

*Hurst Hill*  
Not open for worship but you are welcome to join other acts of worship around the Circuit.

*Lanesfield*  
Sunday Service in Church at 10.30am with Revd William Davis.

*Rakegate*  
Sunday Service in Church at 10.30am with Revd Glennys Bamford.

*St. Andrew's*  
Sunday Service in Church at 10.30am with Revd Dr. Paul Nzacahayo, also on YouTube. The YouTube channel is "ST ANDREWS CHURCH SEDGLEY" and is accessible during the week. [www.youtube.com/watch?v=qrwvypBKFcY](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qrwvypBKFcY)

*St. John's*  
Not open for worship but you are welcome to join other acts of worship around the Circuit.

*Springdale*  
Sunday Service in Church and on Zoom at 10.30am with Revd Robert Readshaw. Zoom link available on request from Janet Fenney or Revd Teddy Siwila.

*Stowlawn*  
Not open for worship but you are welcome to join other acts of worship around the Circuit.

*Stratton Street*  
Sunday Service in Church 11.00am with Richard French.

*Upper Ettingshall*  
Not open for worship but you are welcome to join other acts of worship around the Circuit.

*Wombourne*  
Sunday Service in Church and on Zoom at 10.30am with Revd Robert Readshaw. Zoom link available on request from Janet Fenney or Revd Teddy Siwila.

**Beckminster Methodist Church**  
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Penn Fields,  
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Tel. 01902 344910

*Worship... Service ... Witness ... in the name of Jesus*

# Beckminster Welcomes You

Check Out Our Website @ [www.beckminsterchurch.co.uk](http://www.beckminsterchurch.co.uk)

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## Worship and Fellowship

### Second Sunday of Easter

### 11 April 2021

| What's On This Week....   | Collect for the Day   |
|---|---|
| <b>Monday 12 April</b><br><b>9.30 - 11.30am Office Closed</b><br>4.15 - 7.00pm Dinky Divas  | <b>To ponder and pray .....</b><br>Faithful God, the strength of all who believe and the hope of those who doubt; may we, who have not seen, have faith and receive the fullness of Christ's blessing; who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. <b>Amen.</b> |
| <b>Tuesday 13 April</b><br><b>9.30am - 12.30pm Office Closed</b><br>5.00 - 6.00pm Dinky Divas   |   |
| <b>Wednesday 14 April</b><br><b>9.30am - 12.30pm Office Closed</b><br>9.00am Zoom Prayer Group (See Notices)  |   |
| <b>Thursday 15 April</b><br><b>2.00 - 5.00pm Office Closed</b>  |   |
| <b>Friday 16 April</b><br><b>9.30am - 12.30pm Office Closed</b>   |   |
| <b>Saturday 17 April</b><br>11.00am - 12.30pm Dinky Divas   |   |
| <p><b>Come and join us on</b><br/> <b>Sunday, 18 April 2021</b><br/> <b>at Church or on Zoom</b><br/> <b>Third Sunday of Easter</b><br/> <b>10.30am Morning Worship</b><br/> <b>led by Rev. Ivor Sperring</b></p> |   |

**10.30 am Morning Service  
led by Rev. Peggy Heim  
in Church and on Zoom**

**CALL TO WORSHIP**

Now the picture is complete, now the story is fully told.

The jigsaw is finished:

the trinity of grace – the cradle, the cross, the rising – dovetail together.

The cradle of the birthing:

our God come amongst us, in flesh to share the life we lead and teach us the Way.

The cross of sacrifice:

our God loving us to death.

The rising of hope:

our God embracing us to eternity.

Our new day rises in resurrection light, the long wilderness walk of Lent behind,

the darkness of the Cross ended.

We approach you now, loving God, with renewed joy in our song, and strengthened

hope in our hearts.

We worship, in the name and for the sake of our living Lord, Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

**STF 28 Jesus Calls Us Here to Meet Him (v. 1 - 3)**

Jesus calls us here to meet him

as, through word and song and prayer,

we affirm God's promised presence

where his people live and care.

Praise the God who keeps his promise;

praise the Son who calls us friends;

praise the Spirit who among us,

to our hopes and fears attends.

Jesus calls us to confess him

Word of life and Lord of all,

sharer of our flesh and frailness,

saving all who fail or fall.

Tell his holy human story;

tell his tales that all may hear;

tell the world that Christ in glory

came to earth to meet us here.

*Codsall*

Evening Prayer on a Tuesday and Friday at 7.45pm, online or by phone. Details from Helen Share.

*Coven*

Evening Prayer on a Tuesday and Friday at 7.45pm, online or by phone. Details from Helen Share.

**Worship on Sunday, 11 April 2021 - Easter 2**

*Beckminster*

Sunday Service in Church and on Zoom at 10.30am with Revd Peggy Heim  
Zoom link available on request from Sue Lorimer.

*Bilston*

Sunday Service on Audio Phone at 11.00am with Revd William Davis.  
Telephone Number and Pin available from Revd William Davis, Jonathan Mtsambilwa or Andy Dale.

*Bradley*

Not open for worship but you are welcome to join other acts of worship around the Circuit.

*Brewood*

Sunday Service on Zoom at 10.30am with Rosie Bryant. Zoom link available on request from Helen Share.

*Codsall*

Sunday Service on Zoom at 10.30am with Rosie Bryant. Zoom link available on request from Helen Share.

*Coven*

Sunday Service on Zoom at 10.30am with Rosie Bryant. Zoom link available on request from Helen Share.

*Cranmer*

Sunday Service on Zoom at 11.00am with Revd Sam Hagerman. Zoom link available on request from Revd Sam Hagerman.

*East Park*

Sunday Service in church at 11.00am with Revd Chris Collins.

*Fallings Park*

Sunday Service on Zoom at 11.00am with Revd Sam Hagerman. Zoom link available on request from Revd Sam Hagerman.

*Fordhouses*

Sunday Service at 11.00am with Revd Sam Hagerman. Zoom link available on request from Revd Sam Hagerman.

**CHURCH OFFICE** is closed at the present time so if you need to contact me ring on my home number or email. Many thanks. Sue.

**ZOOM PRAYER MEETING** on a Wednesday at 9.00am. All are welcome and for further details please contact Sue.

**THANK YOU** to the Church for the lovely Easter plant and also thanks for the cards both for my birthday and Easter. They have given me hours of pleasure. Jean Ordidge.

**THANK YOU** also to the Ministers and Members who contributed to the Lent Series. It is as always, a good introduction into Easter Day. Love Jean.

**THANK YOU.** We would like to pass on our grateful thanks and appreciation to Beckminster for the lovely flowering plant, delivered by Margaret this Easter. Many thanks, Jean, Alan and Anthony.

**DISTRICT METHODIST WOMEN IN BRITAIN.** Our next gathering is on Wednesday evening, 21 April at 7.30pm. This will be an evening of readings for Spring and Easter, rather like our Christmas evening. If anyone has anything they'd like to contribute, please send details to Pauline at [andrewpauline.nbgriffin@googlemail.com](mailto:andrewpauline.nbgriffin@googlemail.com). For the first time, we plan to allow a short time for you to chat in small groups, selected at random by Zoom. Perhaps you can talk a little about the good things and the difficulties of the past 13 months. We look forward to seeing as many as possible! For zoom details please contact Sue.

**"SOUL SPACE"** a Sunday evening gathering for quiet and reflective worship lasting about forty minutes. We will share simple prayers, readings, poetry, quietness and reflective music. We meet on Zoom at 6.30pm. For further details contact Rev. Chris Collins.

**Opportunities for Worship and Prayer around the Circuit**  
*If you need help accessing information for on-line worship, please contact Revd Christopher Collins: [christopher.collins@methodist.org.uk](mailto:christopher.collins@methodist.org.uk)*

**Midweek Opportunities**  
***Circuit Morning Prayer***

Available on the Circuit Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/500469540084007>) at 8.00am on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday morning. The video is also available.

***Brewood***

Evening Prayer on a Tuesday and Friday at 7.45pm, online or by phone. Details from Helen Share.

Jesus calls us to each other,  
vastly different though we are;  
creed and colour, class and gender  
neither limit nor debar.  
Join the hand of friend and stranger;  
join the hands of age and youth;  
join the faithful and the doubter  
in their common search for truth.

*John L. Bell & Graham Maule*

**PRAYERS**

God of all that is, maker of all things, stars and mountains, hearts and lives, we thank you for the wonder of your created world. We give you thanks for the promise of life...for what might be...for potential...for our freedom to act for your goodness in any situation. We give you thanks for the possibility of change.

God of all that is, Spirit of Life, we thank you for the miracle of growth, for the beauty of the natural world and for delight in learning. We give you thanks for being with us on our journey. Thank you for your patience, encouragement, and faithfulness.

God of all that is, we thank you that you walked the world with us and showed us what humanity could be. We thank you for showing us a love we can begin to understand, although its depth and height stretches beyond our imagination.

God of all that is, we thank you, we praise you and we offer our whole selves in worship and service. **Amen.**

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Jesus came, stood among the disciples and said, 'Peace be with you.'  
***Lord, forgive us when we do not seek your peace.***

Jesus came, stood among the disciples and said, 'As the Father sent me, I am sending you.'  
***Lord, forgive us when we are unwilling to go where you send us.***

Jesus came, stood among the disciples and said, 'Receive the Holy Spirit.'  
***Lord, forgive us when we are unwilling to accept your gifts for ourselves, and the gifts you have given others.***

Jesus came, stood among the disciples and said, 'Forgive those who have sinned, if you do not forgive, they are not forgiven.'  
***Lord, forgive us when we fail to forgive others.***

Jesus came, stood among the disciples and said to Thomas, 'See my hands, put your finger here. Put your hand into my side. Stop doubting and believe.'

***Lord, forgive us when our faith journey is abandoned because of doubts, but help us to see that doubting is a stage on the way to believing.***

Jesus came, stood among the disciples and said, 'Blessed are those who have not seen me, yet have believed.'

***Lord, forgive us when we criticize rather than support those who struggle with doubts about faith. Forgive us, when we make it hard for people to be a part of the church community.***

*Silence*

As he came to the disciples, Jesus comes to us, holds out his nail-pierced hands, welcomes us into his love and forgives our sins. Thanks be to God. **Amen.**

Reading: John 20: 19 - 31 read by Keith Cheetham

**Jesus Appears to the Disciples**

<sup>19</sup> When it was evening on that day, 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.' <sup>20</sup> After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. <sup>21</sup> Jesus said to them again, 'Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you.' <sup>22</sup> When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, 'Receive the Holy Spirit. <sup>23</sup> If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained.'

**Jesus and Thomas**

<sup>24</sup> But Thomas (who was called the Twin), one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. <sup>25</sup> 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.' <sup>26</sup> 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.' <sup>27</sup> 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

In every insult, rift and war,  
where colour, scorn or wealth divide,  
Christ suffers still, yet loves the more,  
and lives, where even hope has died.

Women and men, in age and youth,  
can feel the Spirit, hear the call,  
and find the way, the life, the truth,  
revealed in Jesus, freed for all.

Christ is alive and comes to bring  
good news to this and every age,  
till earth and sky and ocean ring  
with joy, with justice, love and praise.

*Brian Wren*

**BLESSING**

Alleluia!

Go in joy and peace to love and serve the Lord.

***In the name of Christ. Alleluia!***

**The Plants in the Church for April are in loving memory of:**

Dennis and Isabel Pressey & Mildred Ingleton

Baby Kathryn Tonks

Betty and Brownie Carter-Brown

Ven Venables

Mr and Mrs Kenneth Corns

David Boulton

Anne Jones and her Parents

Violet Watts

**SPECIAL BIRTHDAYS.** Congratulations to you all on your special birthdays which have taken place or are to come from all your friends at Beckminster.

|                  |                     |
|------------------|---------------------|
| Elizabeth Scroop | 50 on 19 March 2021 |
| Keith Berry      | 80 on 6 April 2021  |
| Pam Wilkes       | 90 on 11 April 2021 |
| Karen Fletcher   | 50 on 12 April 2021 |

If anyone has a special birthday coming up, please let me know. Sue.

This Eastertide with joyful voice  
we'll sing: 'The Lord is King! Rejoice!'  
*at Eastertide, at Eastertide,  
O glad was the world at Eastertide*

W. H. Hamilton

**PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

God of power and majesty, you are present with us because of Christ's rising from the dead, and you persist in lifting us to new life in him. We bring to you our prayers for this world in need of resurrection.

We pray  
for nations and leaders in strife...  
for the poor and impoverished at home and abroad...  
for those we know in particular circumstances or distress...  
for those who suffer in body, mind or spirit...  
for those who have worked throughout the pandemic  
to help others...  
for those who are dying and those who grieve...  
for all who follow the risen Christ...

Through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

THE LORD'S PRAYER *With the confidence of the children of God we pray the prayer Jesus taught us.*

**OFFERING AND DEDICATION**

All things come from you, O God, and with gratitude we return to you what is yours. you created all that is, and with love formed us in your image. When our love failed, your love remained steadfast. You gave your only Son, Jesus Christ, to be our Saviour. All that we are, and all that we have, is a trust from you. And so in gratitude for all your gifts, we offer you ourselves, and all that we have in union with Christ's offering for us. By your Holy Spirit make us one with Christ, one with each other, and one in ministry to all the world. Through Jesus Christ our Saviour. **Amen.**

**STF 297 Christ is Alive (v. 1 - 5)**

Christ is alive! Let Christians sing.  
The cross stands empty to the sky.  
Let streets and homes with praises ring.  
Love, drowned in death, shall never die.

Christ is alive! No longer bound  
to distant years in Palestine,  
but saving, healing, here and now,  
and touching every place and time.

believe.' <sup>28</sup> Thomas answered him, 'My Lord and my God!' <sup>29</sup> 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.'

**The Purpose of This Book**

<sup>30</sup> Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book. <sup>31</sup> 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.

**SERMON**

May the words of my mouth and the meditations of all our hearts be acceptable to you Lord, our strength and our salvation. **Amen.**

The Easter story continues. It continues with further experiences and struggles of the disciples as they come to terms with the events they have witnessed in a matter of days. St. John's gospel does not let us forget that they were all in a fragile, emotional state. The events of just that one week in their lives were traumatic enough to turn their world upside down and leave them confused and wondering what to do. I would go so far as to say that they were in a state of chaos, full of mixed emotions and contradictory thoughts. They were also probably exhausted. Fear and doubt were mixed with dawning joy at the thought of the empty tomb. I do not think the understanding came at once but ebbed and flowed somewhat erratically.

St. John tells us that on the evening of the day of resurrection the disciples were ***locked in a house for fear of the Jews.*** It had only been a few days since Jesus had been arrested and they had fled Gethsemane. It was only a few days since Peter had denied Jesus three times. It was only a matter of hours since Mary Magdalen told them she had found the tomb empty, Peter and another disciple ran to see for themselves and Mary Magdalen was able to proclaim: 'I have seen the Lord.' When I try to put myself in that locked room, I feel an unsettled and intense atmosphere.

Jesus steps into that chaos and says, 'Peace be with you.' It is an incarnational moment. We tend to use the word 'incarnation' at Christmas and forget the incarnation encompasses Jesus' birth, life, death, and resurrection. Jesus steps into the chaos and says, 'Peace be with you.' These simple words were loaded with meaning. Jesus was saying not only did he wish that all that was negative, all that was tormenting them would be relieved, but that they may be filled with all that was good, all that could bless and strengthen them.

Upon seeing Jesus' hands and side the disciples *rejoiced*. Again Jesus wishes them peace before commissioning them to fulfil his work, 'As the Father sent me, so I send you.' The mission, the ministry will continue through the disciples gathered that night and through the centuries to those of us gathered today here in the church and by the wonders of modern technology. Jesus then enables the disciples for this mission by gifting them with the Holy Spirit. This empowering breath brings forth the imagery of the first words of Genesis when a 'wind from God' brought forth Creation. It reminds us of the breath of life Adam received from God and the life restored to the valley of dry bones Ezekiel witnessed. The disciples are given *new life* they are *re-created*. They are now in a new relationship with God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Thomas was not with the others on that evening. We do not know why, but because he was not there, and because he responded to the disciples' news by saying he wanted to see Jesus' wounds himself, he has been labelled 'Doubting Thomas.' I do not think he deserved that label any more than the others. What did Peter and the other disciple do when Mary Magdalen told them she had found the stone rolled away and the tomb empty? They ran to see for themselves. What would the disciples have done if that had not been in the locked house on the evening of the day of resurrection? What would they have done if they were not there to see his hands and his side?

I think Thomas is seeking understanding much like the other disciples. Would they have still been shut up in the house together a week later if their experience of Jesus' presence had led them to full understanding? Thomas' eagerness to touch the risen Christ includes the request to touch his wounds. In faith, Thomas is expressing his understanding of the suffering Christ who died for him. In sign language the sign for Jesus is such that one must think of the suffering every time Jesus' name is mentioned. The middle finger of the right hand touches the left palm, and the middle finger of the left hand touches the palm of the right hand.

Jesus appears to Thomas and offers himself to him, he offers himself to be touched and seen. Over the centuries we have come to call him 'Doubting Thomas,' yet he was no more a doubter than any of the others. Thomas appears elsewhere in the John's gospel as a strong character seeking to understand. One definition of theology, the study of God, is 'faith seeking understanding.' Jesus' appearance to Thomas prompts the disciple's statement of faith, 'My Lord and my God.' This is one of the most profound faith statements in the entire gospel. It recognises not only that Christ has risen but that Jesus is one with the Father.

The experience in that locked and shuttered house is a turning point in the lives of those who follow Jesus, and it is a sign of hope and encouragement without which the church would have died in its infancy. Jesus does not reproach Thomas, he gives him what he needs to grow in faith and understanding. At the same time Jesus knows that those who follow the first generation of believers will not have the privilege of seeing him and touching his wounds. Jesus offers encouragement to those who follow by emphasising that belief will not be limited to those who see. Jesus encourages us to rely on the experiences of others, including Thomas. These experiences are related throughout the New Testament and throughout the history of Christianity by those who experienced the presence of the risen Christ without seeing him and those who saw him in the faces of the people they encountered.

I pray we do not let the story of 'The Doubting Disciple' discourage us from exploring our own doubts and asking our own questions. I'll be honest with you, my defence of Thomas stems from the fact that I see my self in him. I would like to start a trend to call Thomas 'The Seeker.' Jesus will respond to our questions and doubts just as he responded to Thomas. Jesus understands, and I believe encourages us to be seekers! As seekers we grow in faith and move forward on our faith journeys until at last we *will* meet the risen Christ and experience the presence of the wounded healer ourselves.

**STF 316 When Easter to the Dark World Came (1, 4 - 7)**

When Easter to the dark world came,  
fair flowers glowed like scarlet flame:

*at Eastertide, at Eastertide,  
O glad was the world at Eastertide.*

When ten disciples met in fear,  
the 'Peace' said Jesus, 'I am here.'

*at Eastertide, at Eastertide,  
O glad was the world at Eastertide*

When Thomas' heart was hurt and grieved,  
then Jesus' wounds his doubt relieved:

*at Eastertide, at Eastertide,  
O glad was the world at Eastertide*

And friend to friend in wonder said:  
'The Lord is risen from the dead!'

*at Eastertide, at Eastertide,  
O glad was the world at Eastertide*