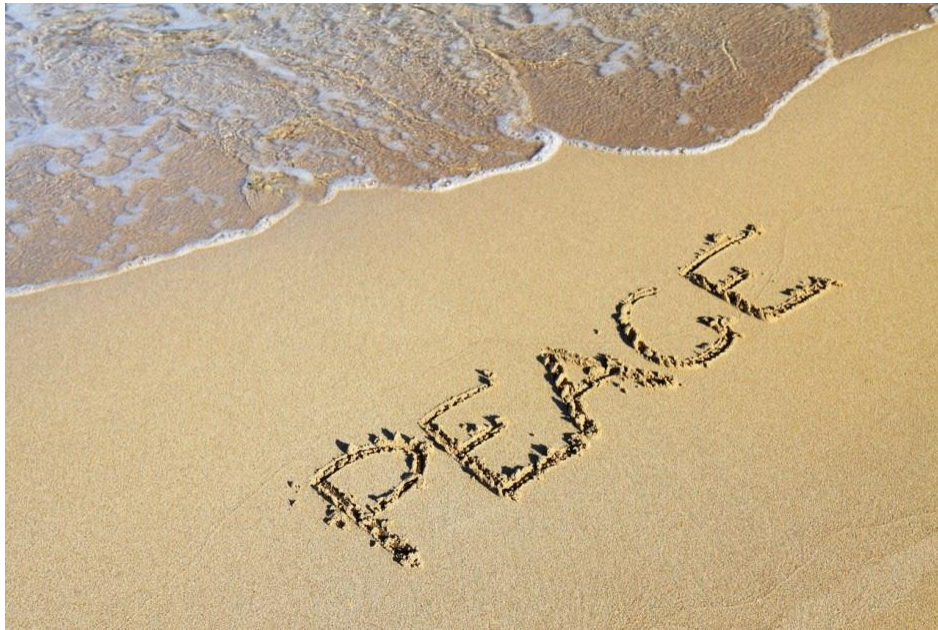


Tarves Parish Church

Second Sunday of Easter - 19th April 2020



Psalm 16 is a 'Song of Trust and Security in God'.

Verses 7-8 say:

"I will praise the LORD, who counsels me;
even at night my heart instructs me.

I keep my eyes always on the LORD.

With him at my right hand, I will not be shaken."

CH4 659 - 'Put peace into each other's hands' by Fred Khan
(It can be sung to 'The King of Love')

Say the words of this hymn slowly and mindfully.

Allow God's Spirit to suggest ways in which you might put peace into someone's hands.

1.
*Put peace into each other's hands
and like a treasure hold it:
protect it like a candle flame,
with tenderness enfold it.*
2.
*Put peace into each other's hands
with loving expectation;
be gentle in your words and ways,
in touch with God's creation.*
3.
*Put peace into each other's hands
like bread we break for sharing;
look people warmly in the eye:
our life is meant for caring.*
5.
*Put Christ into each other's hands
he is love's deepest measure,
in love make peace, give peace a chance
and share it like a treasure.*

The Gospel for today

When Jesus appeared to some of the disciples Thomas was not there. He could not believe that Christ had risen until he had touched the wounds for himself. Later Jesus said to Thomas, "Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet believe." We have not seen for ourselves but we can trust in God's promise that we have everlasting life through Jesus.

Some things to consider as you read this passage

- What jumped out at you from the passage?
- What questions do you have about this passage?
- What does this passage teach us about the heart of humanity?
- What does this passage teach us about the heart of God?

John 20:19-31

Jesus Appears to the Disciples

¹⁹ On the evening of that day, the first day of the week, the doors being shut where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said to them, "Peace be with you." ²⁰ When he had said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord. ²¹ Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I send you." ²² And 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; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained."

Jesus and Thomas

²⁴ Now Thomas, one of the twelve, called the Twin, 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 in his hands the print of the nails, and place my finger in the mark of the nails, and place my hand in his side, I will not believe."

²⁶ Eight days later, his disciples were again in the house, and Thomas was with them. The doors were shut, but 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; and put out your hand, and place it in my side; do not be faithless, but believing." 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 believe."

The Purpose of This Book

³⁰ Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; ³¹ but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in his name.

Comment

As we read about the days after Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection, we can identify with the disciples' feelings around being locked in and isolated, but they were not denied physical contact. Even though our lives are severely restricted right now there are many opportunities to show care that are very *touching*. You may put a light in your window on Sunday evening or clap for carers on a Thursday; you might give a note or a gift to a neighbour, write a letter or make a phone call; you might do

some cooking or shopping for a friend. When you are on the receiving end of others' kindness you might find a way of showing your appreciation.

It has been a strange Holy Week and Easter and yet I have a sense of togetherness as we explore how to BE church in our community. The constraints have forced us to find creative ways of putting our faith into action. Using many of the materials found online I have enjoyed seeing how other churches 'do Easter'. Staying connected by phone has been very positive and helped to build that sense of community cohesion. I hope and pray that this continues in the future. We are fortunate in where we live, but life is still difficult. It is hard to maintain that inner peace – God's peace. What the Gospel passage shows us is that God offers us *His* peace.

'Peace be with you!' says Jesus. How often in scripture do we see the words 'Do not be afraid!'

Jesus is with each one of us, no matter where we are; no matter what we are going through.

Here is a simple prayer that you might use for yourself, another person or situation: 'I pray the peace of Jesus over ... '.

We are fallible human beings and doubt is something we may all experience from time to time. Making a commitment to share our faith in practical ways can be an antidote to doubt.

As the hymn says:

*Put peace into each other's hands
like bread we break for sharing;
look people warmly in the eye:
our life is meant for caring."*

*"Put Christ into each other's hands
he is love's deepest measure,
in love make peace, give peace a chance
and share it like a treasure."*

Prayer for others

Please use this as a basis for your own prayers as you call to mind the people and situations uppermost in your thoughts.

Father God
your arms reach out
welcoming us home
We pray for refugees, migrants and
all displaced people that
they might find a welcome ...

Father God
Whose love, poured out,

mends broken hearts.
Mend the hearts of ...

Father God
Whose wounded hands
reach out to all.
Reach out to those who
are suffering today ...

Father God
Whose Spirit waits to enter in
inspire our leaders
open them up to your wisdom
that they might speak with
respect and love
that they might act with
tolerance, integrity and grace

Draw all the people of this
world back into your arms,
embrace us in your love
and fill us with your peace.
We ask this through
the grace and love of your dear Son,
who gave his life for us in love. Amen

You may wish to conclude by saying The Lord's Prayer

Notices

Pastoral Care

The minister is available to help with any pastoral emergencies. Tel 851295

Care for the Community

If you hear of anyone needing practical help during this time then please contact
Ruth
Tel 851887