

## ***Dear Friends***

As I write, this long and hard winter is still dragging on. I find myself longing for the first signs of spring; for warmth of sun, for the wind to lose its edge, and for the birdsong to pick up tempo and cheer. So in the absence of signs of spring, I put on a CD of Katherine Jenkins instead. What a combination! Beautiful woman! Beautiful voice! And Welsh too!

There's something about the gift of song, the gift of music, that bespeaks of beauty and truth. Those who sing in choirs know this – that to sing, especially *together*, whether you are skilled or unskilled, releases our stresses and worries, and puts us into another space, into a world of beauty and wonder.

When I hear great music, I like to believe that in one of his many ways, our God is speaking to us. Yes, he speaks to us through the bible, through our church worship, but also through great art, music, poetry, and through the wonder of beautiful countryside, towering mountain and sun-washed meadow.

All of which makes me very thankful to God; for I believe these are all gifts of God to us in his wonderful creation. Summed up for Christians in the gift of Jesus himself, who in going to the cross for us on that first Good Friday, and bursting forth from the tomb on that first Easter morning long ago, set us free from sin, death, from being sealed off in that cold, dead place that knows not the light and life of the love of God. All brought to fullness in the gift of Jesus, his risen light shining triumphant upon his creation with the new life of Easter.

Forgive me! This was going to be a practical letter, and it turned into a bit of a sermon. So you see what a Katherine Jenkins CD can do.

Do come and see me, sitting in the lych-gate, on our **Gift Day** on March 28<sup>th</sup>. If you have a glad heart, and want to thank God for it, come and give thanks, and support our Church.

**Mothering Sunday** this year is on 22<sup>nd</sup> March. If God is our Father, then the Church is our Mother; Mothering Sunday celebrates this. We will welcome new members of the Mother's Union that day, and pray for the MU's work too.

My love and prayers,

***Stephen***

**LENT COURSE:** During Lent, there will be an Ecumenical Lent Course, meeting in the Church Hall on Tuesdays at 10.30, starting 3<sup>rd</sup> March. Everyone is welcome to come.