

2nd SUNDAY OF EASTER**ST. PETERS ANGLICAN CHURCH BUNDOORA****Sunday 12th April 2026****Fr. Stephen Monsiegnur****Readings:**¹ Acts 2:14a, 22-32 / Psalm 16 / 1 Peter 1.1-12 / John 20.19-31**Theme:** *“Peace Be With You—And So I Send You”***Acts 2:14a, 22-32**

But Peter, standing with the eleven, raised his voice and addressed them,
²² “Fellow Israelites, listen to what I have to say: Jesus of Nazareth, a man attested to you by God with deeds of power, wonders, and signs that God did through him among you, as you yourselves know—²³ this man, handed over to you according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of those outside the law. ²⁴ But God raised him up, having released him from the agony of death, because it was impossible for him to be held in its power. ²⁵ For David says concerning him, ‘I saw the Lord always before me, for he is at my right hand so that I will not be shaken; ²⁶ therefore my heart was glad, and my tongue rejoiced; moreover, my flesh will live in hope. ²⁷ For you will not abandon my soul to Hades or let your Holy One experience corruption. ²⁸ You have made known to me the ways of life; you will make me full of gladness with your presence.’ ²⁹ “Fellow Israelites, I may say to you confidently of our ancestor David that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us to this day. ³⁰ Since he was a prophet, he knew that God had sworn with an oath to him that he would put one of his descendants on his throne. ³¹ Foreseeing this, David spoke of the resurrection of the Messiah, saying, ‘He was not abandoned to Hades, nor did his flesh experience corruption.’ ³² “This Jesus God raised up, and of that all of us are witnesses.

Psalm 16*Song of Trust and Security in God**A Miktam of David.*

¹ Protect me, O God, for in you I take refuge.
² I say to the Lord, “You are my Lord;
 I have no good apart from you.”
³ As for the holy ones in the land, they are the noble ones
 in whom is all my delight.
⁴ Those who choose another god multiply their sorrows;
 their drink offerings of blood I will not pour out
 or take their names upon my lips.
⁵ The Lord is my chosen portion and my cup;
 you hold my lot.

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⁶The boundary lines have fallen for me in pleasant places;
I have a goodly heritage.

⁷I bless the Lord, who gives me counsel;
in the night also my heart instructs me.

⁸I keep the Lord always before me;
because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved.

⁹Therefore my heart is glad, and my soul rejoices;
my body also rests secure.

¹⁰For you do not give me up to Sheol
or let your faithful one see the Pit.

¹¹You show me the path of life.
In your presence there is fullness of joy;
in your right hand are pleasures forevermore.

1 Peter 1.1-12

Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ,

To the exiles of the dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, ² who have been chosen and destined by God the Father and sanctified by the Spirit to be obedient to Jesus Christ and to be sprinkled with his blood:

May grace and peace be yours in abundance.

³ Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! By his great mercy he has given us a new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead ⁴and into an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, ⁵ who are being protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. ⁶ In this you rejoice, even if now for a little while you have had to suffer various trials, ⁷ so that the genuineness of your faith—being more precious than gold that, though perishable, is tested by fire—may be found to result in praise and glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed. ⁸ Although you have not seen him, you love him, and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and rejoice with an indescribable and glorious joy, ⁹ for you are receiving the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls.

¹⁰ Concerning this salvation, the prophets who prophesied of the grace intended for you made careful search and inquiry, ¹¹ inquiring about the time and circumstances that the Spirit of Christ within them indicated when it testified in advance to the sufferings intended for Christ and the subsequent glory. ¹² It was revealed to them that they were serving not themselves but you, in regard to the things that have now been announced to you through those who brought you good news by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven, things into which angels long to look!

John 20.19-31

When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors were locked where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, “Peace be with you.” ²⁰ After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. ²¹ Jesus said to them again, “Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you.” ²² When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, “Receive the Holy Spirit. ²³ If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained.”

²⁴ But Thomas (who was called the Twin), one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. ²⁵ 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.”

²⁶ 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.” ²⁷ 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.” ²⁸ Thomas answered him, “My Lord and my God!” ²⁹ 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.”

The Purpose of This Book

³⁰ Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples that are not written in this book. ³¹ But these are written so that you may continue to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through believing you may have life in his name.

SERMON

Today we stand at the end of eight days of Easter proclamation, eight days of returning again and again to the same astonishing claim: Jesus Christ is risen. Yet the readings appointed today do not allow Easter to remain a private joy or a settled certainty. Instead, they press a question upon us: *What does the resurrection now require of us?*

In John’s Gospel, the risen Jesus appears to frightened disciples behind locked doors. His first gift is not explanation, but presence: “Peace be with you”². Then he does something extraordinary. He breathes on them and says, “Receive the Holy Spirit”³. This is the breath of new creation, echoing God’s breath in Genesis. Resurrection is not simply something to be believed; it is something to be *received* and then *enacted*.

Immediately, Jesus entrusts his disciples with a daunting responsibility: “If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained”⁴. What is being offered here is nothing less than participation in God’s own reconciling work. Forgiveness is not avoidance or denial of harm; it is the costly labour of truth, mercy, and restoration. To forgive, as Christ forgives, is to risk vulnerability, misunderstanding, and even rejection.

Thomas reminds us that faith is not always immediate or easy. His demand for tangible proof is not condemned; instead, Jesus meets him where he is, wounds exposed, love undiminished⁵. Thomas’s confession—“My Lord and my God!”⁶—shows us that doubt is not the enemy of faith. Isolation is. Faith grows within the community that bears witness to the risen Christ, even when belief comes slowly.

Acts shows what happens when resurrection faith moves beyond locked rooms. Peter, once paralysed by fear, now stands in public and proclaims that “God raised Jesus up,

² John 20:19

³ John 20:22

⁴ John 20:23

⁵ John 20:27

⁶ John 20:28

having released him from the agony of death”⁷. Resurrection transforms Peter from denier to witness. The cost for Peter of this transformation will be persecution and suffering, yet he speaks because resurrection truth demands to be shared.

The Psalmist gives voice to the deep trust that undergirds this courage: “For you do not give me up to Sheol... You show me the path of life”⁸. Resurrection faith does not deny the reality of death or suffering; it insists that these do not have the final word. This confidence is not self-generated—it is rooted in God’s steadfast presence.

First, Peter names both the promise and the challenge of Easter living. We are given “a new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead”⁹. Yet this hope is refined through “various trials” so that faith may prove genuine¹⁰. Belief in the risen Christ does not spare us hardship; rather, it gives hardship meaning and direction.

I am reminded of several times when, following traumatic events or disasters that devastated communities, after the media have left and the surface wounds appear healed, the disagreement and blame begin to surface. The buildings had been repaired, but the deeper damage was relational. Long-standing tensions had flared under pressure—over resources, blame, and decisions made in crisis. It took time and guidance, but eventually the community gathered again, no one pretended nothing had happened. Instead, there was space for listening, apology, and forgiveness. It was awkward. It took time. But something new began to breathe in that room. The building mattered—but the restored relationships mattered more. That is resurrection work.

So what is being offered to us today?

Peace that does not depend on circumstances. Forgiveness that heals rather than binds. A living hope that endures testing.

And what is asked of us?

To be sent, as Christ was sent—to speak truth, to practice costly mercy, to remain in community, and to trust that God is at work even when we cannot yet see.

The resurrection is not the end of the story. It is the beginning of a life shaped by Christ’s breath, Christ’s peace, and Christ’s sending. “Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe”¹¹. That blessing now rests upon us.

Let us pray

Risen Christ, breathe your peace upon us. Send us as witnesses of mercy, courage, and hope. Where fear binds, free us; where wounds remain, heal us. By your Spirit, make us forgiving, faithful, and bold, for the life of the world. Amen.

⁷ Acts 2:24

⁸ Psalm 16:10–11

⁹ 1 Peter 1:3

¹⁰ 1 Peter 1:6–7

¹¹ John 20:29