



St Columba's Bathgate and St Peter's Linlithgow



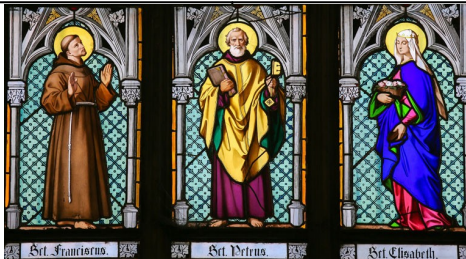
Rector: Rev Christine Barclay Curate: Rev Peter Woodifield

The Rectory
85 Acredales
LINLITHGOW
EH49 6JA
Tel: 07964 175 914

Tel: 07747 023 108

4th July 2021
St Thomas

DEAR FRIENDS, this weekend we celebrate the Feast Day of St Thomas, remembered for his doubt. I hope these readings, prayers and reflections this Sunday make a connection with you and fill you with hope and encouragement.



Collect

ALMIGHTY AND EVER LIVING GOD, who strengthened your apostle Thomas with faith in the resurrection of your Son: grant to us, who have not seen, that we also may believe and so confess Christ as our Lord and our God; who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, world without end.

Readings

Habakkuk 2: 1 – 4
Ephesians 2: 19 – 22
John 20: 24 – 29

Reflection

PICTURES which illustrate the lives of Saints (with a capital S) almost always show those Saints with halos which seem already to be part of them, as if they were born with them. It is easy to forget that they were ordinary people like you and me – human beings, with strengths and weaknesses, successes and failures. The capital S and the halo can hide the fact that we are all saints, and the early Christian church referred to all believers in Christ as saints. As Paul told the Christians in Ephesus “you are citizens with the saints, members of the household of God”. We belong to the great company of saints in heaven and on earth; past, present and future, and together we form a spiritual dwelling-place for God. In

our gospel reading from John this week we have the story of Thomas, a very human, ordinary man who in extraordinary circumstances had an encounter with the divine presence of God. On that first Easter evening Jesus came to his disciples, greeted them, showed them his wounds and breathed into them the Holy Spirit. But Thomas wasn't there, he missed out on this amazing encounter. It isn't easy hearing that we have missed amazing experiences, is it? I often wonder if Thomas felt hurt and rejected that Jesus appeared to the others when he wasn't there. Maybe that was why he said I won't believe until I can see and touch the evidence for myself, a very human response given the scale of what Thomas was being asked to believe. A man, his friend and teacher, who he saw being arrested, a man who was tortured and who he knows died on the cross is no longer dead – he's alive in a new way. This is a very big ask to take on hearsay. Thomas wants certainty before he risks so much of himself in such a huge step of faith. So how did God respond to Thomas? I see God meeting Thomas where he was and, in his doubt, offering him the certainty he needed - the sight and touch of Jesus and his wounds. Thomas wasn't rewarded for believing, but in his unbelief, God has come to him and touched him to heal the pain in his heart. Surely this is the lesson we take from Thomas's story, that when we most need him, when our longing for certainty or guidance or comfort is at its strongest,



God meets us where we are and as we are in ways that we might not expect and through people who don't look anything like Jesus! And as so often happens we might not recognise at the time that God has met us but when we look back from a distance we can. For

God meets us in many unexpected ways, sometimes through music, art, or nature or in the words we read on a page. We can learn much from Thomas and he can be a compassionate and inspiring companion for us on our journeys. This will have huge implications for our lives and for the lives of others as we travel as part of the great company of saints in heaven and on earth; past, present and future with Christ at the head.

Rev Christine



Prayers

LORD JESUS CHRIST, you are our way, our truth and our life, Thomas could not believe until he was able to see and touch, we pray for all who find faith hard to grasp and for our many questions which you make the door to belief and understanding. With summer holiday season upon us we pray for all involved in the travel and tourism sector and for families and individuals planning breaks. We give thanks for the continuing progress in the vaccination rollout and the possibility of more freedoms to our lives in the coming days.

We remember before you those who continue to struggle with Covid and its impact on their lives. We ask your blessing upon the Church worldwide giving thanks for the life and example of your apostle Thomas, for our Scottish Episcopal Church, for our College of Bishops, in particular Mark our Primus, John our Bishop, and for all who lead and guide us.

We pray for Rev Ruth Innes and those from our church families who have asked for our prayers.

From St Columba's: Katrina Barron, Rose MacLaren, Anne MacMillan, Brian Knotts, Lorna Aitken, Kath Stutt, Anthea & Katie McAlpin, Geoffrey Gerrard, Doug and Pat Laurie, Young Harry, Paul & Janice Moffat.

And from St Peter's: Anna Lovelock, Kathleen Rae (Anne's friend), Cisley Moss, Michael Patrick (Ruthie's friend), Peter and Marilyn McOwan, Harry and Connie Payne, Rita Manion (David's mother), Annie and Andy Gibbs (Olivia's in-laws), Joe Lavery, Bob Philip (Andy's father), Dot Pringle, Brenda Cook, Father John, Ruthie Cadell, David Szkudlarek, Jan Robson and Corinne Anderson; and for all their families.

We pray for the souls of those who have died in recent days and for all who mourn, and we remember those connected with our church families whose anniversary of death falls at this time.

From St Columba's: Henry Carruthers, Agnes Brown, Dorothy Corbett and Harvey Dobson.

From St Peter's: Margaret Howard and Mabel Gibbens.

Blessing

GOD GIVE YOU GRACE to follow his saints in faith and hope and love; and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among you and remain with you always.



Notices

DEAR FRIENDS, school holidays are upon us and many of us are making plans to get away or to enjoy staycations in this lovely part of Scotland. I returned from my holiday refreshed but with no voice, too much hilarity with my family perhaps! Recovering now thankfully and very appreciative of my time away and to everyone who worked in my absence. Little by little we are reclaiming much loved aspects of our worship but it may be a few more weeks before we can enjoy everything. Week by week St Peter's is as full as it can be and because space is limited please book your seat – everyone is welcome to request a seat, whether a family group or otherwise, so book with Jane 843176 as soon as possible if you would like to attend a Sunday service.

Services for the coming week - Feast of St Thomas:

St Peter's @ 9.30am (Zoomed live),

St Columba's @ 11.15am

Tuesday 29th June:

St Peter's Eucharist @ 10.30am.

Wednesday 30th June:

St Columba's Eucharist @ 10.30.

The fourth and final Parable's study led by Rev Peter will be held over until Friday July 16 at 3pm.

Pastoral Visiting

If you would like me to come and visit, or if you know of someone who would appreciate a visit, please do let me know. And please be assured that Rev Peter and I hold you all in our prayers each and every day.

The latest edition of **The Communicant** (the Edinburgh diocesan news sheet) is available now on the Diocesan website, via this link: <https://edinburgh.anglican.org/publications/the-communicant/>.

Nothing can stop the Provincial Youth Week! Glen 21 has now been confirmed for 1-7 August. It will be a 'blended' week of online interactivity, offline things to do and some in-person meet-ups in regional hubs around the Province. Places are filling up fast! Booking is still open, so if there are teenagers connected to your church who need something to look forward to this summer, direct them to Glen21.online for full information, FAQs and booking details. If you have any questions about Glen 21 please feel free to email Claire at YouthandChildren@dioceseofedinburgh.org. Claire Benton-Evans.

SEC Morning, Evening and Night Prayer Liturgies

Morning, Evening and Night Prayer liturgies are available at www.scotland.anglican.org/spirituality/prayer/daily-offices

Rev Christine and Rev Peter will be saying Morning Prayer and Evening Prayer each day in their own homes and invite you to join in from yours.

On Thursday mornings at 9am they will be sharing a virtual service via Zoom. If you would like to join in, the link every week will be:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/756114372?pwd=ZXpMWndaY210empVY1daL09paGwZz09>

Meeting ID: 991 1810 8400 Passcode: 143983

For the coming week beginning on Pentecost 6 (Trinity 5). On Tuesday we celebrate Palladius, Bishop, c.450 and on Wednesday we celebrate Boisil, Prior of Melrose, c.642.

Sunday 4 th	Week C	2 Samuel 2:1-11; 3:1	Romans 14:1-17	Luke 18:31 - 19:10
Monday 5 th	Week C	1 Samuel 14:36-45	Acts 9:19b-31	Luke 23:44-56a
Tuesday 6 th	Week C	1 Samuel 15:1-3, 7-35	Acts 9:32-43	Luke 23:56b - 24:11
Wednesday 7 th	Week C	1 Samuel 16:1-13	Acts 10:1-16	Luke 24:13-35
Thursday 8 th	Week C	1 Samuel 16:14 - 17:11	Acts 10:17-33	Luke 24:36-53
Friday 9 th	Week C	1 Samuel 17:17-30	Acts 10:34-38	Mark 1:1-13
Saturday 10 th	Week C	1 Samuel 17:31-49	Acts 11:1-18	Mark 1:14-28

The Collect for the week Proper 14 Sunday between 3 and 9 July

O Lord, let the world be ordered in peace, according to your will: that your people may be free to worship you with joy; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, world without end.

Each day we pray for:

- The world: people, governments and leaders of the countries and specific issues arising in the news. Issues relating to social justice, peace, suffering and creation. And of course at this time for the devastating global covid-19 crisis.
- Our wider church, the SEC, our diocese, individual churches.
- Our community – residents in our area. For those with no faith, we pray for their introduction to the Christian faith, and for those with faith, that their faith may develop further.
- Those known to us who are unwell or in need.
- Our own church communities.



Clergy contact numbers:

Rev Christine – 07964175914; 01334769303
Rev Peter Woodfield – 07747023108

Rector's Wardens contact numbers:

David Graham Service – 07901947345
Jane Ramsay - 07982252666

