



St. Paul's Church Ansdell & Fairhaven
Working In Unity To Share The Good News Of Christ

PEWS NEWS EXTRA

Issue No 138 ~ April 2020



Letter from the vicarage...

Jesus asked them, 'What are you discussing together as you walk along?'

They stood still, their faces downcast. One of them, named Cleopas, asked him, 'Are you the only one visiting Jerusalem who does not know the things that have happened there in these days?'

Luke 24:17-18



Do you not know the things that have happened...?

The same could be said for us today. Things have happened in our nation in these past weeks which everyone is talking about. Every time you turn on the radio, the TV or open a paper it is there. Everyone knows what has happened. The Coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic has changed the lives of us all. It has brought forth wonderful acts of generosity, community and service of others. We must give thanks to those who have shown those attributes, and to God.

But it has also brought forth fear, grief, and isolation, pain, even panic. Things we hoped for – time with family, an operation we needed, a holiday, a trip out, have all been dashed. For some in our nation, that has been tragically the dashing of their hope of more time with a loved one, as they have sadly died.

Maybe we can feel something of the emotion of the two men walking slowly along the road out of Jerusalem, the Emmaus Road. Maybe we feel something of their despondency. Maybe our faces are a little downcast.

The men were downcast because all their hopes had been pinned on one man - Jesus. Hopes that God would come to rule, and bring his kingdom on earth. To restore God's people from their enemies and sin. To breathe new life in them.

Everything they had seen and heard of Jesus – the teaching, the acts of compassion, the miracles – lead them to think he was the One. God's only chosen king – the rescuer – the Lord.

And then...he was killed as a common criminal. Naked, shamed, alone, abandoned. Laid in the grave of stranger.

The surprising darkness over the cross mirrored the darkness in their hearts. Hope dashed to pieces like pottery on stone.

To add insult to injury the tomb where Jesus was laid had been found empty. It had been sealed by a heavy stone, a guard posted at it. But now the body was gone. Perhaps they think a final indignity for Jesus – his body taken.

That emptiness of the tomb, left simply with folded grave clothes remaining, echoed their hearts. Empty, dark, with a remnant of death that wouldn't go away.

We have to be honest. Our present situation should make us realise that aspects of our life are like this. Despite the glorious weather we have enjoyed, there is a darkness around. Despite new connections and friendships over the telephone being forged, an emptiness in life has been shown up. As the things we normally rely on for security, joy, satisfaction and meaning have been taken away, at least for a time. The things we normally look to in life have been shown to be more brittle than we dared recognise. We can't shake off a remnant of death. The fragility of life which we don't like to think about has been that much more evident.

No wonder their hearts were downcast. No wonder that ours might be. In one sense should be.

But is that it? Is that all we can say? It takes us to a more honest reflection of life than we would normally go. But is there nothing else?

Wonderfully – there is something more!

That empty tomb was empty for a different reason. Not a reminder to humanity of its predicament. But rather a sign to humanity that God had burst through and changed everything.

As those two men later ate with Jesus, their eyes were opened to see that it was the risen, living Jesus they were talking with! They could then run to their friends and say 'It is true! The Lord has risen...!'

They had encountered in flesh and blood, eating food with them – a man who had been dead, but was now alive!

That first Easter morning, God turned darkness to light, despair to hope. He had taken the emptiness and despair, and rather than simply doing away with them, had woven them into something so much better. The grief of the tomb gave way to life!

Important Church Updates

You can't have missed the huge changes we have experienced recently and their impacts on churches.

The Church of England has helpfully reminded us:

***'The Church continues to be alive and active,
but our buildings must close.***

We are seeing a huge increase in the number of people falling sick with COVID-19. We must distance ourselves from one another and prevent the spread of infection in order to save lives.

Therefore, as well as public worship being suspended, all church buildings in the Church of England are now closed.

*"Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul
and with all your mind and with all your strength . . .
Love your neighbour as yourself. There is no commandment
greater than these."*

To protect the vulnerable amongst us, please do not leave your home except for essential trips.

That is important to heed. But at the same time it doesn't stop us being church! We just need to be church in a different way.

Services, Resources, Prayers

If you are online go to <https://stpaulsfairhaven.weebly.com/> for online recordings and different resources to help you and any young people you know.

If you are not online, please don't feel left out! If you would like a weekly service order and sermon transcript posted out, please call 734562.

Prayer Groups

Would you like to pray with others – online or by telephone? If so get in touch with Paul on 734562, or email vicar.stpaulsaf@gmail.com.

Are you in need?

If you are in need, or know someone in need, please call 734562 and we will seek to help you as we are able.

How to Make the Most of Our Time at Home?



We've all found ourselves unexpectedly at home for the foreseeable future.

We might be catching up on some jobs we don't normally get time for – DIY, gardening or some dusting!

Can I encourage you to also use this period to make time for another thing we often don't get time for – getting to know Jesus better?

That's why we've begun something called 'Luke's Journey' – a journey day by day through Luke's gospel.

Each day there will be some verses to read, a question or two to get us thinking, and the suggestion of a prayer.

You can find it on our website...

<https://stpaulsfairhaven.weebly.com/the-luke-journey.html>

Or if you would like it in paper form do contact the Vicarage.

Wouldn't it be brilliant at the end of this unsettling and enforced time if we came away thinking – but I know Jesus a little more? That would be a great thing.

Let's not waste the opportunity that this unexpected time has brought to think about the bigger issues of life and to explore. So join us on Luke's journey.

Intercession

Nigel Beeton writes: I'm privileged to be on the intercessions team at St Mary's in Bury St Edmunds, which means that I get to lead the prayers sometimes.

Timothy urges us not to neglect our intercessions:

"I urge then, first of all, that prayers, intercession, and thanksgiving be made for all people..." (1 Tim 2:1)

and truly there is power and strength to be found when we come to our loving God in prayer:

Intercession

Pray for your neighbours – lift them to the Lord!
Thank Him for all that they have done for you!
Claim for your friends the promise of His Word;
In intercession we find strength anew.

Ask of the Lord, and surely you'll receive
Seek now His will, and surely you will find
Knock at His door, and truly we believe
In intercession we see God is kind.

Come to the Lord, for He is always there!
Our worries, cares, and our concerns we bring;
O waste no time, just come to Him in prayer
In intercession we find God the King!

By Nigel Beeton

Coronavirus (Covid-19) Pandemic

If there was ever a time to turn to God in prayer and supplication, this is it. So, we invite you to join us in praying for:

- ◇ Our Government and local authorities who bear the responsibility of confronting this challenge. They cannot afford to get their response wrong.
- ◇ WHO and all health professionals who are working to safeguard our public health.
- ◇ Industry leaders who must take huge decisions to confront this challenge to our economy.
- ◇ The leaders of our local community, who provide care and guidance for those they lead.
- ◇ Finally, let us pray for ourselves and our loved ones, for courage and endurance at this most demanding of times.

Christianity is based on hope in a God that does not fail us. We are the Easter People, and know that even in the worst circumstances, God is with us and will hear our prayers. He will answer us.

As Easter approaches, this is a time to let the light of Christ shine His healing rays throughout the world, and throughout our community.

May the Lord, our Chief Shepherd and our Refuge, grant mercy and grace upon the nations of the world in this time of trouble and distress.

We would like to share with you now the following verses which remind us that we are right to trust in God:

*‘Those who live in the shelter of the Most High
will find rest in the shadow of the Almighty.
This I declare about the Lord:
He alone is my refuge, my place of safety;
He is my God, and I trust Him.
For He will rescue you from every trap
and protect you from deadly disease.
He will cover you with His feathers.
He will shelter you with His wings.
His faithful promises are
your armour and protection.*

Psalm 91:1-4, (NLT)

As Lent moves into Easter (1)



April 5th, 2020

The events of Easter took place over a week, traditionally called Holy Week.

It began on Palm Sunday. After all his teaching and healing, Jesus had built a following. On the Sunday before he was to die, Jesus and his followers arrived at Jerusalem. The city was crowded. Jewish people were arriving from to celebrate Passover. This commemorates

how they had escaped from slavery in Egypt nearly 1,500 year earlier.

Jesus rode into the city on a young donkey. He was greeted like a conquering hero. Cheering crowds waved palm branches in tribute. He was hailed as the Messiah who had come to re-establish a Jewish kingdom.

The next day they returned to Jerusalem. Jesus went to the temple, the epicentre of the Jewish faith, and confronted money-changers and merchants who were ripping off the people. He overturned their tables and accused them of being thieves. The religious authorities were alarmed and feared how he was stirring up the crowds.

On the Tuesday, they challenged Jesus, questioning his authority. He answered by challenging and condemning their hypocrisy. Later that day Jesus spoke to his disciples about future times. He warned them about fake religious leaders; the coming destruction of Jerusalem; wars, earthquakes and famines; and how his followers would face persecution.

By midweek the Jewish religious leaders and elders were so angry with Jesus that they began plotting to arrest and kill him. One of Jesus' disciples, Judas, went to the chief priests and agreed to betray him to them.

Jesus and the 12 disciples gathered on the Thursday evening to celebrate the Passover meal. This is known as the Last Supper. During the evening, Jesus initiated a ritual still marked by Christians – Holy Communion – which commemorates his death. Jesus broke bread and shared it and a cup of wine with his disciples.

Judas then left to meet the other plotters. Jesus continued to teach the others and then went outside into an olive grove to pray. He even prayed for all future believers. He agonised over what was to come but chose the way of obedience. The Bible book, Luke, records him praying, '*Father if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will but yours be done*'. Minutes later Judas arrived with soldiers and the chief priests and Jesus was arrested.

As Lent moves into Easter (2)



April 10th, 2020

A Display of Power

By Nell Goddard, writer for the London Institute for Contemporary Christianity (LICC).

To a world that seeks to show power through explosives, military might, and physical force, Good Friday makes little sense.

A man, hanging on a cross. A man, who claimed to be the Son of God, nailed to a tree. Naked, broken, and dying. Forsaken. Passers-by mock Him: 'Save yourself! Come down from the cross, if you are the Son of God!' (Matthew 27:40). But with no word of complaint, no attempt to fight back, an innocent man accepts a death penalty.

Is this power? The world says no. Power is loud, it is ferocious, and it visibly wins. It is often selfish and seeks advantage over those who are weak and helpless. That is what we see when governments and corporations seeking to show their power at the expense of other people.

Is there really power to be found in the broken and bleeding body of a dying man? The world says no.

But Good Friday tells a different story. This broken and bleeding body of a dying man turns any earthly ideas of power upside down and inside out, as salvation and redemption are found in the most unlikely of places. Power is found in sacrifice, humility, and death. Power is found in a man, hanging on a cross. Naked, broken, and dying. Forsaken. Power is found here, at Calvary.

Today, we preach Christ crucified, 'a stumbling block to the Jews and foolishness to the Gentiles' (1 Corinthians 1:23). The power of the Cross can certainly make little sense to us and our world, so set in our ways. The Cross comes in direct contradiction to everything we hear and see about power on a daily basis. It speaks not of explosives, military might, and physical force, but of love, forgiveness, and the laying down of one's life. A stumbling block and foolishness perhaps, but also a better way to live.

May we seek to show something of Christ's subversive power in our words, lives, and actions, this Good Friday and beyond.

May you experience the powerful love of our Father God, along with the peace and joy that comes from knowing that Jesus died and rose again.

As Lent moves into Easter (3)



April 12th, 2020

Who moved the stone?

*By the Revd Tony Horsfall of
Charis Training.*

'When they looked up, they saw that the stone, which was very large, had been rolled away.' Mark 16:4

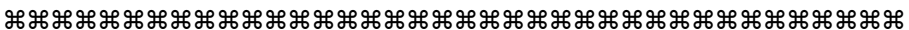
Frank Morrison was an investigative journalist who was a sceptic when it came to religion. He decided to write a book to disprove the claims of Christ, specifically focussed on the last week of His life.

However, when he came to consider the evidence for himself, he was drawn reluctantly to a different outcome than he had imagined. He found that the evidence proved the story to be true, including the fact that Jesus not only died but rose again. In the end he wrote a different kind of book called 'Who Moved the Stone?' with the first chapter entitled, 'The book that refused to be written.'

The veracity of the Christian faith is grounded on historical fact. Not only was Jesus a real person, a figure of history, but His death was real, and so was His resurrection. Examine the evidence for yourself. Read the gospel accounts openly and honestly and see what happens. The truth is there for anyone willing to consider the facts.

Easter reminds us that our faith rests on solid ground. It is why we celebrate Easter Sunday with such gusto. The Resurrection proves that Jesus was who He said He was (the Son of God) and that He did what He set out to do (save us from our sin). But more than that, it reminds us that He can deliver what He promised and help us today because He is alive for evermore.

Jesus is not a figure of history, locked away in the past. No, He is a risen Saviour who is alive today and who invites each of us to receive the gift of salvation, and to live a new life in fellowship with Him.

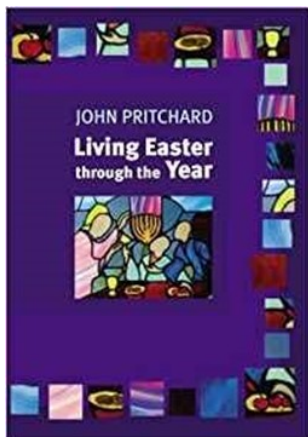


*May the Risen Christ bring you joy
and peace this Eastertime!*



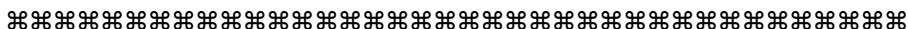
Living Easter Through the Year

By John Pritchard, SPCK, £9.99



We go through Lent and Holy Week with great seriousness, but Easter gets one great day and then we're not sure what to do with it. This book is full of ideas, reflections, and resources on how to extend the message of resurrection through the coming weeks and into the rest of our lives.

It includes ways to celebrate resurrection and to continue the 'risen life', including worship ideas, personal stories, poetry, music, art, literature, film, cartoons and humour; all designed to give points of entry to the theme of resurrection.



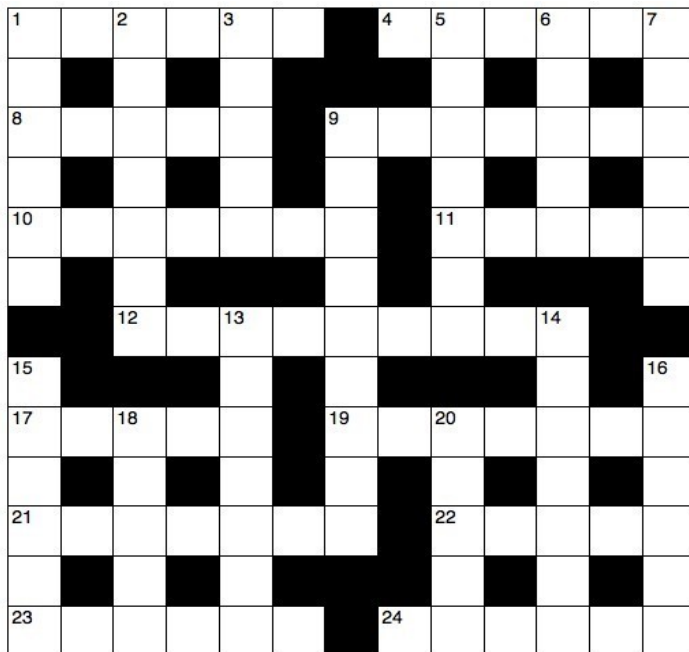
Jesus' Appearances after His Resurrection

The following list of witnesses may help you put all those references in order....

Mary Magdalene	Mark 16:9-11; John 20:10-18	
Other women at the tomb	Matthew 28:8-10	
Peter in Jerusalem	Luke 24:34; 1 Corinthians 15:5	
The two travellers on the road	Mark 16:12,13	
10 disciples behind closed doors	Mark 16:14; Luke 24:36-43; John 20:19-25	
11 disciples (with Thomas)	John 20:26-31; 1 Corinthians 15:5	
7 disciples while fishing	John 21:1-14	
11 disciples on the mountain	Matthew 28:16-20	
A crowd of 500	1 Corinthians 15:6	
Jesus' brother – James	1 Corinthians 15:7	
Those who saw the Ascension	Luke 24:44-49; Acts 1:3-8	

APRIL 2020 CROSSWORD

(The Bible version used in these crosswords is the NIV.)



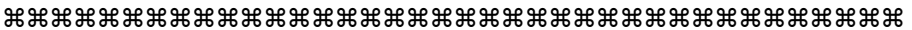
Across

- 1 Relating to the whole universe (6)
- 4 The disciple who made the remark in 8 Across (John 20:24) (6)
- 8 'Unless I see the nail marks — — hands, I will not believe it' (John 20:25) (2,3)
- 9 He urged King Jehoiakim not to burn the scroll containing Jeremiah's message (Jeremiah 36:25) (7)
- 10 Baptist minister and controversial founder of America's Moral Majority, Jerry — (7)
- 11 'Look, here is — . Why shouldn't I be baptized?' (Acts 8:36) (5)
- 12 Repossessed (Genesis 14:16) (9)
- 17 Port from which Paul sailed on his last journey to Rome (Acts 27:3–4) (5)
- 19 'Moses was not aware that his face was — because he had spoken with the Lord' (Exodus 34:29) (7)
- 21 Roonwit, C.S. Lewis's half-man, half-horse (7)
- 22 Grill (Luke 24:42) (5)

- 23 'The lot fell to Matthias; so he was added to the — apostles' (Acts 1:26) (6)
 24 'I was sick and you looked after me, I was in — and you came to visit me' (Matthew 25:36) (6)

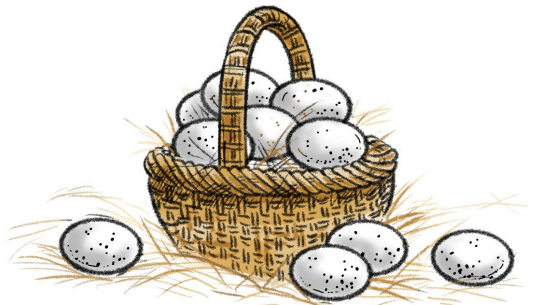
Down

- 1 Coastal rockfaces (Psalm 141:6) (6)
 2 Academic (1 Corinthians 1:20) (7)
 3 Publish (Daniel 6:26) (5)
 5 For example, the Crusades (4,3)
 6 11 Across is certainly this (5)
 7 He reps (anag.) (6)
 9 Liberator (Psalm 18:2) (9)
 13 Man who asked the question in 11 Across was in charge of all her treasury (Acts 8:27) (7)
 14 They must be 'worthy of respect, sincere, not indulging in much wine' (1 Timothy 3:8) (7)
 15 The human mind or soul (6)
 16 'O Lord, while precious children starve, the tools of war increase; their bread is — ' (Graham Kendrick) (6)
 18 'We played the flute for you, and you did not — ' (Matthew 11:17) (5)
 20 Bared (anag.) (5)



Crossword Solution ~ March 2020

P	L	A	N	E	T	R	R	U	G	G	E	D			
A	D					R	I		U		X				
T	R	U	E			A	U	G	U	S	T	U	S		
H	L					C	I		T		D				
A	T	T	I	T	U	D	E			B	E	D			
S	E					R	R		S		L	E			
P	A	R	T	I	C	I	P	A	T	I	O	N			
E	S					E	S		U	N		Y			
W	A	R				H	I	L	L	S	I	D	E		
W	O					D	Y			N		L			
B	A	L	D	H	E	A	D			B	E	D	E		
K						E				A		S	A		
C	E	N	S	U	S					A	R	I	S	E	N



Many of the articles and pictures in the Pews News Extra are sourced from the Parish Pump Website and the Association of Church Editors monthly edition of "Ideas Forum"



Time for a Smile

The Lord is my Shepherd

A Sunday school teacher decided to have her young class memorise one of the most quoted passages in the Bible, Psalm 23. She gave the youngsters a month to learn the Psalm, but little Charles did not find it easy to memorise much of anything.

On the day that the children were scheduled to recite Psalm 23 in front of the congregation, Charles stepped up to the microphone and began proudly, "The Lord is my Shepherd...." He knew that much, but the rest of the Psalm suddenly deserted him. So he concluded bravely: "... and that's all I need to know."



Hot

Q: What do you call a chocolate bunny that was out in the sun too long?

A: A runny bunny.



To God
be the glory



Helen went to church three weeks running, so she was co-opted to the PCC.

What God looks like

An infants teacher was observing her classroom of children while they drew. One little girl was working away furiously, and so she asked her what the drawing was. The girl replied, "I'm drawing God."

The teacher paused and said, "But no one knows what God looks like."

Without missing a beat, the little girl replied, "They will in a minute."

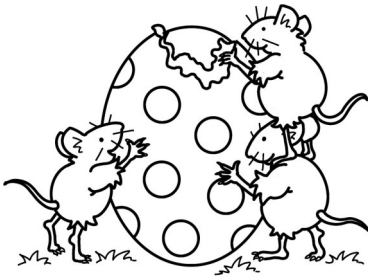
Packet?

A small boy was asking his mother where he came from and when he heard his mother's explanation, he replied: 'Mummy, when God planted the seed in your tummy, was there a photo of me on the packet?'

Higher power

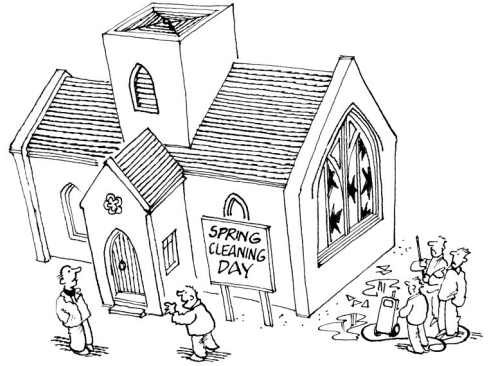
A Sunday school teacher said to her children, "We have been learning how powerful kings and queens were in Bible times. But there is a higher power. Can anybody tell me what it is?"

One child blurted out, "Aces!"



Apes and Monkeys

Puzzled by his first lesson on evolution, young Johnny arrived home from school and said, "Mum is it really true that I am a descendant of apes, monkeys and gorillas." She replied, "I don't really know darling, I never knew any of your father's family."



...er... the good news is the youth-group have made a great start by pressure-washing the west window...



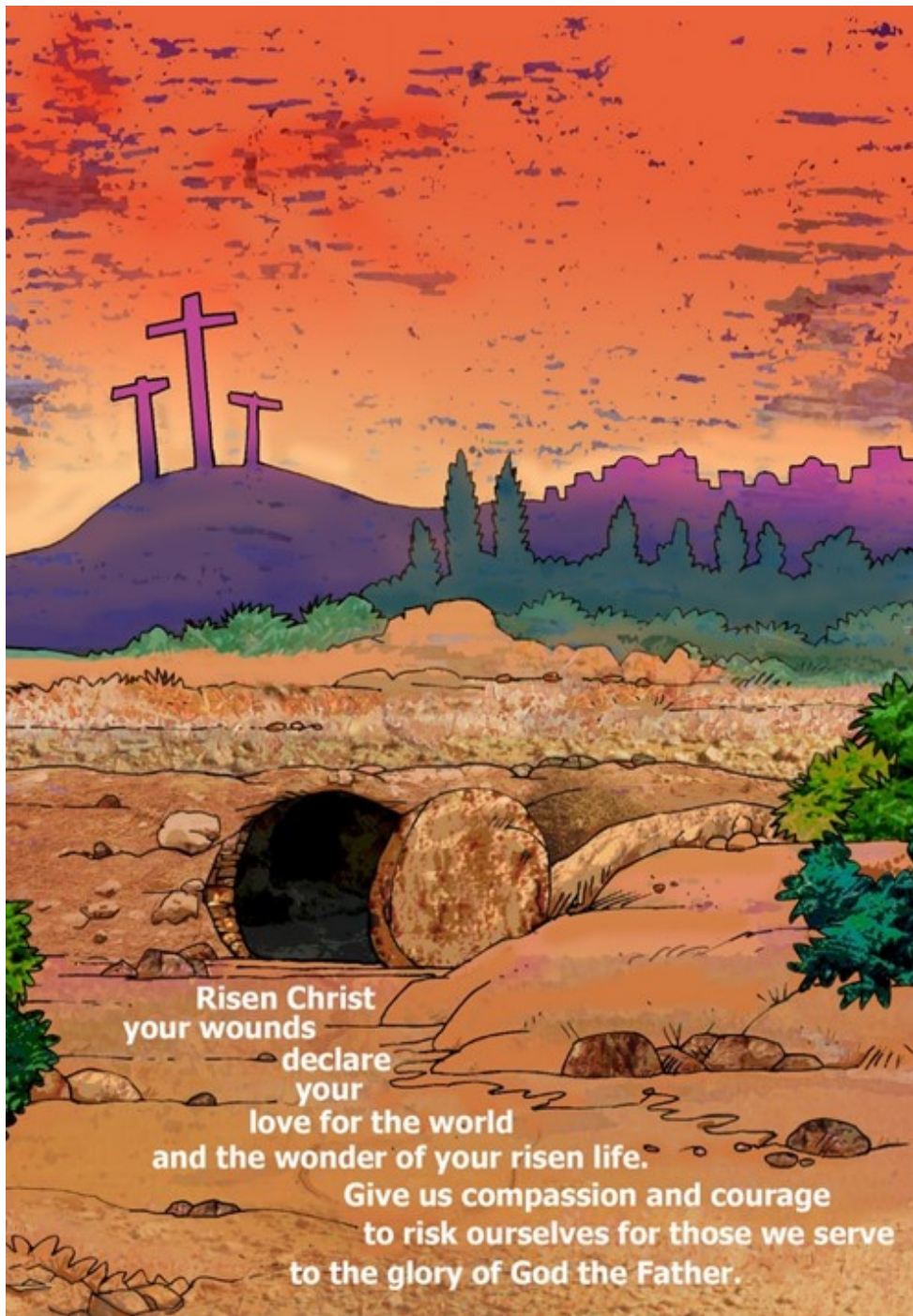
Jesus had a pet?

Heads bowed in prayer, the congregation at our Church listened in complete silence to the Minister as he said, 'Now let us pray in the words that Jesus taught us.'

A little girl's voice could be heard throughout the hushed congregation as she said, "Daddy, I didn't know Jesus had a tortoise."

Environmentally friendly transport

While driving in the countryside, a family caught up to an old farmer and his horse-drawn cart. The farmer obviously had a sense of humour, because attached to the back of the carriage was a hand printed sign: 'Ecologically efficient vehicle: Runs on oats and grass. Caution: Do not step in exhaust.'



Risen Christ
your wounds
declare
your
love for the world
and the wonder of your risen life.

Give us compassion and courage
to risk ourselves for those we serve
to the glory of God the Father.