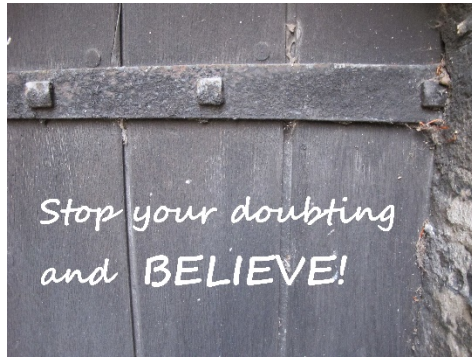


# Worship for Fleet URC & Beacon Hill URC

Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> April 2021



Can you believe it?

Led by Anna Crawford

Opening music: Now the green blade rises

## Welcome & Gathering Prayer Margaret Armes

Let us be still for a moment as we draw near to worship God...  
Take just a few seconds to remind yourself why we are gathered together today... Listen, God speaks even through the background noise of the world around us...

Lord God, in this short time together, open our ears and our eyes to see your vision for this place and our part within it. Teach us, hear our prayers and enable us for service wherever you might take us, to your praise and glory. Amen.

## Call to worship

From the rising of the sun to its setting.  
Let the name of the Lord be praised,  
for the Lord is established over all nations  
and his glory is above the heavens. Amen

## Hymn: Jesus Stand among us

Jesus stand among us  
At the meeting of our lives;  
Be our sweet agreement  
At the meeting of our eyes.  
O Jesus, we love You, so we gather here;  
Join our hearts in unity and take away our fear.

So to You we're gathering  
Out of each and every land;  
Christ the love between us  
At the joining of our hands.  
O Jesus, we love You, so we gather here;  
Join our hearts in unity and take away our fear.

Jesus, stand among us  
At the breaking of the bread;  
Join us as one body  
As we worship You, our Head.  
O Jesus, we love You, so we gather here;  
Join our hearts in unity and take away our fear.

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## Prayers of Thanksgiving & Confession

Lord Jesus Christ, we thank you for the message of Easter – to the assurance it brings of your triumph over death, the proof it offers that love will always have the last word.

Yet alongside that message there is another that perhaps we do not hear so often – a challenge which sometimes we can ignore, a call to action as well as celebration.

You have given the good news,  
**Teach us to share it.**

Lord Jesus Christ, you appeared to your followers, demonstrating you had risen, and you sent them out to proclaim your resurrection to all.

You met with them and called them to lead others to you.

You gave them joy, and told them to share it. Easter was not for the few but the whole world!

You have given the good news,

**Teach us to share it.**

Lord Jesus Christ: forgive us that so often we forget that, having experienced your risen presence, we keep it to ourselves. Having met with you, we fail to introduce you to others in turn. Having received so much, we have shared so little.

You have given the good news,

**Teach us to share it.**

Lord Jesus Christ, we thank you for those who fulfilled your call, those who first made the gospel known to us, those who proclaim it to others, those who sow, nurture bring to fruition the seeds of faith. Remembering especially Ruth at this time, bless her and bring her to health.

We pray for all you have specially gifted to proclaim the good news, may many meet with you through their labours and come to know you as their living saviour.

You have given the good news,

**Teach us to share it.**

Lord Jesus Christ, you call each one of us to be your witnesses, to tell others of what we have experienced of your love, to make known what you have done for us, to testify to the way you have changed our lives, help us to do that faithfully, to play our part in your kingdom and purpose. So that through us may others come to meet you and know you for themselves.

You have given the good news,

**Teach us to share it. To your Glory**

**Amen**

**Reading:** John 20: 19-23 (New International Version) read by Margaret Tracey

*Jesus Appears to His Disciples*

<sup>19</sup> On the evening of that first day of the week, when the disciples were together, with the doors locked for fear of the Jewish leaders, 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 side. The disciples were overjoyed when they saw the Lord.

<sup>21</sup> Again Jesus said, "Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you." <sup>22</sup> And with that he breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit. <sup>23</sup> If you forgive anyone's sins, their sins are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven."

This is the Word of the Lord

**Thanks be to God**

### Reflection

The disciples were locked in through fear, the room they were in was like a tomb; they were sealed in afraid to venture out. They had lost their Lord and leader. They felt powerless, lifeless. How often have we felt this, lockdown has seen us all shut away fearful of the outside world.

Then Jesus came, no fuss, suddenly there he was alive and well 'Peace be with you' said Jesus, two verses later 'Peace be with you' Like a bell ringing out a single note but with many overtones, the promise of peace rings out across the world. Not just an inner peace of heart for every individual who hears and believes. Not just an agenda for peace for a warring world. The old Hebrew word Shalom speaks of a quality of life which includes but transcends both: rich and fruitful human living, God's new creation bursting into many a coloured flower.

The peace declaration is accompanied with a simple but profound action. Jesus shows the disciples his hands and his side, the marks of the love which had loved them to the uttermost, the signs that the bill had been paid. John 19: 30 where 'It is finished' means among other things, 'the price is paid'. Easter means, amidst much else, that peace, never other than costly, has truly been purchased on the cross.

As often in John, we move quickly from love's evidence to love's commission. New creation again; Jesus breaths on the disciples, as God breathed on Adam and Eve to make them living beings of a new sort, peace bringers, sin forgivers, 'As the Father sent me, so I send you' the highest possible study of the church's history, grounded in Christian theology, made effective by the Holy Spirit. Peace is not so much a state of being, more a power to let loose upon the world.

**Hymn:** Make me a channel of your peace

Words by Sebastian Temple

Make me a channel of your peace.

Where there is hatred let me bring your love.

Where there is injury, your pardon, Lord

And where there's doubt, true faith in you.

Oh, Master grant that I may never seek

So much to be consoled as to console

To be understood as to understand

To be loved as to love with all my soul.

Make me a channel of your peace

Where there's despair in life, let me bring hope

Where there is darkness, only light

And where there's sadness, ever joy.

Oh, Master grant that I may never seek

So much to be consoled as to console

To be understood as to understand

To be loved as to love with all my soul.

Make me a channel of your peace

It is in pardoning that we are pardoned

In giving unto all that we receive

And in dying that we're born to eternal life.

**Reading:** John 20: 24-31 read by Margaret Tracey

*Jesus Appears to Thomas*

24 Now Thomas (also known as Didymus), one of the Twelve, was not with the disciples when Jesus came. 25 So the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord!"

But he said to them, "Unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe."

26 A week later his disciples were in the house again, and Thomas was with them. Though the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you!" 27 Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here; see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. Stop doubting and believe."

28 Thomas said to him, "My Lord and my God!"

29 Then Jesus told him, "Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."

30 Jesus performed many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book. 31 But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

This is the Word of the Lord

**Thanks be to God**

## Reflection

For Thomas, peace comes in person to confront the warring spirits of doubt. Call Thomas a doubter if you will: I think he is more of a realist; I expect he would agree. It was reasonable enough to argue that Jesus could not go into Judea again without being murdered (John 11: 16) Then Thomas said to the rest of the disciples, 'Let us also go that we may die with him.'

Thomas the realist was also a loyal disciple and was ready to die with Jesus. Again, it would sound logical to maintain that since Jesus had died on the cross he could not be walking around in Jerusalem. Call it doubt or realism Thomas had to be true to himself. He had also, however, to appreciate that to God resurrection is quite reasonable, for he is the author of life. Having grasped this fact and having met the Lord for himself, he was no longer a doubter but, logical as ever, he perceived in a flash - that Jesus his Lord must also be truly God. In today's world, there is so much news be it true or fake, rumour or gossip, it is not always easy to discern. A Christian's faith though is based on solid facts: Christ is risen - he is the greatest realist of all.

To return to 'As the father sent me, so I send you.'

Jesus needs disciples to continue his work, he will work in them and through them, but he needs disciples. Think on these words concerning the risen lord by St Teresa of Avila

Christ has no hands but your hands to do his work today.  
Christ has no feet but your feet to speed men on his way.  
Christ has no lips but your lips to tell men why he died.  
Christ has no love but your love to win men to his side.  
Amen.

## Prayers

(Using the words of a hymn)

We pray for peace, but not the easy peace built on complacency and not the truth of God; we pray for real peace, the peace Gods love can seal.

We pray for peace, but not the cruel peace leaving God's poor bereft and dying in distress; we pray for real peace enriching all humanity. We pray for peace defending unjust laws and nursing prejudice, but for real peace of justice, mercy, truth, and love.

We pray for peace, holy communion with Christ our risen Lord and every living thing; God's will be fulfilled on earth and all his creatures reconciled.

We pray for peace and for the sake of peace, look to the risen Christ, who gives the grace we need to serve the cause of peace and make our own sacrifice.

God, give us peace; if you withdraw your love there is no peace for us, nor any hope of it. With you to lead us on, through death or tumult, peace will come. **Amen**

Let us say together the prayer that Jesus gave while with us here on earth.

**Our Father, who art in heaven,** read by Bridget Mitchell  
**hallowed be thy name.**

**Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done,**  
**on earth as it is in heaven**

**Give us this day our daily bread.**

**And forgive us our trespasses,**  
**as we forgive those who trespass against us.**

**And lead us not into temptation,**  
**but deliver us from evil.**

**For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen**

**Hymn:** Judge eternal throned in splendour  
Henry Scott Holland

Judge Eternal, throned in splendour,  
Lord of lords and King of kings,  
with your living fire of judgment  
purge this land of bitter things;  
solace all its wide dominion  
with the healing of your wings.

Still the weary folk are pining  
for the hour that brings release,  
and the city's crowded clangor  
cries aloud for sin to cease,  
and the homesteads and the woodlands  
plead in silence for their peace.

Crown, O God, your own endeavour;  
cleave our darkness with your sword;  
feed the faithless and the hungry  
with the richness of your word;  
cleanse the body of this nation  
through the glory of the Lord.

## Blessing

Risen Lord, in bursting from the tomb you have broken the power  
of death.

We see there is no darkness that can overcome your love.

Breath into our lives the wonder of your saving glory so that as we  
go from here our song may ever be your Alleluia.

Amen

Closing music: To God be the glory

Responses led by Bridget Mitchell

Opening music from [STF 306 - Now The Green Blade Rises part of Singing The Faith: Contributed by Paul Wood & Ian Worsfold | The Worship Cloud](#)

Closing music: <https://www.smallchurchmusic.com/2014/Snippet/S-ToGodBeTheGlory-Doane-PipeAL-48-CAM.mp3>

Hymns: Make me a Channel of thy peace Everingham Music by permission

[STF 030 - Jesus Stand Among Us part of Singing The Faith: Contributed by Paul Wood & Ian Worsfold | The Worship Cloud](#)

<https://www.smallchurchmusic.com/MP3/MP3-JudgeEternal-Rhuddlan-PipeLC-128-CAM.mp3>

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