVICE NOTES 11TH APRIL 2021

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## Lectionary passages:-

**Psalm 133,**

**I John 1 v22;**

**John 20 v19-31**

We are in that post Easter season, a time when we learn from the various passages over the next few weeks the reactions and behaviours of the disciples, and others, following the news of the resurrection of Jesus. He is Risen! Note that like in 2021, responses vary enormously!

Today's passage from John 20 includes the story of Doubting Thomas. How sad this one event gives him his negative nickname! Nevertheless it is an event from which we can learn.

Thomas is not present, for whatever reason, when Jesus appears the first evening to them.

To me this is a reminder I can miss out if I fail to meet together with my brothers and sisters in Christ. After the Pandemic is over, I do hope we shall not fail to meet together on the first day of the week to worship, pray and learn from God's word. It has been good to be able to do over Zoom these last 12 months, meeting together is important, if not essential. We must not neglect it for our own good!

Thomas makes some very specific demands if he is to accept the disciple's words! He wants to see the holes in the hands of Jesus, and put his hand in the wound of his side. This is what he requires to believe.

John makes a comment at the end of the story, "how blessed are those who believe without so much physical proof, but are willing to believe the testimony of others".

In these days of fake news and scams we must be careful. We can, and must trust the Bible and the teaching of the church over the years. We should believe in Jesus on the basis of what we have.

Jesus does not appear to the disciples for another week, again when they are gathered together on the first day of the week. We are reminded in this that it is God's timing and timetable. But one can only imagine how the week went for Thomas.

Then Jesus comes to them. Thomas is there this time. He has not given up on it all, as some might. He is no doubt surprised Jesus knows and must have heard his conversation last week and his thoughts and further conversations in the week since! *Scary and sobering stuff for us all! Jesus is alive, and with us even when we are not aware.*

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Again Jesus offers his peace as he arrives through locked doors. He invites Thomas to put his fingers in the wounds... Thomas is blown away, My Lord and my God!!

Jehovah witnesses tell me Thomas is swearing at this point! They say Jesus is not God!

But we know better, we know, as Thomas knows, Jesus is our Lord and our God! He is our Saviour and Lord. As the disciples then go on to prove, as we are also called, to live out their conviction with lives committed to Jesus.

Tradition has it Thomas goes to be a missionary to preach the gospel, the good news of Easter in India. He gives his whole life to the cause of the gospel.

After we have met the risen Lord, Will we? Do we?