

HIDDEN RIVER CIRCUIT DEVOTIONAL ARTICLES

Edition 20: APRIL 2026

Welcome to this April edition of Circuit reflections, to celebrate the Good News that is Easter. Take your Bible and ponder on the stories. Take your hymn book and sing to the God who made us and can do amazing things. Take your time and wait for God to speak to you and bless you.

Thank you to all who have contributed to this edition

Editor: Karen Drayton (kedrayton1@gmail.com 07817830701)

Please send any comments and thoughts you may have on any of the articles

Printer and Distributor: Richard Brinck-Johnsen Circuit Administrator

Contact Details of Hidden River Circuit Staff:

Rev Dr Gary Hall (Superintendent Minister) 07354 646277 gary.hall@methodist.org.uk

Rev Nancy Ndoho 01922 623926 nancy.ndoho@methodist.org.uk

Deacon Helen Webster 01922 628723 helenweb2@gmail.com

Rev Denise Yeadon 01922 863461 deniseyeadon@btinternet.com

Richard Brinck-Johnsen(Circuit Administrator) 07587 956881 hiddenrivercircuit@gmail.com

Pastoral Lay Workers:

Anne Kelsall 07513155879 hiddenrivercircuit.pastoral1@gmail.com

Vickie Heydon-Matterface 07352451336 hiddenrivercircuit.pastoral2@gmail.com

Stephen Allen 07467035211 hiddenrivercircuit.pastoral3@gmail.com

WEEK 1 : APRIL 5th : Why are you looking for the Living among the Dead?

A Reflection by Karen Drayton

SCRIPTURE: Matthew 28 1-10, John 20. 1-18, Acts 10.34-43, I Corinthians 15. 3-7

Happy Easter!! After the long season of Lent, it is so refreshing and wonderful to come to Easter Day, with its feelings of hope, miracles, spring and life beginning again. We are fortunate in Britain to experience Easter in the springtime, when nature seems to be in tune with our church calendar. I wonder if it is more difficult in places in the Southern Hemisphere, like, say, New Zealand, where they are coming into their autumn and winter period.

Once our church in Rotherham ran a holiday club during Holy Week, and lots of lovely children came, many who had never been to church or heard any Lent or Easter stories. When we spoke about Jesus coming alive again, a nine year old girl was amazed!! "What, Jesus came alive again, after being dead?" She couldn't believe the story. Since then I have felt – how amazed people are going to be when they **do** hear the story, these generations who don't go to church and don't know the amazing truth about Jesus!! Many of us have heard these stories since childhood, and maybe they lose their power to cause us to gasp in awe and wonder.

But the story is amazing – Jesus was seen to be crucified, well dead and buried, and yet on the third day he rose again – his dead body was nowhere to be found.

Sometimes I wonder, are we right to believe this incredible story? Is it just a metaphor for hope and renewal of life? If we can't believe in this miraculous alternative end to death that we commonly see, can we still be Christians? Like many things in life, there are reactions from one extreme to the other, a range of responses and beliefs, and I believe God can handle the whole range.

The question of evidence for the resurrection of Jesus Christ involves history, theology, and personal belief.

All four Gospels (Gospel of Matthew, Gospel of Mark, Gospel of Luke, Gospel of John) report that Jesus' tomb was found empty: the body was never produced by opponents, the earliest witnesses were women (you would never choose women to be the first witness in the first century if you wanted to invent a credible story), which suggests the story wasn't fabricated for credibility, the location of the tomb was known—so it could have been checked.

Alternative explanations often suggested are the body was stolen, the women went to the wrong tomb, maybe Jesus was crucified in a mass grave (which was common for criminals) and the story of Jesus rising from death physically developed later.

But - there were plenty of eyewitness appearances, and multiple sources claimed that people encountered the risen Jesus.

The earliest written account is from Paul the Apostle in First Epistle to the Corinthians (chapter 15), where he lists appearances to individuals (like Peter the Apostle), to groups (including "more than 500 people at once"). This belief is dated very early (within a few years of the crucifixion), and it suggests belief in the resurrection wasn't a later legend, or a story that grew with time. Group appearances are harder to explain as hallucinations or visionary experiences, or as a possible grief response.

The rapid growth of Christianity in hostile environments (especially Jerusalem, where Jesus was executed) is often cited as proof of the resurrection - the message of resurrection emerged immediately, not centuries later and it was proclaimed in the very place where it could have been disproven.

First-century Jews did not expect a single person to rise before the end of time or a crucified Messiah - yet early Christians proclaimed both, so something significant must have triggered such a radical reinterpretation of belief. Because the gospels accounts vary in their details, this points to independent testimony rather than collusion, and the Gospel accounts agree on the core claim: the tomb was empty and Jesus appeared alive.

There are also non-Biblical sources that mention Jesus and early beliefs – Tacitus (c. AD 116) who was a Roman Historian writing about the Emperor Nero, confirms that Jesus was executed under Pontius Pilate, and Christianity spread very quickly afterwards. Tacitus is hostile to Christians and so is not trying to promote the story, as the Bible is. Josephus (c. AD 93) mentions Jesus twice in the Antiquities of the Jews. One passage – probably later edited later by Christians - says Jesus appeared alive again after his death, and a shorter passage about James the brother of Jesus is widely accepted as authentic. So Josephus confirms that Jesus existed, he was crucified, and he had followers soon after.

In addition there is Pliny the Younger (c. AD 112) who writes to the Emperor Trajan, describing Christians singing to Christ as to a God, and who gathered regularly despite persecution. This shows that the belief in Jesus' divinity came very early on. And Lucian of Samosata (from the 2nd century) mocks Christians for worshipping a crucified man which confirms that Jesus was crucified, and that followers believed and worshipped him. So, secular sources do not independently verify the resurrection itself, but confirm the belief in the resurrection by very many people, starting a movement not seen before. We can ask – what else could explain this sudden strong belief that Jesus rose from the dead, if not the resurrection itself?

For me, the major fact is the transformation of the disciples and the growth of the movement - before the resurrection, they are portrayed as fearful and scattered. Afterwards, they boldly proclaim that Jesus is alive—even under persecution, many were willing to suffer and die for this belief. People may die for something false—but rarely for something they **know** is false. Something happened that turned their fear into courage, their despair into conviction, their hiding away into boldness in public. There were two

striking examples of the conversion of sceptics -James, brother of Jesus and Paul, the Apostle who actively opposed Christians. Paul especially had no reason to change his deeply felt faith, and both became key leaders after experiences they believed were encounters with the risen Jesus. I believe the Resurrection, and Christian faith itself is not just wishful thinking, or mystical legend, - it is rooted in testimony, experience and lives transformed. The disciples changed in incredible ways, they became leaders, deep in wisdom, good at managing crowds of new believers, creating new ways of being, putting into actions words and stories they had heard from Jesus while he was alive. Likewise when I am challenged in what I believe, I look to my experiences of God, of how they cannot be easily explained away, and I am glad that I have been given the gift of faith. I have a deep seated joy unexplained by human circumstances, a trust in God for the present and the future beyond material expectation and so many daily experiences of the presence and closeness of God. It all feels so right to me. If we don't have this assurance of the presence of God, we can just ask. He **longs** for us to share our lives with him. To be in awe and wonder at creation, at daily miracles and once in a millennia miracles, to see gratitude turning into further blessings can be our response to his gift of death, life and companionship to us.

It feels incredibly sad when this precious time of Easter, of hope and new life and new relationship with God is reduced to a celebration of chocolate and rabbits, and like Christmas, the message seems to have been sabotaged. But no one can take our belief away. If we believe God created the world, healed many people with diseases, walked on water, calmed a storm, fed thousands at a time, spoke truth in a time of turbulence and hate, made sense of what religion is about – why not a bodily resurrection?? And why not a personal Saviour and constant companion and Ruler of the world? So much to celebrate and rejoice!!

Happy Easter!

Prayer: Risen Christ,
you meet us not only in certainty
but in our questions.

Where we seek evidence,
give us eyes to see.

Where we doubt,
meet us with your presence.

Where we fear,
speak your peace.

And in the quiet places of our hearts,
bring to life again
the hope that death cannot defeat. Amen

STF 305 1. Low in the grave he lay, Jesus, my
Saviour,

Waiting the coming day, Jesus, my Lord:

Up from the grave he arose,

With a mighty triumph o'er his foes;

He arose a victor from the dark domain ,

And he lives forever with his saints to reign.

He arose! He Arose! Alleluia! Christ arose!

2. Vainly they watch his bed, Jesus, my Saviour;

Vainly they seal the dead, Jesus, my Lord;

3. Death cannot keep his prey, Jesus, my Saviour;

He tore the bars away, Jesus my Lord:

Robert Lowry

WEEK 2: APRIL 12th: *For Thomas*: Reflections for the Second Sunday of Easter

A Reflection by Rev Dr Gary Hall

Scripture: John 20: 19-31

John 20²⁵ *So the other disciples told him, 'We have seen the Lord.'* But [Thomas] said to them, *'Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands, and put my finger in the mark of the nails and my hand in his side, I will not believe.'*

Love's redeeming work is done. Alleluia.

Love's redeeming work is done. And nothing can undo it.

And when, deep down in your guts, you have felt this to be true, the beauty of this world shines just a little more brightly. You may even dare to believe in the beauty of your own deep-down God-given loveliness. Love's redeeming work is done. *Alleluia.*

What follows on is not always straightforward, however.

The world is still what the world is, with all its horrors and hatred and violence and relentless damage – alongside the beauty and love and wonder which take your breath away.

Yet *love's redeeming work is done.* Despite this. Despite you.

I was sitting there in a little chapel, having sung a few good hymns, listening to a sermon (it was a good sermon) until about half-way through my thoughts started heading off at a tangent. (*One sign of a good sermon is that we can discover our own sermon in the midst of it*)

The thing which came to me during the sermon was that: *we sometimes try too hard.*

I don't mean that we try too hard to be kind or good or loving or decent human beings. Not at all: we should always be trying to be those things, probably a lot harder than we generally do.

I don't mean that we try too hard to make sense of things either. Making sense is what humans do, and there is always work to be done in shaking off some of the silly things we have learned to think and believe about life and how the world is. I wasn't meaning that we try too hard to make sense. It is good to try to make sense – just like those disciples on the road to Emmaus.

Rather, what came to me as I sat in that little chapel was not that we try too hard to act well, or that we try too hard to make sense, but that we sometimes *try too hard to believe.*

Thomas didn't try too hard to believe. He just told his mates he didn't believe them. It was too incredible. Perhaps you are not one who tries too hard to believe, but you may be one who feels they *ought* to try hard to believe. Like, it's your fault if things go badly for you because you didn't believe enough. That's hogwash. If we try too hard to believe then it's not much of a stretch to find ourselves trying too hard to *make other people believe* too, perhaps then blaming them, if their life goes badly, for not believing. God save us from this nonsense.

We can sometimes try too hard to believe; then it gets worse. We try too hard to believe in a way which makes us feel *cheerful*. Because believing the news of Love's redeeming work ought to make us feel cheerful, right?

It's a reasonable thing to expect joyfulness of a Christian, especially during this joyful Eastertide.

Nevertheless, I was still left feeling a real sense of relief in that little chapel when it dawned on me that we don't need to try too hard to believe, and in the process to generate our own cheerfulness. We don't need to try too hard to believe that all is well with the world just because love's redeeming work is done.

That's not the kind of effort required of us. And the fact is, love's redeeming work is done and all is clearly not well with the world. We'd have to be some kind of crazy to think that it is. And we'd have to be some kind of crazy or cruel to feel cheerful in the face of how the world actually is.

I'll tell you why this seems to matter. Because the *sheer effort to believe* and to be of good cheer might actually deprive us of life-changing encounter with the risen Christ.

There is groundwork to be done, and we ought to be faithful in our efforts to do it: searching the scriptures, meditating on them, listening to interpreters and to preachers, learning and singing hymns and liturgies, reading the events of life, reading the world with care and attention... looking for Christ, seeking the Kingdom, doing justice and loving mercy... All of this is important groundwork, ongoing groundwork, the everyday business of faithful discipleship. If the world is going to be re-discovered or re-described for us in the light of Christ's resurrection, then that is more likely to happen if we are steeped in the raw material through which the world is being re-described.

But the re-making of the world, the new creating, is *God's work*, beginning with the risen Christ, who comes to us in God's good time. *Whether, when and how the new creating appears to us is in God's gift.*

When I say we can try too hard to believe, I'm thinking of the kind of thing you may remember if you've watched a Peter Pan film or pantomime. Eyes screwed tight, conviction mustered: *'I do believe in fairies; I do! I do!'*

'I do believe in Jesus, I do! I do!' will not, in my experience, conjure either Jesus or cheerfulness. On the other hand, however, these words may rise up unbidden from deep down within us, *after* we have been encountered anew by the living God. Perhaps the words will sound more like St Thomas after Jesus invited him to touch those wounds: *'My Lord and my God!'* Or they may sound like Peter facing the risen Christ on the lakeside: *'Lord, you know I love you...'*

In these and every other account of the risen Christ, it is *not by the effort of the disciple* that Jesus appears. It is by the act of God, giving back Jesus into the midst of their lives and into the midst of ours.

Some disciples put themselves in the right place: Mary went to tend the tomb and expressed her profound grief; Thomas voiced his grief and impatience and need as he sat listening to rumours of the risen Christ; Peter faced his inner betrayals and disappointments as he faced the simple, direct questions of Jesus: *Do you love me?* Disciples on their way home to Emmaus grappled with events which seemed to make no sense.

In these biblical accounts of the risen Christ appearing to disciples, it seems that he comes to people who have reached the end of their own resources, their own efforts. Sometimes all that remains for them is grieving and disappointment. Perhaps for some the very will to carry on has been stripped away. Terrified, bereft, grieving, lost, face to face with the raw, brutal violence of a mashed-up world... or simply bewildered and disappointed like these disciples on the road to Emmaus: *'We had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel...'*

These disciples are not trying too hard to believe. Naïve notions of *how* Jesus might save Israel have been dismantled by life's events. Then Jesus is given back to them. He was given back in a way they could recognize.

It only needs to happen once, and the world is forever changed for us.

I re-entered the room as the preacher announced the next hymn, with my heart not quite burning, but fluttering a little. Bread was broken and distributed and the little fellowship felt joyous. I went home, hoping to remember the feeling of what had just come together. On the way, radio news grounded me again in some of the horrors of this world.

And I felt with some force that in this world *sorrow and love flow mingled down*, always. It is what it is. And every day we can choose to dare to live as though love's redeeming work is done, without being naively or callously cheerful about how life is for so many people.

I went home and picked up a book by a man who has lost two sons in tragic circumstances, and these words came at me:

'in time you return to the world with some kind of knowledge that has something to do with our vulnerability as participants in this human drama. Everything seems so fragile and precious and heightened, and the world and the people in it seem so endangered, and yet so beautiful. To me it feels like, in this dark place, the idea of a God feels more present or maybe more essential. It actually feels like grief and God are somehow intertwined.' (Nick Cave, *Faith, Hope and Carnage*, p.32)

Don't be afraid to sit in the shadows, with the grief of this world. Sometimes grief is a gateway through which the risen Christ will come, showing us what it means to believe that love's redeeming work is done.

STF 298

1. Christ the Lord is risen today: *Alleluia!*

All creation joins to say: *Alleluia!*

Raise your joys and triumphs high: *Alleluia!*

Sing you heavens let earth reply: *Alleluia!*

2. Love's redeeming work is done, *Alleluia!*

Fought the fight the battle won: *Alleluia!*

Vain the stone, the watch the seal: *Alleluia!*

Christ has burst the gates of hell: *Alleluia!*

Charles Wesley.

3. Lives again our Glorious King: *Alleluia!*

Where, O Death, is now your sting?: *Alleluia!*

Once he died our souls to save: *Alleluia!*

Where's your victory boasting grave?: *Alleluia!*

4. Soar we now where Christ has led: *Alleluia!*

Following our exalted head: *Alleluia!*

Made like him, like him we rise: *Alleluia!*

Ours the cross, the grave, the skies: *Alleluia!*

WEEK 3: APRIL 19th: A White Knuckle Ride: A Reflection by Peter Box

Scripture: Philippians 2. 1-11

It has been some years since I went on a white knuckle ride. Oh the thrill, the exhilaration, the sheer terror and after it perhaps the feeling that you have pushed the boundaries. On reflection you may be elated, a little pleased with yourself, the terror never quite materialised!! And something of all this stays with you for a long time. No doubt you have played your part in coaxing others to try it too! Whether you find the idea of repeating the experience an attractive one or not it is surely the case that just for those few minutes you participated in being totally caught up in the action. Your head was left spinning and pretty well everything around you seemed to pale into insignificance.

Can what we are told about our Saviour Jesus do the same for us? Well I put before you St. Paul's letter to the Philippians, written we suppose from a prison cell. Just think of it, locked away, probably facing a death sentence and yet the author is able to use words such as "joy", "love" and "rejoice" so freely. Of all of St. Paul's writings this for me is the jewel in the crown.

Focusing on the first 11 verses of ch 2 we are brought to see how Jesus, in divesting himself of all divinity seals His triumph. God made man, when you think of it, it was a humiliation of the highest order. In setting to one side His holiness our Saviour set the pattern for the Christian life. He made Himself a "servant". Elsewhere we are told of how we become "sons and heirs" of God. Through God's grace we are saved. This is through following the example of Christ, unto death if need be as St. Paul did. Within the text written to the worshippers at Philippi there are countless pointers as to the way that we should aspire to live.

Paul, being a captive for The Lord was on a white knuckle ride. There was no obvious exit, we don't know how things turned out for him. Tradition has it that he was able to journey beyond Rome and end his days in Spain. We ourselves may never leave Walsall but if we witness as St. Paul would have us do, our lives will contain many thrills along the way.

And so we Pray. Jesus the man came amongst us to show us

The glory and power of His Kingdom.

May we be worthy of the faith and trust placed in us.

And may the examples of those gone before us lead and inspire us

May we find the thrill of knowing, following and living out the gospel message

A message for all humankind to savour. Amen.

STF 317

1. At the name of Jesus, Every knee shall bow,	Through all ranks of creatures to the central height,
Every tongue confess him King of Glory now!	To the throne of Godhead, to the Father's breast;
Tis the Father's pleasure, we should call him Lord,	Filled it with the glory of that perfect rest.
Who from the beginning, was the mighty Word.	4. In your hearts enthrone him; there let him subdue
2. Humbled for a season. To receive a name	All that is not holy, all that is not true;
From the lips of sinners unto whom he came,	Crown him as your captain in temptation's hour;
Faithfully he bore it spotless to the last,	Let his will enfold you in its light and power.
Brought it back victorious, when from death he passed:	5. For this same Lord Jesus shall return again
3. Bore it up triumphant with it's human light,	With his Father's glory, with his angel train;
	All the wreaths of empire meet upon his brow,
	And our hearts confess him King of Glory now!

Caroline Maria Noel

WEEK 4: APRIL 26th: ISLANDS: A Reflection by Karen Drayton

SCRIPTURE: Psalm 97, Isaiah 40. 12-16, Isaiah 41. 8-10, Luke 24. 13-25

I have spent a lot of time recently on islands – in fact we are all living on one! Islands are especially buffeted the wind and the weather, they can be isolated and hard to get to. Sometimes people feel isolated on islands, cut off from society, with the sea as a barrier to opportunities elsewhere rather than something picturesque and relaxing to enjoy. In the Bible “islands” are often translated from the Hebrew “coastlands,” pointing beyond geography into spiritual meanings – places far away (Isaiah 49.1) yet where God’s love can reach; places of inclusion (Psalm 97.1 Let the islands be glad – a vision of global joy and belonging) where even the remotest places rejoice in God. And a sense of waiting and longing (Isaiah 42.4 – distant lands wait eagerly for his teaching) where islands are spaces of longing, waiting, openness.

I spent a week in Iona, for a workweek, cleaning up the abbey and other living accommodation in preparation for their year’s programme of retreats ahead. Iona is a tiny island (3.5 miles by 1.5) off an island (Mull) off the west coast of Scotland. As we travelled from places of high population, Glasgow, through Oban, we ended up in Iona, a place of 170 souls. Iona apparently is so old that it doesn’t even have any fossils – the estimate is that the land is 2000 million years old!! Imagine that! A bronze age burial cairn suggest early inhabitants on Iona around 2000 BC, and St Columba, the famed Irish monk established a monastery here in AD563, which means that worship to God has been going on 1400 years, continuing today twice a day, 9 am and 9 pm, every day of the year. Aren’t all those numbers incredible? Our planet and its history are truly awe inspiring.

There is something deeply Celtic about islands—the sense that they are *threshold places*, where the ordinary world thins and the presence of God feels close enough to touch. The early Celtic Christians sought out such places—not to escape the world, but to see it more clearly.

In Iona, where Columba founded a community of prayer, an island is not just land surrounded by water. It is a place where the noise falls away, the soul becomes attentive, the heart learns to listen again.

The sea does not only separate the island from the main land—it *cleanses*, it *teaches patience and rhythm*. The tide comes in, the tide goes out, like a breath of prayer written into creation. The sea surrounded Iona – and the air – was tangibly pure, clean and translucent. I have never seen such clear seas.

The group of 25 that had gathered to help during the work week were from all over the world - the USA (an Episcopalian seminary, so several students and their tutors), returning volunteers from Germany, the Netherlands and Denmark, as well as local British people. It was amusing that the Glaswegians were the hardest to understand!! There were also people of no faith who wanted to visit and help. I found it incredible – and chastening - that people should come from so far to help tidy up the Abbey – it felt a bit like we were an underdeveloped country and others were coming to help us, as if we couldn’t do it ourselves!! There were staff who work there constantly, and long term volunteers who stay years or months. We all lived and ate and worked together, getting to know each other’s stories and foibles. Having heard so much about the special “thin” place that is Iona, I think we were all expecting something amazing, God’s tangible presence, a lifting of the veil and maybe a lot of us were a bit disappointed. But on reflection, we decided that we carry the potential for being close to God wherever we are. Being on a deserted, beautiful, remote island helps, with like-minded interesting people, but we can access God anywhere. The Spirit of God can break through our human made barriers of distraction, anxiety, fear, or stress and bring us peace, joy, hope and most of all, a sense of being loved by the living God. So often we want a short cut experience of God, when all She wants is a relationship, untainted by a need for results.

I asked one fellow pilgrim how she came to be a Christian – she said she had never been a Christian, but one year ago she walked into a cathedral and was changed! The week on Iona had challenged her to be more open about her faith with the community she lived with at home. There were so many stories of

encountering God. One man cried during communion, he found it so moving. An elderly American lady I sat next to on the bus on the way home, (who had not been at Iona) said she had been a Catholic all her life, but then was busy being young and working and thought nothing of her faith. Until Covid came, and her local church was so good to all of them in the community, with food packages and transport help, that she joined the zoom congregation and is now a lay preacher! Another amazing fact about her life was that although her mother and her husband were artists, she was a teacher and never did anything arty – until her husband died and she discovered she also is an artist – a talent undiscovered until her later years!

A churchgoer in the UK went to a church week, and even though there was 100 of them there, with little time for quietness and isolation, it had felt like a “thin” place, where God is tangible and real and accessible. On the last day they all went to a hotel for a meal. The waiter said to them – “I have never seen one family as big as yours in here before.” The wonderful reply came, “Some of us aren’t related at all but we are all family.” The waiter looked a little confused but before he could ask “What do you mean?” a lady replied, “We’re a church, in which all are welcome and loved like family.” “Oh!” he said... “I wouldn’t mind being a part of that.”

We **are** a part of that! Let us rejoice and be glad.

Prayer: Imagine yourself on a small remote island, buffeted by the wind and the rain, isolated, sitting on the shore, watching the waves come in and out, in and out, hitting the rocks and spraying into the air.

Imagine Jesus beside you, watching the scene with you, offering you his whole attention, healing your hurts, longings and wounds, making you laugh and showing you how he has been with you your whole life.

What does he say to you today?

If I was invited on Radio Four’s Desert Island Discs, I would choose this hymn to take with me:

STF 728 Is a beautiful hymn by Bernadette Farrell, based on Psalm 139: - O God, you search me and you know me - there is nowhere on earth I can escape you; Let us rejoice in being known and being adored.

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. O God, you search me and you know me | You are with me beyond my understanding; |
| All my thoughts lie open to your gaze. | God of my present, my past and future, too. |
| When I walk or lie down you are before me; | 4. Although your spirit is upon me, |
| Ever the maker and keeper of my days. | Still I search for shelter from your light. |
| 2. You know my resting and my rising, | There is nowhere on earth I can escape you: |
| You discern my purpose from afar, | Even the darkness is radiant in your sight. |
| And with love everlasting you besiege me; | 5. For you created me and shaped me, |
| In every moment of life or death, you are. | Gave me life within my mother’s womb, |
| 3. Before a word is on my tongue Lord | For the wonder of who I am I praise you; |
| You have known its meaning through and through, | Safe in your hands, all creation is made new. |