

Service for Sunday, 26 April 2020 Easter 3

Reading: Luke 24: 13 - 35

God who knows our darkest moments
meets us in our brokenness:
walks beside us as a whisper,
holds our pain in his caress.
God, who leads through shadowed valleys,
where death's bleakness dims our sight,
speaks a peace beyond our knowing,
floods our anguish with his light.

Far beyond our grief's horizon,
as Creation holds its breath:
Love Divine, revealed in Jesus,
tears apart the chains of death.
Servant son and humble healer,
by your cross and life laid down
you have carried all our suff'ring
and you wear the victor's crown.

Lift us up, now, risen Saviour
to the place where mercy plays,
where our broken hopes and heartache
find their healing in your gaze.
This is love, that God has saved us!
This is love, that Christ has died!
We rejoice that love has conquered
and has drawn us to your side.

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Metre: 87.87.D

Suggested tune: Dim ond Iesu (StF 713) – a Welsh tune for a Welsh community, as
Gareth says.

Collect for the Third Sunday of Easter.

Eternal God, your kingdom has broken into our troubled world
Through the life, death, and resurrection of your Son.
Help us to hear your word and obey it.
Bring your saving love to fruition in our lives,
Through Jesus Christ, our Saviour and Lord,
Who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
One God, now and forever.

Things I'm learning from Covid 19

I'm beginning to wonder if Mother Nature isn't trying to tell us how fed up she is with the way humans have been treating her. I'm appreciating the clear blue skies. free of vapour trails and the quietness, since I've had hearing aids I've been able to hear the constant rumble of the traffic on the M54, about half a mile as the Buzzards fly, from 25 Clematis Drive, that's gone now. The short drive to our beehives at Pendeford Mill; we have to take so much stuff we can't carry it, is almost a pleasure with so little traffic on the road. There are some intellectual giants whose cars make too much noise and one with an ear splitting din that like to drive too fast and rupture the silence but that noise soon goes.

Anyway these days are educative. Some important lessons are being reinforced. More than ever I am aware of the fragility of human life. It isn't just young people who behave as if they are immortal and Covid is screaming, "Remember you are mortal."

Weeks before the lock down I had a letter reminding me it was time to get my eyesight tested. I intended to do it "later." Something is happening to my good eye and I now struggle to read the print in the books I had planned to get round to, thank the Lord for Kindle. I won't mention my other aids that also need seeing to! Procrastination is a thief. I think I'll spend the first days after the lockdown "being seen to!"

We are blessed? To have most of our family living within walking distance. They come and stand outside 25 and shout to us and we reciprocate, always keeping the required 6 feet six inches apart. (Not sure how to spell meters). We can't eat and drink together and chat properly, don't want everybody to know our business! The first thing I want us to do, when it's safe, is to have a great big BBQ at the home of the one and only son. Don't want the mess here for June to clear up. And then some pub meals with friends, Oh I miss that fattening pub grub, plus Coffee Mates I cant say how much I miss those Monday mornings the fellowship, the gossip. I need people in my life.

I think we all imagined our pre Covid life style would last forever. We were wrong and we were wrong to take it for granted. This awful, insidious, destructive virus is not respecting our traditions and customs. We needed to be reminded that it can all be taken away, and much of it has been. We don't know when this will end but we can use the time to reconsider, to apologise to dear mother earth, to one another and to God, to plan a life style that will be enriching rather than impoverishing. We are learning who the important people are and we have applauded them each Thursday, let's now pledge to turn that applause into something tangible that goes beyond respect, that pays the mortgage and satisfies Mr Sainsbury, John Lewis, Mr Aldi and Mrs Lidl.

These days emphasise, underline, underscore we are not islands we need one another and we are dependent on the Goodness and Mercy of God.

H&P 431 Tune Fulda

Where cross the crowded ways of life,
where sound the cries of race and clan,
above the noise of selfish strife,
we hear thy voice, O Son of Man.

In haunts of wretchedness and need,
on shadowed thresholds dark with fears,
from paths where hide the lures of greed,
we catch the vision of thy tears.

From tender childhoods helplessness,
from woman's grief, man's burdened toil,
from famished souls, from sorrow's stress,
thy heart has never known recoil.

The cup of water given for thee
still holds the freshness of thy grace;
yet long these multitudes to see
the sweet compassion of thy face.

O Master, from the mountain side,
make haste to heal these hearts of pain;
among these restless throngs abide,
O tread the city's streets again;

Till all the world shall learn thy love,
and follow where thy feet have trod;
till glorious from thy heaven above,
shall come the city of our God.

Frank Mason North 1850-1935

STF 418 We Have a Gospel to Proclaim Tune Fulda

We have a gospel to proclaim,
Good news for men in all the earth;
The gospel of a Saviour's name,
We sing His glory, tell His worth.

Tell of His birth at Bethlehem,
Not in a royal house or hall
But in a stable dark and dim,
The Word made flesh, a light for all.

Tell of His death at Calvary,
Hated by those He came to save,
In lonely suffering on the cross,
For all He loved His life He gave.

Tell of that glorious Easter moon,
Empty the tomb, for He was free.
He broke the power of death and hell
That we might share His victory.

Tell of His reign at God's right hand,
By all creation glorified,
He sends His Spirit on His Church,
To live for Him, the Lamb who died.

Now we rejoice to name Him King,
Jesus is Lord of all the earth,
This gospel message we proclaim,
We sing His glory, tell His worth.

Edward Joseph Burns b. 1938

Ivor Sperring