

I'm writing this a few hours after the tight new restrictions because of Covid19. If I'd written a few days ago, it would have been a different message. You are receiving this by email or via the church website, rather than through the post. Some of us may be in isolation because of frailty or illness, many of us are gripped with fear, confined in our homes, only leaving for essential shopping or vital appointments. Family gatherings are suspended and so Easter is going to feel very different this year, whether we are people of faith or not.

Many have used the word 'unprecedented' and while this might be true in our own lifetimes historically there have been similar times, and the early Christians faced similar challenges.

On the evening of the resurrection of Jesus, Christians were meeting behind locked doors, confused, in fear and bewildered by events of a few days before, the day we now call Good Friday, the day when Jesus died on the cross and his outstretched arms embrace all in love in the midst of suffering.

As those first followers of Jesus met in fear and isolation, something happened. There was the risen Lord Jesus among them. His first words since his death were 'peace be with you'. These are powerful words. They are words we all need to hear in these troubled times. They are words we need to speak to each other and allow the risen Lord Jesus to speak to us. But words are not enough. Over the last week many in our communities, including myself, have been working to set up systems to provide care for the most vulnerable, especially those whose self-isolation leaves them without contacts. We can all be on the lookout for our neighbours, and elsewhere in this magazine you can find out how to offer help, and how to receive help. You'll also see how you can continue to join in with worship and for some the rhythm of prayer will be essential in this unsettling time.

I am here for you – practically and spiritually – don't hesitate to call me on 07504827929, 01959540012 or email vicar@pcd.org.uk

The resurrection took Jesus' first followers by surprise, as he offered them his peace. My prayer for us all is that we will find moments of resurrection life in the days and weeks that lie ahead.

Please be assured of my prayers,
John