

Meeting Places

There have been a few in Eastertide 2025

Sunday's gospel (for Easter 4) shows Jesus in the Temple Courtyard - a place where people could meet and discuss important issues – where questions could be asked and differences resolved. Jesus was asked for a 'sign' that he was the promised 'Messiah'. Jesus reminded them of all the 'signs' they had seen – the sick healed, the blind given sight, the deaf able to hear, the dead raised to life: 'The works that I do in my Father's name testify to me.'



Across the country and the world there have been meetings in churches, streets and public places, to commemorate VE Day 80 years ago. We remembered those who died, those who survived with physical and emotional injuries, and those who experienced the most unspeakable horrors human beings can inflict upon others. We also met to give thanks for new relationships forged and to celebrate special memories of courage and kindness; and reconciliation between enemies.

In Rome the Conclave met to listen to the Holy Spirit's guidance in electing a new Pope. Now we have Pope Leo XIV to be a leader for Christ in the world. In that same place, where Pope Francis prayed daily for peace, the world also saw a close encounter between Presidents Zelenski and Trump. We wait to see the long-term outcome, but short-term progress was made.

Not least is the place we meet each Sunday – like the Temple Courtyard of Jesus time, church buildings are where we can learn from one another, where we can discern how God wants us to act, and a place where we can resolve our differences. We share peace amongst ourselves so we can approach the communion table without enmity in our hearts.

Psalm 23:5 begins *'You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies.'* God invites us to sit at table with those who trouble us – to listen to one another, to grow together, to forge new and just ways to live, in reconciliation and peace.

Here is the communion table... the table of reconciliation with God. It is where hurts are healed, sins forgiven and life renewed. It is the place where we meet the heart of God and the fullness of peace and justice, together with those we love and also those who trouble us. *Surely, goodness and love will follow us all the days of our lives and we shall dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.*