

ST. MARY OF NAZARETH /ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI – WEST WICKHAM

4th April 2021: Easter Sunday

Hazel writes:

A very Happy Easter to you all. As some of the restrictions on social activity have now been lifted for people meeting outside, it really does feel like a moment of new life beginning. Sadly, there are many people who will be left with little hope for a new life at this time as a result of food insecurity made worse by the pandemic. Over the past few weeks we have had reports from projects which help such people that are being supported by the Bishop of Southwark's Lent Appeal. All of the monetary gifts given in the churches on Easter Sunday will be sent to this appeal, or you can donate directly on-line at www.southwark.anglican.org/lentcall.

Next Sunday there will be an on-line **service of Holy Communion** which will be livestreamed from **St Mary's at 10am**. This is an in-person service open to all and there will be another service in **St Francis' church at 8am**.

St Francis' Church will be **open for private prayer** on Wednesday 7th April and Wednesday 14th April from 10.30-11.30am. There may be some music played from 11am onwards.

Resources and updates for the week ahead – This week our service will be livestreamed **at 9.15am** and will be available to view afterwards. All other files for this week and next have been combined and posted as a pew sheet which has been sent on paper to those who have told us that they are not on-line. Other worship and resources that you might want to listen to or look at on Sunday:

- The Church of England's national virtual service will be available on their website at www.churchofengland.org.
- The BBC have the following programmes to watch and listen to:
 - Sunday Worship at 8.10am on Radio 4 – A celebration of the Eucharist with the Archbishop of Canterbury for Easter Day
 - Choral Evensong at 3pm on Radio 3 from Manchester Cathedral.
 - On BBC 1: Sunday Worship at **10.00 a.m** with Archbishop Justin Welby from Canterbury Cathedral and Songs of Praise at 1.15 p.m. with Katherine Jenkins from Llanduff Cathedral in Cardiff.

Below are details for 11th April next Sunday as there will be no pew sheet

- The Church of England's national virtual service will be available on their website at www.churchofengland.org.
- The BBC have the following programmes to watch and listen to:
 - Sunday Worship at 8.10am on Radio 4 with Rev. Philip Blackledge and Claire Nicholson of Holy Trinity Episcopal Church, Melrose
 - Choral Evensong at 3pm on Radio 3 from St. Matthew's Church, Westminster
 - On BBC 1: Sunday Stories at **10.30 a.m.** with Kate Bottley sharing stories rooted in faith, love and spirituality and Songs of Praise at 1.15 p.m. with Aled Jones from Newstead Abbey in Nottinghamshire.

We have a service that will focus on **things to be thankful for** in April and would like to compile a video with short clips from many different people saying 'thank you' for some of the things that God has provided over the past year through the church. If you'd like to contribute something, please let me know and I'll record you on Easter Sunday, or through a socially distanced visit to your doorstep. Hazel

Please bring **Foodbank donations** to the Vicarage or St Francis' Church. Currently they need desserts, UHT Milk, Tinned Vegetables, long life fruit juice, Tinned Fruit, Tinned Fish, Tinned Cold meat, Toilet Rolls. Please do not bring any fresh food, or Baby milk as the foodbank cannot pass this on. You can also donate financially here: <https://bromleyborough.foodbank.org.uk/give-help/donate-money>. Thank you for your continuing support.

Coffee and Chat. We will be having a break from our Coffee and chat on Thursday 8th April. We will meet again on Thursday 15th April.

As we look to support our community as we come out of lockdown, I am grateful to those who have already knitted or crocheted some forget-me-nots for our **bereavement support bags**. These will be especially helpful in the months ahead. If you would like a bag to give to someone that you know who has lost a loved one, there are some in both of the churches, or if you'd like me to deliver to your door, please let me know. Hazel

We have now **re-opened the church buildings for public worship**. The services will follow the same pattern as before with an 8.00 a.m. and 10.00 a.m. service each Sunday. The restrictions associated with social distancing, wearing a face mask and no singing or socialising indoors will continue to be in place. There will also be an on-line provision of our Sunday services for the foreseeable future.

After Easter both of our churches will hold their annual meetings, when we will report on the year past and look forward to the year ahead. We will be looking for **new PCC members** in both churches and want to include more people in guiding and shaping what we do. If you'd like a greater insight to how our churches run, do talk to one of the current members about the role and consider whether it's something you'd be interested in taking on.

The Church Electoral Rolls of our two parishes will be revised as follows:

- For St Mary's, starting on the 20th March 2021, and ending on 3rd April 2021.
- For St Francis', starting on the 28th March 2021, and ending on 10th April 2021.

Under the Church Representation Rules any lay persons are entitled to have their names entered on the roll if the person —

(a) is baptised,

(b) is aged 16 or over, and

(c) has made one of the following three declarations and duly applied for enrolment.

- that the person is a member of the Church of England or of a Church in communion with it and is resident in the parish.
- that the person is a member of the Church of England or of a Church in communion with it, is not resident in the parish, but has habitually attended public worship in the parish during the preceding six months.
- that the person is a member in good standing of a Church which is not in communion with the Church of England but subscribes to the doctrine of the Holy Trinity and is also a member of the Church of England and has habitually attended public worship in the parish during the preceding six months.

Application Forms for enrolment can be obtained from the Church Electoral Roll Officer (Chris Fitzgerald for St Mary's and Rowena Griffiths for St Francis'). In order for a person to attend the annual parochial church meeting and to take part in its proceedings, an Application Form for enrolment must be returned by the date shown above for the ending of the revision of the Church Electoral Roll.

We had a recent talk from **Bromley Civic Society** on Gardens and now we are planning for them to return and do another talk in the evening of Tuesday 20th April - "A tour of Victorian Bromley" picking the most important buildings and providing history around them. Put the date in your diary and further details will follow after Easter.

Christian Aid Week this year is from 10-16th May and focusses on Climate Justice. We will not have a door-to-door collection, but (physical and virtual) envelopes can be given to friends and neighbours and we will focus on Christian Aid at our service on Sunday 16th May. Carol Hubbard has stepped down as our representative at St Mary's and Anita Curtis from St Francis' will be unable to co-ordinate our efforts this year. If we are to contribute to Churches Together in West Wickham in this respect and record how much we raise, we will need to have someone else as our representative. If anyone is interested in finding out more (and the role need include only those aspects which someone is able to take on), please contact either Anita Curtis on 8777-5973 (john.curtis23@ntlworld.com) or Hazel.

Merri Womack would like to thank Ann Herbert for offering to take over the organising of the MacMillan Coffee Morning sometime later this year.

Any items for the joint pew sheet to Beryl bbolton@ntlworld.com and items for the websites to brian.griff19@btinternet.com or Gifty office@stmarywestwickham.co.uk

Collect

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.

First 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.'

Gospel reading:

Mark 16: 1-8

Alleluia, alleluia.
I am the first and the last, says the Lord, and the living one;
I was dead, and behold I am alive for evermore.

Alleluia.

When the sabbath was over, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices, so that they might go and anoint him. ² And very early on the first day of the week, when the sun had risen, they went to the tomb. ³ They had been saying to one another, 'Who will roll away the stone for us from the entrance to the tomb?' ⁴ When they looked up, they saw that the stone, which

was very large, had already been rolled back. ⁵ As they entered the tomb, they saw a young man, dressed in a white robe, sitting on the right side; and they were alarmed. ⁶ But he said to them, 'Do not be alarmed; you are looking for Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has been raised; he is not here. Look, there is the place they laid him. ⁷ But go, tell his disciples and Peter that he is going ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see him, just as he told you.' ⁸ So they went out and fled from the tomb, for terror and amazement had seized them; and they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid.

Post Communion Prayer

God of Life,
who for our redemption gave your only-begotten Son to the death of the cross, and by his glorious resurrection have delivered us from the power of our enemy:
grant us so to die daily to sin, that we may evermore live with him in the joy of his risen life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

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Collect

Risen Christ, for whom no door is locked, no entrance barred: open the doors of our hearts, that we may seek the good of others and walk the joyful road of sacrifice and peace, to the praise of God the Father.

First Reading: Acts 4: 32-35

³² 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. ³³ With great power the apostles gave their testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all. ³⁴ 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. ³⁵ They laid it at the apostles' feet, and it was distributed to each as any had need.

Gospel Reading:

John 20: 19-end

¹⁹ 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.' ²⁰ After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. ²¹ Jesus said to them again, 'Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you.' ²² When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, 'Receive the Holy Spirit. ²³ If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained.'²⁴ But Thomas (who was called the Twin), one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. ²⁵ 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.'²⁶ 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.'²⁷ 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.'²⁸ Thomas answered him, 'My Lord and my God!' ²⁹ 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.'³⁰ Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book. ³¹ 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.

Post Communion Prayer

Lord God our Father, through our Saviour Jesus Christ you have assured your children of eternal life and in baptism have made us one with him: deliver us from the death of sin and raise us to new life in your love, in the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ.

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Easter Sunday Sermon: Hazel O'Sullivan

I wonder how you're feeling about coming out of lockdown at the moment?

We had the National Day of Refection 10 days ago – maybe you're still feeling sad at the huge loss of life and want to stay a bit longer in that mode of lament. That's OK.

It was only on Monday last week that some of the first freedoms were given to social interaction – now we can meet in a group of 6 outside. But it's been so long since we could meet face to face in a purely social occasion – will we remember how to behave? Maybe you're feeling a bit of trepidation at going out again. That's OK.

I suspect that the women - Mary Magdalene, Mary, the mother of James and Salome were feeling the same. Still very sad – they wanted to weep some more over Jesus' body while they anointed him with the spices. Also, much trepidation – it might be dangerous being seen going to his tomb.

So, that morning the women were filled with sadness and trepidation as they went to the tomb where they thought Jesus lay. When they got there, they found the stone rolled away and the young man in the tomb said that Jesus had been raised from the dead. You can appreciate how their sadness and trepidation turned to terror and amazement. And they fled! They fled back to the one place that they knew – the group of disciples that they'd travelled around with as they'd followed Jesus. On the way there they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid.

The women needed to make sense of what had happened. And to do so they needed to share what they'd seen with others who could help them to make sense of it. People like Peter, who is the one named person that they are told to tell. I wonder why the young man did this – mention Peter by name? I think it might be something to do with the transformation that was coming up. Remember, Peter was the one who'd made so many mistakes. He was the one who'd committed himself to stand by Jesus and then just hours later had denied him three times. And yet, it was Peter in particular who was going to be trusted with this message.

It is, of course also Peter who's the one talking in our reading from Acts. We don't know how long it is after Jesus rose from the dead that this meeting of Peter with Cornelius' household takes place, but it was probably a few months – maybe the best part of a year. And so Peter has had time to come to terms with what had happened on that first Easter morning. But to do so, Peter had gone through a great

transformation. He'd changed from someone who'd made mistakes and denied Jesus three times, to someone who was leading thousands of people by giving a message of peace through Jesus Christ who'd been raised from the dead and could bring about healing and forgiveness of sins to all those who believe in him. This was a very powerful speech. Peter had obviously been transformed over that period of time since the resurrection. Transformed from someone hiding behind a closed door to one spreading the good news about Jesus far and wide.

Many things had happened to Peter, but for now, let's concentrate on that first day and to think about how we might use this time as we come out of lockdown, so that we can allow Jesus and the Holy Spirit to transform us in a similar way to the way in which he transformed Peter by his resurrection.

The thing that began Peter's transformation was that he was told a story. He was told of how the women had gone to the tomb, had found it empty and had been told that Jesus had risen from the dead. Now, this wasn't an easy story to tell. The women were afraid, remember? Would they be believed? This was unlikely as women weren't thought to be trustworthy in giving evidence in those days – they couldn't do so in a court of law. And yet, there was something about this story that meant they had to tell it to others who might be able to help them to understand it.

I wonder if anything that you've seen or experienced during lockdown is something that you need to tell others about in order to understand it better. Or maybe you've got a story about something which happened that you'd like to share because it will help you to be able to celebrate it. I'd love us to be able to share more stories together over the next few weeks. There's a first that's been published in both church magazines this week from Tony Ivey. Your story may not be so dramatic, but it might still say something about who Jesus is and it may help others to find Jesus in something that's happened to them. And I've already collected about 5 or 6 brief video clips of people talking about what they want to give thanks for – we'll use them in a service in a couple of weeks' time, so do take an opportunity after the service today to record another one with me outside or in the days ahead – just let me know that you've got one that you'd like to share.

Somehow we need to make sense of what has happened over the past few months, so that we can hold on to any positive things that might show Christ to us and so that we can react with healing, with forgiveness and in standing up for justice towards negative things that the pandemic has highlighted within our community or within society more

widely. This is what Peter and the disciples were doing in the months after the resurrection. They were allowing Jesus to transform them and responding to opportunities that came their way to heal, to forgive, to stand up for justice and to tell the good news of Jesus.

I'd like us to be able to use the next few weeks to prepare ourselves to do the same – to bring healing through community support, such as our bereavement support bags, two of which are there at the back of the church – do take one if there's someone that would benefit from some kind of support of this type; to bring forgiveness within our community by continuing down our path to becoming Inclusive Churches which can reach out a welcome to others whatever their background; to highlight those areas of injustice in our society, like our collecting of food bank donations yesterday on the High Street.

So, yes you may be feeling very sad at this time in view of the enormous loss of lives and experiences that has happened over the past year. You may be somewhat fearful about re-entering into social situations, given the risks that still exist and how out of practice we've all become in these things. Easter Sunday is a time when we'd normally be able to crowd together in church, sing that opening hymn lustily and greet each other with a big hug – if that's your thing. I'm not recommending any of this: we cannot go back to exactly what we were doing before. To do so would be like Peter going back to denying Jesus after experiencing his resurrection. What I am recommending is that we use Jesus' resurrection as a sign that we too might be resurrected, we might be transformed.

We have to allow the Easter story to change us in some way and to make us more of a disciple of Jesus. As it says in the gospel reading – verse 7: he has gone ahead and there we will see him. Please do tell others about those times when you see Jesus, whatever form that may take, so that we can make sense of it and we can use those sightings to transform us, so that we can be a people who, like Peter, go out into our community to heal, talk about forgiveness, stand up for justice and tell the good news of Jesus.

Amen.

**Maundy Thursday Reflection on the Last Supper
based on the Gospel of Mark chapter 14:17-36 - Debbie Adams**

My reflection will cover three main points in the bible reading: firstly, forgiveness and relationships of trust; secondly, loyalty to Jesus and sharing his story; and thirdly, helping and supporting others.

We are all familiar with the Easter story of the Last Supper and how it unfolds. The Last Supper reminds me of a play or drama because it has all the elements of a Hollywood blockbuster. We have a location for a gathering where initially only two people, out of the 12 people to be gathered, know the location. The city is busy and overflowing with people preparing for the Passover celebration, and there is a party atmosphere.

The gathering of the disciples at the Passover meal will create tension, intrigue, fear, outrage, disbelief, confusion, distress, forgiveness, denial, humility and love.

The long-awaited Passover meal begins and all are seated at the table in the upper room.

During the meal Jesus knows that he will be betrayed and knows that it will have fatal consequences for him. He reveals this to those that are gathered, without naming that person.

What follows in the passage is the way in which the relationship of trust between Jesus and the disciples is tested and Jesus` ability to forgive them.

In verse 18 Jesus states "One of you will betray me, one who is eating with me".

The immediate reaction of the disciples is a stunned silence; it is what you might call a conversation stopper. There is no `calling out` or `person shaming` by Jesus. We can only imagine how Jesus felt having this knowledge for some time. It must have been very difficult for him to bear, particularly when the betrayer was one of his trusted followers.

The passage describes the human reaction of the disciples, as they become agitated and distressed. They become defensive and disbelieving, in verse 19 replying in turn "Surely, not I?"

In verse 20, Jesus not wishing to reveal the betrayer, states "it is one of the twelve, one who is dipping bread into the bowl with me".

Mark's Gospel in verse 21 records in rather strong terms Jesus' thoughts on the betrayer, "For the son of Man goes as it is written of him, but woe to that one by whom the son of Man is betrayed! It would have been better for that one not to have been born".

We know that the betrayer is Judas, but would we have reacted in the way Jesus did with that knowledge? Jesus does not isolate or exclude Judas but continues to love and show compassion towards him.

In the Gospel of Matthew, Luke and John, Jesus washes the feet of his disciples including Judas, showing how much, he loves them. We witness the humility of Jesus and his ability to extend forgiveness and love to them all.

I wonder, have you felt the betrayal of a trusted friend or family member, and have you been able to forgive them and continue loving them? Or have you found it difficult to trust others, and put-up barriers as a way of protecting yourself from further hurt or a betrayed confidence?

We have all had to adjust to a new way of communicating with each other during the pandemic through zoom, skype and other forms of social media. While this has been a lifeline for many, it can also exclude or isolate those who do not have access to technology. It can also put a strain on relationships and create misunderstandings. How can we ensure that our relationships remain trusting and forgiving? How will we nurture and strengthen these relationships and friendships that are important to us? These are the challenges that we all face.

The Passover meal is a major celebration each year commemorating the Israelites being released from captivity out of Egypt and ending with the sacrifice of the Passover lamb. However, the meal takes on a new significance, and so is different to any other meal they have shared together.

In verses 22 to 25, Jesus blesses the bread, breaks it, and shares it with them saying "this is my body". He then shares a cup of wine, saying "this is my blood of the new covenant that is poured out for many". By linking his body and blood with the Passover, Jesus explains that he is the Passover sacrifice and prepares them for his death. It is a lot for the disciples to take in.

We witness in the passage the human weakness of the disciples and how they struggle to remain loyal to Jesus, and their inability to show their support when questioned by others.

The disciples' confusion and anguish lead to them denying that they know Jesus, and in verse 30 we read of Peter denying knowing Jesus not once but three times before the cock crows twice.

Perhaps we can all identify with the disciples and how they were fearful of the consequences of supporting Jesus. It was safer for them to deny that they knew him. Have there been times when we too say we are loyal to Jesus, but our actions and words show otherwise? Or we have failed to defend our Christian beliefs in a situation that required it, for fear of feeling isolated or of the reactions of others?

It is of course so much easier to remain silent. But I would encourage you to be brave and speak about what your faith means to you and how it has shaped your life. I know from my own personal experience that when I allow myself to be led by the Holy Spirit, these difficult situations are easily overcome. When I share my faith with others, I feel joyful and excited it has really helped my faith develop and grow.

Speaking about our faith is what we are called to do to motivate and inspire others as Jesus called his disciples to follow him and spread the good news.

It is night-time and Jesus is in the garden of Gethsemane. His closest friends are with him because he needs their help and support. The disciples are exhausted and sleepy, and Jesus knows his time is near and asks them to keep awake. Jesus takes Peter, James and John with him while he prays. Jesus simply asks his friends to be there for him but they have fallen asleep. He knows he can no longer rely on them, and he must have felt completely abandoned and alone.

This is revealed in verse 36 as Jesus wrestles with his Father's will, asking "not what I want, but what you want". His anguish and torment are poured out to God in prayer and God strengthens him.

Jesus will soon be separated from his friends and experience isolation and fear, resulting in his arrest, trial and agonising death on the cross.

I wonder, do we ask for help when we need it, and are we faithful to friends and to others when they ask for our help?

When we come out of lockdown, will we rejoice and adjust readily to life without restrictions, or will we be fearful of socialising with others and feel nervous in an environment we can't control?

What will we have learned about those who support us and those who we support? Will we view ourselves differently as a church and as individuals? Will our collective vision continue with renewed energy as we strive to work together on outreach projects in our wider community? Will we step forward and offer that help in any way we can, or fall asleep while others take up that challenge?

I believe God has provided a valuable opportunity for both our churches to work together and make a real difference to those in need, and to build on what we have already achieved.

In summing up my reflection, let us draw on Mark's gospel as he reveals to us the human qualities of Jesus, his heart of forgiveness and his ability to extend love to all. As the Civil Rights Leader Martin Luther King Jr put it: "Forgiveness is not an occasional act, it is a permanent attitude".

During Holy Week, as we reflect on the cross and the price paid for our sins. May we strive to be more like Jesus and be true disciples of his word by sharing our faith with others. May we be willing to show our loyalty and trust in our relationships with friends and family in a spirit of forgiveness and love and offering help and support where it is needed.

Prayer Pointers

The empty Easter tomb changed the disciples forever. Pray that the Risen Christ may disturb and challenge us, turning our expectations, certainties and faith upside down. Thank God that through the resurrection we have the promise and good news of eternal life. Give thanks that as Jesus called Mary by name at the tomb on that first Easter Day, he calls us too by name to recognise and proclaim his risen presence with us, day by day.

Pray for those who long for the stone of their distress to be rolled away:
those who have to watch others suffer,
those whose relationships are breaking down.

Pray for those who are too afraid to tell others what they feel and know:
those who suffer bullying and abuse,
those who harbour guilt,
those who think they won't be believed,
those who have been warned not to tell anyone what they know.

Pray that the power of the resurrection may bring peace and calm in the storms of life.

Christ is risen and rises again when in any community:
goodness prevails over wrongdoing,
unhealthy living conditions are transformed,
faithlessness becomes faithfulness,
fear is overcome by hope and love,
poor people hear good news and captives are released,
people blinded by prejudice and hatred recover loving sight, and
oppressed people are given their freedom.

Pray for our community locally here in West Wickham and more widely in our city of London. May we who bear witness to the resurrection be shining lights of the love of Jesus. May we bring healing to our community and be fruitful on our frontlines.

Pray for all those who are ill and for those who have had surgery or treatment recently –especially for John Godfrey and Michael Sanders (husband of Mary Sanders). Give thanks for the steady recovery of Anne Bryan (sister of Barbara Colpus); and Chris Cowlard (nephew of Ken Colpus). Pray for those we know, and those known to God alone, who are experiencing suffering, ill health, isolation and loneliness. Pray that

they may feel the love of the risen Jesus in their hearts, that they may not fear the future. Comfort them and sustain them in their need.

Pray for those who have died and help us to trust they are at peace with you. Pray for all who have lost a loved one especially those who have been bereaved as a result of the Covid outbreak. Pray for all those who have been unable to attend a loved one's funeral due to Covid restrictions. Show us how to reach out to the bereaved with kindness and care, so that the hope of the resurrection shines clear in our lives.

When everything was dark and it seemed that the sun would never shine again, your love broke through. Your love was too strong, too wide, too deep for death to hold. The sparks cast by your love dance and spread and burst forth with resurrection light. We pray that the Easter light of life, hope and joy, will live in us each day; and that we will be bearers of that light into the lives of others. *(Revd Michaela Youngson – Methodist Church)*