

We pray for those who, because they cannot see you, do not believe. Help us Lord to make your power, your victory and your goodness known. Help us to reveal you in what we say and do; may your Church demonstrate your presence in this world by its works – helping the poor and needy, comforting those who grieve, campaigning for justice, teaching the truth.

And we thank you, Lord, for the faith we have, for our confidence in the resurrection and in your grace. We entrust these prayers into your hands, in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord and our God. **Amen.**

#### Hymn

STF 354 – **Jesus is the Name we Honour**

STF 348 / H&P 256 – **He is Lord**

#### Blessing

May the God who sought Thomas in his doubting, reach out to save us from falling.

May the Lord who revealed himself to Thomas, enlighten us

May the Saviour who proved his victory over death to Thomas, comfort us and strengthen our faith;

And may the blessing of Almighty God, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, be with us now and for ever. Amen

Compiled by Local Preacher, Susan Thorne.

## **Worship at Home Darlington District**

**2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Easter: 11 April 2021**

Christ is Risen! **He is Risen Indeed. Hallelujah!**

#### Call to worship - Hymn

STF 644 / H&P 686 – **When our Confidence is Shaken**

STF 347 / H&P 255 – **Crown him with Many Crowns**

#### Opening prayer

We praise you, O Lord, the Father who made all things, who is our creator and sustainer, and on whom we depend.

We praise you, O Lord, the Son who died for us and redeemed us.

We praise you, O Lord, Holy Spirit who fills us and cleanses us.

Praise to you our God; you have justified us through your grace, sanctified us by your Spirit and glorified us in your presence.

Amen

#### **Lord's Prayer**

Reading – [John 20:19-31](#)

## Reflection

The account of Thomas who doubted resonates with us all; each of us has experienced doubt. Thomas missed the first appearance of Jesus to his gathered disciples simply because he was not there. Having missed his chance, he stubbornly refused to listen to the testimony of his fellow-apostles, and said that nothing would convince him except putting his hand into Jesus' wounded side. Bible commentators have criticised Thomas' absence and his doubting, but whatever the reason, Jesus gave him a second chance; he came again. Full of grace and forgiveness, Jesus invited Thomas to see and touch his wounds, and his doubts were resolved; Thomas did not need to touch the wounds of love, for he could see in Jesus' face his victory over death, his love and his mercy.

For one absence, one error of judgment, Thomas has been labelled "Doubting Thomas"- not by Christ, though. He is the God of second - and subsequent - chances, leading us deeper into our faith and our relationship with him. Thomas' experience of Jesus' grace gave him a sudden new insight. He cried out, "My Lord, and my God" – one of the most profound statements of faith in the entire New Testament, one that finally established Jesus' true identity. This astonishing statement seems to have burst from Thomas, as he realised that Jesus had truly conquered death. As we experience Christ more fully, trusting in his love, power and victory, may we also grow deeper into our Christian faith, and closer to the God who died for us.

## Intercessions

Our Lord and our God,

At this time of fear and doubting, we come into your presence to bring to you all that is on our hearts for this troubled world.

We pray for those who doubt your power; who are in despair over lost income, ruined businesses, disrupted careers; those who are suffering poverty and deprivation, the jobless, the homeless. Lord, please motivate our government, and other world leaders, to support the poor, to introduce fair taxation that protects those with the least, to tackle climate change that threatens the wellbeing and future of our planet, and to be just and merciful to the helpless.

We pray for those who, in their grief and mourning, doubt your victory over death. We pray for your compassion and comfort on all who have lost loved ones or who are caring for those suffering with long-delayed recovery from Covid-19. Strengthen their faith; help them to trust in you.

We pray for those who doubt your goodness, in this world where injustice and ruin prevail, a world in which the wealthy nations that cause the most damage to the environment suffer the least, but where the poorest nations experience drought, flooding, crop failure and starvation. Please, Lord, reach into the hearts of those who have decisions to make, and guide them into wise and just choices, for the benefit of all.