

29<sup>th</sup> April 2022

## Repeat

**“Let every creature rise and bring  
Peculiar honours to our King;  
Angels, descend with songs again,  
And earth, repeat the long AMEN.”**

*Isaac Watts, Jesus Shall Reign Where'er the Sun*

The seagulls are back! I was wakened at exactly 05.09 this morning with Morris Dancing gulls having their early morning rehearsal on the roof above me. Or maybe it was a team of Spanish dancers practicing a *Fandango*, or couple brushing up on their *Paso Doble* for the ornithological equivalent of *Strictly*. But the seagulls woke me up again. And it was an exact repeat of what happened this time last year!

Some repeated things we don't like: the continued loud music from a noisy neighbour; the recurrence of pain which analgesics fail to keep at bay; the horrors of the daily news from Ukraine. Others bring pleasure: visits from someone we love; the familiarity of a favourite radio or TV show; a message from a friend on the anniversary of a loss. We live with the bad and the good of repeats all the time – seagulls on my roof included.

And repeats in our journey of faith? Familiar bible passages; well-known hymns; the reassuring voice of our minister; the routine of a prayer group. Such repeated things that are rightly valued when they happen. But what about something we repeat *all* the time, in public and private, often without thinking, and certainly not pondering its importance much? That's the word "amen" – repeated over, and over, and over again.

In Isaac Watts familiar hymn, "Jesus shall reign where'er the sun", after outlining the importance of Christ's Kingdom, calling us to respond and the pointing to the blessings that result, he turns in the final verse – quoted above – to the importance of a repeat: "Repeat the long Amen". Familiar? Of course. Given little thought? That too. But an affirmation of our response to all we're given from the hand of God? Yes, and yes again!

So, if I'm woken up again tomorrow at 05.09 by seagulls dancing on my roof, I'm not say "amen" to that repeat. But I *will* give thought to repeating "amen" for all the benefits of the goodness and love of my God in my life. And that'll be a much better way to begin the day!

### **A prayer for today**

*"Amen!" I say. And I repeat, "Amen! Amen! Amen!" And that's my prayer. Amen*

An original reflection @Tom Gordon

Also available at <https://swallowsnestnet.wordpress.com>