



# The Benefice of Upper Wensleydale



“He is Risen!”

‘Church in the Home’

Edition 7

Sunday May 03<sup>rd</sup> – Saturday May 9th

## Changing Times

"There are far, far better things ahead  
than any we leave behind" - C. S. Lewis

Any kind of change can be daunting or unsettling; we're creatures of habit and by our very nature we're drawn to the security of familiarity. As a family, as a community, as a nation - heck, as a human population - we've seen uncharted change these past couple of months. Covid19 has shifted our lives as we know it. As the weeks go on there is a building conversation about when and how life will go back to 'normal'; about when the world will look like the familiar world we all knew, pre-coronavirus. I'm not sure if we'll see the old normal as we knew it though.

The thing with change is that it changes us. Just as a pebble - whose edges have been smoothed by the waves of the ocean - is not the same shape after a storm; I'd imagine we'll all find ourselves and our lives forever changed by this.

Some change will be born out of a longing to maintain the simpler way of life we're living right now. Some change will be laced with pain as we navigate loss, be it of a loved one, a job or the plans we held on to that dissolved in our hands. And some change will be sprouting up like a little germinating seed, watered by a shift in perspective and priorities. Whichever way, I believe we'll come out of this changed; we might not have chosen the storm and the wind and rain might have knocked us around to where we thought we wouldn't come out at the other end, but we will, and our edges will be smoother. The world is going to look different and I'm believing there are even better things ahead than what we knew before.

Heather Cumpstone



Knowing you Jesus

Graham Kendrick

<https://youtu.be/oxpPIa-BskY>

Music from

Sarah

This song rejoices in the truth of newfound belief! This is what the church in Acts were celebrating - A 'new normal' as they trusted in Jesus and stepped into a new life with him. Everything that the world holds dear and considers important is nothing against the reality of knowing Jesus in our lives. Their lives were renewed and they showed it through their everyday lives. Dave has often used this song to begin his services of Morning Prayer.

All I once held dear, built my life upon  
All this world reveres, and wars to own  
All I once thought gain I have counted loss  
Spent and worthless now, compared to this

*Knowing you, Jesus  
Knowing you, there is no greater thing  
You're my all, you're the best  
You're my joy, my righteousness  
And I love you, Lord*

Now my heart's desire is to know you more  
To be found in you and known as yours  
To possess by faith what I could not earn  
All-surpassing gift of righteousness

*Knowing you, Jesus  
Knowing you, there is no greater thing  
You're my all, you're the best  
You're my joy, my righteousness  
And I love you, Lord*

Oh, to know the power of your risen life  
And to know You in Your sufferings  
To become like you in your death, my Lord  
So with you to live and never die

*Knowing you, Jesus  
Knowing you, there is no greater thing  
You're my all, you're the best  
You're my joy, my righteousness  
And I love you, Lord*

## **Water you turned into wine** - Chris Tomlin [https://youtu.be/O5d\\_gm9zrnY](https://youtu.be/O5d_gm9zrnY)

This song speaks about rising up out of ashes of defeat. It declares the greatness of the Lord's miracles. This faith is demonstrated in the acts of the apostles as they reflected in the power of the Holy Spirit and devoted themselves to in their new faith and commitment to one another. It speaks of renewed hope because God is with us therefore what can be against us!

Water You turned into wine  
Opened the eyes of the blind  
There's no one like you  
None like you  
Into the darkness You shine  
Out of the ashes we rise  
There's No one like you  
None like you

Our God is greater, our God is stronger  
God You are higher than any other  
Our God is Healer, awesome in power  
Our God, Our God

Into the darkness you shining  
Out of the ashes we Rise  
No one like you  
None like you

Our God is greater, our God is stronger  
God You are higher than any other  
Our God is Healer, awesome in power  
Our God, Our God  
Our God is greater, our God is stronger  
God You are higher than any other  
Our God is Healer, awesome in power  
Our God, Our God

And if Our God is for us, then who could ever stop us?  
And if our God is with us, then what can stand against?  
And if Our God is for us, then who could ever stop us?  
And if our God is with us, then what can stand against?  
Then what can stand against?

Our God is greater, our God is stronger  
God You are higher than any other  
Our God is Healer, awesome in power  
Our God, Our God  
Our God is greater, our God is stronger  
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## **Sunday May 3rd Bible Reading:** Acts 2: 38-47, Psalm 23, John 10:1-10

Click on this site, type in the reading you want and then listen to David Suchet read it to you.

<https://www.biblegateway.com/audio/suchet/nivuk/Gen.1>

# Reflection

## ‘A new Normal’ – Acts 2: 38-47

I have always loved the book of Acts. It's full of action, adventure, purpose and promise as the fledgling church grows in the power of the Holy Spirit with the risen Jesus at her centre. And that's the key. It's all about Jesus. The transformation of lives and the progress of God's kingdom on earth is centred on an encounter with the risen Jesus. It's knowing Him and being filled with His Holy Spirit that makes all the difference. It was so then and it remains so today.

There is a great deal of conversation at the moment about how our lives have changed and will continue to change as a result of the impact of Covid19. Archbishop Justin Welby in his Easter address said that there needs to be, *‘a resurrection of our common life, a new normal, something that links to the old, but is different and more beautiful. We must dream it, build it, make it, grasp it, because it is the gift of God and the call of God.’*

What a change there is that takes place after the release and filling of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. There's a boldness, a confidence a power and a conviction that enters the disciples and the church and in it all, Peter keeps the main thing the main thing: Jesus. It's the work of Jesus on the cross and his love that calls us to respond; to turn away from our old lives (repent) and trust in him for the forgiveness of all things that have separated us from God (sin) and to live in the freedom and the fullness of that restored relationship. Perhaps it's the pure, unadulterated, unencumbered delivery of the gospel message (good news message) that I love so much. It's all about Jesus, looking to Him and accepting Him that transforms the people who hear and respond. And as they respond they enter into a completely new life, a radically transformed **‘normal’**. It happens on a grand scale. 3000 on that first day and then a constant flow thereafter. The risen Jesus ‘resurrects’ his friends lives with new energy and direction and his Holy Spirit then does the same for all who believe. *It was so then and it remains so today.*

This description of the early church is frequently looked to as the example of what a healthy church should look like as it details the qualities that come from a spirit filled encounter with Jesus.

It's a learning church, a praying church, a worshipping church, a sharing church, a joyful church and an attractive church. Attractive because it's full of faith and full of fellowship. Doesn't that excite you? Doesn't that draw you in to want to know more and to experience more? This is what the church of Jesus Christ is intended to be and to look like. Making a difference in the world because Jesus has made the difference in the people who *are* the church. It's not solitary, it's collective. It's not isolation it's community and it's completely focussed on Jesus.

As our archbishop says; ‘.. we must dream it, build it, make it, grasp it, because it is the gift of God and the call of God.’

We are meant to be worshipping, learning, growing and serving together, but what does this mean in these days of physical distancing, lockdown and shielding? How can we be church when we cannot gather as we used to and as they did?

The early church was full of people of different nationalities, different languages, different backgrounds and different customs but with one essential thing in common; their experience of the love, the forgiveness and the presence of the risen Jesus. That was the common denominator. That was what united them. *It was so then and it remains so today.* It's all about Jesus. And as we live in Him and with Him and through Him our lives become united and filled with a common purpose – that we might love the world as He does and through that love draw others to know Him also. A healthy church is a reproducing church and that is something that we are *all* called to be involved in. It becomes our **‘new normal’** as we live as a community with Jesus at the centre, attracting others to experience the same.

How wonderful it is to see all the pictures of this vibrant, active, loving and diverse church community at work and play in the upper dale. These will be shared as part of our morning service on May 3<sup>rd</sup> but can also be found on the website. So many different things taking place. But the early church ensured that Jesus remained consistently at the centre. Their life was focussed on a collective desire to know and to learn and to discover more about him, to maintain an active prayer and worship life, to encourage one another with testimony of the goodness of God, to live thankful, grateful lives that resulted in joyful expressions of generosity in all things; spiritual, physical and yes ... financial. They kept their worship and their relationship alive by constantly remembering Jesus and it was this active living out and sharing of their own experiences that drew others to want to know more.

I remain so grateful to everyone who enables our worship to continue through written and recorded material. We all have a personal responsibility to keep the light of Christ alive in our lives, but it's good to share in this together.

In the gospel reading set for today, Jesus explains that he has come that we might *'have life and life in all its fullness.'* <sup>John 10:10</sup> Earthly experiences, work, finances, opportunities, friendships and activities are all wonderful things, but will fade and fail. The fullness of life Jesus is speaking of is everlasting and ever enduring as it's based on knowing him. There are many people doing so many loving, kind and generous things at the moment, and that is an expression of God's love, but what truly matters is knowing Jesus. *It was so then and it remains so today.*

Before our current situation interrupted plans, Julian and Barbara Spykerman were preparing to run a short course called 'Christianity Explored'. When this present time is over this will resume and I encourage you to consider bringing a friend along with you that more may discover the wonderful truth of freedom, liberty and life that there is in knowing Jesus. It's all about him. It's all about entering into a **'new normal'**. It was so then and it remains so today. God bless you all as we grow together in new ways.

*Dave*

## Prayers

Prayers written in my garden where, during the last month, I have felt closer to God & peace in my heart.

**Jennifer Fawcett**



**“Three things will last forever – faith, hope & love – and the greatest of these is love.”** Corinthians Chapter 1 verse 13. God's love surrounds us & is constant throughout our lives.

Loving and healing God, we turn to you in prayer, confident that you are with us and with all people in every moment. We stand before you as people of hope, trusting in your care and protection. May your faithful love support us and soothe the anxiety of our hearts, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**LORD, IN YOUR MERCY, HEAR OUR PRAYER**

At this difficult time of separation from our families & friends we pray,

Dear God, this day we thank you for all the love & blessings you have given to us. Our loving families & our caring friends. We ask you to bless, protect & guide them till we are able to meet again.

**LORD, IN YOUR MERCY, HEAR OUR PRAYER**

We continue to pray for Drs, Nurses & all NHS workers, for carers & all essential workers. We also pray for scientists who are searching for a vaccine to protect us from the Corona Virus. We give thanks for Captain Tom Moore, a truly inspirational & remarkable man, 100 years old this week, who has raised 29 million pounds for our NHS.

Gracious God, give skill, sympathy and resilience to all who are caring for the sick, and your wisdom to those searching for a cure. Strengthen them with your Spirit, that through their work many will be restored to health; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**LORD, IN YOUR MERCY, HEAR OUR PRAYER**

We pray for those in our Benefice who are unwell at this time & for the lonely, anxious or isolated thinking especially of the residents & staff at Sycamore Hall.

Merciful God, we entrust to your tender care those who are ill or in pain, knowing that your everlasting arms are there to hold them safe. Comfort and heal them, and restore them to health and strength;

**LORD IN YOUR MERCY, HEAR OUR PRAYER**

Father God, gather us all into a circle of friendship & circle us about with your love.

**Merciful Father, accept these prayers for the sake of your son, our Saviour Jesus Christ.**

Visit our Website for more information, resources and messages [www.upperwensleydalechurch.co.uk](http://www.upperwensleydalechurch.co.uk)



# DAILY HOPE

Worship, prayer, hymns and reflections on your telephone

24hrs a day – 7 days a week – call: 0800 804 8044

*“The Daily Hope service will allow people to hear hymns, prayers and words that offer comfort and hope, especially in this Easter season”*

Archbishop Justin Welby

..... This Sunday ..... This Sunday ..... This Sunday ..... This Sunday ..... This Sunday

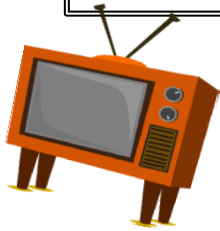
**Sunday May 3<sup>rd</sup>**  
**10:30am**  
Acts 2:38-47  
'A new normal'



To view this Sunday's service:  
Visit the website:

[www.upperwensleydalechurch.co.uk](http://www.upperwensleydalechurch.co.uk)

**TV  
Radio**



## Let's keep worship on the BBC:

Tune into some of the services on TV and Radio.

**Sunday: Radio 4** Sunday Worship 8:10 – 8:50am 'Exploring Emmaus'

**Sunday: Radio 3** Choral Evensong 3:00 – 4pm

**Wednesday:** Choral Evensong 3:30 – 4:30pm

**Sunday BBC1** Worship 10:45 – 11:15 Hereford Cathedral

Songs of Praise 1:15 – 1:50

Just a little thought:



'If your life is hemmed with prayer ...  
it is less likely to unravel'