



Bible Verse for 2020

"Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever." Hebrews 13:8

Prayer for 2020

God, grant me the Serenity to
accept the things I cannot
change... Courage to change the
things I can, and Wisdom to know
the difference. Amen.

Reinhold Neibuhr

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Letter from Andrew Housley

Dear Friends,

I would like to begin by sharing a poem written by Sheila Beeby from Bickerstaffe Church.

We Will Survive

Stay indoors! Don't go out!
Especially if you're old
It's time to act responsibly
And do as we are told.

Don't panic-buy - there's food for all
And sufficient household goods
Buy what you need - not three times more
And we'll survive till we're out of the woods.

Look out for each other - phone a friend
They're feeling lonely too
Ask about family - pets as well
Your kindness will come back to you.

We're fed and warm and safe at home
Let's make the best of things
A cheerful word when someone asks
We'll cope with what life brings.

We all have a friend - oh such a friend
Who is just a prayer away
Ask Him to guide and strengthen us
And support us through each day.

I have no doubt that the poem has raised a smile amongst our readers! My heart has been warmed by how positive and creative many of us have been when faced with a challenge of the past few weeks. The ladies who live in St Michael's alms houses have stepped out of their bungalows each day to do stretching exercises to music. Sheila Beeby wrote poems and prayers to bring encouragement to people. During the weekend of Mothering Sunday, St Michael's offered primulas to people outside the church, while the Bickerstaffe Brownies and Guides gave out chocolates. I'm also grateful for contributions people from both St Michael's and Holy Trinity have made to the online church services, which I think we may need to sustain for some time.

The Prayer Chain continues to grow, as we make new friends as we share support and prayer. If you would like to join the prayer chain, there is more information in this magazine and on the church websites.

The other day someone said to me, *'we are facing a challenge on a biblical scale and so we need faith on a biblical scale'*. Never a truer word spoken! There are times when we all wrestle with our faith, but as a church family we are called to encourage one another and to give special attention to our weaker members. I have no doubt, that during these difficult weeks the Holy Spirit will inspire and guide us in our prayer and also in our fellowship.

As our buildings will be shut for a few weeks or even months we need to be reminded of what continues. I recently read the following, which puts it quite well.

Church online	NOT CANCELLED
Quiet time with God	NOT CANCELLED
Praying for the sick	NOT CANCELLED
Checking on a friend	NOT CANCELLED
Helping others	NOT CANCELLED
Being the church	NOW MORE THAN EVER

There are no hard copies of the magazine this month. If you know somebody who is unable to access the online copy, please feel free to e-mail or post them a copy. Thank you. Please also check the website for news and updates.

God bless,

Andrew

Let's catch and share love and joy this Easter



The Bible tells us that perfect love casts out fear, "for fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not reached perfection in love." (1 John 4:18). At a time of world-wide fear, when the spread of the Coronavirus is testing relationships between nations as well as between individuals, Christians have a responsibility to look to life and to choose life.

This can have very simple consequences, as we ask God for the grace to make a difference in the world. Our mood can really shape us and how we interact with each other. Mood is infectious and contagious, our happiness can help others shine; sadness can cast a shadow over us all.

The Easter story takes us on a journey through many emotions, rooted in fear and rooted in love. We have the thrilling, loud and triumphant entry into Jerusalem, we have the quiet and agonised reflections of Jesus with his disciples, the fearful atmosphere of the betrayal and trial of Jesus and the overpowering grief when Jesus is crucified.

But then comes the decisive moment. We see the revelation of the empty tomb and the joy of the disciples knowing in their hearts and seeing with their eyes the perfect love that casts out fear. Jesus had risen; Jesus is risen. The joy that spread through Jesus's followers and through the world over centuries becomes the central message of hope that Christianity offers the world. And it's a hope that shines most brightly in times of fear.

It's a hope founded in the knowledge that each and every one of us is seen by God as uniquely and wonderfully made. The hope that no matter who we are, what our background is, we are welcome to the table of the Lord, where we are abundantly provided for in life and in death. That we are loved without condition.

One of my favourite lines in the liturgy is the resounding message of joy we offer congregations from Easter to Pentecost. **Alleluia, Christ is Risen.** We share the Church's confident cry of joy. We celebrate that through all the struggle and strife, fear and anxiety, God is good. We remember that God is victorious and that we and all the world can share in the love God gives so freely and so generously.

As we ask God to make the difference in the world through us, then part of God's answer to our prayers will be the strength and motivation to show that difference to the world in the way we live. As you know, in our Diocese we are asking God for a bigger church to make a bigger difference, and we say, "more people knowing Jesus, more justice in the world".

With this in mind we constantly encourage one another - as difference-makers we encourage one another to "do ten things" that will show and share God's love. Its why we follow our Rule of Life with its inner and outer journeys. When we have received food from God through our prayer, our reading and learning then we are sent to tell, serve and give so that more and more people may know what it means to live in the knowledge that Christ has risen.

As I write this, we are rightly being encouraged to follow medical and scientific advice on the Coronavirus. Some of this advice is to distance and isolate ourselves from one another, if by doing so we can keep this illness away from those who are most vulnerable. That is of course a sane and sensible response. But it is also a response that can inevitably leave the vulnerable feeling alone and unloved. As a community of people who gather together around our Lord when we can, this challenges us in the Diocese to find other ways to look at how we share the love of Jesus. Using technology – from a simple phone call to messages of love and solidarity on social media – let's look at how we can daily show the love that casts out fear.

Epidemics have come and gone in the past, and they have brought the best and the worst out of human beings and human society. As we move towards Easter, may we all commit ourselves to sharing in the life that conquered suffering and death - the risen life of Jesus which we celebrate at Easter and seek to share at all times. May God bless you with courage, health and hope, and with the resurrection life which nothing can defeat. Alleluia! Christ is risen!

Bishop Beverley of Warrington



Worship & Learning



5th April: Turning point.

Matthew 21:1-11

Jesus enters Jerusalem as a Passover pilgrim for the last time, demonstrating how he brings in God's kingdom and setting the stage for the showdown with those he sees as God's real enemies.

A personal prayer

Jesus, I journey with you today
as you journey with me.
Let me go where you go. Amen.

12th April: Delighting in God's grace. Matthew 28:1-10

Two women, disciples of Jesus, visit his tomb once the sabbath is over. They find the tomb empty, and experience both fear and joy. They are sent by an angel to tell the rest of the disciples that Jesus is raised.

A personal prayer

Thank you, risen Jesus,
that you are my Lord and Saviour.
In you I have joy and hope, always. Amen.

19th April: Peace be with you. John 20:19-31

The risen Jesus appears among his disciples when Thomas is absent. Jesus breathes on them and says, 'Receive the Holy Spirit'. A week later, Jesus appears again and speaks to Thomas directly. Thomas cries out, 'My Lord and my God!'

A personal prayer

Let me feel the touch of peace,
the touch of life,
the touch of the risen Lord,
beside me, behind me, and before me
all the days of my life. Amen.

26th April: Moments of revelation. Luke 24:13-35

Two disciples walk back from Jerusalem to their home in Emmaus. They are in despair about the death of Jesus. Jesus appears and walks beside them, but they do not recognise him. He teaches them from the Scriptures, and they see who he is when he breaks bread with them.

A personal prayer

Risen Christ, friend, companion, healer:
as I walk the road in front of me
be by my side and never leave. **Amen.**

Benefice News

Pastoral Visits

If you know of anyone who would like a pastoral phone call, then please speak to Irene or Andrew.

Charity Collections

A reminder that we continue to collect good quality **children's clothes** and other school items such as football boots, and goggles, which will be donated to Litherland Moss School.

Gift of **men's clothes** will be forwarded to Bootle Salvation Army.

The Skelmersdale **Food Bank** remains a vital service for members of the community. Non-perishable food items are therefore very much appreciated. **Please leave any items at your local supermarket.** Thank you so much for your ongoing support.

Friends of Holy Trinity, Bickerstaffe

If you need to renew your annual subscription, then please complete a renewal form, which you can pick up in church.



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Coronavirus Church Closures

Sadly, St Michael's, Aughton and Holy Trinity are closed for public worship, but that doesn't mean that we can't meet God in worship and prayer. There are regular worship programmes on the radio, please follow the links.

- Thought for the day – BBC Radio 4 at 07.45am
- Daily Service – BBC Radio 4 Long Wave at 09.45am
- Pause for thought – BBC Radio 2 at 05.45am and 09.20am
- The Sunday Service – BBC Radio 4 at 08.10am

Each Sunday you will also be able to watch a pre-recorded service and we're sure you'll recognize a few faces. Please tune in by visiting our website or by using the following link:

<https://tinyurl.com/RevAndrewTV>

Prayer Chain

Please contact me on 01695 423204 if you would like to be on our prayer chain at St Michael, Aughton and Holy Trinity Bickerstaffe.

We have a central list of names and phones numbers and each person is given the number of the person next to them on the list. They phone that person each day for a chat, and to say a prayer from the prayer sheet (on both church websites or by e-mail). Each person should then speak to two people each day. If you don't hear from one of those two, please let me know.

A prayer chain prayer sheet can be downloaded from the websites or emailed or posted on request.

Andrew

Regular Church Giving

Over the next few weeks and months, Holy Trinity will lose income from church funerals. We will also lose the opportunity for the congregation to give during the collection. Despite all of this, we still have fixed expenses. If you would like to set up a standing order to support Holy Trinity church, please complete the form at the end of this magazine and send to Stan or Andrew.

We remain grateful for all the support we are giving and receiving during these challenging times.



Prayer is never the last resort of God's people
- it's the first point of action!

Protect us Lord from fear and isolation as we pray:

For those who are lonely, sick or infected with the virus.
Help, heal and sustain them.

For the young and strong
- give them caution to keep safe and inspire them to help others,
especially the housebound and elderly.

For our science experts
- give them knowledge and wisdom to swiftly find a cure to combat
this outbreak.

For our Government
to allocate necessary resources for the good of all people.

For workers in business and industry facing shut-down or lay-offs
- Lord sustain them and keep them from panic.

As our schools close for an indefinite time,
we pray for families with young children at home.

May parents work together to care and support their children in sometimes stressful situations.

For college and university students whose courses have been disrupted

- Lord give them vision in their uncertainty
to hold fast to you through good and ill.

We pray especially for all medical and health workers.
Keep them safe and healthy
in the face of surrounding need, urgency and panic.

We pray for ourselves Lord
and ask that we may be faithful people in this time of global crisis
- inspired to be caring, clear-minded, patient and positive.

Sheila Beeby

Food for thought

*There is enough in the world for everyone's need
But not enough for everyone's greed*

Mahatma Gandhi

The Women's Institute



Due to the Coronavirus, all meetings have been cancelled till further notice.

Margaret Fairclough

Salad Days of a Prime Minister – Part 3 by Owen Taylor

Continued from last month ...

Seddon soon contacted the local authorities and wrote to government members expressing his desire for more races, which, he deemed an important factor in elevating the interest of workers and subsequently helping to boost gold output of the colony.

He showed more enterprise when he opened a general store in the midst of the mining community and as proprietor, quickly became well-known in the district. At the age of 24 years, Richard John was elected member of Arahura Road Board. His new position helped him to gain a foothold on the political ladder and gradually acquainted him with Parliamentary procedure, thus extending his popularity on the South Island.



Richard John Seddon on Horseback. Perhaps it reminded him of his younger days in Bickerstaffe.

Everything now seemed to be going his way. In 1869, he sailed over to Melbourne to marry Miss Louise Spotswood, a lady who had waited three years, until her future husband's success was assured. They produced a large family of eight daughters and three sons. Unfortunately, two of their daughters died in infancy.



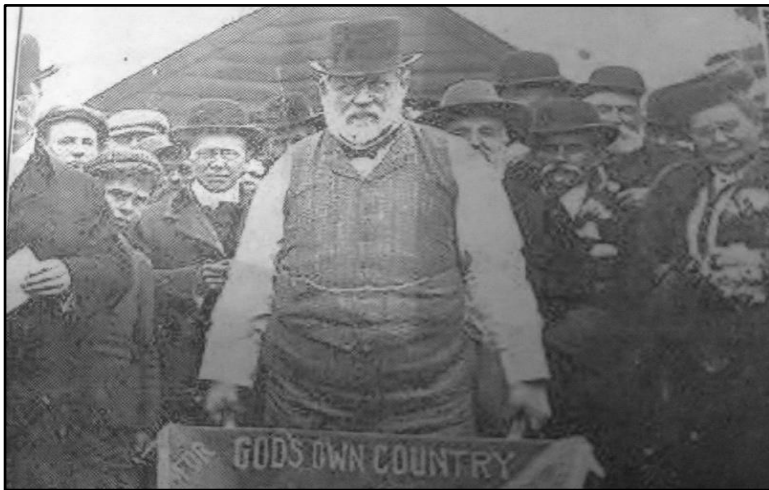
Premier Richard John, with family.

John Stewart Spotswood-Seddon, called on Mrs Anne Taylor and Family, at Wood End Farm, Bickerstaffe, whilst on leave from the Army, during the occupation in Germany in 1919 (2nd Left, back row).

In 1878, the borough of Kumara was constituted and Mr Seddon had the honour of being elected the first mayor. As a man of independent thought, he joined the Liberal Party in 1879 and was elected member for Hokitika, a town with a population of 2,363.

Within the next decade he held many influential posts in government, including Minister of Mines and Public Works, Office of Native Affairs, Minister of Marine, Post Master General, Commissioner of Customs and Electric Telegraph Commissioner. His big day came in 1892 when he was

chosen as Acting-Premier due to the ill-health of Mr Balance, the sitting Premier. Some members of Parliament criticised his verbosity when addressing them. Rumoured too, was that he was unable to write properly until his late twenties and if he became excited, his Lancashire accent became more assertive. However, the following year, after the death of Mr Balance, Mr Richard John Seddon was elected Prime Minister of New Zealand.



Premier Seddon, at the opening of the Railway Works, at Roxburgh.

The expeditious rise of an ordinary young man to the highest office of state, in part of the British Empire and many, many miles away, was seen as an outstanding accomplishment at home. People felt proud that someone like themselves had attained such distinction. Local newspapers carried features proclaiming him as our 'King Dick'.



Premier Seddon with Senior Ministers, 2nd Right, front row, seated.



Left, Statue of the Premier in Wellington, New Zealand.

To be continued next month with his visit to Barrow Nook in 1902.

Acknowledgements:
New Zealand Mail
Ormskirk Advertiser
Angela Chaderton

Owen Taylor

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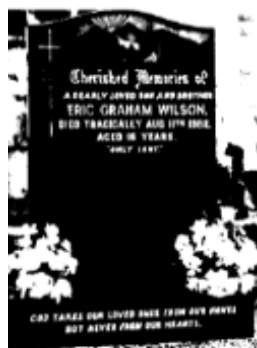
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Holy Week Resources



Readings, questions to ponder, activities and prayers for Holy Week

Use these ideas as a basis for planning simple activities, or photocopy them for the children or families in your church to use at home.

Holy Monday: John 12.1-8

Read

Jesus went to a place called Bethany where a friend of his called Lazarus lived. Jesus was a very special friend so Lazarus and his sisters Mary and Martha decided to have a party. At the party Martha was busy getting people food and drinks and Lazarus sat at the table talking to Jesus and some other people. Then Mary took a big bottle of very expensive perfume and poured it all over Jesus' feet and then wiped his feet with her very long hair. The perfume made the house smell really lovely. Some of the people who were at the party got very angry, especially Jesus' friend Judas, because he thought the perfume had been wasted. Jesus told Judas not to tell Mary off. She had done something really special to show how much she loved her friend Jesus. Mary had given Jesus a very precious present.

Think

Just imagine if someone had given you a very expensive present such as a new games console or latest mobile phone and you gave it away to somebody else. That would really show how much you cared and how much you loved them. That is what Mary did. She poured expensive perfume over Jesus. It was a very special thing to do. In those days the

perfume would have cost a large amount of money. Mary was showing Jesus how much she loved and cared for him and how special he was.

Do

- Show someone how special they are by filling a bowl with warm water and adding a small amount of bubble bath or perfume to it. This will make the water smell really sweet. Then gently wash the person's hands in the water. Or, get help to make a cup of coffee for someone, or bake some cakes – or other things that smell wonderful.
- Is there someone in your house who has perfume or aftershave? If so, ask if you can smell the different ones. Which do you like the most? Which do you think cost the most? Check with the person whose perfume or aftershave it is.

Pray

Dear Jesus, you did so many good things to help people, and Mary did a very special thing for you when she washed your feet with her precious perfume. Please help me to try to do nice things for my friends, at home and even for people I don't like very much. **Amen.**

Holy Tuesday: John 12.23-24

Read

Jesus told the people he was talking to that the time had now come for him to be glorified. What he said to them sounded a bit strange. He said that, unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies, then it remains a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds.

Think

What Jesus meant was that a seed has to be planted into the ground. For a while nothing seems to happen. It seems as if the seed has died.

But then, after some time, it will grow. If you just leave the seed in the packet, it will not grow. It needs to be buried in the earth. Jesus was trying to explain to the people that he was about to die, but they shouldn't be sad because it was going to have a good result.

Do

- If you were a seed, what sort of plant would you become, do you think? Try to draw a picture of the plant that you think God would like you to be. Would you be very bright like a daffodil, or would you be a flower that smells really nice, like a rose bush, or would you be a great big tree like you see in parks, which people can climb or sit in the shade?
- Cut out simple paper flowers. Then colour in the petals. In the middle write the name of somebody you want to pray for. Carefully fold over the petals, one by one, until the name of the person is covered over by the folded petals. Tuck the last one underneath the first petal. Get a small bowl of water ready and gently put the flowers into the water (petal side up). The petals will slowly open and you can pray for each person as their name appears.

Pray

Thank you, God,
that you grow tiny little seeds into big flowers and trees.
Thank you that, even when it looks as though the seed has died and nothing is happening, you are helping the plant on its way.
Please help me to become the plant that you want me to be.
Help me to grow stronger and stronger each day with your help.
Amen.

Holy Wednesday: John 13.21-29

Read

Jesus was having a special meal with his friends, the disciples. During the meal, he started looking very sad, and said, 'One of you is going to betray me.' That meant that one of them would start working with Jesus' enemies, the people who wanted to kill Jesus.

Jesus' friends were upset to think that one of them would let him down and tried to find out who Jesus was talking about. Jesus turned to Judas and said, 'Go and do what you have to do quickly.' The other disciples thought Jesus was sending Judas to do a job for him. They didn't realise that Judas was the one who would betray Jesus.

Think

Think about times when someone has let you down. Maybe when someone has not kept a secret safe, or when they have said horrid things about you to others.

What did that feel like?

Do you think Jesus felt really hurt by Judas?

Was it hard to forgive those people?

Then think about times when you might have let someone else down.

Have you upset somebody because you have not done what they asked you to do?

Have you hurt a friend, or a teacher, or someone at home?

Think of times when you might have let Jesus down.

Do

- Draw a place mat. Draw pictures on the mat of food that you like to eat, or cut pictures out of a magazine, and stick them onto the mat. Then write around the outside of the mat, 'Thank you God for all the food that you have given us to eat. Thank you for special meals to share time with our friends. Amen.'

- Write a letter to God, saying sorry for ways that you have let people down. Write a prayer in it, too, for anyone who has let you down. You might want to write out the prayer below, instead.

Pray

Dear Jesus,

I'm sorry that I have been like one of your disciples
and I have let you down.

I am sorry also for the times
when I have let other people down,
my friends, my teachers and my family.

Please help me to forgive the people who have let me down.

Thank you that I can always make a new start with you. **Amen.**

Maundy Thursday: John 13.1-17



Read

In Bible times the roads were very dirty and dusty. The people didn't wear shoes or trainers that covered their feet, they wore sandals. This meant that as they walked along their feet would get really, really dirty. When you got to the house that you were going to, the servants would wash your feet, which meant you didn't get the houses all dirty too.

On Maundy Thursday we remember Jesus' command to love one another. Jesus showed his disciples how to love one another, by helping them, by being a servant. Jesus wrapped a towel around his waist and got a bowl of water and he washed all the disciples' dirty feet. Even though Jesus knew that something bad was going to happen to him, he wanted to do something for his friends. Instead of being worried by his own problems, he just wanted to show his love for everyone else.

Think

Think about Jesus and how important he was. He had done miracles, and healed lots of people. Crowds of people had come to listen to his teaching, and everyone thought he was really important. Some had worshipped him.

Was it a strange thing for someone so important to wash the feet of his friends?

What might he have done for his friends if he had lived in our time and our culture?

Do

- Think of things that you could do today to help someone. Have you ever washed somebody else's feet? Has anyone ever washed your feet? Perhaps you could wash someone's feet today or ask them to wash your feet. Or, make a list of your family members, and then think of something you could do for each one of them today.
- Draw around your feet on a piece of paper. Try to make about ten feet. If there are other people in your family, draw around their feet too. On a big piece of paper, stick the feet in a circle shape. In the middle of the circle write, 'Jesus washed his disciples' feet'.

Pray

To remind you of today's reading, put your feet in a bowl of warm water as you say this prayer.

Dear God, thank you that Jesus did kind, good things for people.

Help me to help other people too.

Thank you that Jesus cleaned people's dirty feet to show that he loved them.

Thank you for loving me. Help me to love others. **Amen.**

Good Friday: John 18–19**Read**

Can you remember the story of Good Friday? This is the day when we remember that Jesus died on the cross. It was a horrible way to die. We know now that Jesus amazingly came alive again, but his friends did not know that would happen. They were very sad about it all.

Think

Today, the cross is one of the world's most famous symbols – perhaps the most well known. You can find the cross on flags and badges, in schools, museums, on clothes and jewellery. When you see a cross, what does it make you think of?

The day on which Jesus died has been called 'Good Friday' by Christians for nearly 2,000 years. It seems a bit strange to call the day when God's son was horribly killed 'good'. Perhaps Bad Friday or Sad Friday seems more suitable. What would you call it?

The reason it is called 'Good' Friday is because of the meaning of Jesus' death. He died to set us free from all that is bad in the world, our own badness, and that of other people. Think for a moment of things that you have done that are bad, and things in the world that are bad. These are the things that Jesus can make better because he died and rose again.

Do

Draw a cross on a sheet of paper. Write a prayer or prayers on to the cross, and draw pictures around it of some of the things that are mentioned in the Bible to do with Good Friday. The suggestions below come from John 18–19.

A cock – that crowed after Peter denied knowing Jesus three times (John 18.27).

A hammer and nails – used to hold Jesus to the cross (John 19.18).

A crown – the sign on Jesus' cross said 'King of the Jews' (John 19.19).

A die – used by the soldiers to see who would 'win' Jesus' clothes (John 19.24).

A sponge on a stick – used to give Jesus a drink of wine vinegar (John 19.29).

A spear – used to pierce the side of Jesus to check whether he was dead (John 19.34).

Pray

Lord, help me to look at your world,
and the people in it,
in the right way.
Whenever possible help me
to see goodness and make good what is bad. **Amen.**

Dear Jesus, thank you for dying for me,
and thank you for loving me even though I do wrong things.
Please help me to follow you more closely. **Amen.**

Holy Saturday: John 19.38-42 The burial of Jesus



Read

A man called Joseph, who had become a disciple of Jesus, asked Pilate (the Roman leader) for Jesus' body so that he could bury it. Pilate told some of his soldiers to take Jesus' body off the cross and give it to Joseph. A man called Nicodemus was helping Joseph. They wrapped strips of material and special spices around Jesus' body. Then they placed it in a tomb in the garden near to where Jesus had been crucified.

Think

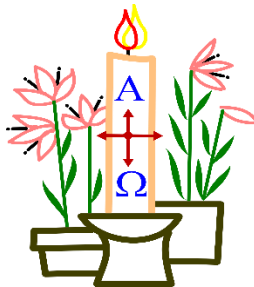
Try staying really still and quiet for as long as possible. How long did you manage? Was it difficult or easy? See if you can get some of your friends or family to play the party game 'Sleeping lions'. In this game you all have to be as still as possible. The winner is the person who is still the longest.

Do

If you have a garden, or know someone who does, ask if you can dig up a little bit of earth. The earth on its own looks very ordinary. Perhaps you could say it looks dark and dead. Have a closer look. Can you find anything in the earth that is alive, a spider or an ant or a bulb that is starting to grow?

Pray

Dear God, thank you that when things look dull,
dark and ordinary – even dead like earth –
that you are still there and things are alive.
Thank you for looking after Jesus' body in the tomb.
Thank you for looking after me wherever I am.
Amen.



Happy Easter to All Our Readers!

Please join us online for our Easter Service.

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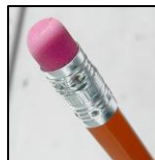
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And Finally....

*The love of God
be the passion
in your heart.
The joy of God
your strength
when times are hard.
The presence of God
a peace that overflows.
The Word of God
the seed
that you might sow.*

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Editorial News



The deadline for the May magazine is **Friday 17th April**. As always, please pass articles to myself, or e-mail it to jo.housley@gmail.com. I will do my best to publish articles when space and copyright allows.

**Please note we will only publish
online during the Pandemic.**

Thank you.

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