

## Pastoral Letter 4<sup>th</sup> March

Dear friends,

I was woken very early one morning last week by the sound of a woodpecker merrily going about his drilling business, in one the nearby older sycamore trees. As I opened the curtains on the scene overlooking the valley, I was welcomed with the glorious sight of a wonderful glowing red sunrise. There is something quite beautiful in seeing these amazing natural moments in the day. As I stood looking out I thought to myself; whatever the day might bring, the sight of the sunrise will be with me no matter what.

I was given a print as a gift several years ago now, of Claude Monet's picture, 'Sunrise', and it's a picture I see every morning as it's in the kitchen at the rectory. No matter what the weather might be outside, I still see the glow of a beautiful sunrise, even when my over eager toaster, let's just say, makes sure my toast is well done!

In one of the books that I've been reading this Lent it's been reflecting upon the moment when very early in the morning, whilst it was still dark, Mary Magdalene and two of the disciples go to the tomb where Jesus had been put, only to find it open and the body of Jesus nowhere to be seen. It's only a little bit later on, probably at about the time of sunrise, that Mary Magdalene meets unexpectedly with the risen Jesus. (John 20 v1-19)

Whenever then I see a sunrise, if I'm up early enough, or when I look at the painting of the sunrise on my kitchen wall, it always fills me not only with a sense of joy at seeing such a beautiful sight, but also a sense and feeling of hope, a hope that is based on that first Easter sunrise moment.

I pray that during this Lenten season we might all individually and together as a church family, become ever more aware of the sense of hope that comes through that sunrise moment, on that first Easter morning.

Love & prayers

Revd Neil

