



New life, new glory and a new peace

We're used to celebrating Easter and Ascension Day and Pentecost as three different festivals. That's the way St. Luke describes them and our calendar follows his way of organising things. St. John though is different. For John all three of these great events are rolled into one.

On Good Friday Jesus was crucified but for John things are never quite what they seem. What you see is only part of the story and very often it contains a deeper truth which seems to contrast with the obvious. For John therefore the cross is not only an instrument of shameful death it is also the throne from which Jesus rules his Father's creation. One commentary on John's Gospel refers to the Passion narrative as "The Book of Glory." This kingship is celebrated by Luke in his story of the Ascension.

On the third day, Jesus rose from the dead and was seen by his disciples. The Gospels contain a number of stories of these encounters but none is more significant than the one John tells us took place on the evening of that first Easter day. The disciples were gathered together behind locked doors but Jesus comes to be with them and gives them his Peace. Next though, John tells us that he breathed on them and said "Receive the Holy spirit." For John, then, the gift of the Holy Spirit is directly related to the resurrection and is given by Jesus himself. This is the experience Luke says took place at Pentecost. Jesus' breath, of course, is the same as the wind

of Pentecost – moving air; but to set these two stories alongside one another is to give us an understanding of the Holy Spirit both as gentle, like breathing; and as powerful, like a rushing mighty wind.

When we gather together in the Library Gardens to celebrate Pentecost we shall be marking the completion of the Easter season and celebrating the universal rule of our Lord; but as we do so we shall recall that he rules from the cross in humility and in solidarity with the suffering and the needy. Let us pray that we shall know both the gentleness of the Spirit in the way we deal with each other; and His power in the way he enlivens and motivates us. Let us pray that, like those first disciples, we shall know ourselves to be in the peace of Christ.

Michael Camp

**COMMON
GROUND**

This month Michael Camp writes our leading article. It also appears in the magazines of Bromley Methodist Church & Bromley URC

Please let me have anything for the June Key by Sunday 18th May.

Any thoughts, comments or suggestions please.

Nic Hodson

nicholas.hodson@kcl.ac.uk