



CMC Covid-19 Newsletter No. 3

April/May 2020

Hello friend,

Thank you, again, for all your kind words and messages about the last editions of our newsletter. We are glad you are finding it useful and it is nice to have the opportunity to keep in touch with each other. We are now emailing to 116 people and 26 copies are delivered to those not online.

Thank you, also, to everyone who has contributed to the newsletters. If you've any news (or photographs) that you want to be included in future editions, please send them in so we can share with others. The number of people contributing is increasing, but it would be good to have even more; the next edition will coincide with Pentecost, so you've a few weeks to ponder if there is anything that you would like to contribute. This edition includes messages from all different ages, a Service by Dave Kitchen for the 10th May and information about Christian Aid, so read-on and enjoy!

As we said in the previous newsletters, if you are a pastoral visitor and can't keep up with, or have concerns about, those in your group, or don't have a pastoral visitor available, or in fact think that we may be able to help in some way, please do get in touch with The Stewards or the Minister(s).

With love and best wishes,

The Stewards

Thought for the day – Third Sunday of Easter

Please read Luke 24 verses 13 – 35.

Soon after Sandra and I arrived in Cardiff we went on holiday to Canada. It was an amazing holiday and it started with our arrival in Calgary and a coach trip down to Banff our first destination. The thing that struck is more than anything else was the scale of the scenery, it was awesome.

Amazing because here in Cardiff we found the mountains and scenery which are so beautiful, and we fell in love with Wales immediately. But Canada was on a much bigger scale a much bigger map.

And that's where I'd like to start – to encourage us to see ourselves on a bigger map. Most of us are so caught up in what we do in the life of the church that we occupy that space and so often we fail to see what is happening around us outside of our church walls.

The reality is that so often we plough our furrow in isolation. Or if we do talk to others we tend to stay with the people who attend the same groups as we do. We tend not to talk to others. Perhaps at this time we might think or cast our net wider by speaking to people we know slightly.

Soon Sandra, Thomas and I will leave for Fleet to another phase of our ministry. Thinking of moving on I have been recalling my arrival in Cardiff.

My first year started as the blank piece of paper but by six months someone else had articulated the theology behinds what I had started to do. Nick it's the road to Emmaus. It was helpful to have someone else explain that they saw my role as coming alongside people on their journey.

I want to suggest that all of us might benefit from reflecting on the Emmaus journey and inviting God to use us in a similar way.

The story is simple, two disciples leaving Jerusalem walking home despondently – it's all gone horribly wrong and they have no one to talk to and they are in despair, all they had planned and hoped for lay in ruins.

Does that sound familiar? We get focussed on the detail running it over and over in our minds and we fail to see how it fits into a bigger picture. The death of Jesus has brought the disciples to despair, they think it's over.

They have forgotten what Jesus said about death and resurrection, they have lost the bigger picture and in doing so they start to disengage from God. So often that is the case with us, we get caught up in the detail and we lose the bigger picture of what God is about of what God is doing.

The current impact of covid19 is to close down our world, it's a different place and there is a risk we lose the bigger picture of God because we are no longer meeting together, there is a great fear in me that some may not come back to church when this is over. It's so easy to forget to lose the routine the pattern the discipline of journeying with God.

Indeed, those on the road had taken Jesus' death and minimised it, forgetting what it was about, losing its meaning –so often we do the same.

And someone comes to them – we of course know it's Jesus but, in some ways, I am not convinced who it was is as important as what he does.

Jesus invites them to tell their story – of course he knows the true story, but he is happy to listen as they tell it from their perspective. One thing that has made me proud in recent weeks is the way people in the church are talking to one another. We are good at keeping in touch by phone checking that everyone is well and that practical needs are met. Jesus goes one step further; he asks those he is with to talk about the events that have happened and to talk about God.

I am sure we all talk on the phone about the impact of covid19, but do we talk about God and how we know God's presence at this time? Do we share a moment from the service that we watched or listened to on Sunday that meant something to us in the hope it might encourage another church member when we are on the phone?

There is a danger our voices become silenced about God, yet God is doing so much. Jesus encourages fearful disciples on the road to "re-find" their voice to talk of Jesus and what they have seen. Let us be bold and let's tell others what we have seen and encourage each other not just practically, but spiritually, as we share our love of God.

Let's keep in touch with one another and with God. Speak soon.

Revd Nick Oborski



As you can see, I'm struggling with my hair and just about to take the scissors to my fringe, at least! I wonder if anyone else would like to share their photos of 'bad hair' days. But this situation has brought to my mind the words about the hairs on our head being numbered.

⁶ "What is the price of five sparrows—two copper coins? Yet God does not forget a single one of them. ⁷And the very hairs on your head are all numbered. So don't be afraid; you are more valuable to God than a whole flock of sparrows."

I found it in Luke 12 v 6/7 and felt reassured thinking that with whatever's happening around us these days, God's love and care is always there. And then a friend forwarded a music video to me by Keith and Kristyn Getty called 'He will hold me fast'. It's a beautiful song and, if you fancy listening it's on YouTube (the version I heard is a live recording featuring Selah)

We might all continue with our bad hair days for a while longer, but our God is always there.

A reflection from Alison

Self-imposed isolation - who would have thought that a few weeks ago those words would mean so much to us. One thing about it though, it has brought home to me how much in life we take for granted - meeting friends, shopping, group activities, going out socially etc. It is hard for all of us, some more than others, to feel so isolated, but it has to be done to keep ourselves and our loved ones safe and well. I particularly miss Sunday services, the hymns that mean so much to us all, praying together and our Ministers words of wisdom. I also miss choir practice on a Thursday evening, we all have a really good chat and put the world to rights and have a good laugh and giggle (Sheila usually initiates that)! But our esteemed leader Carol, whom I'm sure gets exasperated at times, manages to get us under control in time to practice the hymns for the following Sunday.

I have also realised that, at times like this, we see the very best in our neighbours, some of whom we rarely see or speak to yet they are knocking on our doors offering help. Also, I have found that a telephone call is so welcome, especially to people who live alone, it is so important to let everyone know that they are not forgotten, especially as we don't meet as often as usual.

I pray to God that this nightmare will soon be over and I look forward to that wonderful Sunday when we can all meet and worship together again.

Stay safe and may God bless you all, Alison H.



Here's a picture of Laurie making "Happy Birthday" paper chains.

A message from Jenny

How lovely it is that everyone is keeping in touch with each other by phone/text/email etc. If you haven't done this why not phone a friend or someone you haven't spoken to for a while, special thanks to Nick for ringing round, this is very much appreciated.

Hope everyone is keeping well and enjoying the sunshine although the gardeners amongst us were grateful for the little bit of rain.

Thank you to everyone who are contributing to this newsletter, it's good to share news from our Church Family at this difficult time, stay safe and take care.

Birth

Perhaps I had been sleeping
Or resting on the beaten track of habit,
A taking-it-for-granted life.
Somewhere the colours changed,
A flower opened
Silently in my heart.
Something, good enough to be a secret, happened
That filled me until
It was too good to be a secret.
Birth:
Of what I didn't really understand,
A drawing out of darkness,
A watering of thirsty land.

Dave Kitchen

The 'Eden.co.uk' website is well-worth a browse - there are resources available for delivery ranging from devotional books, CD and DVD options and some activity items, such as the 'adult colouring books' or for children and families. Helen O.



Janet and Martin have been busy tending to their Easter Garden!

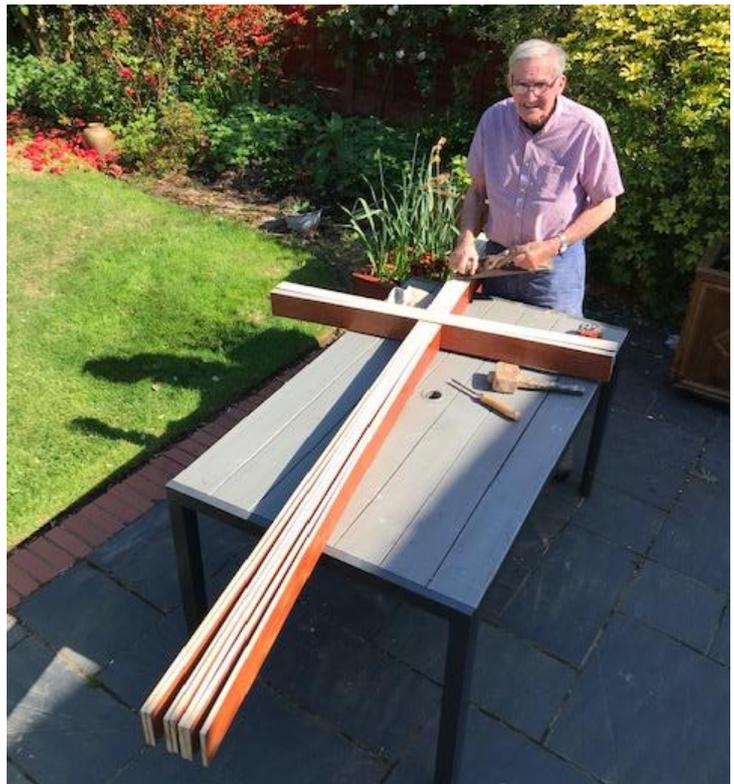
Hello everyone,

I'm currently constructing a Cross for our Church. I'm making the most of all this spare time at home. The doctor's told me that I've got to self-isolate for 12 weeks so there's plenty of time to get it finished!

Thank you so much for the news-letters in the past month and thank you Nick for your spiritually uplifting messages every week. I miss Services at Cyncoed every Sunday so much and, of course, I miss the fellowship with all worshippers. I appreciate all your phone calls and emails. Thank you David for the Palm Sunday service on the radio as well.

Margaret is well cared for and kept safe at Willowbrook and, to make up for no visiting, we meet remotely on Facetime every Wednesday. She is a bit confused by this miracle of technology but it's good to see and talk to each other.

Every blessing,
Ivor



Hi Everyone at Junior Church

We hope you all had a good time over Easter even though it was different from any Easter we've ever had! I hope though that you still managed to hunt for chocolate eggs and eat hot cross buns.



Also, Happy Birthday Morgan! What a strange birthday it must have been for you but I'm sure your family made certain that you had a good day despite everything that is happening. Maybe you can celebrate with your friends when all this is over.

Lovely photo of you, Izzy and Sacha, with the fish you decorated. I loved the colours you used and the way that they seemed to shimmer and shine. You'll have to let us know what you did to decorate them to make them look like that.

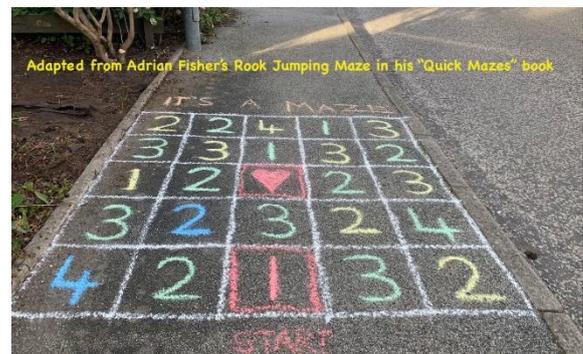
We hope all the rest of you are doing well and keeping safe. Let us know what you have been up to whilst you have been away from school. I hope you haven't had too much school work to do.



I know we haven't been able to meet to share our news but I thought I'd let you know about the visitor we had to our garden last week. My son Jonathan went in the garden late at night to look for our cat and he found this little fellow instead, eating some of the food we had put out for him!

I also saw something online that I thought was good and you might like to try whilst you're at home.

Draw it with chalk. You can move in any direction, except diagonally, the number of squares that the square you are standing on tells you. See if you can get to the heart in the middle!



In the meantime, you all take care, keep safe and remember we're all thinking of you every day.

Lots of love Kath, Angela and Marion xxx



Sadly we won't be able to meet for a while due to the Covid-19 virus

Take care and stay safe!

Messy Church 'Lockdown Gallery'

Messy Church families are sharing photos of things that they are getting up to during the 'Lockdown' – a lovely way of keeping in touch.

The 'Lockdown Gallery' can be viewed on the Church website – 'Messy Church Activity page.'

However if you don't have access to a computer, we wouldn't want you to miss out on *these* wonderful and fun photos.



I have drawn and coloured this rainbow and put my family in the middle.

Many people are putting rainbows in their windows as a sign of solidarity with the NHS staff and Key workers.

We made Palm crosses and donkeys to celebrate Palm Sunday.





I had lots of fun over the Easter weekend making my 'Easter Garden'



Together in Lockdown,
walking and having fun!!



Hope and Love suncatcher

During our last 'Messy Church' session we made this lovely suncatcher together. Lots of concentration and a great result!!

We talked about how God loves us all and wants us to have a future of hope.



A message from the Methley family:

Hi everyone,

We hope you are all well and had a good Easter, we did. Izzy and Sacha would like to thank Junior church for the lovely letter they put in the last newsletter. They are both enjoying lots of art and craft and were pleased that the Easter bunny visited! And yes, Dad, we did brush our teeth after eating the chocolate and cake. Izzy also did the marzipan decoration on our Simnel cake this year and did a really good job. We hope everyone is staying safe and well.

Love from the Methley family

Lockdown

No children on the swings nor slides
No shop except for food and pills
All is silent.

We cannot go into town
Although so many of us moan
But we not alone
As God is with us.

We must do as we are told
And stay at home,
We watch the rising and the setting of the sun.
And know that all is well with our Lord.

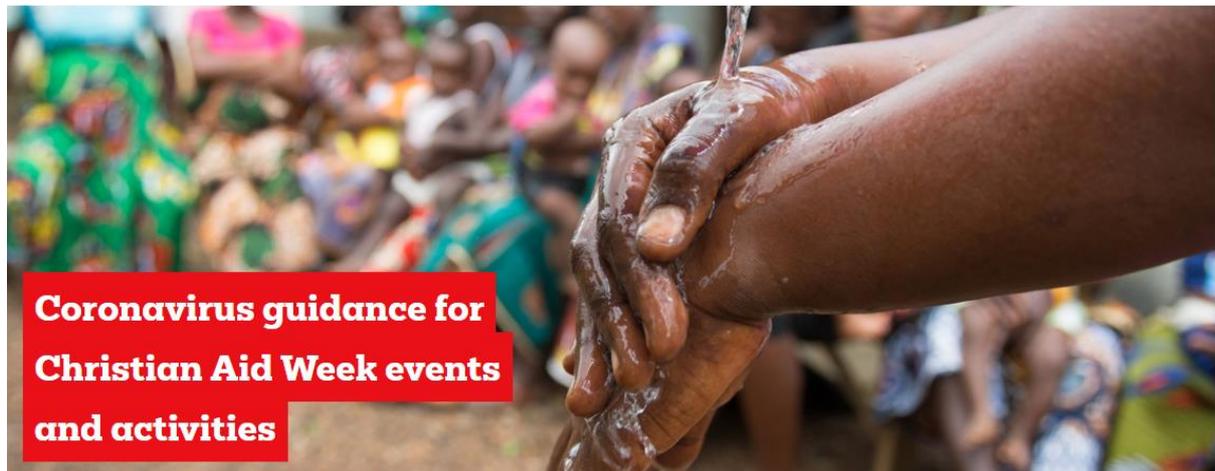
Blessings,
Anne (Isherwood)



Some more lovely examples of Easter artwork:



(with Bella the cat)



**Coronavirus guidance for
Christian Aid Week events
and activities**

Dear supporters,

As all of our thoughts are on the Covid-19 situation, we wanted to share an update on Christian Aid's response. We value our volunteers enormously and want to ensure you all keep safe when fundraising for Christian Aid Week. The health and safety of our community, including loyal supporters like you, is of the utmost importance to us, and we are monitoring the situation on a daily basis.

Advice for Christian Aid Week

Many of you will have been planning house-to-house collections and events. Under the current circumstances, sadly, house-to-house collections and delivery-only collections should not go ahead. In particular, along with many churches, events such as Big Brekkies or Lent lunches cannot go ahead.

Instead, Christian Aid Week is moving online! We are building a vibrant, virtual Christian Aid Week so you can take part with our online community. We would love you to join in to show love for our neighbours near and far, as a global family.

During Christian Aid Week

It's more important than ever that we come together as a community to worship and to share fun and fellowship. That's why during Christian Aid Week we will be live-streaming worship each day, and hosting a fun daily quiz to join and raise funds.

Sign up using the links below to take part.

<https://www.christianaid.org.uk/christian-aid-week/daily-live-streaming>

<https://www.christianaid.org.uk/christian-aid-week/daily-quiz>

Just a reminder about how we can still share in Worship

- BBC Radio 4 Sunday morning at **8.10am**
- Daily Service weekdays on BBC Radio 4 (LW), **9.45 a.m.**
- Choral Evensong on BBC Radio 3, Wednesdays, **3.30 p.m.**

Methodist Church Online Resources

- A word in time Bible study
<https://www.methodist.org.uk/our-faith/the-bible/a-word-in-time/>
- The Methodist Church website has a wealth of resources to explore
<https://www.methodist.org.uk/our-faith/>
- Methodist Central Hall have a catalogue of sermons given by various people, all available on their website
<https://methodist-central-hall.org.uk/sermons-2/>
- Rev Darren Middleton regularly posts worship and scripture based videos on the facebook page for Ridgeway Methodist Church. Like this page to be notified of his new posts. It's also great to see him!
- Trinity Church, Gosforth has a YouTube channel with many talks by Rev Peter Holwell from past services. Peter is continuing to preach at Gosforth despite there being no official meetings. These sermons are being uploaded to this channel.
- Highfields Church are uploading a series of Daily Devotions at 10:30 each day to their YouTube channel, and they also have past services.
- The Lectionary is available online, with Prayers and Art to accompany each week
<https://lectionary.library.vanderbilt.edu//index.php>
- BBC Songs of Praise has previous episodes available to view, along with interview features and hymns.
<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b006ttc5>

Between you and me

Worship for May 10 with Dave Kitchen

Between you and me, I don't think we always share what we're thinking and feeling as well as we might. We're probably better than we were 20 or 30 years ago but I suspect we're still not good at it. So this is a short time together where I'll share favourite words, readings, poems, prayers and stories. Because this is sharing, you're very welcome to send me something in return ... but you don't have to! Just if something pops into your head. And talking of things popping into heads, here's the poem that probably started off all the other short poems I use at the start of services

Make me gentle in your love, Lord
Make me kind to every man;
Let me learn that I need others
To be all that I am.

Make me cry when I am stone, Lord;
Make me warm when I am cold;
Make me wise when I am young, Lord,
And young when I am old.

I am yours and you are mine, Lord,
And together we are one,
And, out of that, new life is born
And love again begun.

Let's pray together

Gentleness, Lord – that's what we need
And so often we're angry or frustrated.
We'll never manage kindness or compassion if we're full of our own problems and opinions.
Forgive us.

And, as you forgive us, open our eyes to the extraordinary beauty of your creation that we miss when we're thinking about ourselves.

The sun rises, the blossoms come out, the birds sing – you put these things there because you love all that is beautiful. It's as if you're saying: "Go on. Enjoy this moment for I have put it there with you in mind."

And, though you remember each of us individually, what you give us is not for one or two people alone.

The sun rises for everyone, the birds sing so all can hear, the blossom is glorious to every person who notices it.

Even when we are kept apart, your creation binds us together.

Bless you, Lord.

And we remember the prayer which was a blessing to your first followers

Our Father, who art in heaven,

hallowed be thy name;

thy kingdom come;

thy will be done;

on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread.

And forgive us our trespasses,

as we forgive those who trespass against us.

And lead us not into temptation;

but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom,

the power and the glory,

for ever and ever.

Amen

Music?

If we were together now, we'd be singing. So I've included hyperlinks (at the end of this service transcript) to some music that you can play in if you want to. Play one now. Play it later. The great thing about this sort of worship is that you can enjoy it in any order you wish and even skip the boring bits. Although, if you're like Alison, you'll feel guilty about doing that! But it truly is YOUR choice.

Psalm

One of my choices when I'm reading the bible is the poetry. Don't know why I love poetry so much. Just do! The beautiful Catholic translation of the psalms that became part of their Jerusalem Bible was made at a retreat community called The Grail, just up the road from where we lived. It was about 200 yards from our own church, Pinner Methodist, and the most of the congregation knew almost nothing about the magical community that lived just by them.

We're a bit like that. We miss the beauty that is just around the corner because we don't open our eyes. So take a browse in the Psalms one day and look for the voice that speaks to you. Write out the part that struck you – in your best handwriting, of course!

Here's my take, as a poet, on what Psalm 67 says to me.

May God forgive us, may he love us,
May he see us and still bless us.
May his face shine upon us
So we feel his light within our lives.

In the sunshine of that love, may we spread
His kindness and compassion across the earth
So that all are saved from darkness
And no one left in fear.

May praise rise from every corner
And joy from every house,
As God's way becomes our way
And that way becomes everyone's path.

Then the lands will grow green,
The harvests will be golden
And God, in all his awesome power,
Will come close ... and will bless even us.

A prayer for others

Father God

We pray first for those who are being driven close to the edge by the pressures this situation creates. Give us all the strength we need, a dash of patience, the ability to endure and a dose of good humour to help us get through.

We pray especially for those who keep the wheels of life moving, including the ones who don't make the headlines as they drive the night-time deliveries, clean the sewers and do a thousand and one jobs that we never see.

We pray as well for those who care, both formally and informally for the most vulnerable of us. Bless them, Lord, and keep them safe.

We pray for the scientists, sometimes on double shifts, as they try to find the solutions that will make us safer.

We pray for medical staff across the world as they deal with the crisis that a tiny virus has unleashed. May they make the right decisions at the right moments that make the systems work even when they're looking as if they might fall apart .

And finally we pray for ourselves that we will simply do what we can, where we can with a good heart and a smile on our face

We ask this through Jesus Christ, whose death and life makes all prayers possible and who astonishingly made us his hands and hearts here on earth. Amen

Music?

It's up to you but the talk bit comes next so if you need a breather, this isn't a bad point.

The Question: how on earth did you become a local preacher?

It's a regular sort of afternoon in the summer holidays of 1967. I think to myself that perhaps I'll do what teenagers did in the 1960s ... especially when they had too much time on their hands. So I get the bicycle out of the garage and tell my mum that I'm going to the library. It's the safe thing to say. She never questions me all that much.

The twist in this story is where I'm intending to go. I'm not slipping out to buy cannabis or arrange Peace and Love parties. I am actually cycling to the library. Whatever anybody tells you about me, deep down I'm just a geek. I might have wanted to be the wild child but in fact I was simply the bookish boy with the wild hair. This afternoon, however, I'll not make it to the house of free books.

Les is to blame for that. Eventually he would become the Reverend Lesley Goulden but back then he was just Les. When the youth group went on their Easter trip to the Peak District in 1966, he took the afternoon service at a country chapel called Woodlands. We all hiked there. It was in the middle of a field with a congregation of six and a stray sheep that I shooed out of the toilet! The service was heart-lifting both for the elderly congregation and for us.

Les was a good young local preacher and just before the service, he asked if anyone would do the Easter reading from John's gospel. There was a period of silence while the youth group made a careful study of their walking boots. I felt sorry for him, said I'd do it if no one else wanted to. No one else did.

That was the start of Les and I. He was pleased with how the reading went and asked if I'd like to join him in helping with some services. These days this is commonly called the mentoring of worship leaders and comes with a van load of paperwork. Back then we just did it. For all our current fear of informal arrangements, it worked for many people including me.

None of this is in my mind as I wave to mum and set out for the library. The odd moment comes when I'm half way down Love Lane – a great name for a road with a church on its corner. For no good reason, I think I'm being told to put my name down for Local Preaching.

As I'm only 16, this can fairly be described as an extremely odd thought but Les has already commented that I don't seem afraid of anything. My father has said the same but, with him, it's a definite criticism!

The bike slows as I think about what I might be letting myself in for. Cycling slowly down the main street, I can't make a decision. Then the synagogue and the library come into view at the far end of the shops. I make the decision by the synagogue! Picking up the pace on the pedals, I ignore the library and head instead for The Manse.

Probably, you're supposed to make appointments but I'm not sure God works like that. Reverend Bernard Holland opens the door and looks surprised. He invites me in: 'Why on earth have you cycled all this way in the middle of the afternoon?' I look puzzled and he goes on: 'On any other day, I'd be out on my pastoral visits.' 'But you're not!'

He laughs: 'No, I've just had a phone call cancelling a visit. I was actually wondering what to do next.'

So that's what happens. We're both unexpectedly there and we begin making the necessary arrangements. He explains that putting your name forward doesn't oblige you to anything and quite a few people find that it isn't for them after all, That's fine, he explains, because everyone needs to explore. He's making it easier for me to change my mind if I need to. After all, while there's no minimum starting age, I'm fairly young. Back in the sixties, young people were often pilloried for lacking staying power. I probably look like one of the flakier ones.

When I get home, my mother asks me what I got from the library and I explain what's actually happened.

'That's nice, dear,' she says which is her code for *I haven't the faintest idea about what you've just said*. She smiles, though, and gives me a hug because I'm still her boy however strange I may seem. And I feel good about what I've begun.

Bible reading

A bible reading hardly ever comes last – we read the book, we preach to apply what the book says. But that’s not the only possibility. My story changes because of one word. It’s the astonished one word cry at the end of the bible reading that Les gave to me on that Easter afternoon back in 1966. Suddenly, like Mary, I knew it was real.

John 20, 1-16

Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the tomb. So she ran and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved, and said to them, “They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him.”

Then Peter and the other disciple set out and went toward the tomb. The two were running together, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. He bent down to look in and saw the linen wrappings lying there, but he did not go in.

Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb. He saw the linen wrappings lying there, and the cloth that had been on Jesus’ head, not lying with the linen wrappings but rolled up in a place by itself.

Then the other disciple, who reached the tomb first, also went in, and he saw and believed. As yet they did not understand the scripture, that he must rise from the dead. Then the disciples returned to their homes.

But Mary stood weeping outside the tomb. As she wept, she bent over to look into the tomb; and she saw two angels in white, sitting where the body of Jesus had been lying, one at the head and the other at the feet.

They said to her, “Woman, why are you weeping?”

She said to them, "They have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid him."

When she had said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not know that it was Jesus.

Jesus said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping? Who are you looking for?"

Supposing him to be the gardener, she said to him, "Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away."

Jesus said to her, "Mary!"

She turned and said to him. in Hebrew, "Rabboni!" (which means Master.)

Blessing

May the light of Jesus shine on you,
May his spirit fill your heart,
May the sense that he will walk with you,
Be there at each day's start.
May the peace of God sit deep in you,
May it calm your every fear.
Today, tomorrow, for all time:
May you know that he is near.

Music ... and coffee ... and chocolate biscuits?

You could play one of the music files now or something that you particularly like. Then you could put the kettle on and make a cuppa with us. Chocolate biscuits are, of course, merely optional but they are rather nice! God bless, Dave.

Links to and notes on the music

Fool's Wisdom: *Malcolm and Alwyn*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0WpFvsQc0qM&list=PLA30057248E341D0C&index=2>

- I opened Malcom & Alwyn's last concert ever which was here in Cardiff so heard the final time they sang this. Unforgettable. A bit of lost treasure.

God of the moon and stars: *Paul Field*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k41L405QXuI>

- Paul played at Christchurch, Fairwater when Daren Middleton was their Minister. A great evening full of Paul's sense that we are all God's children however damaged we have become. He is always still just waiting for us.

In Christ Alone: *Stuart Townend*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ouGuG97I2RY>

- We sing this regularly when 10.30am on Sunday allows us to be together. This version features Stuart, his band and a congregation making the hymn come alive just as we try to do in our own way.