

24th April 2022

  
The **Methodist Church**

**South Warwickshire Circuit**

Registered charity no. 1154830

Superintendent Minister: Rev Dr Iain Ballard

**Hello everyone, my warmest Easter greetings to you all,**

The story of Thomas is one of my most dearly loved New Testament passages. I think it teaches us so much about the nature of Jesus, and the nature of what it is to be human. For me, it is one of the most wonderfully encouraging passages in the Gospel of John, a gospel which is full of affirming accounts of how Jesus treats fallible human beings. Look at how Jesus patiently answers Nicodemus, how dearly Jesus loves Lazarus and his family, or how Peter is restored after denying Jesus. Jesus' treatment of women, and the status afforded to women in this gospel, is also illuminating.

John 20:19-31 begins with the disciples gathered together in the locked room, disconsolate, sad and fearful. Jesus' first words to them are 'Peace be with you' – how accurately and concisely Jesus sums up how they are feeling, and what they need! But Thomas, of course, is not with them at this point. We are not told where he is, or what he is doing. But one can pretty well guarantee that he is feeling just as confused and bereft as the others. Indeed, his response to Jesus later on confirms this.

On hearing the news from his excited friends, Thomas will have none of it. He has to look, of course. He so wants to believe, he would love to think his Lord was alive, but he needs material proof. Unless I see those marks, he says, unless I see Him, unless I touch those wounds, I won't believe it. And Jesus is not impatient with this, he's not dismissive of this – instead, he comes **personally** to Thomas, to sort him out, to set him straight. Here is Thomas, so very human and frail, saying what I guess we all say from time to time – well unless I see it with my own eyes, I *won't* believe it. And Jesus deals with this so patiently, so kindly. He knows this is a big problem for Thomas and that he won't be able to progress unless he does see Jesus with his own eyes, and touch with his own hands. So that is what Jesus does. It's a personal touch from Christ our living Lord. But with it comes help for the rest of us:

**Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe.**

Christ knows our struggles. He knows we doubt. He knows that sometimes we have to wrestle with our faith, and work it through. Many of us are doing this right now, as we come to terms with the difficulties of the last two years, and the fears of the present time. Jesus knows that sometimes he doesn't seem real to us. He knows and he understands, and he will come to us, and straighten us out too.

And this is His encouragement to us - Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe.

May we all be blessed anew with the knowledge and the belief that Jesus is alive, this Eastertide and beyond.

**Rev'd Sally**

**Reminder: Dial – a – Prayer, Methodist Church**

Listen to a prayer: 0808 281 2514  
2478

Listen to news: 0808 281

### Sunday Worship and Daily Prayers

There are plenty of opportunities to join in worship if you have the internet, eg Methodist Central Hall (London) streams worship each Sunday at 11:00 am (<https://mchw.live/>) Livestreaming of worship takes place at other venues associated with the Connexion – see <https://www.methodist.org.uk/our-faith/worship/singing-the-faith-plus/seasons-and-themes/worship-during-the-coronavirus-pandemic/> for more details.

### Circuit Service

The Circuit now provides a pre-recorded service each month (on the first Sunday of the month), via YouTube, Facebook and our website – see below for details:

Please access the YouTube video by clicking the following link or typing it into your browser:

[tinyurl.com/SWCplaylist](https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLzyDSCOYMtQvpCroUvvxjE93MqkTWQomY)

or if this doesn't work, try the long version:

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLzyDSCOYMtQvpCroUvvxjE93MqkTWQomY>

***If you regularly watch the Circuit Service, do consider subscribing to the Channel.***

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/SW.Methodist/>

Website: [www.methodist-swc.org.uk](http://www.methodist-swc.org.uk)

Additional pre-recorded services will be provided by the Circuit for special feasts (Easter, Christmas etc)

A full text of the pre-recorded service is available on the website, and is being sent by post to all those people who do not use the Internet so they can join in too.

In intervening weeks, the Circuit will be using the service provided by the Methodist Church.

### TV & radio opportunities for worship:

Radio 4, Sunday Worship, Sunday 8:10am,

Radio 4 Long Wave, Daily Service, 9.45am Mon-Fri,

Radio 3, Choral Evensong, Sunday 3pm.

BBC 1, Songs of Praise, Sunday 1:15pm

*(The times of the TV services can alter, please check the times)*

**Daily prayers** at 10am are led by members of the circuit via zoom

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/328494818> - all zoom meetings are now protected by password – please contact Tony Parkinson on 01926 778646 for the password.

All members of the Circuit are invited to join, **you do not need a zoom account to join.** You can also join by **telephone.**

### Pastoral Support

A reminder that if you are in pastoral need of any kind please contact your own Minister direct by email or phone. We may also be able to arrange practical help with shopping and so on. Our details are below.

**If in any doubt, please contact Rev Dr Iain Ballard and he will link you up with help locally to you.**

Rev Dr Iain Ballard	07368 875790	iain.ballard@methodist.org.uk
<i>(Day off – Friday)</i>		

Rev Sally Jones	01926 740846	sally.jones@methodist.org.uk
<i>(Day off – Monday; Study day – Friday)</i>		

Rev. Jeongsook Kim	<i>Rev Jeongsook is on sabbatical until 31<sup>st</sup> May 2022</i>	
<i>(Day off – Tuesday)</i>		

Rev. Audrey Simpson                      01789 267971                      revaes@gmail.com  
(Day off – Friday)

Rev. Jemima Strain                      07969 345389  
jemima.strain@methodist.org.uk

(Part-time)

Rev. Richard Wilde                      07971 218356                      revrichardwilde@gmail.com,  
(Part-time)

**Keep safe. Keep caring. Keep praying. With every blessing to you and yours.** *The Ministers and Stewards of the South Warwickshire Methodist Circuit of Churches*