

Someone once said to me – “if you could have a superpower what would it be?”

I said: “I’d like to evaluate past events, and say how we could have done things better.”

“That’s not a superpower” they said – “that’s just hindsight” ... I said “yes – I see that now.”

Hindsight is a really useful thing. What were you doing this time last year?

I’d bet that like thousands of us up and down the country we were probably watching Boris Johnson on the TV, giving his speech and telling us we were going into a lockdown.

How did you feel in that moment? Did you see it as inevitable?

Did you think well, it’s around the world and so it’ll come to us – the numbers are creeping up, perhaps about 300 or so ...

Or did it come as a shock? Did you think it wouldn’t happen in this country?

Did you think it would last three weeks? Months? A year?

To still be socially distancing now? To spend as much time as possible inside?

We can see it in hindsight – if only we did it earlier, or if only the government did this ...

If only, if only, if only!

But that only gets us so far, because it doesn’t change anything does it?

We are where we are, we are social distancing, we can’t meet, we can’t gather in churches. And now instead of 300 its thousands ...

And today we remember them, we remember all those who have lost their lives.

But as well as that we look forwards, we look to the hope the vaccine gives us to be able to meet again, to be able to hug again, to meet to worship together ...

Those moments fill us with hope and with joy, expectation and excitement.

This season of Easter is about hope, joy, expectation.

On Palm Sunday – this Sunday, I wonder if the crowd knew what was coming next – did the disciples know what was coming next? That over the course of the coming week, all of them would desert him and the one they’d followed for the last three years would be killed, crucified, gone.

How would they be feeling I wonder, looking back on the events of that week? Thinking if only, if only, if only?

I don’t think they would, I think they’d be grieving the loss of Jesus.

And yet, we know that resurrection is coming, we know that Jesus will be coming back, he will be resurrected. And that he will share that joy of new life with his disciples, we know because we are looking back.

There will be a moment in the future, when we look back on the events of coronavirus – it will be like that Good Friday, things are dark, things are bleak ...

But we will look back through the lens of Easter Sunday – we look back and say yes it was terrible, and it was hard ... But we have a vaccine, things got better, things got brighter.

And we do the same with Good Friday – it's hard and tough – but because of the resurrection of Jesus things got better.

And so in the future when we are in those Good Friday moments, or even those Easter Saturdays, when things are dark, when things are tough we can remember those Easter Sunday moments, and we can say that God is with us, God will be working in so many ways, and God will bring us through to a new situation.

We aren't there yet, we're still in a place that is tough and that is dark ...

But the events from Palm Sunday through to Easter show us there is hope, there are things to look forward to, and God is at work to bring something out of this darkness.

Our challenge is to hold on to hope!

To share that expectancy and hope with one another, who look to a brighter future, not because of the vaccine, but because God is with us, God is working, and Jesus is risen.

And we are invited to share in that resurrected life, through and beyond even death.

Amen.