Thought for the Day 30th July 2020 from Janet Lindley (All Hallows)

Readings: 1 Samuel 12 & Luke 22:47-62

'I don't know him'.

That's how Peter replied to the servant girl.

Looking at the passage from Luke, it had been a crazy day. A seemingly friendly kiss had resulted in arrest and drawn swords. Now waiting outside the house of one of the religious leaders where Jesus was interred, Peter was waiting for news.

'I don't know him'.

It feels pretty uncomfortable reading those words. We wonder what would we have done? What would we have said in response? Would we have joined in the denial?

What I'm struck by today, after reading this familiar and unsettling passage, is that Peter was there.

This afternoon I went to a Church of England webinar "opening the doors" thinking about the impact of online worship and what it might mean for the church in the future. Across the country churches have opened their doors in a different way, and our three churches have joined in offering worship online. New worshipers have found their way to church in large numbers. Those who wanted to, but couldn't physically get there, have joined in too. It poses a question, what does that mean for the future of our worship as a church?

Back to Peter and his threefold denial. Fast forward to John 21:17, right after Jesus' death and resurrection we hear of Jesus and Peter meeting again. The three denials are met with three instructions to Peter to look after Jesus' followers. Not just look after, but to lead, being the 'rock'.

As churches we can often be thinking of rocks, or at least bricks and mortar. It's not surprising as the Church of England is structured that way with land (parishes) and buildings.

There is benefit in 'being there'. Here, physically in Hyde Park and Headingley, and virtually on Zoom, Youtube and Facebook live.

What will it mean to be church into the future? How will we continue to welcome and serve the people who look for God through the church doors or a google search?

https://www.dur.ac.uk/digitaltheology/ewo/