

Sanctuary First

A PLACE TO BE

BEHOLD THE MAN

April 2019, Lent into Easter (07 April - 04 May)

Our last theme, [In The Neighbourhood](#), encouraged us to look around our local communities as part of our Lenten reflections - to seek God's face and God's plans amongst the people and places near us. As we draw towards the end of Lent, in anticipation of Easter, we take what we have learned about our neighbourhoods and we focus back on the incredible person of Jesus Christ.

During the next few weeks we are taking up an interesting phrase from the King James version of the Bible. Baiting the crowd, Pilate the Roman Governor of Palestine, points to Jesus the prisoner in all his vulnerability and shouts, "Behold the man!" It is such an enigmatic phrase, for just a few years earlier, John the Baptist addressing, perhaps a different kind of a crowd, had prophesied such a moment when he invited a group of people to look beyond the man, as he cried "Behold the Lamb of God".

We would like the phrase *Behold the man* to weave its way through all our reflections during this season of Lent and Easter. In many ways these two voices echo across the centuries inviting us to look more closely at Jesus of Nazareth and discover again for ourselves what it really means to talk about the Word being made flesh, God's unspeakable gift to a broken world.

Over the next few weeks let us think more deeply about this amazing truth. God the creator of all things has come to dwell with his creation and longs to empower each and every one of us to live our lives to the fullest capacity and then to enter into a new life after death encountering love and acceptance that is beyond our capacity to imagine. So what John Lennon sang about in his song *Imagine* is only but a foretaste of what God has planned for all those who love him and yet do not know him. And those who long for justice to come? Their day will surely come for the Lamb has opened the scroll of history and has redeemed time itself (see Revelation 5).

Each week of the theme runs Sunday-Saturday and has its own subtheme, which contains daily Bible readings and thought triggers.

Date	Subtheme	Readings	Notes
07 April	Can you see it?	1. Isaiah 43: 16-21 2. Psalm 126 3. Philippians 3: 4b-14 4. John 12: 1-6 5. Matthew 16: 13-17 6. Luke 7: 44 7. Mark 10: 17-27	Reflect upon how easy it is to miss out on the inspiration of eternal things. Often we can't see the good things that are staring us in the face. Use these passages to help stimulate your reflections and prayers. 1. God's New Thing 2. Can our mouths contain the laughter when we get excited about God? 3. Pressing on - to grasp the prize 4. Mary got It! 5. Peter got It! 6. Simon missed It! 7. The rich ruler missed It!

Date	Subtheme	Readings	Notes
14 April (Holy Week)	What are you looking at?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Isaiah 53: 1-8 2. Isaiah 42: 1-9 3. John 12: 20-36 4. John 13: 21-32 5. John 13: 1-17, 31-35 6. John 19: 1-19, 42 7. Matthew 27: 57-66 	<p>Our Daily Worship writers will write seven prayers and reflections around images of Jesus. What do we see when we look at Jesus? Could it be we are looking at someone who was and is "One Of Us". Scripture does say, "In all things he was tempted like us." Yet he was more than us.</p> <p>Karl Barth, the famous 20th Century theologian once wrote, "God is 'wholly other', and there is nothing that humankind can do to bridge the gulf; however, Man is in the heart of God and everyone is included in his love."</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Look at Jesus - The Rejected One 2. Look at Jesus - The Beloved One 3. Look at Jesus - The Glorified One 4. Look at Jesus - The Betrayed One 5. Look at Jesus - The Serving One 6. Look at Jesus - The Crucified One 7. Look at Jesus - The Buried One
21 April (Easter)	Now can you see it? You get like what you look at!	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. John 21: 9-17 2. Acts 10: 34-43 3. Isaiah 65: 17 4. Psalm 118: 22-23 5. I Corinthians 15: 19-26 6. Revelation 5 7. I John 1: 1-4 	<p>Our Daily Worship writers will write seven prayers and reflections around the central conviction of the resurrection of Jesus. When it comes to resurrection it is not so much what you see - it is what you perceive and understand has been revealed to you.</p> <p>To truly know Jesus is not so much a flesh and blood perception as a Spirit of God revelation. The more you look at resurrection the more you become a new creation.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Look at Jesus - The Risen One! 2. Peter says "Now I truly understand! Now I know God has no favourites." 3. God says, "I will create new heavens and a new earth. The former things will not be remembered." 4. God says, "Look the Rejected One, is the Cornerstone." It's marvellous in our eyes. 5. Paul says, "Resurrection is the deal maker or the deal breaker!" 6. The Lamb has redeemed time itself. 7. John says, "It happened, we saw it with our own eyes, our hands have touched it. We write this to make our common joy complete!

Date	Subtheme	Readings	Notes
28 April	It's contagious! Resurrection is breaking out everywhere!	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Acts 5: 27-32 2. Psalm 118: 14-29 (especially v23) 3. Psalm 150 4. John 14: 12-14 5. John 20: 19-23 6. John 20: 24-31 7. John 14: 15-21 	<p>If it is true that you get like what you look at - the more we reflect upon the power of the resurrection the more Christlike we will become. To believe in the resurrection is to believe that the impossible can happen. Sinners can become saints, sins can be forgiven, faith can be kindled out of ashes.</p> <p>Once this can be believed the message of resurrection become contagious.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Something inside so strong! 2. This is all God. It's absolutely marvellous! 3. All I can say is "Strike Up the band!" 4. And there is more to come? 5. Don't get too anxious "Peace be with you" 6. Stop doubting - start believing 7. Did I not tell you I was never going to leave you - I'll be your life tutor right beside you!