

Dear all

At last!

I am delighted to be able to announce that Sonia's PTO has finally come through. PTO stands for Permission To Officiate – so she is legal again, and can pick up her full priestly ministry in DSJ.

It is such a shame that, under the current circumstances, we cannot celebrate this as we should. We look forward to a return to normality, and to experience once again valued Sonia's presidency at Communion, and her preaching. I am also looking forward to discovering the fruits of her sabbatical in her researches into the Medieval Guilds.



Sonia will soon be joining me & Ted Fisk in phoning around and keeping in touch with people. Do please join us and keep in touch with as many others as you can – either by phone or email. We are being church in a very different way now. This interesting cartoon makes a wry point about this.

If anyone else has anything to offer – either creative or spiritual – or just plain silly – please do feel free to send me any links/pictures/text etc., and I will post them on.

Just as an example of something ridiculously silly, very painful to listen to, and appeals to my somewhat, at times, warped sense of humour – Handel as never experienced before... (actually a masterclass in dubbing)

<https://www.facebook.com/giuseppepisconti.moniacapobianco/videos/10212429740680565/>

On a more serious note, I have had an offer of an 'emergency grocery pack' from someone who doesn't need it. If anyone either needs one, or knows someone who does, please let me know, and I can arrange delivery.

Finally, this is Paula Gooder's reflection from Tuesday: Life is Stronger than Death.

You may like to read Luke 24.13-35 before you begin.

One of the features that fascinates me most about the resurrection accounts is the reaction of the disciples. Jesus had told them that he would rise from the dead on more than one occasion. They then heard reports that the tomb was empty and he had, in fact, risen as he said he would. But the disciples don't seem to be pleased. We see it most clearly in the story of the road to Emmaus where the two disciples are leaving Jerusalem miserable and downcast. Everything about their demeanour and subsequent conversation with the stranger – who was Jesus – tells us that they thought Jesus' ministry had ended in failure.

The reason for this seems to be that the world was as awful as it had ever been: the Romans were still in power and God's people were still oppressed. The peace and prosperity proclaimed in Isaiah's glorious prophecies seemed as far off as ever. They expected the resurrection to transform the world and they thought that it hadn't. What they needed to learn was how to live the resurrection, not as they expected in a world made suddenly easy and peaceful, but in a world fractured by heartache and sorrow.

This Easter we face a similar challenge. How do we celebrate Easter in a Good Friday world, when the very last thing that anyone wants to be told is 'Be happy, Jesus is Risen'? The risen Christ comes to us as he has always come, bringing into our broken, grieving world the gentle but persistent reminder that, in the words of Desmond Tutu: 'Good is stronger than evil; love is stronger than hate; light is stronger than darkness; life is stronger than death.' He doesn't ask us to feel joyful, just to hold on to the fact that this is true.

Stay safe

Blessings and love

Mark