

**Behold, I am doing a new thing;
now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?** Isaiah 43:19

Lockdown Lent!



Theresa has given me the great honour to pen the main story for this month's Listening Post and the challenge to produce some thinking for Lent. By the time you all read this we will be right in the middle of Lent!

You probably wonder what on earth is this picture of my desk? I'm fast approaching the one-year anniversary of working permanently from this position in my loft overlooking Cuddington Park.

Most working days I spend anything between four and ten hours on Zoom calls trying to manage a team of fourteen staff from this very spot. The days are long. I get an incredibly stiff back and need to stretch frequently. Trying to listen and influence on screen is incredibly challenging and every discussion starts with the phrase, "can you hear me?"

Erica and the kids now know a lot of what it takes to manage an international disaster response and look quite phased by some of the things they hear on my calls given the levels of funding involved and risks that get talked about that are having to be managed in some of the world's toughest places.

I've got to say this style of working isn't something I asked for and like us all as we try to get through this latest Lockdown, I'm sure we're all asking the same question. "Haven't we suffered enough?" Can we have our normal lives back please?

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Our spiritual lives are no different and I'm sure as we have all had to endure three lockdowns we have all had to find new ways to maintain, grow and nurture our own sense of spirituality.

Of late I've really got into following the Choral Evensong put on Facebook by Guildford Cathedral and it takes me into a different spiritual zone which I've found very soothing and refreshing. I'm also finding myself with the headphones on listening to my Spotify playlist with the Gregorian chanting from the Worth Abbey Benedictine Monks. I love it!

Lent is a time when we take time out of the normal church year to think hard and attempt to do something that challenges us and pushes us out of our spiritual comfort zones too. Through that learning it helps us to understand a bit more about ourselves and the power of a risen Jesus that we celebrate at Easter.

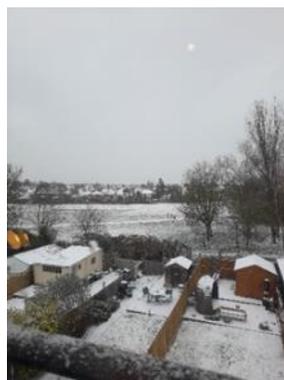
This Lent Theresa is running a weekly course entitled "**Jesus the Storyteller**" using material from a book written by Paula Gooder about the parables.

These stories are just brilliant at helping us understand some really important issues and I encourage you to attend and put yourself in the middle of one of these stories and immerse yourself!

There's also **Stations of the Cross** that will run weekly which presents another opportunity to do something a little spiritually different and maybe see and feel something through a different lens.

I know we have been through a lot already over the last year but I urge you to push the boat out this Lent, do something a little different and be ready to receive the power of the risen Lord we experience and celebrate at Easter.

Stay safe and looking forward to seeing you all again soon!



Jason

Exodus 3:13-14

Moses said to God, 'If I come to the Israelites and say to them, "The God of your ancestors has sent me to you", and they ask me, "What is his name?" what shall I say to them?' God said to Moses, 'I am who I am.'

John 6:35

Jesus said to them, 'I am the **bread of life**. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty.'

Jesus The "I am" Statements

John 8:12

Jesus spoke to them, saying, 'I am the **light of the world**. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness but will have the light of life.'

John 10:11

'I am the **good shepherd**. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.'

John 10:9

I am the **gate**. Whoever enters by me will be saved, and will come in and go out and find pasture.

John 11:25-26

'I am the **resurrection and the life**. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die.'

John 15:1

'I am the **true vine**, and my Father is the vine-grower.'

John 14:6

'I am the **way, and the truth, and the life**. No one comes to the Father except through me.'

Jesus's "I am" statements appear uniquely in John's gospel. Why not take some time to meditate on each of them this Lent?

You might like to try the following:

Find the quotation in your Bible and read it in context.

Is there any further explanation which helps you to understand what Jesus is saying about himself?

Notice what stories come before and after the "I am" statement.

Does this add to your understanding?

Spend some time praying and reflecting on the statement.

March Services and Events

In the present phase of Lockdown, services are allowed to take place in church, with restricted numbers to maintain social distancing. All services in this diary will take place in church unless otherwise stated. Please contact the Vicar on 020 8337 4914 to book a place or to obtain the Zoom login code.

Tuesday 2	10.00	Lent Course on Parables on Zoom
Friday 5	20.00	Stations of the Cross on Zoom
Sunday 7	08.00	Holy Communion
	09.30	Holy Communion
	11.00	Sunday Club on Zoom
Tuesday 9	17.00	Lent Course on Parables on Zoom
Friday 12	20.00	Stations of the Cross on Zoom
Sunday 14	08.00	Holy Communion
	09.30	Mothering Sunday Holy Communion
Wednesday 17	20.00	PCC on Zoom
Thursday 18	19.30	Lent Course on Parables on Zoom
Friday 19	20.00	Stations of the Cross on Zoom
Sunday 21	08.00	Holy Communion
	09.30	Holy Communion
	11.00	Sunday Club on Zoom
Tuesday 23	10.00	Lent Course on Parables on Zoom
Friday 26	20.00	Stations of the Cross on Zoom
Sunday 28	08.00	Holy Communion
	09.30	Palm Sunday Holy Communion
Monday 29	20.00	Holy Monday Communion
Tuesday 30	20.00	Holy Tuesday Communion
Wednesday 31	20.00	Holy Wednesday Communion

Morning Prayer is said every weekday morning at 9am

All are very welcome - use Zoom code 909 037 180