

Dear Friends

We're often challenged by the question: "how is the church relevant to the needs of our people and the world today?" Stabbings, shootings, climate change, war, poverty, abuse, extremism, neglect and political turmoil are all sad facets of today's world and can seem far removed from the Sunday gatherings and singing of hymns that we engage in.

The image pictured here is taken in the church "Dominus Flevit" (Jesus wept) which is on the Mount of Olives, overlooking Jerusalem. Facing the altar you look past the cross through the glass to the city – a microcosm of all that is wrong in the world today. It is through the image of the cross that we see the world. Of course, the cross that we contemplate again in the coming weeks speaks to us of our individual at-oneness with God – that sense that it is a personal statement to each that we are forgiven, we are loved, that much.



But it is also a message for the world in all its groaning today. The Cross spoke, and speaks to a chaotic world of the power of sacrificial love – love for neighbour and for God. It's an answer to the world's problems that isn't instant, but requires patience. It doesn't involve the use of military strength, and refuses to be caught up in tit-for-tat revenge and condemnation. It's a costly answer which is about winning over the hearts of men and women to love one another in being drawn to him who is raised up and stretches out his arms for us. It's an answer which carries the message "God is with us" and, through the resurrection can never be defeated. It's a message of hope.

This is not an immediate, knee-jerk answer to today's problems – but it is *the* answer, profoundly and perpetually relevant to all the needs of the world.

Praise be to the one who was born as man, died on the Cross and rose again for us!

Kim