

‘Transformation’

Kitchen Science Activity – colour changes using red cabbage pH detector.

Detector solution in jam jars etc. Add a variety of solutions and see what happens e.g. lemon juice, water, washing up liquid. Observe colour changes.

(How does it work? Red cabbage contains a pigment molecule called flavin. Acids and alkalis change the colour of the pigment.)

Last Sunday, Easter Day, we celebrated the most amazing transformation of all time: Jesus’ resurrection. God raised Jesus from the dead and showed us that Love overcomes death and promises us that whatever our terrors, sufferings and weaknesses in life, by trusting in Jesus we can know that we are never isolated from God either here and now, or for all of eternity. A whole new world order has begun, and God’s Kingdom is being established on earth. In the ‘raising up’ of Jesus God’s mission of healing and restoration has succeeded in breaking the power of sin and death. We humans are no longer alienated from God, isolated by our sin and without hope for this world.

For the next few weeks our Bible readings will help us to think more deeply about what this great transformation means for us, for the church and for the wider world.

Our Gospel reading today tells a wonderful transformation story. The disciples were of course terribly afraid after Jesus’ death. Whatever was going to happen to them? They had had so many amazing experiences with Jesus, but it had all ended with Jesus’ terrible death.

But then, all of a sudden, Jesus was with them in the locked room. Just imagine for a moment if you had been there. How would you feel if the person who meant everything to you, who had died, was next to you again?

I think it must have been pandemonium! But these are Jesus’ words:

‘Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you.’ ²² When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, ‘Receive the Holy Spirit.’

With that peace, with the Holy Spirit to guide them and with the gifts of the Spirit to enable them, the disciples were transformed from people who hid away, too scared to go out, into people who told the story of Jesus and his resurrection so that everyone who heard could find peace and know that Love overcomes death ...

We are blessed to live in a nation where everyone is free to speak about their faith. When we talk about Jesus' resurrection we are not going to be sent to prison. But I wonder how often we do it? And if we don't do it very often, why we don't? Because it would make a big difference if we did.

This week I was at my Mum's, packing up to help her move into sheltered accommodation. Her carers come in very early and the flat was full of bags and boxes, so I got out of the way and went for an early morning coffee. I found a tiny coffee bar where people were perching on bar stools drinking their coffee and chatting. It was all very friendly and cheerful, and one of the regulars was very open about his Christian faith and it wasn't cringy, or intrusive, or heavy, or 'too out of this world to be any earthly use'. These Bible readings and that man in the coffee bar are making me think about how the transformation that God has brought through Jesus' resurrection leads to a transformation in us, that can then spread into the places that we live and relax and work and learn by the way that we live, the values we hold, the priorities we choose, but also by talking about the fact that we go to church, that we pray, and that God answers those prayers. If the BBC2 programme 'Pilgrimage' is anything to go by, people want to hear about our experiences of God and they want to share their thoughts and faith with us.

So let's be bold! With the help of the Holy Spirit, our words could be part of a new story of transformation where a locked heart is opened, or a prison door is unlocked.