

Stay Connected – 12th April 2026

Easter Sunday

This Week's Reading

Bible Reading: John 20: 19-end

Peter's Blurb

"Come to St. Mark's – not just a church but a family!"

Another Sunday race morning hindering access to church today! A little irritating but we have to co-exist with those who would prefer to run however many miles than join us, sit in a comfortable (😞) pew sing some lovely hymns, listen to an inspiring talk and hang out with a lot of nice friendly folk. Different strokes for different folks! One thing is for sure – I ain't joining them 🏃 - no siree!

We had a good turnout, in spite of, and it was a lovely service, a powerful service, followed by great fellowship and refreshments – thanks to Debbie & Dudley. Katy & Lily Partington were sporting their new growth following their recent donation of their beautiful hair to St. Baldrick's just three or four weeks ago. My! They looked just as beautiful as ever! (And perfect for swimming season which is not much more than a few weeks away.) Personally, I found the whole day to be a joyful day!

See the section below advising of the forthcoming AGM and, Dudley, who is the Chair of the Nominating Committee for Vestry, asks anyone who feels they have something to contribute, and may be willing to serve as a Vestry member for a while, become part of the team, if you will, to speak to him, find out what is involved and then consider putting your name into the hat.

And anyone interested in taking on the production of this weekly newsletter please reach out to me. We need a fresh mind to carry it forward – I am drying up – literally as well as journalistically 🏃 – It needn't take much more than a couple hours a week in addition to participating in church activities.

With Angie away this weekend, for the funeral of her late father, we were fortunate to have Oliver Grant as our relief organist. Oliver is well known to those of us who sing in the Chamber Choir where he is often an accompanist. He is also an accomplished concert pianist having performed Piano Concertos in three Bermuda Festivals. He did well to pick up what we do at short notice with virtually no rehearsal time. Then, sadly, no time to socialize with us afterwards as he rushed off to play the service at St. Peter's Church in St. George – again filling in for Angie. Thanks Olly 🙏

Guild News

St. Mark's Guild, held their monthly meeting today, delayed a week because of Easter Sunday (they normally meet the first Sunday of each month), and started planning for the Guild's 82nd Anniversary Evensong Service. This is held on the Sunday nearest our Patronal Festival, i.e. St. Mark's Day, which falls on 25th April each year. So, this year's service will be held on **Sunday, 26th April at 3.00 p.m.** (be sure to put that date in your calendar) and will be followed by a sit-down tea. It is a festive occasion at which members of the Guilds of other churches in the Diocese participate and bring appropriate greetings from their own mother churches. A great tradition.

The guest speaker for the occasion will be **The Very Revd Calvert Prentis, Sub Dean and Canon Residentiary, The Cathedral of the Most Holy Trinity.**

Annual General Meeting

It is coming up to the time of year when the parishes of the Diocese are required to hold their Annual General Meetings. For those unfamiliar, reports are submitted from the various activities (“departments”) in the church including Financial Reports, Properties etc. These are presented for discussion and a new Vestry is elected by the members to manage the affairs of the church for the next year. The Vestry, under the chairmanship of Rev. Terry, consists of two Churchwardens who serve a four-year term plus a number of regular members who each serve a term of three years. Rotation is staggered so that continuity is maintained. There are likely some vacancies opening up this year and anyone who is interested in helping the church in this capacity should speak to Dudley Cottingham, choir member, who has been designated, by the Vestry, as Chairman of the Nominating Committee. He will be happy to explain how it all works, what vacancies exist and you may then consider “putting your name in the hat” for possible selection.

The Annual General Meeting will be held following our 9.30 service on **Sunday, 17th May** immediately following refreshments.

Fr. Terry’s Talk

April 12, 2026

Second Sunday of Easter

St. Mark’s Anglican Church

John 20:19-31

Sermon Topic: “Peace Be with You.”

On Friday evening, many of us found ourselves drawn to our screens, watching the re-entry of Artemis II into Earth’s atmosphere. We held our breath together as four human lives, enclosed in a small capsule, hurtled toward the Pacific Ocean at 24,000 kilometres per hour. As that blazing ball of fire tore through the sky, there was a quiet, shared prayer in so many hearts: *“Lord... please let those parachutes open.* And when they did—those orange and white parachutes blooming against the sky — relief washed over us. Some of us whispered it. Some of us said it out loud: **“Thank you, Jesus.”** For a moment, the world felt different. Lighter. Full of hope. It was as if, just for a few hours, we were reminded that things can go right. That there is still goodness. There is still promise. That there is still a future worth believing in.

So, before we step into today’s Gospel from John, it’s worth holding onto that feeling, and asking ourselves a few honest questions: When the world feels uncertain or frightening, where do we go? Do we close ourselves off, retreating behind our own “locked doors”, or do we stay open to hope? Why is it that even when we hear good news, fear can still cling so tightly to us? What place does doubt have in our faith? Is it something that weakens our belief, or could it be part of a deeper, more honest trust? And what does it really mean to believe without seeing—especially in a world that constantly asks us for proof? These aren’t just questions for the disciples long ago. They are our questions. Because, in so many ways, their story is our story. And so, I invite you to join me as we walk into this narrative of John.

It is evening on that first Easter Day. The disciples are gathered together behind locked doors. The world outside feels dangerous. Everything they thought they understood has been shaken. The future is unclear. They are afraid. And if we’re honest, that scene doesn’t feel so distant from our own lives.

We live in a world filled with uncertainty: wars that seem endless, economic struggles that touch everyday life, divisions that fracture communities, and there is a constant stream of troubling news that leaves many of us anxious and weary. And then there are the quieter fears we carry; concerns for our families, concerns for our health, concerns for our future and what direction our lives are taking.

In one way or another, many of us are living behind locked doors. And it is precisely into that kind of world, into this chaotic space, that the risen Christ comes. The Gospel tells us that, despite the locked doors, Jesus came and stood among them. He doesn’t wait for their fear to fade. He doesn’t wait for them to feel brave or certain. He comes right into the middle of their anxiety and speaks a simple, powerful word: **“Peace be with you.”**

It's not a denial of reality, for the dangers are still there, the uncertainty hasn't disappeared—but as a promise, Jesus is reminding us that we are not alone. His peace is not the absence of trouble. It is the presence of love in the midst of it. And that matters deeply for us. Our faith doesn't remove us from life's struggles, but rather it holds us steady within them. And, even in that moment, belief doesn't come easily to everyone.

Thomas, who wasn't there that first evening, struggles. *"Unless I see... unless I touch... I will not believe,"* he says. And maybe, if we're honest, we understand him. Because faith can feel fragile in an uncertain world. Questions come. Doubts surface. We wonder where God is in suffering. Why does peace feel so far away.

Thomas gives voice to that tension—that space between longing and uncertainty. And what's so beautiful is this: **Jesus does not turn him away.**

A week later, Jesus comes again. The doors are still closed. The world hasn't suddenly become safer. But still—He comes. And this time, He speaks directly to Thomas: *"Put your finger here... see my hands... do not doubt but believe."* There is no anger in Jesus' voice. There is no rejection in his attitude. Only invitation. Thomas is met exactly where he is. He isn't asked to hide his doubt, or to pretend it isn't there. Instead, he's invited to bring it into relationship with Christ. And in that encounter, something shifts. Doubt doesn't disappear—it is transformed. And Thomas responds with one of the most profound declarations of faith: **"My Lord and my God."**

Family, that is what faith looks like. It is not the absence of doubt, but it's the courage to let doubt be touched by grace. Then Jesus speaks words that reach far beyond that room. Words meant for every generation, including us today: *"Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe."*

That blessing continues to rest on us. We do not see what the disciples saw. We do not touch as Thomas did. And yet, we are still invited to trust, to believe, to hold onto the quiet assurance that Christ is present. Present in Word and Sacrament. Present in prayer. Present in community. Present even now, in the middle of our fears. Still standing among us. Still speaking those same words: **"Peace be with you."**

So, the question isn't whether fear and doubt exist—they do. The question is: What happens to them in the presence of Christ? Because in Him, fear does not have the final word—peace does. Doubt does not have the final word—faith does. Isolation does not have the final word—encounter does. The world may still feel unsettled. The doors may still feel closed at times. But Christ keeps coming. Again and again, He comes to His people.

And so, we are invited, even in this uncertain and fragile world, to make Thomas' confession our own: **"My Lord and my God."** Not because everything is certain, but because He is present. And in a few moments, when we are sent out with the words, *"Go in peace to love and serve the Lord,"* may we go with quiet confidence—not in ourselves, but in the unshakable peace of the risen Christ. In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

In our prayers

We ask for your prayers for Margaret Blanchette, Gill Rossiter, Sam & Marjorie, Gwyneth & Ralph, Jill, Barbara (Dyer), Vinette, Nancy, Gail, Janet & Gary, Tina, Val & Mark, Tim, Audrey, Robert & Kalreeta, David, Rachel and for Angela, Valerie (June) Johnstone and Hilda Warner. Also, for all and any others known to us.

We ask special prayers today in memory of and for the repose of the soul of the late **Fr. Don Moore who will be laid to rest on Tuesday this week (14th) at St. John's Church, Pembroke at 3pm.** Many of our local readers will have read the excellent tribute to Fr. Don in the Royal Gazette during the past week and will have learned of his secular career as a Govt. Horticulturist, which is how I first knew him, prior to dedicating the rest of his life to the ministry (including 6 years as Priest-in-Charge at St. Mark's.)



Previous services and other videos are on our YouTube channel and/or our Facebook page at:

<https://www.youtube.com/StMarksChurchBermuda> and/or <https://www.facebook.com/stmarksbermuda/>

Next Sunday

Sunday, **19th April** – Third Sunday of Easter. We will hold our **Peaceful Worship** at **8 am.** followed by our usual **Contemporary Worship** at **9.30 am** both led by Fr. Terry. There will be Junior Church

as usual. Refreshments and Fellowship follow the service.

Coming Events

- **Life Group Startup** – The popular Life Groups have resumed but it **may not be too late** to get involved. Reach out to Steve or Cathy West if you would like to know more: cswestmd@logic.bm or cathwest@gmail.com.
- **Vendor's Market** – The next Vendor's Market will be on **Saturday, 25th April.**
- **St. Mark's Guild Evensong** – St. Mark's Guild will celebrate their **82nd Anniversary** with an **Evensong Service at 3.00 p.m. on Sunday, 26th April.** The service will be followed by a sit-down **Afternoon Tea.** The guest speaker for the occasion will be **The Very Revd Calvert Prentis, Sub Dean and Canon Residentiary, The Cathedral of the Most Holy Trinity.**
- **Bereavement Support Tea** – our next monthly chat will take place at **3.00 p.m. on Sunday, 3rd May** in the Parish Hall.
- **Annual General Meeting** – St. Mark's Annual General Meeting will take place following our 9.30 service on **Sunday, 17th May.** (See discussion above.)

Those of you who generously donate to the church by way of Standing Order may wish to double-check that your orders have not passed their end-by date and expired. Of course, if they have, we would love you to re-instate them. 🙏

Down the Debt – St. Mark's needs your help in reducing the size of our debt which inhibits future investment in our church. If you feel you may be able to help with this please go to <https://stmarks.bm/donate/> where you will find details and an opportunity to donate.

Links:

Just a reminder – if you want to check vot's happnin' or vot's comin' dahn de road – you can find it all at our:

- **Facebook page:** <https://www.facebook.com/stmarksbermuda/>
- **YouTube Channel:** <https://www.youtube.com/StMarksChurchBermuda>
- **Website:** <https://anglican.bm/churches/st-marks/>
- **Holy Trinity Facebook page:** <https://www.facebook.com/holytrinitychurchbda>

End Stuff:

Here's a thought. It is always a great time for us all to review our pledging. If each of us is able to increase our pledge by 10% that would be a great boost to our cash flow (which as you know is tenuous at best). And, with our in-person collections still inhibited by numbers restrictions, please consider the opportunity to convert to pledging by Direct Deposit (see below). Your support is vital.

As always, another huge thank you to all of you who continue to support our church family with your pledges and donations via online transfer.

Direct deposits can be made to: Butterfield Bank for the account of:

St. Mark's Church Wardens – A/c No. 20-006-060-104125-100.

- **For Grave Payments** – when paying Grave Maintenance fees be sure to enter Grave Number and Name of

Lessee e.g. "Grave 273 Peter Nash" in the **Beneficiary** space on the on-line transfer form.

- **For Cash donations** – if you do not have an Envelope # just be sure to also enter your Name and "Donation" e.g. "Nash Donation" in the **Beneficiary** space on the on-line transfer form.

Use of the "Beneficiary" space is IMPORTANT – it is the only way we have to identify who is paying and for what.

Posters follow:

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