12th April 2026

Wonderful?

"And I think to myself: what a wonderful world."

Bob Thiele and George David Weiss, *What a Wonderful World*

In the past few weeks, I've had several FaceTime and WhatsApp calls with family and friends in different parts of the UK, from Yorkshire to the far north of Scotland … I've been on a training programme using the Teams platform, with participants from all over the country … I've joined a Presbytery meeting and had a catch-up with Hospice chaplains by Zoom, with more people than I could count … I've had conversations with friends in the USA, using Zoom, Teams and Facetime … I've joined an on-line chat with volunteers in a UK charity … I've viewed a friend's funeral service live streamed on YouTube … I've watched a system being set up to broadcast a funeral from our church, with equipment that could fit in two suitcases … I've been amazed at the clarity of the communications from the *Artemis* space-capsule … And I think to myself, what a wonderful world!

And in the past few weeks I've watched the devastation of war in Iran and throughout the Middle East, including the loss of lives of innocent men, women and children … I've been reminded of the continued distress of the people of Palestine and the West Bank, with their tragedies so quickly pushed aside by other events … I've watched a documentary on the struggles the people of Ukraine have had over this past winter as the Russian forces have continued to target their energy infrastructure … I've read through material in advance of *Christian Aid* Week in May, around their appeal for Sudan, where violence has displaced millions of people, whose plight has been made worse by cuts in International Aid … And I think to myself … A wonderful world? Very far from that, it seems.

And yet, was it not ever thus? Are we not constantly squeezed between the wonderful and the hellish, the glorious and the utterly horrific, the happy and the sad, the optimistic and the hopeless? As the wonder of our world is threatened by the awfulness of humanity, it's hard to shake off the fear that the hopeful will be overwhelmed by the dreadful.

So, in this post-Easter period, as glory is challenged by the tensions within us and around us, let's stand together and try to stay hopeful, believing, as we should, that goodness will have the ultimate victory.

A prayer for today

For love, justice and truth to sustain us and lead to peace, this is my prayer. Amen

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