



Easter Sunday Message - 12th April 2020 Transcript

As we join together on this Easter morning,
we join our voices with the whole Church,
across the world and across time,
as we proclaim: Christ has risen! **He is risen indeed, Alleluia!**
Let's proclaim it across this nation:
Christ has risen! **He is risen indeed, Alleluia!**
Let's proclaim it in the midst all the strangeness of life at present
Christ has risen! **He is risen indeed, Alleluia!**

Excuse the loud shirt! But it feels right for Sunday Morning. We can't have Easter Sunday without singing. You'll have to excuse my voice - the best way to hide it is for you to sing along along. Let's sing together 'Christ the Lord is risen today'

*Christ the Lord is risen today; Alleluia!
Sons of men and angels say: Alleluia!
Raise your joys and triumphs high: Alleluia!
Sing ye heavens thou earth, reply: Alleluia!*

*Love's redeeming work is done, Alleluia!
Fought the fight, the battle won; Alleluia!
Vain the stone, the watch, the seal; Alleluia!
Christ hath burst the gates of hell: Alleluia!*

*Lives again our glorious king; Alleluia!
Where, O death, is now thy sting? Alleluia!
Once he died our souls to save, Alleluia!
Where's thy victory, boasting grave? Alleluia!*

*Soar we now where Christ hath led, Alleluia!
Following our exalted head; Alleluia!
Made like him, like him we rise; Alleluia!
Ours the cross, the grave, the skies: Alleluia!*

*King of glory! Soul of bliss! Alleluia!
Everlasting life is this, Alleluia!
Thee to know, thy power to prove, Alleluia!
Thus to sing, and thus to love: Alleluia!*

People thought Jesus was dead and that was the end. They watched him hanging on the cross. They saw him die. They saw a spear thrust into his body just to

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check he was dead, and they saw him lifted down from the cross and his body wrapped up in a big white sheet to be buried. They watched him be put into the tomb and they were certain he was dead. And they were sad. They were in despair. They felt that all their hope was gone. It was the saddest day they had ever known.

The empty cross stood there before them: a symbol of everything that had happened. But it wasn't the end of everything - in fact it was the beginning of everything!

Matthew tells us what happened next:

The Resurrection from Matthew chapter 28 verses 1 to 10

After the Sabbath, as Sunday morning was dawning, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to look at the tomb. Suddenly there was a violent earthquake; an angel of the Lord came down from heaven, rolled the stone away, and sat on it. His appearance was like lightning, and his clothes were white as snow. The guards were so afraid that they trembled and became like dead men.

The angel spoke to the women. "You must not be afraid," he said. "I know you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. He is not here; he has been raised, just as he said. Come here and see the place where he was lying. Go quickly now, and tell his disciples, 'He has been raised from death, and now he is going to Galilee ahead of you; there you will see him!' Remember what I have told you." So they left the tomb in a hurry, afraid and yet filled with joy, and ran to tell his disciples.

Suddenly Jesus met them and said, "Peace be with you." They came up to him, took hold of his feet, and worshiped him. "Do not be afraid," Jesus said to them. "Go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee, and there they will see me."

Thanks be to God for that word. Amen.

Let us pray

The tomb cannot hold you, our living God.

Jesus, you are greater than death itself.

You have broken down the walls that keep us from you.

We praise you, great redeemer.

Fear could not bind you, courageous Lord.

You tell your followers not to be afraid.

You have shown us that you are with us when the world is at its darkest.

You bring us light, new and shining with glory.

Evil could not overpower you, the source of all goodness.

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You have conquered death and set your people free.
You are the God of earth and heaven, and all else there ever was.
We praise you for your power and your righteousness.
We praise you for love beyond our knowing. Alleluia! Amen.

So, anyone had any Easter Eggs? Anyone eaten them yet? Perhaps it's a bit early for that?

There are a few reasons why we enjoy eggs at Easter. There is a tradition of eggs, way way back into history. Long before Jesus, in many parts of this world, there was a tradition of decorating eggs. And these eggs were a symbol of death and rebirth. The decorated eggs were placed in graves as a symbol of the hope of new life, and that was as long as 5000 ago. Early Christians decorated eggs red, to represent the blood of Christ, and quite early in the history of the church the symbol of the egg was used to represent new life. There is also likely a strong link with the fact that eggs were among foods that were forbidden during Lent. Remember all the weeks ago when we ate pancakes on Shrove Tuesday, that was to use up the forbidden foods before Lent began. Though I very much doubt whether any of us have kept off eggs during the Lent itself, unless you just couldn't get any because of the panic buying of course!

These days, painted eggs are used less frequently perhaps, though I remember decorating eggs as a child, and rolling them at Easter. I expect some of you will remember doing that too! Maybe some of you still do it - or know those that do! The most common eggs these days seem to be chocolate ones which we can enjoy of course.

One of the common symbols of Easter is the chick. A chick - when the time is right - will use its beak to peck at the inside of the egg in which it was born. Gradually cracks will appear, and then, miraculously, the chick will shake off the egg that bound it - and will live. It's an amazing thing to see: the beginning of life from a seemingly cold hard egg. And on that day long ago, Jesus, miraculously burst forth, not just from the tomb that held him, but from the clutches of death itself. The stone that had sealed the tomb was rolled aside much like we used to roll eggs as kids. The tomb was there, an empty shell, no life in it, just the grave clothes where they fell. Because Jesus was alive! Jesus was alive then, and He is alive now. This day is a day of celebration for that very fact! Everything that we have thought about in the past week was important. Jesus had to suffer and had to die. But today, death is behind him, and he is alive. And because he is alive - we - his church are alive! This year we're not alive in the way that we usually are, singing songs of joy together and celebrating in style. But we are very much alive! And today God's church: his people, wherever they are, are bursting with joy because there is resurrection. Because there is hope. Because there is joy in the midst of so much pain and sadness and struggle. And all because he is alive ! Alleluia!

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Time for another song, lets sing together ` See what a morning`

*See what a morning, gloriously bright, with the dawning of hope in
Jerusalem;*

*Folded the grave-clothes, Tomb filled with light, as the angels announce
Christ is risen!*

*See God's salvation plan, wrought in love, borne in pain, paid in sacrifice,
Fulfilled in Christ, the Man, for He lives: Christ is risen from the dead!*

*See Mary weeping, 'Where is He laid?' As in sorrow she turns from the
empty tomb;*

*Hears a voice speaking, calling her name; it's the Master, the Lord raised
to life again!*

*The voice that spans the years, speaking life, stirring hope, bringing peace
to us,*

Will sound till He appears, for He lives, Christ is risen from the dead!

*One with the Father, Ancient of Days, through the Spirit who clothes faith
with certainty,*

*Honour and blessing, glory and praise to the King crowned with power and
authority!*

*And we are raised with Him, death is dead, love has won, Christ has
conquered;*

And we shall reign with Him, for He lives, Christ is risen from the dead!

New life that Jesus gives us, through his death and resurrection, is, I believe, about three things. Three things that may speak to us especially now, in these strange and difficult times.

I believe it is about Eternal hope. If something is eternal it goes on for ever and ever, with no end to it at all. And nothing in all of creation can take it away from us: no pain; no suffering; no loneliness; no anxiety; not even death itself.

Because Jesus's resurrection means that we have eternal hope. It means that no matter what happens to us on this earth, we have hope in God which never ends

I believe it is also about Generous Love. We know about love we get from people: from our families; our friends; people who care for us; our church families. But there are always times when that love lets us down. And no matter how hard we try to make sure we always love, there are always fallings out, misunderstandings, arguments. We say the wrong thing or do the wrong thing, or fail to do or say the right thing. Because that's being human! But love we can know in the living Jesus is love that forgives everything we do wrong, that never leaves us, that never hesitates for a single second. Just close your eyes for a moment and think about that - you are loved exactly as you are, exactly where you are, by God. If that moment wasn't long enough for you, go back to it later, because it will still be true!



And I believe the third thing we have is Great peace. We can't change lots of things in our lives; not that easily anyway. But no matter how hard life is, if we let Jesus be part of us and our lives, part of our situations, part of every day, then we can know that great peace in every moment of our lives. It's a peace that is always there for us, especially if we consciously seek it. We may drift out of it from time to time: it's hard not to. But the peace which passes understanding is always there again and again and again. It's the peace we all need just now!

So that's three things that New Life in Jesus means for us, though there are lots more things too of course as well. But three for today: Endless Hope, Generous Love, Great peace. These spell out EGG! So every time you eat a bit of egg today, and in the days ahead, and I'm sure you will, do so remembering that Jesus is alive and there is new life to be had for you too!

Let us pray

Jesus Christ, we welcome you here with us, alive today.

Your hands and feet still have holes in them, but you are alive.

You come to meet us - you know us by name and greet us.

You have come to show us your face and invite us to share with you always.

You are alive and the world is full of joy because of you.

We are alive, and can have new life because of you.

Hallelujah. You are Risen! Amen!

It's not Easter Day unless we sing Thine Be The Glory - so let's do that just now.
'Thine be the glory, risen, conquering Son'

*Thine be the glory, risen, conquering Son;
Endless is the victory Thou o'er death hast won.
Angels in bright raiment rolled the stone away,
Kept the folded grave-clothes where Thy body lay.
Thine be the glory, risen, conquering Son;
Endless is the victory Thou o'er death hast won.*

*Lo, Jesus meets us, risen from the tomb!
Lovingly He greets us, scatters fear and gloom.
Let the church with gladness hymns of triumph sing,
For her Lord now liveth, death hath lost its sting.
Thine be the glory, risen, conquering Son;
Endless is the victory Thou o'er death hast won.*

*No more we doubt Thee, glorious Prince of life;
Life is naught without Thee: aid us in our strife;
Make us more than conquerors, through Thy deathless love;
Bring us safe through Jordan, to thy home above.*

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*Thine be the glory, risen, conquering Son;
Endless is the victory Thou o'er death hast won.*

Thine Be the Glory, risen conquering Son
Endless is the victory Thou o'er death has won.
Bless us all, this Easter Day, and always. Amen