Revelation 5:11-14

11 Then I looked,
and I heard the voice
of many angels
surrounding the throne
and the living creatures
and the elders;
they numbered
myriads of myriads
and thousands of thousands,
12 singing with full voice,

'Worthy is the Lamb
that was slaughtered
to receive power and wealth
and wisdom and might
and honour and glory and blessing!'

13 Then I heard every creature
in heaven and on earth
and under the earth and in the sea,
and all that is in them,
singing,

'To the one seated on the throne
and to the Lamb
be blessing and honour
and glory and might
for ever and ever!'

14 And the four living creatures said,

'Amen!'

And the elders fell down
and worshipped.

Reading Revelation This Week

Since last week's opening greeting summary
Messages to 7 churches filled up 3 chapters
Chapters 4 and 5 set a scene – can you see one?
When you sang 'Holy, holy, holy', what did you imagine?

John writes that 'in the spirit', 'in heaven', he saw:
A throne, surrounded by 24 thrones,
All occupied, amid lightning, thunder, torches, spirits,
In front something like a sea of glass

It's a sound-and-light show –
4 creatures and 24 elders
singing 'Holy, Holy, Holy…' in chorus,
to which are added 'many angels' today

The angels sing 'Worthy is the Lamb…'
Then all creatures add 'To the one…'
Ending with the 4 creatures saying 'Amen'
How's your soundtrack, in your mental movie?

Artists and musicians reflect and echo it,
For 2 millennia, sharing clues and iconography –
Our modern enlightenment disenchanted the vision,
But our postmodern visual culture demands it

Start with trying to see and hear and feel
Before you try to think and analyse
Conceive of cosmic rhythmic worship around, beyond
Adding dimensions to our experience of here, now

Flip through any hymnbook, or its index
All nature sings, and round me rings, the music of the spheres
Musicians create symphonic, majestic versions
Why just read the scroll or add prayers to the bowls?

What does it 'mean' to you to indulge these visions?

John 21:1-19

After these things
Jesus showed himself again to the disciples
by the Sea of Tiberias;
and he showed himself in this way.

[2]Gathered there together
were Simon Peter,
Thomas called the Twin,
Nathanael of Cana in Galilee,
the sons of Zebedee,
and two others of his disciples.

[3]Simon Peter said to them,
'I am going fishing.'

They said to him,
'We will go with you.'

They went out and got into the boat,
but that night they caught nothing.

4 Just after daybreak,
Jesus stood on the beach;
but the disciples did not know
that it was Jesus.

[5]Jesus said to them,
'Children, you have no fish, have you?'

They answered him,
'No.'

[6]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.

[7]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 lake.

[8]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.

9 When they had gone ashore,
they saw a charcoal fire there,
with fish on it,
and bread.

[10]Jesus said to them,
'Bring some of the fish
that you have just caught.'

[11]So Simon Peter went aboard
and hauled the net ashore,
full of large fish,
a hundred and fifty-three of them;
and though there were so many,
the net was not torn.

[12]Jesus said to them,
'Come and have breakfast.'

Now none of the disciples dared to ask him,
'Who are you?'
because they knew
it was the Lord.

13 Jesus came
and took the bread
and gave it to them,
and did the same with the fish.

14 This was now the third time
that Jesus appeared
to the disciples
after he was raised
from the dead.

15 When they had finished breakfast,
Jesus said to Simon Peter,
'Simon son of John,
do you love me more than these?'

He said to him,
'Yes, Lord; you know that I love you.'

Jesus said to him,
'Feed my lambs.'

16 A second time he said to him,
'Simon son of John,
do you love me?'

He said to him,
'Yes, Lord; you know that I love you.'

Jesus said to him,
'Tend my sheep.'

17 He said to him the third time,
'Simon son of John,
do you love me?'

Peter felt hurt
because he said to him the third time,
'Do you love me?'

And he said to him,
'Lord, you know everything;
you know that I love you.'

Jesus said to him,
'Feed my sheep.

18 Very truly,
I tell you,
when you were younger,
you used to fasten your own belt
and to go wherever you wished.

But when you grow old,
you will stretch out your hands,
and someone else
will fasten a belt around you
and take you
where you do not wish to go.'

19 (He said this to indicate the kind of death
by which he would glorify God.)

After this he said to him,
'Follow me.'

Reading the Gospel this Week

Last week, chapter 20 seemed a good end to a gospel
Why add chapter 21, not leave it as 'many other signs'?
This is a third appearance to disciples, sums up v.14

Why 'Sea of Tiberius', not 'Sea of Galilee' – or Jerusalem?
Why the miraculous catch of 153 fish, echoing fishing miracles
The 'barbeque on the beach', echoing feeding miracles?

Why these 7, not 12 –
who is included, added, missing?
Why fishing, not evangelizing?

John Pentland's book 'fishing on the other side'
Assumes an allegorical reading – fishing is evangelism
Jerome says there are 153 types of fish in the Greek world
Augustine says 153 is sum of 1 to 17 – stands for law + gospel
Calvin calls it all 'childish trifling'

Most times through,
I'm drawn to 'rehabilitation of Peter'
Who denied Jesus 3 times.

After breakfast,
Jesus asks Peter 3 times: do you love me
(the first, adding 'more than these')

Peter gets his job, 3 times:
Feed/tend my lambs/sheep
Using several words for love, know, lambs, sheep
And a warning he will be martyred, when older

After this reading, the gospel ends with a few more verses,
Repeating the ending of 20 of 'many other things'
So again – why can't we miss this BBQ?