



Church At Home
St. Timothy's Lutheran Church – Pembroke, Ontario
Second Sunday of Easter **April 12, 2026**

Christ is Risen! **He is Risen Indeed! Alleluia!**

Prayer of the Day

Almighty and eternal God, the strength of those who believe and the hope of those who doubt, may we, who have not seen, have faith in you and receive the fullness of Christ's blessing, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

The Holy Gospel: John 20:19-31

When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors of the house where the disciples had met were locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you." When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained."

But Thomas (who was called the Twin), one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. So the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord." But he said to them, "Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands, and put my finger in the mark of the nails and my hand in his side, I will not believe."

A week later his disciples were again in the house, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were shut, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here and see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it in my side. Do not doubt but believe." Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God!" Jesus said to him, "Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe."

Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book. But these are written so that you may come to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through believing you may have life in his name.

Homily

I greet you in the name of Jesus, our risen Saviour. Amen.

Let's face it, our minds search for order: to make sense of things, to understand the world, to organize all the data that comes to our awareness. This is the impulse that pushes us toward scientific discovery. It is at the core of legal arguments and debates. It is the reason we love a good mystery story. We possess the keen desire to follow the evidence until a mystery is solved.

Faith is a mystery of the heart that the mind wants to solve. To admit that we take certain things on faith is to say that we are willing, in limited circumstances, for things not to make perfect sense. Yet we want faith to support evidences so that the leap of faith is a manageable one.

In the Easter season, we celebrate the biggest mystery of faith: that Jesus was slain and died for the sins of the world and he rose from the grave. This fact of faith, compared to all the other fantastic stories about Jesus; his healing miracles, his walking on water, is the hardest one for the human mind to capture. There are two things in this life we cannot avoid: death and taxes. Yet, nothing in life is more certain than death. For Jesus to be raised from the dead contradicts every instinct. It just cannot happen; period.

The Gospel of John is the story of Jesus written for the courtroom. It not only tells what he did in life; it also gives the motives behind the facts. John writes in clear terms. He provides a clear message that helps us see the truth. He gives evidence so that we will know with certainty; “these (stories) are written so that you may come to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through believing you may have life in his name” (John 20:31). John does admit that Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples and others that he does not record. One story he did not exclude is of Thomas, the twin, the disciple, Doubting Thomas after *that day*.

It was evening on *that day*, a day like no other. After the awful reality of Jesus’ crucifixion and burial on Friday, this first day of the week had brought some unsettling events.

The morning found Mary Magdalene distressed, running to tell the disciples that Jesus’ body was missing from the tomb. Peter and the other disciples had run to the tomb and saw for themselves that it was true; only the linen cloths that wrapped Jesus could be found. Later that day, Mary Magdalene came to the disciples again, this time breathless and with excitement told them, “I have seen the Lord.”

By evening, the mood of the day had changed again. The disciples were living in fear. They had locked themselves in a house. We might have expected that the disciples would be celebrating now for Jesus had risen. Instead, we find them huddled behind locked doors. We are told by John they were in fear of the Jews; not Jews in general as they were ones but the Jewish leaders who were behind the plot to kill Jesus. The disciples likely feared for their own lives, afraid of their uncertain futures.

Jesus will not be stopped by locked doors. He comes through them and appears in the midst of his frightened friends. He comes not to confront his disciples with their failures, but to grant them peace: “Peace be with you”. Then he shows them his hands and his side so they can see that it is their friend, the crucified Jesus and not a ghost or vision. It is the real deal! The disciples are elated; all but one; Thomas, who is nowhere to be found.

I’ve said it before and I will say it again; I believe Thomas gets a bad rap!

We wonder why it seemed so difficult for Thomas to believe. He had the testimony of the other disciples – wasn't that good enough for him? But doesn't his doubt and disbelief make sense to you? After all, don't we have difficulty believing news that is quite literally too good to be true. It is almost certainly untrue. Such things are hard to believe.

We wonder why, in Thomas' struggles to believe, Jesus seemed to answer him so harshly. After all, Thomas only asks for what the other disciples had already received. He just wanted to see Jesus too. Jesus, the one who had been nailed to the cross and pierced in the side and rose from the dead. So why did Jesus scold him? Yet, maybe, just maybe Jesus isn't speaking to Thomas nearly as much as Jesus is speaking to us.

You see, John is writing for a community of faith that, like Thomas, had never seen the resurrected Christ. Yes, they had the testimony of others but they hadn't seen Jesus for themselves. Jesus doesn't so much scold Thomas as he does bless all those who read this story and come to faith through it.

This is the promise of Jesus; to Thomas and to us; the community of faith in the twenty-first century that when we hear the story of God's love we come to faith and are blessed.

Moreover, this story on *that day* and the week that followed tells us who God is. The God whom we know from creation is the same God incarnate in the crucified and resurrected Jesus. The story tells us who Jesus isn't; not just another prophet, not just another in a long line of martyrs or heroes of the faith.....Jesus is God in the flesh. And, the resurrected Christ still bears the scars of crucifixion. The resurrection does not change or undo the crucifixion but it leads us to see God on the cross and not just in the resurrection. It is here at the cross where God meets us; in our suffering and the lowly places; not just in the high, blessed moments of life.

My Friends in Christ. We live in the time after Easter. As Thomas who missed seeing Jesus on the evening of *that day*, we missed Easter by two thousand years. We did not see or touch or experience it for ourselves. Yet we heard. Someone told us the story of Jesus in a way that invited us to say yes. Yes, to faith, faith in our God who cares for us, knows our needs and loves us unconditionally.

Christ is risen! He is risen indeed.

Amen.

Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

Benediction

The Lord bless you and keep you,
The Lord's face shine upon you and be gracious unto you,
The Lord look upon you with favour and give you (+) peace. Amen.

Prayers used by permission by Augsburg Fortress – Sundays and Seasons

STTLC COMMUNIQUE

In Our Prayers Today.....Mike Harrington, Lila Martinat, Irlavere Tubbe, Bobby Keuhl, Adele Krieger, Tracy Schori and Christa Reitlingshoefer.

Lenten Food Drive has come to an end with 540 items delivered to the Food Bank. With these donations, we have helped those in need. Thank you for being in mission for others.

Shepherd's Pie Luncheon is being hosted by the Witness Committee, Saturday, May 9th beginning at noon. Come and enjoy delicious homemade Shepherd's Pie, salad, dessert and beverage of your choice for only \$10 per person. Tickets will be available Sunday, April 19, 26 and May 3rd in Jubilee Hall following the service. Only 60 tickets are available!

Camp Lutherlyn Camper Sponsorships – St. Timothy's is sponsoring up to 5 children/youth for 1 Week each at Camp Lutherlyn this summer. You can obtain an Application Form from the church office and you can register your child online at lutherlyncamp.ca and then going to the Registration Page.

Ministerial Acts – Funeral

Nancy Briscoe – March 30, 2026. Age 81

