

Reflection

I must admit to a range of emotions as I sit and type this, my final reflection for you here at St Thomas. I have loved these last 7-months ministering in this community and I want to thank you for your welcome and support. I am excited for the future of the church here and will continue to pray for you all as you transition into this next chapter.

Our Gospel reading today speaks of Jesus love for his disciples and his assurance that, when he leaves, they will not be alone but will have the presence of the Holy Spirit to guide and lead them God's presence always dwelling within and among them.

It's a comforting passage, but also a challenging one as Jesus asks his people to live and reflect that indwelling love. In our reading from Acts, that same Holy Spirit is at work through the words of Paul as he stands among the Athenians and speaks of a God who cannot be contained by temples or images, a God in whom "we live and move and have our being." It's a reminder to us all that God is always greater than our understanding and already present in places we might not expect.

And so as I mark my final Sunday with you all in this season and say goodbye for now, I leave you knowing that God's presence remains – God who can do more than we could ever ask or imagine. May you all feel the presence of the Holy Spirit, guiding and leading you into this next chapter and the flourishing of the church community here in St Thomas.

With my deepest thanks and continued prayers for you all.

Rev Sarah



NEXT SUNDAY 17.05.26 Seventh Sunday of Easter
10.30am in the Church

OT 1 Peter 4: 12-14, 5: 6-11
NT Acts 1: 6-14
GOSPEL John 17: 1-11



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St Thomas, Exeter

10th May 2026

Sixth Sunday of Easter

10.30am in the Church

Today

Sung Eucharist

Hymn Numbers

235 *I, the Lord of sea and sky*

214 *Holy Spirit, come, confirm us*

56 *Be thou my vision*

321 *Love divine, all loves excelling*

Tuesday 12th May

7.30pm House Group

Thursday 14th May

9.30-11am St Thomas Tots

10.30-12noon Knit & Natter at Jenny
Tuckett's house

Friday 15th May

9.30am Morning Prayers

10am Staff Meeting



Collect

God our redeemer, you have delivered us from the power of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of your Son: grant, that as by his death he has recalled us to life, so by his continual presence in us he may raise us to eternal joy; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen**

1 Peter 3: 13-22

Now who will harm you if you are eager to do what is good? But even if you do suffer for doing what is right, you are blessed. Do not fear what they fear, and do not be intimidated, but in your hearts sanctify Christ as Lord. Always be ready to make your defence to anyone who demands from you an account of the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and reverence. Keep your conscience clear, so that, when you are maligned, those who abuse you for your good conduct in Christ may be put to shame. For it is better to suffer for doing good, if suffering should be God's will, than to suffer for doing evil. For Christ also suffered for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, in order to bring you to God. He was put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit, in which also he went and made a proclamation to the spirits in prison, who in former times did not obey, when God waited patiently in the days of Noah, during the building of the ark, in which a few, that is, eight people, were saved through water. And baptism, which this prefigured, now saves you—not as a removal of dirt from the body, but as an appeal to God for a good conscience, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, with angels, authorities, and powers made subject to him.

Acts 17: 22-31

Then Paul stood in front of the Areopagus and said, 'Athenians, I see how extremely religious you

are in every way. For as I went through the city and looked carefully at the objects of your worship, I found among them an altar with the inscription, "To an unknown god." What therefore you worship as unknown, this I proclaim to you. The God who made the world and everything in it, he who is Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in shrines made by human hands, nor is he served by human hands, as though he needed anything, since he himself gives to all mortals life and breath and all things. From one ancestor he made all nations to inhabit the whole earth, and he allotted the times of their existence and the boundaries of the places where they would live, so that they would search for God and perhaps grope for him and find him—though indeed he is not far from each one of us. For "In him we live and move and have our being"; as even some of your own poets have said, "For we too are his offspring." Since we are God's offspring, we ought not to think that the deity is like gold, or silver, or stone, an image formed by the art and imagination of mortals. While God has overlooked the times of human ignorance, now he commands all people everywhere to repent, because he has fixed a day on which he will have the world judged in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed, and of this he has given assurance to all by raising him from the dead.'

John 14: 15-21

'If you love me, you will keep my commandments. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate, to be with you for ever. This is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, because he abides with you, and he will be in you. I will not leave you orphaned; I am coming to you. In a little while the world will no longer see me, but you will see me; because I live, you also will live. On that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you. They who have my commandments and keep them are those who love me; and those who love me will be loved by my Father, and I will

love them and reveal myself to them.'

Post Communion

God our Father, whose Son Jesus Christ gives the water of eternal life: may we thirst for you, the spring of life and source of goodness, through him who is alive and reigns, now and for ever. **Amen**

Notices

On the occasion of her last service, Rev Sarah would like to extend her heartfelt thanks to you all for your support and encouragement since October. Thank you.

Next week, we welcome **the Venerable Andrew Beane** who will preach and preside at our service of Sunday worship.

Thy Kingdom Come Sunday 17th May 6pm-7.30pm In the Cathedral. Free tickets must be booked in advance through Eventbrite. See Ian for details.

Ian, your Churchwarden, is taking part in the Hospiscare 100 Miles in May Challenge again this year. He will be walking from Bude to Minehead on the Southwest Coast Path. He can be sponsored via <https://justgiving.com/page/ian-totterdell-4> but he is also happy to receive cash donations at services.

If people are interested in taking part in a sponsored walk for a good local cause, Exeter Foodbank is holding a short walk on Saturday 4th July. See Ian for details. Please continue to support Exeter Foodbank when shopping in the supermarkets.