



Create a peaceful space to pause, and allow yourself to feel God's presence alongside you, as near to you as your own breath. In following the reflection below, as a church we will draw closer to God and to one another as we grow in faith and deepen our sense of belonging to God.

### John 21: 4-8 'The Stranger on the Shore'



<sup>4</sup>Just after daybreak, Jesus stood on the beach; but the disciples did not know that it was Jesus. <sup>5</sup>Jesus said to them, "Children, you have no fish, have you?" They answered him, "No." <sup>6</sup>He said to them, "Cast the net to the right side of the boat, and you will find some." So they cast it, and now they were not able to haul it in because there were so many fish. <sup>7</sup>That disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, "It is the Lord!" When Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he put on some clothes, for he was naked, and jumped into the sea. <sup>8</sup>But the other disciples came in the boat, dragging the net full of fish, for they were not far from the land, only about a hundred yards off.

When we read this lovely story, it's tempting to ask ourselves: who had the better eyesight – Peter or John? An even better question would be: *when* do you think the disciples recognise that it's Jesus? A closer examination of the passage reveals that it's not when they hear his voice, nor when they see who's calling to them from the shore – but when they cast their nets. In other words, when they did as they were told!

Sometimes I think that we worry too much about our lack of understanding, because at times resurrection is so difficult to comprehend. But Peter's example shows that recognition and understanding come with *following*. We have to trust, and put a foot forward in faith. We have to get out of the boat, and jump into the sea, like Peter. When we take a chance, embrace risk, and follow our Lord, then he will seem less like a stranger on the shore and more like an ever-present companion.



#### **Prayer:**

Loving, gracious God,  
if we are slow to recognise your presence, forgive us.  
Help us to be reminded  
that there is no situation in life – however desperate –  
where you are not present and your love is not at work.

**GIVE US THE WISDOM TO SEE OUR RISEN LORD JESUS CHRIST IN SURPRISING PLACES,  
AND THE STRENGTH TO SHARE IN HIS CONTINUING MINISTRY  
TO ALL WHO CALL UPON US IN THEIR NEED.**

We ask this for your love's sake. **AMEN.**