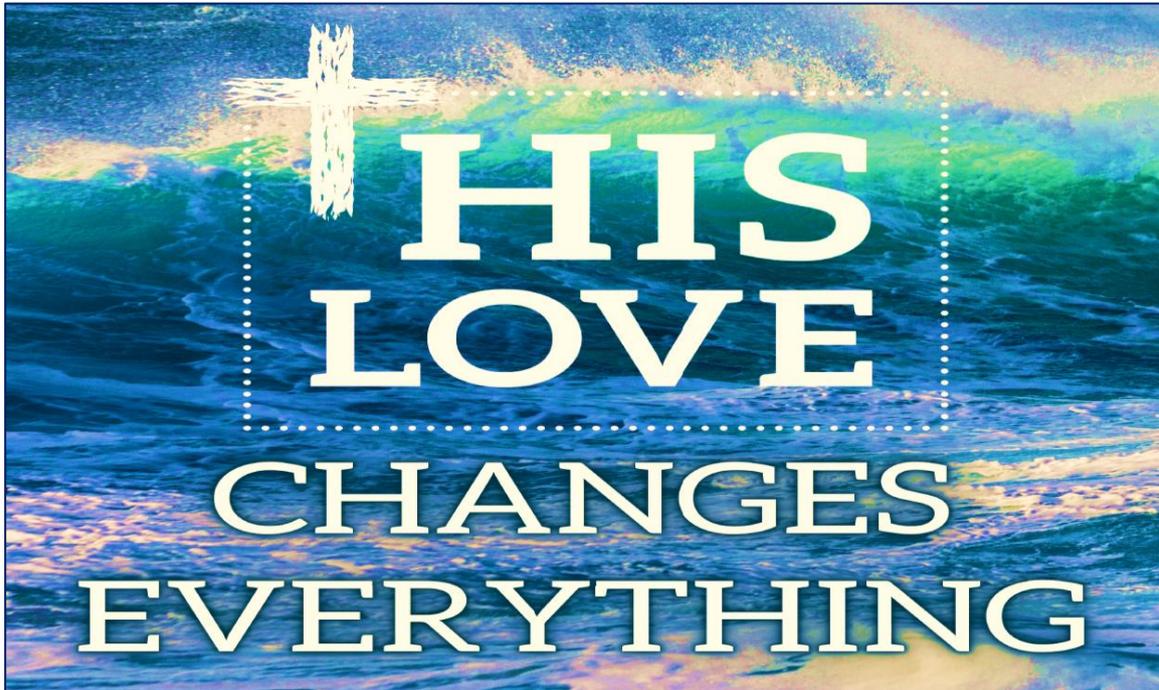


EYNESHAM BAPTIST CHURCH

Lombard Street, Eynsham OX29 4HT



SUNDAY 11th APRIL

SERVICE ON ZOOM
at 10.30 a.m.

Led by: Revd Malcolm Cook

Made new at Easter: Incredible new possibilities

Readings: John 20: 19-31 and 1 Peter 1: 6 - 9

Zoom login:

Meeting ID: 753 5934 1499 **Password:** 024518

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/75359341499?pwd=U1IYRzk3N1ppeTJDcjVPWG5kNFQwZz09>

YOU CAN ACCESS ANY OF OUR ZOOM EVENTS BY TELEPHONE.

Simply call one of the numbers below and follow the prompts: you will just need the **Meeting ID** and **Password** (*but not the very long number*):

0203 481 5240, 0131 460 1196, 0203 481 5237, 0203 051 2874

OTHER SERVICES ON SUNDAY

8.10 a.m. BBC Radio 4

1.15 p.m. BBC 1 Songs of Praise

DAILY HOPE - 0800 804 8044

Music, prayers and reflections as well as full worship services: 24 hours a day.

EBC DEACONS MEETING

10.30 a.m. on Tuesdays. Please pray for Zoltan and our Deacons.

ZOOM BIBLE STUDY

11.00 a.m. on Thursdays. All welcome.

Meeting ID: 821 2089 8795

Passcode: 994274

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82120898795?pwd=ejN4RU8rSkpDRFlxYlJQbEhHUytlZz09>

PRAYER

For all those we know who are in physical pain or mental anguish at this time, we ask for the Lord's healing touch and comforting presence. We pray especially for those recently bereaved, in particular thinking of Her Majesty the Queen and the Royal family following the death of Prince Philip. We pray that all would know the everlasting arms around them and upholding them.

**'Do not fear, for I have redeemed you;
I have called you by name,
you are mine.**

**When you pass through the waters,
I will be with you;
and through the rivers,
they shall not overwhelm you;**

Isaiah 43:1-2

"Forgive us, Lord, when we are rooted to the earth, unable to see beyond the present, blind to the glory of your presence.

We become engrossed in what is happening now and forget all that you yet have in store for us.

We are so concerned with what is immediate, temporary, and short-lived that we leave ourselves no time for the things that are eternal and full of your love.

Lift up our heads, that we may see Christ in all his glory and all things in their true perspective.

We ask this, with the forgiveness of our sins, in your name. "

Amen.

Simple acts of kindness are so important in supporting our community.

A Brighter Tomorrow

There is much we can do just to brighten

This world of all take and no give;
There's a great deal that we can contribute

Through the everyday lives that we live.

By supporting one's elderly neighbours
Or through lending a hand in some way,
It's by taking a bunch of spring flowers
To someone to brighten their day.

It's by sparing a few precious hours
In the service of those most in need,
It's all about setting a standard
And trying to give others a lead.

It's the way that we tend to treat others
And help and aid folks in distress,
It's the care and assistance we offer
That will set us apart from the rest.

The choice that we face is quite simple,
The rewards plain for all men to see,
'As you did all of this to my brother
Then' said Christ, 'you did it to Me.'

Colin Hammacott (in Parish Pump)

No doubt about it (John 20:19-31)

Then he said to Thomas, “Put your finger into my hands. Put your hand into my side. Don’t be faithless any longer. Believe!” “My Lord and my God!” Thomas said. (TLB)

The story of “doubting” Thomas is a familiar narrative this time of the year, and I am sure Malcom will also mention this in his reflection tomorrow. Of course, the word is not “doubt” but “unbelieving”. In the Gospel of John this is always a verb, never a noun. Believing for John is a statement of relationship with Jesus. To believe in Jesus is not a commitment to certain doctrinal statements, but an affirmation of the existing relationship between Jesus and the believer. So, for John believing in Jesus depends on how we answer the question, “Do you know Jesus?”.

As the final verses of the gospel remind us, for John knowing Jesus is not knowing about him or knowing him from a second-hand experience but experiencing the reality of him in fullness. *“These are written that you may (continue to) believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life”*. The original text suggests that this Gospel is for those who are yet to believe in Jesus as well as for the current believers to be sustained in their faith. And Thomas’ case serves as a final example.

The simple words of Thomas’s own confession is a great example of such act of believing. “My Lord and my God”. These words essentially summarize the entire Gospel. The “and” in this statement should be highlighted because Jesus is Lord, of course, he is our Lord, but Jesus is also God, the

great “I AM” who in the first verse of the Gospel came to dwell in human flesh.

Also, the pronoun “my” Lord and “my” God is important because again, confession is not acceptance of dogma but a claim about relationship. In this story Thomas needs to see this flesh *again* in order to believe in Jesus. But for John the gospel is a full sensory experience. Sometimes it’s tasting (John 6), sometimes it’s smelling (John 11), sometimes it’s hearing (John 10), sometimes it’s touching (John 13:23), and sometimes it is seeing. Because this is what it means to be human and to experience relationships as human beings, and during the lockdown this is what we miss the most. A full, intimate, meaningful relationship will encompass the entirety of who we are and what it means to be human. God wants nothing less than this kind of relationship with us.

We also tend to forget that the disciples who did happen to be in the room when Jesus first appeared to them are the same disciples who remained sceptical when Mary brought them the news of the resurrection. When Mary bursts into the room full of disciples and announces, “I have seen the Lord!”, none of the disciples say “Great! That is amazing! We believe you!” There is no response to her announcement. Instead, Jesus finds them huddled somewhere behind locked doors and fills them with hope and the Spirit. Thomas is not there for this first occasion, but the story of Thomas reminds us once again of the grace upon grace through Jesus. Jesus comes back for Thomas because he will not lose a single one of those whom the Father gave him (18:9). Which means

for people who believe (who experience) Jesus there is always hope.

Prayer: *Jesus, fill us with your Spirit so we would dare to believe in the things we cannot see in your love for us, in your love for those around us, in the hope of eternity. We would dare to believe that another world is possible, that suffering can end, that we can play a part in the kingdom to come. We would dare to believe in the light breaking through, in justice made new, in your love for us. Amen.*

Zoltan

ASYLUM WELCOME

Donations still needed. Please speak to Marcus Thompson on 01865 881808.

EYNESHAM COMMUNITY LARDER

Call Bob Thiele on 07738 063083 or email on eynshamhelp@gmail.com.

Donation points in Co-op, Spar, Market Garden and Tesco.

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Please make Zoltan or Deacons aware of any pastoral needs.

Contributions for the newsletter to
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01865 881780 (*subject to space and editorial discretion*).