

## The tree of life



I came across a strange pair of trees last year. One tree was planted on a slope and leaning heavily. It would have fallen, but it was being held up by a smaller tree. So close were they that the trees had fused together. The lower tree seemed to have stopped growing - it was just acting as a support. The other tree was reaching high into the sky.

I had just spent a week reflecting on the cross -the place where Jesus carried the full weight of the darkness in the world - the place where he catches us as we are falling, and holds us, giving his all. It is from that place that we are able to go on growing, reaching up into the light and warmth of God's love.

We can see the same love in the costly support of a parent, enabling a young person to grow into their full potential and in other examples of caring and giving which place demands on the giver but set someone free.



Jesus gives us this pattern - a way of being which is ready to give all so that others may live. This Holy Week we will once again celebrate his gift beyond words. We will hear the shouts of the crowd in praise and condemnation on **Palm Sunday**. We will gather around his table on **Maundy Thursday**, washing feet, breaking bread, and leaving in darkness., After the children have prepared our Easter Garden on **Good Friday**, we will take the story outside, where it belongs, and tell it under the trees outside Lloyd's. Then later in church we will focus on the wood of the cross in words and actions, holding crosses, shaping wood, dressing a tree.

We will pause on **Saturday** evening, reflecting on the different trees which tell our story, and then on **Easter Day** we will begin our great celebration of new life with a bonfire - dry wood giving birth to living flame - and go on to sing our songs of Easter joy.

Come and join us as we share this wonderful story once again - you will find the times of the services here on the website. As the trees around us bud and begin to blossom, we remember the tree of shame which became the tree of glory - the tree on which our Lord brings us new life and hope.

*Simon Witcombe*