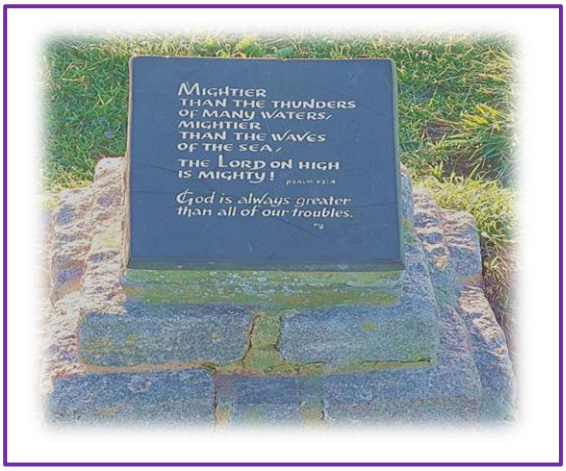
From the Rectory

Friends

Your support and encouragement for our South Downs Way walk has been a real inspiration – heartfelt thanks.

It wasn't always easy going… Walking straight after church was a nice idea but telling in terms of the energy it takes to lead worship. Monday was a walk through sideways rain and gusting wind – nothing is waterproof! On Tuesday, I heard from a dear friend in Christ that he'd been diagnosed with a terminal illness – so I said I would walk with prayer in my heart for him and the sun shone bright all day… And yes, John and Jacqui you were right – the hardest stetch were The Seven Sisters! It felt more like seventy-seven sisters but eventually we had the end in sight and near to Beachy Head – such a troubled spot despite its breathtaking grandeur, we took strength for ourselves and all those whose walk through life is profoundly burdened as we came across the plaque pictured with an inscription from Ps 93 v4 and the words *'God is always greater than all our troubles…'*.



Above all, we experienced again the blessing of being 'bathed in green' and the Japanese way of *shinrin yoku* (nature bathing). Reading around the theme of walking as a spiritual practice I came across more Japanese wisdom, this time from a Christian theologian **Kosuke Koyama** and his influential 1970s book, ***Three Mile an Hour God***. He wrote something very beautiful which I have been blessed with just a glimpse of but that I hope and pray, with more walking in the Spirit, may become a bigger faith picture:

The Speed of Love… *Three miles per hour is the average speed at which a human being walks. Because God became incarnate in Jesus Christ - who had no modern transportation and walked from village to village - God chose to communicate and express love at a walking pace. God walks 'slowly' because He is love. If He is not love He would move much faster. Love requires presence, listening, and patience - things that cannot be rushed by technological speed…*

Longing to know God's love in Christ evermore fully
Yours
Jonathan

PS So far we've raised ***£1970*** *to support Cardiac Rehab West Sussex and St Mary's Sound System Appeal*