

Dear friends,

**Easter Sunday** started early with the ecumenical service on the beach at 6.30 am. It was perishing cold and windy but thankfully no rain. Then the 8am at St. Peter's where numbers were a little up on normal weeks but the main service broke all expectations and we enjoyed a lovely service with well over 160 souls including children. Impractical as it may be, I sometimes think we should take a register on high days and holidays to find out who all these people are so we can follow up afterwards. The service also included the baptism of Stephen Blyth, the 17-year-old who has joined us just recently. He towers over me, so the baptism took place with him kneeling down over the bowl of water in front of the congregation. It was an emotional moment for many in the congregation and a potent sign of life in our church on the day when we celebrate new life!

**Lent course - Wednesday 10th April at 5pm.** Because of conflicting services we never ended the Lent course so we agreed to hold it two weeks after Easter on the date above so if you came to the Lent course, the final installment is on its way!

**I'm sure** we can all remember the Karen Young debacle, a situation I had to deal with alongside all the Covid restrictions. There was a lot of mudslinging and false accusations against me at the time, while I was effectively subject to a gagging order. The lies and wayward behaviour eventually descended into exploitation and downright theft on a grand scale.

Well, the "Nursing and midwifery council" has now struck Karen off from being able to practise as a nurse and the tribunal that resulted in their decision is now on public record so we can now see what she inflicted on two of our vulnerable, trusting and loyal members of the congregation during that time.

Just google "NMC Karen Young" and you get the whole sorry record of the case.

Justice moves slowly in this country but justice has been done in the NHS and I was invited to a meeting in Exeter last Wednesday where justice in the church (it was noted) compared very unfavourably.

A total of £22,000 was unaccounted for in total. Her dishonesty and lying went far beyond the two cases mentioned of course but it was a necessary and substantive case to hang her suspension on at the time. Just click on the link below to save time.

<https://www.nmc.org.uk/globalassets/sitedocuments/ftpoutcomes/2023/december-2023/reasons-young-ftpcsh-84981-20231213.pdf>

### Sunday 7th April – 2nd of Easter

Reverend Jean Burrows will preside at both services at St. Peter's and I will preside at All Saints at 9.30am. John Archibald will preside at a service of the word at 11am.

**Acts 4: 32-35.** A somewhat idealised account of what was happening in the early church no doubt. All of one heart and mind and sharing everything in common – this may have happened on a small scale in the early months of the church bound together by zeal and generosity. Of course, from Paul's letters we get a different picture of a fractious and argumentative church. As with all utopian dreams they are completely impractical and unworkable except perhaps on a very limited and local level, but they are meant to convey a unity and fraternity that completely eludes world Christianity today so it is a scenario to inspire a certain frame of mind.

**1 John 1: 1 – 2: 2.** Whether written before or after the famous fourth gospel, or even if it was by the same hand, this is less radical and ever so slightly muted, as if the Johannine communities needed something more in tune with modern realities than high falutin' theology. The author is concerned with people in the community sinning and falls back onto comparison with the Temple sacrificial system. Jesus is a bigger and more perfect sacrifice than the animals used in the Temple and this perfect sacrifice covers not just individual sins but the sins of the whole world.

**John 20: 19-31.** The giving of the Spirit, recorded in Luke's gospel as having occurred 50 days after the resurrection at Pentecost, happens on Easter Sunday in John's gospel where Jesus breathed his spirit upon them. The capacity to "bind or loose" sins was granted – they could decide what was considered within or without ethical parameters (a property still adhered to by the catholic church). Thomas was not present when this happened setting up the encounter a week later where he was invited to touch the wounds of Jesus. Thomas responds with "My Lord and my God" without actually needing to do so providing the most startling admission of Jesus' divinity in the bible. The blessing that follows is for all future believers.

### Thought for the Day

Physical life is fragile and hangs by a thread. We all know this but consign this knowledge to the back of our minds until confronted with it through some catastrophic incident. Andrew, Louise's brother, being struck down and paralysed by a stroke is one such incident that brings life into sharp relief. It is made more poignant when he is a young fit man with no medical worries prior to the incident. You probably know that my wife died – nothing particularly unusual in that – but that she was only 49 when that happened. What happens in response to things like that is a deep sense of gratitude for what we possess – whatever health, mobility or indeed life that we enjoy. Gratitude for the gift of health and life are fundamentally religious emotions. As people who believe in God, we at least have somewhere or more particularly "someone" to direct our thanks. We have just celebrated Easter where we celebrate the gift of "eternal life" to any who come to believe that such a thing is possible. Jesus is the great sign that not only is it possible but is part of God's great design for his creation. In believing, we claim the gift that is already ours. We continue to be grateful for the life and health that we enjoy but are also mindful that those who don't or haven't enjoyed long life or health will not miss out, because God's nature and purposes are to put all things right, and pain and suffering have no place in God's eternal kingdom. Life is everlasting and cannot be destroyed. Thanks be to God.

**The Prayer for Today** is by Therese of Lisieux.

**Lord Jesus I am not an eagle.  
All I have is the eyes and heart of one.  
In spite of my littleness, I dare to gaze at the sun of love  
and long to fly towards it.  
I want to imitate the eagles, but all I can do is flap my small  
wings.  
What shall I do?  
With cheerful confidence I shall stay gazing at the sun until I  
die.  
Nothing will frighten me, neither wind nor rain.  
O my beloved sun, I delight in feeling small and helpless in your  
presence.  
And my heart is at peace.**

Love and peace,  
Martin