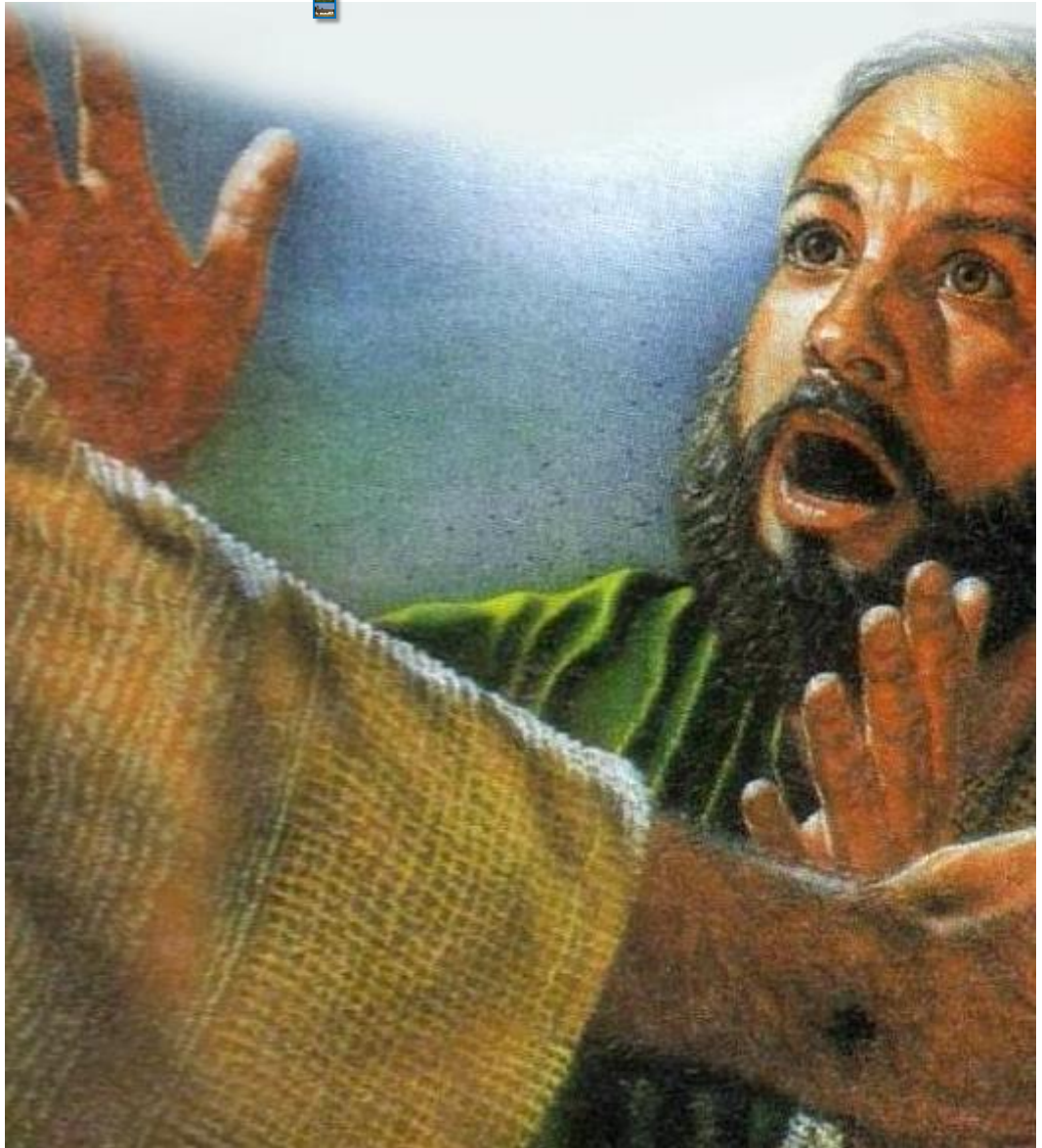




Chet Valley Churches



Informal Communion
Third Sunday of Trinity
3rd July 2022

The Gathering

Welcome to this service wherever you are, from the Chet Valley Benefice, on the Festival of Thomas the Apostle.

🎵 **Hymn:** *God of Mercy, God of Grace*

**God of mercy, God of grace,
Show the brightness of thy face;
Shine upon us, Saviour, shine,
Fill thy church with light divine;
And thy saving health extend
Unto earth's remotest end.**

**Let the people praise thee, Lord;
Be by all that live adored;
Let the nations shout and sing
Glory to their Saviour King;
At thy feet their tribute pay,
And thy holy will obey.**

**Let the people praise thee, Lord;
Earth shall then her fruits afford;
God to man his blessing give,
Man to God devoted live;
All below, and all above,
One in joy and light and love.**



Jesus said, "If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me."

We meet in the name of God,
and in the name of Jesus,
and in the name of the Holy Spirit.

**O Lord,
As we receive you in bread and wine,
fill us with gratitude for all
that you have done for us,
and give us the strength
to carry our cross and follow you.**

Prayer of Confession

Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, where for forty days he was tempted by the devil.

Let us confess our sins remembering before God the times when we have fallen from temptation into sin.

**God of mercy,
we acknowledge that we are all sinners.
We turn from the wrong
that we have thought and said and done
and are mindful of all we have failed to do.
For the sake of Jesus Christ who died for us,
forgive us all that is past,
and help us to live each day
in the light of Christ our Lord. Amen.**



To all and to each where regret is real
God pronounces pardon and give us the right to begin again.
Thanks be to God. Amen.

Collect

Almighty and eternal God who, for the firmer foundation of our faith, allowed your holy apostle Thomas to doubt the resurrection of your Son till word and sight convinced him, grant to us who have not seen, that we also may believe, and so confess Christ as our Lord and our God, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

Bible Reading: Habakkuk 2:1-4

I will stand at my watch and station myself on the ramparts; I will look to see what he will say to me, and what answer I am to give to this complaint.

Then the Lord replied: “Write down the revelation and make it plain on tablets so that a herald may run with it. For the revelation awaits an appointed time; it speaks of the end and will not prove false. Though it linger, wait for it; it will certainly come and will not delay.

“See, the enemy is puffed up; his desires are not upright—but the righteous person will live by his faithfulness

♪ **Hymn:** *From the Breaking of the Dawn*

From the breaking of the dawn
To the setting of the sun,
I will stand
On ev'ry promise of your word.

Words of power, strong to save,
That will never pass away,
I will stand
On ev'ry promise of your word.

For your covenant is sure,
And on this I am secure—
I can stand
On ev'ry promise of your word.

When I stumble and I sin,
Condemnation pressing in,
I will stand
On ev'ry promise of your word.

You are faithful to forgive
That in freedom I might live,
So I stand
On ev'ry promise of your word.

Guilt to innocence restored,
You remember sins no more—
So I'll stand
On ev'ry promise of your word.

When I'm faced with anguished choice,
I will listen for your voice,
stand on ev'ry promise of your word.
And I'll stand
On ev'ry promise of your word.

Through this dark and troubled land
You will guide me with your hand
As I stand
On ev'ry promise of your word.



**And you've promised to complete
Ev'ry work begun in me—
So I'll stand
On ev'ry promise of your word.**

**Hope that lifts me from despair,
Love that casts out ev'ry fear,
As I stand
On ev'ry promise of your word.**

**Not forsaken, not alone,
For the Comforter has come,
And I stand
On ev'ry promise of your word.**

**Grace sufficient, grace for me,
Grace for all who will believe—
We will stand
On ev'ry promise of your word.**

Bible Reading: *John 20:24-29*

Now Thomas (also known as Didymus), one of the Twelve, was not with the disciples when Jesus came. So the other disciples told him, “We have seen the Lord!”

But he said to them, “Unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe.”

A week later his disciples were in the house again, and Thomas was with them. Though the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, “Peace be with you!” Then he said to Thomas, “Put your finger here; see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. Stop doubting and believe.”

Thomas said to him, “My Lord and my God!”

Then Jesus told him, “Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.”

Sermon [Rev Jill]

Those words of the prophet Habakkuk in the Old Testament come from the time when his people were under threat from the cruel and violent Babylonians. As a prophet, he was a watchman and God's messenger. After bursting out in distress, he then waited for God's answer. In time it became clear to him, that he was to write down this very important message about God's triumph over evil: "This will come true, you may have to wait, but it will certainly take place".

Those who are evil will not survive, but those faithful to God will live, because they believe. God's glory and triumph will one day be seen, and the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord! This was a time for holding on to God's Word, having determination not to sink into despair, but to trust, have faith and hope!

The Gospel according to John was written so that readers can come to believe that Jesus is the promised Messiah, our Saviour, the Son of God. That through your faith in Him, you may have life.

As we read about Thomas and the other disciples as they follow Jesus, Thomas often seems to miss the point of Jesus words. He wants to be part of Jesus' mission, but sometimes struggles to understand. After Jesus' cruel crucifixion and death, Thomas is most distressed and very confused.

Then, after a few days, the other disciples tell him they have seen the Lord. But in his distress Thomas needs more than their stories to lift him out of his grief.

A week later, when he is with the disciples, Jesus comes to be with them again. Suddenly, Thomas sees Jesus, and the scars of the wounds inflicted as he was crucified on the cross. He has really struggled to understand and now, he firmly believes saying, "My Lord, and my God!"

Those scars are constant reminders for us, of the wounds through which our healing, and the healing of the world will be accomplished! Constant reminders of the sacrifice Jesus made for us, as he took the pain of the world on himself.

In the darkest times, when we are lost, afraid, or confused, we too, can hold on, to trust and have faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. Through faith and trust in him we have hope, and come to believe in the life he gives. Amen.

Statement of Faith

We believe that our lives are held within the encircling love of God, who knows our names and recognises our deepest needs.

We believe that Christ is the divine Child of the living God, and that his grace is like living waters that can never be exhausted.

We believe in the birthing, renewing, enabling Spirit of God who yearns over our welfare as a mother yearns for her child.

We believe that God is in the arid desert as well as in green pastures, and that hard times and disciplines are also loving gifts.

We believe that our journey has a purpose and a destination, and that our path leads to a human glory we cannot yet imagine.

We believe that in the church we are fellow pilgrims on the road, and that we are called to love one another as God loves us.

This is our faith and we are humbled to profess in Jesus the Christ. Amen.

Prayers

Almighty God our heavenly Father, we pray for your Church today, gathering all around the world, to praise you, to hear your holy word and to meet you in bread and wine.

We pray for those with responsibilities as Church leaders and pray for all people in this benefice. By your Holy Spirit enable us to support each other with generous hearts, allowing you to work through us, to reveal your glory.

Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for a world which struggles to live justly and in peace. We pray for those who must search for food or walk long distances for clean water. We remember with sadness those whose lives are cut short by disease or violence. We pray for those who meet persecution and torture with courage and dignity. We pray for those who have lost so much in the devastating earthquake in Afghanistan, and for those who are living with the terror of war around them in Ukraine. We pray for people who have lost loved ones, and for those who have fled to find a safe place to live.

Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for those who work in places of power and influence, making decisions which may affect many people. Give wisdom, Lord, to all in authority, and direct this and every nation in the ways of justice and peace, to honour one another and seek the common good.

Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We thank you Lord for those who sustain us by their love and forgiveness. Thank you for the people with whom our lives are linked, and who make up the network of our family, work, and community life. Help us to be aware of each other's needs and quick to serve and encourage one another. May our love for one another reflect your love for us.

Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for those who are suffering with pain, sickness, anxiety, or loneliness, and pray you would be close to all who are bereaved. May they know your healing and comfort now and in the coming days.

Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Heavenly Father, we remember before you those who have died in the faith of Christ according to your promises. Grant us with them a share in your eternal kingdom.

**Merciful Father,
accept these prayers for the sake of your Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.**

We Share the Peace

Christ, King of Tenderness,
Christ, King of Tenderness,
bind us with a bond that cannot be broken.
Bind us with a bond of love
that cannot be broken.

The peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.
And also with you.

The Communion

The Lord is here.

His Spirit is with us.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give thanks and praise.

It is right to praise you, Father, Lord of all creation;
in your love you made us for yourself.

When we turned away you did not reject us,
but came to meet us in your Son.

**You embraced us as your children
and welcomed us to sit and eat with you.**

In Christ you shared our life
that we might live in him and he in us.

**He opened his arms of love upon the cross
and made for all the perfect sacrifice for sin.**

On the night he was betrayed,
at supper with his friends
he took bread, and gave you thanks;
he broke it and gave it to them, saying:
Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you;
do this in remembrance of me.

**Father, we do this in remembrance of him:
his body is the bread of life.**

At the end of supper, taking the cup of wine,
he gave you thanks, and said:
Drink this, all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant,
which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins;
do this in remembrance of me.

**Father, we do this in remembrance of him:
his blood is shed for all.**



As we proclaim his death and celebrate his rising in glory, send your Holy Spirit that this bread and this wine may be to us the body and blood of your dear Son.

**As we eat and drink these holy gifts
make us one in Christ, our risen Lord.**

With your whole Church throughout the world
we offer you this sacrifice of praise
and lift our voice to join the eternal song of heaven:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord,
God of power and might,
Heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.**

The Lord's Prayer

**Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name.
Your kingdom come,
your will be done,
On Earth as in Heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins as we forgive
those who sin against us.
Lead us not into temptation
but deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power and the glory
are yours, now and for ever. Amen.**



The Fraction

Every time we eat this bread and drink this cup,
We proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

The Invitation

If you are thirsty, drink the Fount of Life.
If you are hungry, eat the Bread of Life.
Blessed are all who hunger for this Bread
and thirst for this Fount.

The Communion

Prayer after Communion

Lord Jesus Christ, you have put your life into our hands;
now we put our lives into yours.

**Take us, renew and remake us.
What we have been is past;
what we shall be, through you, awaits us.
Lead us on. Take us with you. Amen.**

Closing Responses

The cross,
we shall take it;

The bread,
we shall break it;

The pain,
we shall bear it;

The joy,
we shall share it;

The Gospel,
we shall live it;

The light,
we shall cherish it;

The love,
we shall give it;

The darkness,
God shall perish it.



Hymn: I Will Sing the Wondrous Story

**I will sing the wondrous story
Of the Christ who died for me:
How he left his home in glory
For the cross of Calvary.
I was lost, but Jesus found me,
Found the sheep that went astray,
Threw his loving arms around me,
Drew me back into his way.**

**I was bruised, but Jesus healed me;
Faint was I from many a fall;
Sight was gone, and fears possessed me,
But he freed me from them all.
Days of darkness still come o'er me,
Sorrow's paths I often tread,
But the Saviour still is with me;
By his hand I'm safely led.**

**He will keep me 'til the river
Rolls its waters at my feet;
Then he'll bear me safely over,
All my joy in him complete.
Yes, I'll sing the wondrous story
Of the Christ who died for me,
Sing it with the saints in glory,
Gathered by the crystal sea.**

Blessing and Dismissal

**I bless you in the name of the Father, the Son
and the Sacred Spirit: the One and the Three.**

**May God give you to drink of His cup;
may the sun be bright upon you; may the night call down peace;
and when you come to His household
may the door be open wide for you to go in to your joy.**

**Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.
In the name of Christ, Amen.**

