

Some things never change!

Acts 2^{14,22-32}; [Psalm 16; 1 Peter 1³⁻⁹]; John 20^{19-end}

*Although the doors were shut, Jesus came and stood among them and said, 'Peace be with you'.
[John 20²⁶]*

One of the challenges that those of us who preach regularly have to deal with is making the Bible relevant - and as there can be between 5000 and 2000 years to bridge, sometimes you need to be creative. Not today! Did you hear those words from the Gospel: **Although the doors were shut, Jesus came and stood among them and said, 'Peace be with you'**.

The disciples over two weeks - Thomas famously being absent on the first week - had that face to face encounter with the resurrected Jesus when they became convinced that he really was risen from the dead and that became the basis for their belief.

- ✠ Peter was so convinced that, in the passage we read from his Pentecost sermon, he makes the point that the events of Good Friday were **according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God** and that **you crucified and killed him, but God raised him up**. He goes on to point out that the great King **David** (who, despite his elevated status had managed to stay dead) prophesied that the Messiah will rise from the dead.
- ✠ It is this conviction that turns the disciples into Apostles as they are **sent** in the power of the **Holy Spirit** in John's Pentecost with the power to **forgive the sins of any** (or not).

For us today that same risen Jesus stands with us behind closed doors and his message is the same - **Peace be with you!** It is that complete peace summed up in the Hebrew *Shalom*. It is peace with God, particularly in the forgiveness of sin and the removal of guilt that the death and resurrection of Jesus makes possible; it is peace between us and others in the mending of relationships; it is peace within ourselves as that Holy Spirit Jesus breathed over his disciples makes us more and more like Jesus. All of that is possible - even behind closed doors!