



Gillian Cooper *reflects on* Luke 24:1-12

“An idle tale” – that’s what Luke tells us the leaders of the disciples thought of the story that the women brought back from the tomb. And who can blame them? Grief does funny things to people. They had seen enough death to know that. And this was no ordinary death, but the end of a dream for all of them. They had listened to Jesus and seen the possibility of a new world, one which overturned the old structures of religion and society, and offered freedom and joy. The end of it all was bound to make them a bit crazy for a while. And the men knew, of course, that women are more susceptible to these things.

So when the women came rushing in with their stories of an empty tomb and men in shining clothes, they responded with the Aramaic equivalent of “There, there, dear, calm down and have a nice cup of tea.” All except Peter. Perhaps Peter felt the air stir again, sensed some of the old magic.

Soon they all knew what the women had seen first; that, incredibly, even death had been overturned. Not an idle tale, but the story of freedom and joy, stronger than ever. 🌱

God on the smallholding

by Jeni Parsons

We got new hens recently. They came from a commercial caged environment where they had little room to move, never went outside or saw the sun. At first they were reluctant to come out of their new house and they took ages to learn how to scratch the earth. They only

had feathers on the front half of their bodies, the rest being naked from plucking by other hens. Now they sunbathe and dustbathe and they have full feathers and eager eyes for food in all its forms. It doesn’t take a genius to see who has borne the cost of cheap eggs here.

Does having stewardship of the earth mean this? Our hens give gold each day in egg yolk, and we share this earth with them as God’s precious gift to all life. So we need to cherish them in their little lives as God cherishes them, and us. 🌱

Risen Lord Jesus, stir us to hear your story with fresh ears. Forgive our unbelief, and help us to know you among us, risen and glorified for all people, at all times, and in all places. For in you and in your story is our true freedom and joy. Amen.

Finding God in the spring

by Caroline Hodgson

He is risen! Easter Day is when we turn our attention to life eternal, and here on earth we can see life eternally rolling through the cycle of God’s seasons. Despite the fact that he had spelled it out for them several times, the disciples were unable to imagine that Jesus’ dead body could contain life.

But every dead thing contains the potential for life – even when we die, our earthly bones nourish the earth and feed into new creation. Depending on what type of seed you planted, you may already be able to see delicate young green shoots unfurling from the dried-up seeds you put in the earth a few weeks ago. When at last you see the first signs of life emerging, make time for a prayer:

Thank you, Lord, for this sign of life abundant. And thank you for your risen son. Amen. 🌱

“ Christ the Lord is risen today, Alleluia! / Earth and heaven in chorus say, Alleluia! / Raise your joys and triumphs high, Alleluia! / Sing, ye heavens, and earth reply, Alleluia!”

Charles Wesley (1707-1788), leader of the Methodist movement and hymn writer