

LISBON UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
April 11, 2021 Second Sunday of the Easter Season
“At Home Worship”

Call to Worship:

As we enter into God's presence, God calls us by name and invites us to believe.

We believe, O God.

As we worship in this Easter season, Christ offers us the fullness of life everlasting.

May we live our faith with the fullness of hope and joy we find in worshipping you today, O God.

Opening Prayer Christ, our living hope, breathe your Spirit upon us as we gather to worship this day. Fill us with your faith and love, that we may believe and live the good news of Easter. Help us so to believe where we have not seen, that others will see in us the living Christ. We come to worship, giving thanks for the miracle of Easter. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

Scripture Reading *“With great power the apostles gave their testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus...”*
Read Acts 4:32-35

Prayer of Confession Almighty God, like doubting Thomas, it is often hard for us to believe where we have not seen; it is even hard to accept your love when we have known it ourselves and have felt the wounds carried by others on our behalf. Forgive us, we pray, for our doubt and our unbelief and lead us into the fullness of life you offer us in the Risen Savior, Jesus. Amen.

Time of Silent Confession *Offer the confessions of your heart to God in these quiet moments.*

Words of Assurance Everyone who believes in Christ receives forgiveness of sins through his name. In the name of Jesus Christ, we are forgiven and loved by the God of steadfast love. Thanks be to God.

Scripture Reading *“God is light and in him there is no darkness at all.”* Read I John 1.1-2.2

Remembering our Joys and Concerns in Prayer *Please spend a few moments remembering those who are on our prayer list and the joys and concerns you bring to God today.*

An Easter Season Prayer Holy Lord, you are the Light of the World. Grant us eyes to see and ears to hear the resurrection joy so many cannot yet believe. Open our hearts to hear the word you proclaim to us and for us today; open our minds to embrace the life you hold before us. Hear us as we pray for those we love and for those in our community, nation, and world. Show us the way of unity that we may live generously as people of light. Reign among us, resurrected one, as we pray that prayer that our Risen Savior has taught us..... **The Lord's Prayer**

Scripture Reading *“Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe.”* Read John 20:19-31

Meditation With the arrival of spring on March 20 and then the beginning of April last week, we know that we're most likely out of the woods when it comes to snow storms. Oh, certainly we could have another; it's Maine after all but it's been a rather mild winter. However, when the possibilities of snow were a lot more likely, it's a good bet that many of us prepared by making a trip to the grocery store. It's just what we do! There is almost always something we think we need when the snowflakes begin to fly.

After the crucifixion of our Savior, Jesus Christ, the disciples

locked themselves into an “upper room” out of fear for their own lives. They were known followers of Jesus, the one who had caused all sorts of “chaos.” Secluded as they were, someone had to go out on the grocery run. While this week’s gospel lesson doesn’t spell this out, we may wonder if the disciple Thomas was the one who went, the one who risked his life for the good of his friends. When Jesus makes his first post-resurrection appearance, everyone is there to greet him – except Thomas. He offered his beloved disciples a greeting of “peace” and showed them his hands and his side. It was the Savior alright – which the others joyfully told Thomas upon his return.

Thomas risks something else when hearing this news; he risks expressing his doubts. “Unless I see this for myself,” he declared, “I will not believe.” We’ve given him the unflattering name of “Doubting Thomas” but do you really think that’s fair? He just plainly refused a “second hand faith.” When Jesus returned for a second visit, Thomas was present and received all the proof he needed and Jesus admonished him not to doubt but to believe.

But, despite Thomas’ proclamation “*My Lord and my God,*” Jesus challenged this disciple, saying, “*Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe.*” And here is where we may not have as much compassion for Thomas – and ourselves as well – because, like it or not, what Jesus asks is a legitimate question. Yes, it’s okay to express our doubts when working on our own faithfulness but, on the other hand, some things just require our belief and belief in the Risen Savior is one of them – the main one! God understands our need to sort things out for ourselves and, like Thomas, to require some “proof.” However, God also hopes that our faith is ultimately bigger than our doubt – our faith in the One who loves us enough to send us His only Son.

Words of Benediction May peace be with you. In peace, go forth to proclaim God’s love. In peace, go forth and live as Christ’s disciples, that others may see your faith and also believe. Go forth!



Lisbon United Methodist Church
welcomes, nurtures, and serves
all people
with the love of Christ.