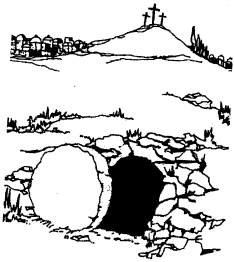


A message
from Revd. David Jones

People of Hope

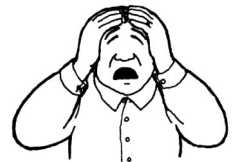
As churches we have spent weeks on the journey to the cross with Christ and by the time of print we will have recounted his passion and now we will be trying to understand what the resurrection means for us.

Perhaps we need to get out of the fast lane and take life at a steadier pace. Some years ago, I took part in the London 100 bike ride. After what seemed like an eternity to start I found myself in a group of what felt like thousands of bicycles. The pace we were travelling at felt too fast for me, the noise of the machinery was overwhelming. I couldn't slow down without causing an accident, I couldn't move to the side, I was stuck in my lane having to struggle to keep up, afraid of the consequences. Eventually the pack spread out and I was able to travel at my own pace.



In the Yate and Fromeside churches we have been exploring how it would have felt to have been at the first Holy Week and the first Easter. Trying to place ourselves, our thoughts and feelings into a 2000 year old story and to gain a sense of how it is a reality for us 2000 years later. We have challenged our ideas about who the baddies and the goodies are in the story and we have realised that we too would most likely have been caught up with the crowd, too afraid to not be. We are all fallen people. So now we are seeking to find hope and joy as a result of being resurrection people as we are raised with Christ.

In a world where everything appears to be broken and all the news is bad it can be difficult to find any hope. Joy can be in short supply and when it is there, it can all too often be overshadowed by worry. Perhaps we need to spend a little time rediscovering how to find Joy, peace and happiness. That won't be found by rushing around at everybody else's pace, that will be found by listening to God, trusting in him to safely help us to travel with him, to follow him. Jesus is there with us, through the Holy Spirit, leading and guiding us to the places of safety; we just need to be brave enough to trust! He longs to lead us in peace and hope.



We need to acknowledge the pain that Christ suffered for us and join in with the resurrection hope. Jurgen Moltmann, a 20th Century German theologian, in the shared shame of being a German soldier, caught up in a war without choice recognised this. He recognised that Christ was the only true source of hope and joy and although he had no choice he, through Christ, had hope.

The central theme of *Theology of Hope* is promise. The Christian faith is lived, Moltmann argues, in witness to the promises of a God who can and will make all things right. These promises are offered most clearly in the passion, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. As through death and resurrection alone, Jesus breaks the cycle of fear and despair and replaces it with joy and hope.



As Christians we share in the joy and the hope of the resurrection, as it is not just an old story, it is a reality for us, each and every day.