

## Reflections for 17<sup>th</sup> October 2021

### 20<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Trinity

#### Scars and Glory

On October 18<sup>th</sup> we celebrate St. Luke, and his place in the story of our faith, and as part of that we remember the tradition that Luke was a doctor, and that he has always been closely related to the church's ministry of healing. With that in mind, I would like to reflect on the image of the scars we bear, and what they show us.

A while ago I read a book called *The Resilient Disciple*, by Justine Allain Chapman. A central image in that book (reflected in the cover design) is something called 'kintsugi', a tradition from Japan, which means 'joining with gold'. This developed when fragile and precious bowls and vessels were broken, and they were repaired with gold, so as not to mask or cover up the damage they had suffered, but to honour the history of a precious object, and even to make it beautiful in a new way, through the scars that told the story of how it was broken and remade.

That image speaks to me about healing, and about hope. The hope of our faith is not that we become some kind of airbrushed, unreal 'shiny happy people', as if we lived in a permanently photoshopped world. Our hope is that God in Jesus Christ meets us in our brokenness, to renew us and make us anew, not by denying the reality of our pains and hurts and struggles, but by honouring and transforming them, just like those threads of gold that trace the places where a bowl has been broken – as they mend it and make it anew.

As we can read in the gospel of Luke, and the other gospels, the risen Christ in his glory still carried the marks of his suffering and death on his hands and feet and side, the scars that show the wonder and the cost of love. The scars that the risen glorified Christ bears are a sign of hope and healing for us.

Revd John Waller

Christ our Saviour,  
your scars declare your love for the world  
and the wonder of your risen life:  
give us compassion and courage  
to risk ourselves for those we serve,  
to the glory of God the Father.  
Amen.

Bible readings (for St. Luke): Isaiah 35. 3-6; Acts 16. 6-12a; Luke 10. 1-9

Story: 'Goodbye at Last' (based on the gospel accounts of the risen Jesus)