

Sunday 7th April 2024: Second Sunday of Easter

For use by the Central Norfolk Circuit at 10.30 am or other suitable time.



StF 314 H&P 213 'This joyful Eastertide' by Fred Pratt Green (1903 – 2000)

Opening Prayer

Think of the past week and say both 'thank you' and 'sorry' to our loving God.

Psalm set for today: Psalm 133

To think about

To understand what is being said about Aaron's beard, look up Exodus 30 v 22 – 33.

Beyond this imagery, what is the psalm saying about unity?

Gospel reading set for today: John 20 v 19 – 31

StF 311 H&P 208 'The day of resurrection' by St John of Damascus (675 – 750) transl by John Neale

Message from a Circuit Friend

Although we have moved on from Easter Day in the Gospel reading, it is still the day of resurrection. We find the disciples huddled together, behind locked doors, too terrified to venture out despite the news from Mary That Jesus had risen. No locked door will stop the risen Christ. Suddenly he appears among them, there are so many things he could have said to them; 'where were you? Why did you leave me? Why are you hiding here?' But gracious as always, his greeting is 'Peace be with you'. Then he breathes the Holy Spirit on them, commissioning them to go and spread the Good News of the risen Christ. However, one disciple was missing, Thomas. When they tell him they have seen Jesus, he can't believe it and waits until he has seen the scars on Jesus' body for himself. The resurrection is a God event and it's in God's very nature to do surprising and new things.

They are all there a week after and Jesus comes again and gives his individual attention to Thomas and invites him to see and touch. Thomas makes a huge leap in his faith, not only does he see and believe, but he also makes the proclamation 'My Lord and my God'. He was the first disciple to do this. His doubting led to a firm and committed faith. We should never underestimate the place of searching and questioning in our journey with Christ. The risen Christ comes to us each and every day through scripture, through the witness of others and through prayer. We are blessed because although we have never seen him, we believe. He comes to squash our doubts and still our fears. Christ comes to mould us into a loving community where all people are equal. He comes to surprise, to make us think again, to disturb our complacency. May we be challenged, surprised, transformed by the risen Christ.

Avril Temple (Local Preacher and member of Sculthorpe & Fakenham Methodist Church)

StF 348 H&P 256 'He is Lord' by Anonymous

Prayers of Intercession

We pray for our world... for the church... for our communities... for our families & friends...

Offer to God your offertory for the week, and say the Lord's Prayer...

StF 297 H&P 190 'Christ is alive! Let Christians sing' by Brian Wren (b 1936)

May the blessing of God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit be with us, and all those we love, this day and always, Amen.

Circuit News: The East Anglia Methodist Heritage Centre at Wighton (2 miles from Walsingham) opened again this last weekend. It is now open on Tuesdays and Fridays between 11 am and 3 pm welcoming visitors from near and far. There is an official opening service on Saturday 20th April at 11.45 am. If anyone would be interested in a walk from Walsingham to Wighton beforehand (returning on the Wells to Walsingham train), please ask Jacqui or Marianne for the flier which gives details.

District News: There is to be a District Service in our own Circuit in June led by Rev Julian Pursehouse (our Chair of District) and Rev Jacqui Horton (our Superintendent) on 8th June. The venue is Walsingham Methodist Church and the date is Walsingham's 230th anniversary. The service will begin at 2.30 pm and there will be refreshments afterwards. The Heritage Centre – see above – will be open in the morning. A reminder that the following week (15th) is Rev Jonny's Testimony Service at Holt at 3 pm.