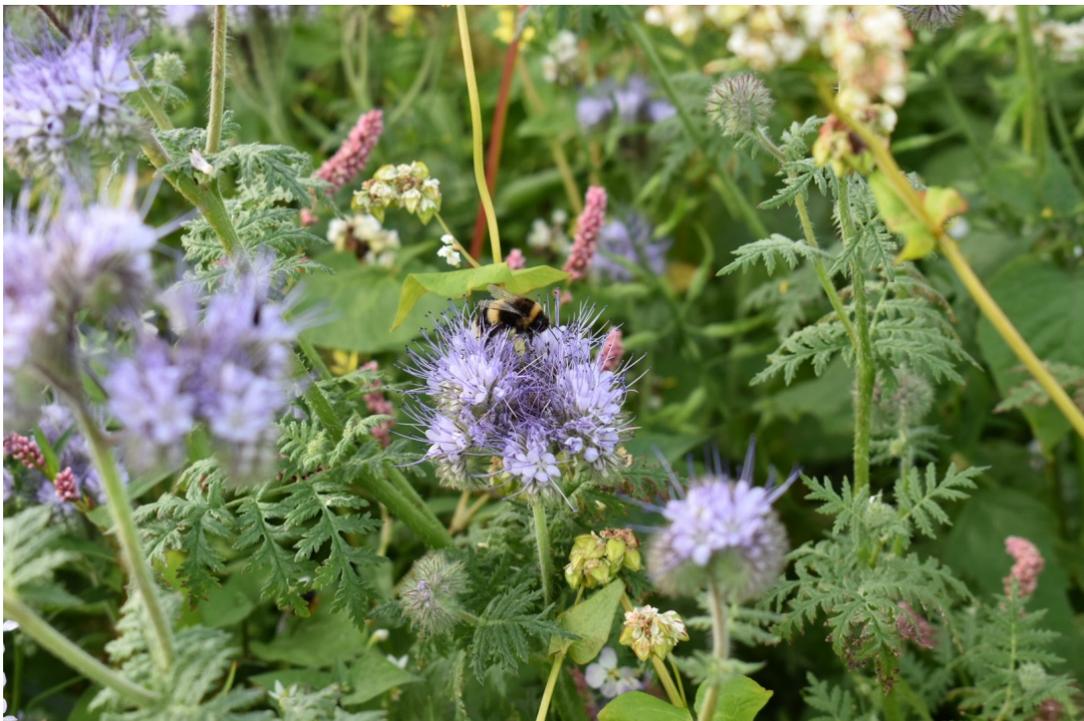


**News from St Thomas Church:  
Week c/c Sunday the 4th April 2021**

**Easter Sunday**



What I wonder does a garden mean for you? Summer days enjoying the scent of new-mown grass and the fragrance of the flowers? Birdsong? Vegetables and herbs that travel only the distance between your kitchen garden and your table? Or maybe hard work, an aching back, an invincible army of weeds?

Your heart is like a garden, the place you go to meet God in prayer and the place where God meets you, to help tend the sacredness you share.

Good gardens gives life to many creatures as well as to its gardener. In what way does your heart, your life, give nourishment to others?

What herbs, such-as sincerity or gentleness, grow in your heart and add their special flavour to the feast of life? Does anything you find there threaten to spoil the feast for others? Sarcastic tongues for example, gossiping or spiteful gestures? What gifts bear fruit in your life and bring life to others? Is there anything in the way you relate to others that threatens to overwhelm them with impatience or intolerance and choke the channels of love? Who shares the sacred space of your heart's garden? How lovingly do you share the space of others when they invite you to enter their holy ground? In the bible, gardens are places where important events happen. In the book of Genesis we meet Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. A paradise where they can talk and walk each day with God the gardener of Eden. In our reading from John's Gospel we meet Mary Magdalene in another garden where she encounters the risen Jesus. An encounter in a sacred garden space that will change her life for ever. Mistaking him for 'the gardener' she asks him where he has taken the body of Jesus. He answers with a single word: he calls her name, "Mary!" and she knows she has rediscovered her lost love, in a totally new way. "I took you for the gardener" she falters. "Perhaps I *am* the gardener " he smiles, as they walk away together into the future.

Happy Easter

Tracy.x

## Bible readings for Sunday the 4th April 2021

### **1st reading:** *Acts 10.34-43*

**34** Then Peter began to speak to them: "I truly understand that God shows no partiality, **35** but in every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him. **36** You know the message he sent to the people of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ—he is Lord of all. **37** That message spread throughout Judea, beginning in Galilee after the baptism that John announced: **38** how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power; how he went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him. **39** We are witnesses to all that he did both in Judea and in Jerusalem. They put him to death by hanging him on a tree; **40** but God raised him on the third day and allowed him to appear, **41** not to all the people but to us who were chosen by God as witnesses, and who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead. **42** He commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one ordained by God as judge of the living and the dead. **43** All the prophets

testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name.”

**2nd reading:** *John 20.1-18*

### **The Resurrection of Jesus**

**20** Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the tomb. **2** So she ran and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved, and said to them, “They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him.” **3** Then Peter and the other disciple set out and went toward the tomb. **4** The two were running together, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. **5** He bent down to look in and saw the linen wrappings lying there, but he did not go in. **6** Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb. He saw the linen wrappings lying there, **7** and the cloth that had been on Jesus’ head, not lying with the linen wrappings but rolled up in a place by itself. **8** Then the other disciple, who reached the tomb first, also went in, and he saw and believed; **9** for as yet they did not understand the scripture, that he must rise from the dead. **10** Then the disciples returned to their homes.

### **Jesus Appears to Mary Magdalene**

**11** But Mary stood weeping outside the tomb. As she wept, she bent over to look[a] into the tomb; **12** and she saw two angels in white, sitting where the body of Jesus had been lying, one at the head and the other at the feet. **13** They said to her, “Woman, why are you weeping?” She said to them, “They have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid him.” **14** When she had said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not know that it was Jesus. **15** Jesus said to her, “Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you looking for?” Supposing him to be the gardener, she said to him, “Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away.” **16** Jesus said to her, “Mary!” She turned and said to him in Hebrew,[b] “Rabbouni!” (which means Teacher). **17** Jesus said to her, “Do not hold on to me, because I have not yet ascended to the Father. But go to my brothers and say to them, ‘I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.’” **18** Mary Magdalene went and announced to the disciples, “I have seen the Lord”; and she told them that he had said these things to her.

## Collect for Easter Sunday

God of glory,  
by the raising of your Son  
you have broken the chains of death and hell:  
fill your Church with faith and hope;  
for a new day has dawned  
and the way to life stands open  
in our Saviour Jesus Christ.

## Notices...

### Monday to Friday each week

10.00am Morning Prayer and 7pm Compline/Night Prayer on our YouTube channel:  
'Worship from St Thomas' (<https://bit.ly/2ynuqHq>)

10.00am Zoom Sunday service Zoom link for this and all our Sunday Services

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86792362778>

(You can click on this link directly from the homepage of our website  
[www.mellorchurch.org](http://www.mellorchurch.org) )

12.00 midday - Holy Communion in church. Numbers will be restricted so please  
tel 07546 927052 Monday, Wednesday or Thursday during the week up to 12.00  
midday to reserve a space in church.

Our church is open for private prayer and reflection everyday during daylight hours.  
Maybe light a candle in prayer... or just sit and listen to the music...  
Prayer resources are also available in church for you to use at home.

## Looking ahead ...

Readings to ponder over this coming week...

1st reading: *Acts 4.32-35*

2nd reading: *John 20.19-end*

*All my best wishes to you and yours,*

*Revd Tracy*