

## May 2021 - Ribbons, beans and flowers

By the time you read this, children will have returned to school and for most of us Easter will feel a distant memory, but I'm still going to reflect on it.

For me, Easter this year was an improvement on Easter last year! Last year our churches were closed, we could not meet, and Richard and I greeted Easter dawn on our own on the top of Rebellion Knoll. This year, I know our churches and communities a little better, I feel we have learned a lot together over the last year or so, and I'd like to say a huge thank you to everyone who enabled our Easter celebrations this year to be as near to 'normal' as possible.

I know I am not alone in finding it a joy this year to see the number of prayer ribbons that have been tied to Thankful Crosses across the Valley. It will feel sad in a way to take them down, but I hope that we will find other similar ways to share together. I also have a runner bean plant by my front door that started as a Lent activity, and is now climbing towards the ceiling so quickly that I'm wondering what to do with it while it is still too cold for it to go outside. One or two emails and photos have suggested I'm not alone in that either!

On a chilly and damp Palm Sunday, Wesley the donkey behaved impeccably on a walk through Castleton to the Methodist Church, as I shared stories about Jesus with random (carefully planted) passers-by that I met, before Rev' Julie Letts led us in worship together outside the Methodist Church. Unfortunately, although Wesley behaved impeccably, the same was not true of the technology! Finally, on Easter Sunday itself, a high point was undoubtedly the flowers, and Easter gardens and crosses in all of our churches.

One of my prayers for our churches as we look ahead is undoubtedly that we will continue to work closely together to value one another, and to value the faith of the many members of our communities who love God, but do not feel that our traditional ways of worshipping 'work' for them, for a whole host of reasons. And, as always, I thank you for the support our churches enjoy from so many in our communities.

Yours in Christ,  
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