

UNTIL WE MEET AGAIN

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These are the words of an ancient Celtic blessing:

*May the road rise to meet you.
May the wind be always at your back.
May the sun shine warm upon your face.
May the rain fall soft upon your fields,
and until we meet again
may the Lord hold you in the palm of his hand*

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I thought of this prayer during the Queen's broadcast to the nation on Palm Sunday. She spoke of her confidence that one day soon we will **meet again** with family and friends from whom we have been separated during the official lockdown. I am sure that many of us are feeling very deprived of the normal times, and hugs, we share with others.

The Queen evoked a famous Second World War song – 'We'll **meet again**' sung by Vera Lynn. Eighty years ago it was a searing expression of hope that the War would be over one day, and that people would be reunited with their loved ones. Almost everybody's life was disrupted by military service, relief work, evacuations, and community service of one kind or another. That song must have been such a comfort through those dark years.

Of course, not everybody did meet again – not in this life. But our Christian hope is that we will meet again nonetheless. The Easter story is a glorious message that we shall **meet again** one day in heaven those we have loved here on earth. Jesus said, 'I have gone ahead of you to prepare a place for you. Where I am, you shall be also'.

I used this Celtic Blessing on 15th March, little realising then that it would be the last Sunday we could hold a service in church until the epidemic is under control. It seems even more appropriate now – to all our dear friends in the church and in the wider village community: 'Until we **meet again**, may the Lord hold you in the palm of his hand'.

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