

I'm writing this on Ascension Day – or as someone put it 'the day Jesus started working from home'!

It seems a long 40 days since Easter this year, due to the lockdown, but again, it's helped me to appreciate how it was for the first followers of Jesus, filled with uncertainty among signs of hope – for them, meeting the risen Lord Jesus, but still not sure of the future. And for Christians that remains the present reality too.

We're still not sure when church buildings will reopen for public worship – and when they do, things will be very different to how they were before. Broadcast services will remain, I think, so that those unwilling or unable to attend can still be fed spiritually, and while lacking the closeness of fellowship with others, the same Risen, Ascended Jesus will meet with us whether we are in church, or in our homes.

Because that's what the Ascension is all about. Jesus really did start working from home. But unlike us this meant he was no longer limited by what makes us and him human. Before he ascends back to his father in heaven, he gave to his troubled friends several promises. The first was that they would receive another helper, another friend – The Holy Spirit – one who is like Jesus, but whose presence would reassure them as they listened to his voice in prayer and followed his words. Second, he promised eternal hope. I am relieved to say that as I write, our communities have not been overwhelmed by funerals, although our hearts go out to any who have lost loved ones recently.

Jesus promised to prepare a place for us in his Father's house – what an amazing image of eternal life. A place where we will be known and will know both God and our loved ones. This crisis has caused many of us to re-evaluate our lives, and for some this has meant regaining faith and trusting in a loving God, one who is close to us even when we at the moment have to be separate from others.

Jesus completed his work on earth, returned to his Father, and now, each and every day, gives hope to troubled hearts. Hang on to that, and remember I am here for you – practically and spiritually – don't hesitate to call me on 07504827929, 01959540012 or email [vicar@pcd.org.uk](mailto:vicar@pcd.org.uk)

With blessings and prayers,  
John