

## Words of Light and Hope by Fran Neale AWA

We've probably heard in church or read again recently about "Doubting Thomas".

**I think Thomas gets an unfair press! In Luke's account of events, and one version of Mark's account, none of the disciples believed the women who said they had seen the risen Jesus - until they saw him for themselves. Thomas wasn't with the other eleven the evening they saw him, so nor did he - until he saw Jesus for himself. So picking Thomas out for doubting doesn't seem justified.**

Not long before his death, Jesus had warned his followers there would be false prophets and false Messiahs. So wasn't Thomas right to be wary of someone claiming to be Jesus?

**We seem to like to type-cast people - Thomas was the doubter, Peter the denier, Judas the betrayer and so on. But surely there are elements of all three in many of us, at times in our lives. There is something reassuring in hearing about the short-comings of the disciples - we know we aren't the only ones who get things wrong, don't live up to even our own standards....and more.**

Also, there is a place for doubt in our journey of faith. Jonathan Sacks (former Chief Rabbi in UK) said "Faith is not certainty but the courage to live with uncertainty." Someone else said "Doubt is faith standing on tiptoe." For a long time I have found great encouragement in Romans chapter 8, verses 24,25 - "Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what he sees? But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience."



REEPHAM & WENSUM VALLEY  
TEAM CHURCHES

## Pew Notes

**13th April: 9:00am: Deanery Pilgrimage, Stations of the Resurrection. For details see <https://facebook.com/events/s/deanery-pilgrimage-stations-of/432778295890375/>**  
**18th April: 10:30 –12 noon: Lyng coffee morning**  
**24th April: 10am—12 noon : Swannington coffee morning**

### Services for next week: Sunday 14th April,

9:00am Holy Communion (BCP), St Mary's, Bylaugh  
9:00am Holy Communion, St Andrew's, Thurning  
10:30am Holy Communion, St Mary's, Great Witchingham  
10:30am Holy Communion, St Mary's, Reepham  
10:30am Words and Praise, St Margret's, Lyng

The Rev'd. Helen Rengert, 01603 879275 [revdhelenrww@gmail.com](mailto:revdhelenrww@gmail.com)

The Rev'd. Keith Rengert, 01603 879275 [revdkeith@gmail.com](mailto:revdkeith@gmail.com) (Sunday only)

The Rev'd. Judith Sweetman, 07484862962 (Friday to Sunday)  
[judith.sweetman@btinternet.com](mailto:judith.sweetman@btinternet.com)

The Rev'd. Richard Turk, 07721 035009 [revdrichardrww@gmail.com](mailto:revdrichardrww@gmail.com)

Email [parishofficerwv@gmail.com](mailto:parishofficerwv@gmail.com) to submit articles or join the mailing list.

**FACEBOOK:** Reepham & Wensum Valley Events

**WEBSITE:** [www.reepham-and-wensum-valley-team-churches.org.uk](http://www.reepham-and-wensum-valley-team-churches.org.uk)

**Pew Notes are available to download from the RWV website and the E-newsletter**

**If you have any safeguarding concerns, please contact your Parish Safeguarding Officer.**  
Details in the church porch **or on the RWV website.**

**Acts 4:32-35**

Now the whole group of those who believed were of one heart and soul, and no one claimed private ownership of any possessions, but everything they owned was held in common. With great power the apostles gave their testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all. There was not a needy person among them, for as many as owned lands or houses sold them and brought the proceeds of what was sold. They laid it at the apostles' feet, and it was distributed to each as any had need.

**Psalm 133 Ecce, quam bonum!**

1 Oh, how good and pleasant it is, \* when brethren live together in unity!  
2 It is like fine oil upon the head \* that runs down upon the beard,  
3 Upon the beard of Aaron, \* and runs down upon the collar of his robe.  
4 It is like the dew of Hermon \* that falls upon the hills of Zion.  
5 For there the LORD has ordained the blessing: \* life for evermore.

**1 John 1:1-2:2**

We declare to you what was from the beginning, what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we have looked at and touched with our hands, concerning the word of life-- this life was revealed, and we have seen it and testify to it, and declare to you the eternal life that was with the Father and was revealed to us-- we declare to you what we have seen and heard so that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ. We are writing these things so that our joy may be complete. This is the message we have heard from him and proclaim to you, that God is light and in him there is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with him while we are walking in darkness, we lie and do not do what is true; but if we walk in the light as he himself is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he who is faithful and just will forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us. My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and he is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world.

**John 20:19-31**

When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors of the house where the disciples had met were locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you." When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained." But Thomas (who was called the Twin), one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. 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." 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." 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." Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God!" 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." Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book. But these are written so that you may come to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through believing you may have life in his name.