



For Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> April

## Dear Friends,

I hope you were able to enjoy some Easter worship on the radio or TV on Easter Day. We reached our capacity on Zoom church with 100 devices signed in with over 170 people in all. This week the 'narrow gate' has been made wider so that all those who wish to join us for the online service can.

There were four in the church family who had birthdays on 12<sup>th</sup> April and among those Di Tuttlebee who was 80, so Peter sang 'Happy Birthday to you to Jesus be true...' and hoped a few others joined in too.

We were joined by our Mission Partners Janet and Pascal Frésard from Switzerland. They work with Wycliffe Bible Translators translating the Bible into the language of the Karoninka in Senegal, and Pascal is Director Wycliffe's work among the West African Francophiles.

These are anxious days for many and the longer the pandemic goes on the more of us are touched directly by the loss of life, work, hopes and dreams. We are reminded to call on God, to stand on his unshakeable promises, and to ask for his mercy on us all that God may act sovereignly in the way he did for Israel of old to bring to an end the disasters that befell his people.

None of us have any merit of our own to commend us to God, but we do have a risen and ascended Saviour in Jesus who lives to make intercession for us before our Father in heaven.

Peter & Rosie



## Thought for St James'

Rainbows have been appearing in unexpected places. There was one on the road in front of our driveway on Saturday, with the message HOPE in big letters. Was it divine irony that saw it washed away in the thunderstorm on Easter Sunday?

In Genesis 9 we see that the rainbow was to be forever a visible sign of hope from God, his promise that never again would all living creatures be destroyed in a flood. God's hope will never be washed away! More than one hundred tomes in the Bible we are told that our hope must be in God.

Paul wrote to the church in Thessalonica "...remembering without ceasing your work of faith, labour of love, and patient

hope in our Lord Jesus Christ..." (1 Corinthians 1:3). I wondered what our "work of faith, labour of love" could be? I remembered Jesus' first declaration of his work "to preach good news to the poor" (Luke 4:18).

A friend pointed out that while we seem to hear nothing but Coronavirus, over 2,500,000 people have already died of starvation since the beginning of 2020. That is 25 times as many as those reported killed by Covid-19. Has the news about this been quarantined?

Can we, as Christians, in our "work of faith, labour of love" find a way of lighting a rainbow to help those who are starving; can we give them hope?

Martin Johnson



## Our Easter expression of faith

We believe in Jesus of Nazareth,  
shown to be from God by his signs and power,  
handed over to us in the plan of God,  
crucified by our sinful hands.

We believe in Jesus Christ,  
raised by God from the dead,  
freeing him from death's power:  
for death could not hold him.

We believe in Jesus the Exalted,  
ascended to the right hand of God,  
who received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit,  
and has poured this Spirit on his people.

We believe, we repent,  
we receive God's forgiveness.  
We believe, we rejoice,  
we receive God's Holy Spirit. Amen.



# Breakfast on the Beach

Read John 21:1-14. Some thoughts on today's scripture

‘Come and have breakfast’ How simply and sensitively Jesus deals with us! He knows our needs and our hunger. He knows too that we can only manage the revelations of the divine in small portions. I could do well before my daily breakfast to listen to the Lord speaking my name and saying ‘Come and have breakfast.’ Imagine him serving me, if not with bread and fish, perhaps with a muffin and coffee! I begin to notice that through the day he continues to serve me what I need.

How does Peter feel in this scene? Somewhere in the back of his mind he sensed where that catch of fish had come from. Surely now his heart breaks open in repentant love when he is treated so kindly by the person he had betrayed? Am I open to God’s kindly care which picks me gently up when I have fallen?

A night of futile fishing leaves empty nets and empty hearts. Jesus takes the initiative and meets them in the early morning light. He invites them to eat: ‘Come and have breakfast.’ There is an abundant table ready - of fish, food, love, warmth, and great joy. Here, fractured relationships are healed.

Jesus, you meet me at the water’s edge of my ordinary life. You accept me lovingly, you encourage me, you invite me to abundance. Nourished by the food of your word, warmed by the fire of your unfailing love, may I in turn nourish, heal and love those I meet today.

From *Sacred Space* daily prayer online ☞



Jesus in the garden, newly risen from the dead,  
who stood by weeping Mary, and who heard the words she said  
as if you were the gardener, till at last your shepherd's voice  
called her 'Mary' and with one word gave her reason to rejoice,  
Jesus in the garden, ever new but still the same,  
help me recognise you in the speaking of my name.

Jesus on the journey, fellow traveller on the road,  
who met two sad disciples, walking with them as you showed  
the meaning of the scriptures that predicted you would rise,  
but only when you blessed the meal could they believe their eyes.  
Jesus on the journey, meet me where my hopes have fled,  
help me recognise you in the breaking of the bread.

Jesus in the locked room, breaking through despair and doubt,  
who comforted your friends when they had shut the whole world out,  
who came again for Thomas, and revealed your hands and side  
so that he could touch and know you as alive, though you had died.  
Jesus in the locked room, breaking through our self-built bars,  
help me recognise you in the touching of your scars.

Jesus on the shoreline, cooking breakfast for your friends,  
who offered guilty Peter one more chance to make amends,  
who filled a net with fish for him, and helped him to recall  
the first catch that convinced him to respond to your first call.  
Jesus on the shoreline, know my best, forgive my worst,

## Recognising You - Resurrection Poem

by: Amy Scott Robinson, Richard Lyall