

St Martin of Tours  
Epsom

St Stephen on the Downs  
Langley Vale

The parish of  
St Martin of Tours  
with St Stephen-on-the-Downs

Weekly Newsletter  
Registered Charity Number: 1134149

## Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> April 2021 – Second Sunday of Easter

Dear Friends,

First, an apology to those who turned up/ tuned in for last week's Thursday am service. I was convinced it was Wednesday and was reading circulars, papers etc at home. I suspect this was due to the Bank Holiday on Monday.

St Thomas also missed something really important – he wasn't there when Jesus appeared to the others. Consequently, he found it hard to believe their stories when he returned. He wanted proof. When our anecdotes fall flat, we often say 'you had to be there.' We also exclaim, 'if I hadn't been there I wouldn't believe it had happened.' Jesus says, blessed are they who weren't there, but still believe.

*Nick Parish*

### **THIS WEEK**

#### **Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> April – Second Sunday of Easter**

- 9.30am – Holy Communion at St Stephen's – led by David Candlin
- 10.00am – Morning Prayer at St Martin's, in Church and live streamed – led by John Padwick
- 6.30pm – Stations of the Resurrection – music, scripture, poetry, painting and prayer inspired by the Risen Christ. Easter Celebration words and music. Live and streamed at St Martin's – led by Adrian Esdaile.

#### **Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> April**

- 10.00am – Holy Communion, in Church and live streamed – led by Nick Parish

### **FUTURE SERVICES**

#### **Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> April – Third Sunday of Easter**

- 9.30am – Morning Prayer at St Stephen's – led by Graeme Lodge
- 10.00am – Holy Communion at St Martin's, in Church and live streamed – led by David Candlin
- 6.30pm – Evening Prayer in Church and live streamed – led by Howard Bluett.

## **DISCIPLESHIP /STUDY/ WORSHIP MEETINGS**

### **Time Aside: Midweek Individually Guided Retreat**

Tue, 20 Apr 2021, 6:00 pm - Thu, 22 Apr 2021 3:00 pm

Led by the House of Prayer Team via Zoom

This retreat provides an opportunity to step aside from the busyness of everyday life and spend time in quiet prayer and reflection. A retreat guide will be available for daily individual meetings to accompany you through the retreat. Above all, this retreat is a time of listening to God who is present in the experiences of prayer and daily living. All communal prayer meetings and spiritual direction will be online using the Zoom platform. If you wish to attend this retreat from the House of Prayer you will need to bring a laptop or device with you.

Retreat from home cost: £60

### **Consolation and Desolation for Challenging Times**

Saturday, 24 April 2021 10:00 am - 4:00 pm

Led by Gemma Simmonds, C.J. via Zoom

Lockdown has stripped many of us of the identifying markers by which we define our lives: normal patterns of work and relationships, both private and professional, patterns of interaction with wider society, patterns of travel for both work and leisure. Many of us have had to re-negotiate our sense of meaning and purpose and are searching for tools to help us. The teaching of Ignatius of Loyola on consolation and desolation can be a useful means of navigating these new pathways and finding the hidden opportunities within the pandemic crisis.

Cost: £30

### **Retreats from the House of Prayer, April 2021.**

House of Prayer

35 Seymour Road

East Molesey

Surrey KT8 0PB

**Tel: 020 8941 2313**

Charitable Incorporated Organisation 1174120

## **STEWARDSHIP**

### **Giving to St Martin's and St Stephen on the Downs**

For general and stewardship giving you can give online giving via the Charities Aid Foundation.

Donations can be either a one-off donation or a regular donation using direct debit.

To make a donation either:

1. Click on the following link:

<https://cafdonate.cafonline.org/13377>

OR

2. Use your Smart Phone and Scan the QR Code below



There is also a "Donate" button on our website.

**Thank you for your continued giving directly and via online giving.**

## **OTHER NOTICES**

From Monday, we can now host weddings with up to 15 people in attendance.

Funerals remain at 30 but can now be followed by a reception for up to 15.

We can also host children's activities indoors (that meet the covid safe measures).

When phase 3 date is confirmed, we will update this guide, and we are planning for that next phase now.

### **Electoral Roll Revision**

The Electoral Roll is due to be revised on 7<sup>th</sup> May 2021 and a notice to this effect will be displayed outside both our churches from 19<sup>th</sup> March 2021. If you are unsure please check that your name is entered in the current Roll (at the back of St Martins) or with me by email (aronson\_john@hotmail.com), also if there have been changes to your address or contact details please inform me or the Parish Office. Your full details can be checked in the office. We always want new people to join so if you are not yet on the Roll and would like to join please complete an application form and hand it in to the Parish Office. The Roll will be closed for any new entries from 6 May 2021 until after the Parish AGM on 23 May 2021. ***John Aronson, Electoral Roll Officer.***

### **Trees in the Churchyard**

As I think most of you know, Epsom and Ewell Borough Council are responsible for the maintenance of our Churchyard. The Council exercise their responsibility for the trees in our Churchyard by employing a Tree Officer who surveys the trees at regular intervals, and determines what works are required to maintain them in good and safe order. We have now received the latest schedule of proposed work to the trees and most of the work refers to removing ivy where it is damaging trees and minor pruning; only one tree will be felled completely and that is the dead pine tree to the east of the Church, next to the pathway that runs through the south-side of the churchyard.

The dead tree should be removed in the next week or so, but the Borough Council has agreed that the remainder of the work will be delayed until the late summer so as to avoid disturbing any birds during the nesting season.

If you have any queries regarding this work, please do not hesitate to speak to the Churchwardens in the first instance. ***The Churchwardens***

### **Mission For April**

#### **HOME**

MAF believe nothing should stop people from receiving the love of of God and the essentials of life. Their vision is to see isolated people physically and spiritually transformed in Christ's name. MAF uses light aircraft and technology to reach isolated places, as the only way to reach isolated people in need. ***Meg Topley***

#### **ABROAD**

Christian Aid is an international NGO endeavouring to help people have the advantage of living a full life, free from poverty and inequality operating on the basis of need, irrespective of religion, ethnicity, race, gender or nationality. Working with local partners to address the root causes of poverty through integrated development and humanitarian programming, policy and advocacy work. ***Jill Chapman***

**Can you please hold these Mission areas in your Prayers – Thank you**

## Tour de Parish

Thank you to everyone who sponsored our ride round the parish over the Bank Holiday weekend. We visited every road in the parish and thanks to your generosity we've raised £2,030 to support our ministry in the parish.

Here's a picture of the riders - John Flower, David Stamp, John Aronson and me - ready for the off!

**David Candlin**



## NHS COVID-19 QR Code & App

The terms of use relating to the official NHS QR code poster have changed. These two changes are outlined below:

- We may now share details of venues that have downloaded an official NHS QR code poster with local authorities and health protection teams. This is to help local authorities make sure venues that should display an official NHS QR code poster are displaying one.
- NHS COVID-19 app users can now share their venue history via the app with public health authorities if they test positive for coronavirus (COVID-19). This will be used to help other visitors to the venue to be warned that they may be at risk if multiple visitors have tested positive since visiting the venue. Venue names and details will not be shared in these alerts.

## The Church Army, Greenwich

We have received the following from Nick Russell, Lead Evangelist at the Church Army Centre of Mission at Greenwich. Some of you will remember his impressive presentation to us two years ago. This gives us some insight into the work they do, which we are happy to support financially and prayerfully.

Dear Friends,

Thank you once again for your prayers which sustain our work.

Much blessing, Nick

Praise God for:

Children's groups

- A huge donation of Easter eggs by our local Baptist Church
- Being able to continue two face to face and an online children's and carer's support group
- Over 800 views for our online children's and carer's group
- Funding for 68 snack and activity packs delivered each week

## Youth groups

- Good attendance and participation at our girl power vulnerable girls group, improving attendance at our year 6-8 group and young offenders' group, and good attendance at our two other youth groups.
- the fact that a 15 year old stab victim is now able to play football again. He has a scar nearly five inches wide on both sides of his calf where an adult forced his way into his home and attacked him with a large knife as he ran upstairs. Miraculously no tendons or major blood vessels were cut. He previously suffered neglect from parents who are both addicts, but has responded warmly to our youth support work.
- The return to our at risk support group of a youth arrested for carrying a knife and drugs
- The youth support work of an ex-young offender who received a custodial sentence at age 13 for aggravated burglary and later became a Christian – please pray for him in his faith struggles and family difficulties
- Growth in the numbers of young offenders and at risk young people in our Sunday group

## Fresh expressions of church

- Three previously unchurched young people and an adult from youth church fresh expression who want to be baptised
- Receptive audiences as the Easter story was preached at various events for unchurched young people and families

## St. Saviour's Church

- A new couple regularly attending St. Saviour's Church
- A good plan for heating in the church and ventilation in the hall.
- The wonderful dedication of those who keep the church going
- Our visiting clergy who serve us so well
- Young people from church families

## Please pray for

- God to move by His Spirit in our parish and among the unchurched
- Discussions with a free evangelical church relating to a fresh expression in our parish, that this will have the right shape for local people
- Relationships with the unchurched members of our parish to become channels of faith
- The many who are even more poverty stricken as a result of the Pandemic, mothers struggling to put food on the table, people in debt
- An ex-young offender wrongly accused of a crime for which he may be recalled to prison for several months before a parole hearing
- Our work to dissuade young people from carrying knives, an increasing trend
- Our work with mothers who are addicts, which is constantly frustrating
- Two girls bullied by a pack of 30 schoolchildren older than themselves
- A teenager with a tough home life, who has accused his carers of beating him, and our intervention in this case
- Teenagers with parents who are addicts
- The fight to keep teenagers away from drug delivery work amid increasing poverty

- Our work to encourage at risk teenagers into training and work
- One of our local workers who is struggling with two young children with special needs
- Three mothers with a cocaine addictions
- Our vulnerable adults whose group and fresh expression of church which are yet to reopen
- Our online family fresh expression of church which is attracting smaller audiences.
- Ventilation and heating work planned for our church and hall

## Nick Russell CA

Lead Evangelist Greenwich Centre of Mission



Nick.Russell@churcharmy.org

www.churcharmy.org

## Latest message from Chris Short at Food Bank

Can you please help us this week, with any of the following?

Hair Conditioner

Shampoo

Female Deodorant

Shower Gel

Tinned Vegetables (not sweetcorn as we have lots)

Tinned Meat (ideally not SPAM or corned beef)

Washing Powder, Pods & Tablets (bio & non-bio)

Powdered Milk (semi or full fat only, thank you)

You can donate at the usual supermarket points, or bring donations to our car park (please wear a mask);

Epsom & Ewell Foodbank

Generation Resource Centre

(Behind West Ewell Primary School)

Ruxley Lane

Ewell

KT19 0JG

Donation Drop Off Times: Monday to Friday 9am – 2pm

**\* PLEASE MAKE SURE ALL DONATIONS ARE SEALED, IN DATE AND DO NOT CONTAIN ALCOHOL \***

Can't get to the shops? You could text to make a small donation, send us a supermarket delivery to the address above, or contact us about sponsoring some fresh fruit & veg!

You can help by texting 70450 to donate:

Text **FOODBANKGIFT2** to donate £2

Text **FOODBANKGIFT5** to donate £5

Text **FOODBANKGIFT15** to donate £15

Text **FOODBANKGIFT3** to donate £3

Text **FOODBANKGIFT10** to donate £10

Text **FOODBANKGIFT20** to donate £20

Kind regards, Chris Shortt

## **CONTACT US**

### ***Parish Office:***

***Church House, Church Street, Epsom,  
KT17 4PX Phone: 01372 722567***

***E-mail: [stmartinsepsom@btconnect.com](mailto:stmartinsepsom@btconnect.com)***

***Website: [www.stmartinsepsom.org](http://www.stmartinsepsom.org)***

**The Revd Nick Parish, Vicar – 01372 743336**

**Email: [vicar@stmartinsepsom.org](mailto:vicar@stmartinsepsom.org)**

**The Revd David Candlin – Curate - 07723 849 477**

**Email: [revcandlin@gmail.com](mailto:revcandlin@gmail.com)**

## COLLECT

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.

## FIRST READING

(Alternative readings)  
*The reading from Acts must be read  
as either the First or Second Reading.*

### Either **Acts 4:32-35**

*A reading from the Acts of the  
Apostles.*

The whole group of those who  
believed were of one heart and soul,  
and no one claimed private ownership  
of any possessions, but everything  
they owned was held in common.  
With great power the apostles gave  
their testimony to the resurrection of  
the Lord Jesus, and great grace was  
upon them all. There was not a needy  
person among them, for as many as  
owned lands or houses sold them and  
brought the proceeds of what was  
sold. They laid it at the apostles' feet,  
and it was distributed to each as any  
had need.

Or **Exodus 14:10-end; 15:20-21**

## PSALM Psalm 133

**R** *How good and pleasant it is  
to live together in unity.*

O how good and pleasant it is,  
when a family lives together in unity!  
It is like fine oil upon the head  
that runs down upon the beard,  
Upon the beard of Aaron,  
and runs down upon the collar of his  
robe. **R**

It is like the dew of Hermon  
that falls upon the hills of Zion.  
For there the Lord has ordained the  
blessing:  
life for evermore. **R**

## SECOND READING

(Alternative readings)

### Either **1 John 1:1 – 2:2**

*A reading from the first letter of John.*

We declare to you what was from the  
beginning, what we have heard, what  
we have seen with our eyes, what we  
have looked at and touched with our  
hands, concerning the word of life –  
this life was revealed, and we have  
seen it and testify to it, and declare  
to you the eternal life that was with  
the Father and was revealed to us  
– we declare to you what we have  
seen and heard so that you also may  
have fellowship with us; and truly our  
fellowship is with the Father and with  
his Son Jesus Christ. We are writing  
these things so that our joy may be  
complete. This is the message we  
have heard from him and proclaim to  
you, that God is light and in him there  
is no darkness at all. If we say that we  
have fellowship with him while we are  
walking in darkness, we lie and do not  
do what is true; but if we walk in the  
light as he himself is in the light, we  
have fellowship with one another, and  
the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses  
us from all sin. If we say that we have  
no sin, we deceive ourselves, and  
the truth is not in us. If we confess  
our sins, he who is faithful and just  
will forgive us our sins and cleanse  
us from all unrighteousness. If we say  
that we have not sinned, we make  
him a liar, and his word is not in us.  
My little children, I am writing these  
things to you so that you may not sin.  
But if anyone does sin, we have an  
advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ  
the righteous; and he is the atoning  
sacrifice for our sins, and not for ours  
only but also for the sins of the whole  
world.

Or **Acts 4:32-35**

### **GOSPEL John 20:19-end**

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

It was evening on 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.

## POST COMMUNION

Lord God our Father,  
through our Saviour Jesus Christ  
you have assured your children of  
eternal life  
and in baptism have made us one  
with him:  
deliver us from the death of sin  
and raise us to new life in your love,  
in the fellowship of the Holy Spirit,  
by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ.

# Sunday Homily

## SECOND SUNDAY OF EASTER

11 APRIL 2021

YEAR B

"My Lord and my God!"

John 20:28

### Illustration

It is Caravaggio, the seventeenth-century Italian artist, who captures most vividly the moment when Thomas makes his declaration of faith in the risen Christ. Jesus has loosened his garment. In the dim light of the spluttering candle, he grips Thomas by the wrist. Thomas extends a distinctly grubby forefinger which Jesus guides into the loose flesh of the gaping wound in his side. Thomas' brow is deeply furrowed with doubt and incomprehension. His eyes follow the direction of his extended forefinger. This is the moment of decision. Can he believe what he sees? He can, and he does: "My Lord and my God!" It is a life-changing moment for Thomas. It remains a crucial moment for the many who would come after him in the course of time, "who have not seen and yet have come to believe".

### Gospel Teaching

Because of his initial reluctance to believe that Jesus had risen, Thomas has given his name to all who find it difficult to believe, or experience moments of doubt. Yet Thomas was one of the original twelve whom Jesus sent out to proclaim the Gospel with very little to sustain them. When there were threats on Jesus' life, it was Thomas who encouraged the others: "Let us also go, that we may die with him." So we need to look again at the circumstances surrounding his declaration of faith.

As we are presented with Thomas' disbelief, we have to ask, "Why should he have believed?" We know very little about the disciples. We cannot know what went on between them, or what bound them together. We do know conflicts existed, as over which of them would be the most important. So when the others told Thomas they had seen the risen Jesus, it could have been that they were having a joke, in the worst possible taste, at his expense. Nor could he know they had already seen Jesus' wounds for themselves.

But the appearance of the risen Jesus confirmed that the disciples had not been joking. They had been genuine, and now Jesus was actually there amongst them again. Having greeted them all, "Peace be with you", it was to Thomas that he turned. "Put your finger here and see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it in my side."

This is the scene Caravaggio captured in his painting. The setting is commonplace, simply the house where the disciples met and locked the doors for fear of their enemies. The artist gives us no shining lights or angels waiting at the edges of his canvas. Yet it is a profoundly religious moment, lit by Thomas' declaration of faith. He is confronted by Jesus in person, a different person, yet essentially the same, who addresses him directly: "Do not doubt but believe." Thomas has to make up his mind, reach his decision. The evidence of the resurrection is there before his eyes. There is only one conclusion he can come to: "My Lord and my God!" Thomas is declaring his faith in the risen Christ, acknowledging Christ's claim upon his life from now on, and committing the whole of his life to proclaiming the Gospel of the dying and rising of Jesus. Ancient tradition has it that this took him as far afield as India.

## Application

Nevertheless, Thomas' negative reputation lives on. His name stands for doubt, rather than faith. This means that we do Thomas a grave disservice. He has left an abiding and positive legacy to the Church, to all who would seek to follow the risen Christ. In many ways he stands for all of us, represents all of us. Many of us have followed his pattern. We have experienced the same struggle to believe, to come to terms with the Christian faith, to make a commitment to the risen Lord.

There is ample evidence in the Bible of the many who have heard God's call, and felt that it could not be so. How could God be calling them? For ourselves, we may also feel, or have felt, that it must at best be a mistake; at worst, a joke in poor taste. Like Thomas, we have to weigh the evidence, reach our own conclusion, make our own decision. Only then can we make our personal declaration of faith, and all that it implies for our belief, and our commitment to service in the name of the risen Lord. Like Thomas, we have to be able to say, at some stage, and in our own way, "My Lord and my God!"

**MONDAY****12 APRIL**

Acts 4:23-31

Psalm 2:1-9

John 3:1-8

**TUESDAY****13 APRIL**

Acts 4:32-end

Psalm 93

John 3:7-15

**WEDNESDAY****14 APRIL**

Acts 5:17-26

Psalm 34:1-8

John 3:16-21

**THURSDAY****15 APRIL**

Acts 5:27-33

Psalm 34:1. 15-end

John 3:31-end

**FRIDAY****16 APRIL**

Acts 5:34-42

Psalm 27:1-5. 16-17

John 6:1-15

**SATURDAY****17 APRIL**

Acts 6:1-7

Psalm 33:1-5. 18-19

John 6:16-21

## REFLECTION

In this second week after Easter we begin to follow the story of the first Church in the book of Acts and the Gospel of John. Together they help us

engage afresh with the reality of Jesus – who he is, and what he means for us. This week's readings include one of the most famous of all verses, John 3:16: "God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life". Jesus is the one who has come from heaven to earth, the saviour of the world, the one who feeds the hungry and walks on water, who gave his life for the life of the world.

In the light of the resurrection, Peter prays for boldness to proclaim the good news and is filled with the Holy Spirit – and the Church multiplies. This is a good week to meditate on that single verse, turning it over in our minds and hearts until we are so gripped by its truth that we simply have to tell the world, to speak with Peter's boldness of the transforming love of God, that all may know that Jesus has risen from the dead.

### PRAYER

Eternal God, you raised Jesus from the dead as saviour of the world.

Give us courage and compassion to share the good news with all your people, that the whole world may come to believe and receive your gift of eternal life.



Sculpture St Peter with a key, St Peter's Cathedral, Vatican

## PART III – INNER FARNE

The Farne Islands are situated off the coast of Northumberland, directly east of Bamburgh. Inner Farne, although closest to the mainland, is a wild and windswept place. Now owned by the National Trust, it is home to puffins in the breeding season, and still houses the remains of a seventh-century anchorite cell and the fourteenth-century St Cuthbert's Chapel.

You can reach Inner Farne by boat from Seahouses, a bustling little town a little south of Bamburgh with its iconic castle. You may be accompanied by nature lovers and those who want to visit the Longstone Lighthouse from where Grace Darling famously rowed to the wrecked Forfarshire in 1838. But there is plenty of time to imagine the experience of St Aidan and St Cuthbert, who both lived on the island.

St Aidan was here when the pagan Mercian King Penda burned Bamburgh. St Cuthbert, who had made his way to Lindisfarne after a vision of angels on the night St Aidan died in 651, went to live on Inner Farne in 676. He stayed until 684 when he was elected Bishop of Lindisfarne, but returned two years later and died on Inner Farne in 687.

St Cuthbert constructed a round building with a straw roof containing an oratory for prayer and a house to live in. He also dug out a well. The chapel that exists today was built in 1370 and probably stands on the same spot as the oratory.

An interest in the wildlife is not out of keeping with the spiritual nature of the island. The Venerable Bede recorded a legendary story of otters who came to warm and dry St Cuthbert's feet after he had been praying in the sea all night, while Cuthbert is also said to have scolded crows for eating his barley. If you walk to the far end of the island you can find a quiet spot away from others to contemplate Cuthbert's life and to experience the majesty of God's creation in this wild place.

# LIVE the WORD

SUSTAINING YOU  
THROUGH THE WEEK

Edited by  
Caroline Hodgson  
and  
Heather Smith



Second week of Easter

Monday 12 April to  
Saturday 17 April  
2021

WEEK

# Living together



Gillian Cooper *reflects on* Acts 4:32-35

It sounds so wonderful, doesn't it? The early Christian community, living in harmony, sharing all their possessions, making sure there is no one in need, worshipping God together in the light of the resurrection of Christ. It sounds so wonderful that many Christian groups have tried to replicate it since, mostly with about the enduring level of success that the early Church managed.

We know from St Paul's letters how quickly things got complicated, how soon there were complaints and disagreements. Some were seen to be getting more money or food, or being let off certain regulations. Fingers were pointed, harsh words were said, and leaders were written to. Once the first enthusiasm of the new faith began to wear off, practicality necessarily reasserted

itself. Rules were written, hierarchies established, and officers appointed. And here we are, at our point in the history of a Christian Church that has not always distinguished itself in the areas of kindness, equality and care for the weakest.

But the Church is here. It is here because of who God is, and because of who we are. Human beings are not designed to live together in complete equality. We owe our very survival to being competitive. We are creative and can see better ways of doing things. That energy, of competitiveness and creativity, has spread the Gospel throughout the world. So let us be kind, to ourselves as well as to others, and know our limitations, so readily forgiven by God. 🍷

**Forgive us, Lord, when we fail to live in harmony with others. Forgive our greed, our self-righteousness and our unkindness. Help us to be the best we can be and to rejoice in your power to remake us in your image. Amen.**

## Holy places

### Lindisfarne

by Heather Smith

The Holy Island of Lindisfarne, just off the Northumbrian coast, is a popular place of pilgrimage.

The island is cut off at high tide, and for centuries visitors had to cross the sand to get there. Up until 1954 there were special high taxis to take you, although a causeway has since been built. Travel across it with careful attention to the tides and find yourself in the place that was known by Finian,

Bishop of Northumbria (651-661) and Northumbria's patron saint, Cuthbert, Bishop of Lindisfarne. The famous Lindisfarne Gospels were produced here in the eighth century.

St Aidan arrived in Northumbria in around AD 634 at the request of King Oswald and chose it as the place for a priory. This was to be the base from which he restored Christianity to the kingdom.

Today the Community of Aidan and Hilda holds retreats here and you can stay at their house, the Open Gate. Their approach is in the Celtic tradition and you might find a week based around the fantastic nature on the island, or on mysticism, or Aidan and Hilda themselves. 🍷

“The Bible without the Holy Spirit is a sundial by moonlight.”

Dwight L. Moody (1837-1899), American evangelist and publisher

## Walking with Poppy Surprise!

by Gillian Cooper

I tell Poppy that Janet is coming to see her. My sister is Poppy's favourite person in the world and she looks up with bright eyes when I say the name. But no sign yet, so she settles down to snooze. Eventually I wake her and encourage her outside

and to the end of the path. A car pulls up and Poppy is off, the aches and pains of old age quite forgotten, her tail wagging so hard that she almost falls over. There is much kissing and exclaiming. Poppy experiences the joy of a delightful surprise. For her, every good thing brings happiness that is fresh and new.

We sometimes forget to be surprised by Easter. We repeat the story, year after year. We remember the doubt of Thomas, who like us had not seen for himself. We may need instead to share his joyful astonishment when the impossible turned out to be true. 🍷



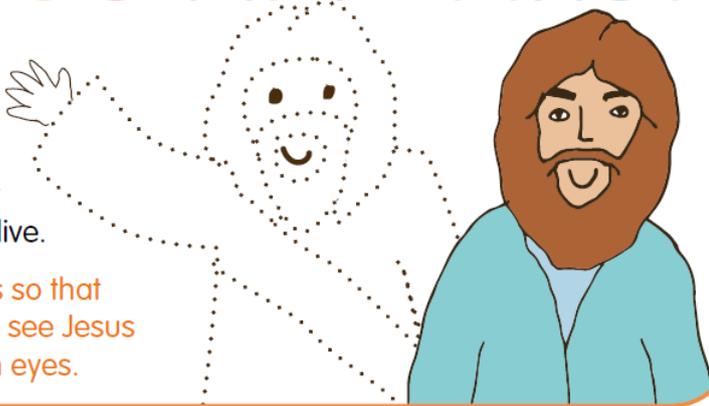
My name is \_\_\_\_\_

# IN THE GOSPEL TODAY

After Jesus' death, his friends are very afraid and hide away. Jesus appears to them and shows that he is alive and well. Thomas is not there and does not believe his friends. When Thomas finally sees Jesus, Jesus tells him that it is good to believe without seeing.

## JESUS APPEARS!

Thomas did not believe his friends when they told him that Jesus was alive.



Join the dots so that Thomas can see Jesus with his own eyes.

## Visit loved ones

The disciples were so happy to see Jesus again.

Write the name of someone you would love to see this week, or draw their happy face, in the space. Then find the right path to visit them.



## Open the door!

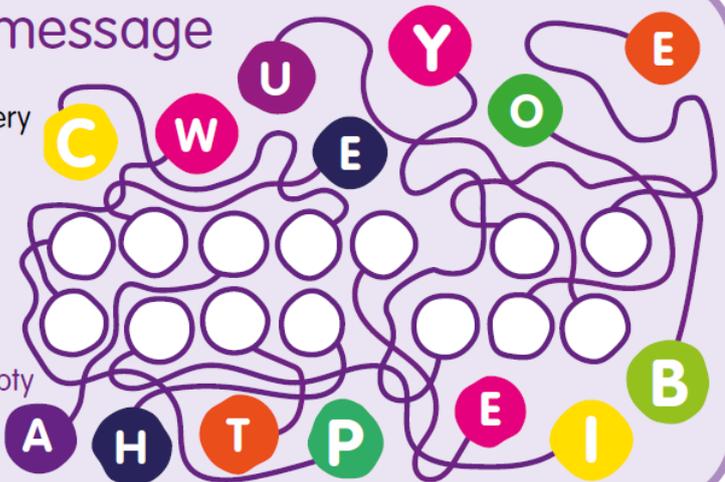
The disciples were afraid because they no longer had Jesus with them. They sat in a room with the doors locked.



Match the right key to the right door so that the disciples can go and tell everyone the good news that Jesus is alive!

## Jesus' message

Jesus said something very important to his disciples when he appeared to them. Move each letter to its linked empty circle to see what it is.



## A PRAYER TO SAY

Dear Jesus, sometimes it can be hard to believe good news when we hear so much bad news. After Thomas saw Jesus dying, he couldn't believe that Jesus could possibly be alive again. Help me to see and believe good news when it arrives. Amen.

Answers: Peace be with you.