

RYDE BAPTIST CHURCH SUNDAY SERVICE

12 April 2020—Easter Sunday

Witnesses. Those who met with the risen Jesus are given a job to do, and that is to bear witness to his resurrection life and to proclaim his forgiveness by forgiving sins. As Peter later preaches, when God raised Jesus from the dead on the third day he caused him to be seen; and those who saw him, who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead are commanded to 'preach to the people and to testify that he is the one whom God appointed as judge of the living and the dead...that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name.' This is a powerful ministry that all of us who continue to eat and drink with him—for that is what we do whenever we gather around the Lord's Table—have been given too. Forgiveness of sins and assurance of eternal life are at the very heart of the message of good news.

So what must we do. Mary knew exactly what she must do, and she did it. Sadly it seems as if much of what Mary and the other women went on to do was not recorded, although we do get glimpses of their significant ministry throughout Acts and the New Testament letters. Peter and the other Apostles knew what they must do, and at Pentecost they were—having previously been commissioned—finally empowered and emboldened for the significant ministry that they were to perform. But what about us; how does this apply to us who follow Jesus as 21st century disciples?

Our challenge is two-fold. Firstly to accept the forgiveness that he offers us and to live as those who are forgiven, living to the full the new life we have been given in the here and now in the light of eternity. Secondly to accept the mission of passing on that forgiveness in Jesus' name, and living life in such a way, in action as well as speech, that others get to live that life too. Forgiveness and eternal life are intertwined. Remember when Jesus talked about the promise of eternal life he also said that he did not come to condemn the world but that the world might be saved through him (John 3:16-17).

TIME OF PRAYER

Spend some time reflecting upon your life and ensuring that you have received the forgiveness Jesus offers you, and the new life that he has promised; and then recommit yourself to living and passing on the resurrection life as Jesus promises to help us to do, day by day.

SUGGESTED SONG

O Church Arise (Arise, Shine)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MZmS81yLjMg>

BLESSING

May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with us all, evermore. Amen.

<https://rydebaptist.xyz>

The Lord is risen...

...He is risen indeed. Hallelujah!

Dear Friends,

Commentators are telling us that this is the first Easter since the establishment of the church on these islands (the British Isles not just the Isle of Wight) that we have not been able to gather together to worship God in celebration of our risen Lord. In fact the whole pattern of our church life is structured around the resurrection of Jesus.

Whereas our Jewish antecedents recognised the Sabbath as the day of rest, from sunset on a Friday until sunset on a Saturday, taking seriously the order of creation whereby God rested on the seventh day which was then established by the Law to keep the Sabbath holy; our Christian forebears immediately adopted the first day of the week, the day of resurrection, as their regular weekly day of worship and witness, initially after having taken their sabbath rest before embarking on the next day's work. The Lord's Day was thus born.

The resurrection of Jesus remains at the heart of our life and faith and it is this which gives us hope and purpose in a world that longs for renewal. I pray that,

however we are celebrating Easter this year, we will take the time to spend this short time today in a united act of praise and thanksgiving. For the Lord is risen, present tense, meaning that what happened once continues for ever and the living Lord continues to live and walk alongside us, by his Spirit, even as he reigns as Lord and King over our lives. The Lord is risen indeed!

Don't forget that you can click on the links on your computer or device to go straight to the songs and readings, and that on the website you will find other interesting and useful information and resources. <https://rydebaptist.xyz>

CALL TO WORSHIP

Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. ²Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. ³For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. ⁴When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory. (Colossians 3:1-4)

I have told this story before, but do so again because it is so relevant. My mum

had this saying that she would use very frequently, namely, 'keep looking up'!

Sometimes when I have mentioned this people have wrongly and somewhat condescendingly assumed that of course a mum would be optimistic with her children. However, this would be to totally underestimate the power of this saying for someone with a strong faith like my mum, whose utter reliance upon her risen Lord and Saviour meant, using Paul's words in Colossians, that her heart and mind were firmly set on things above. It was her resurrection faith that upheld her through her final illness and her death knowing that she was already raised with Christ and that she would appear with him in his glory.

Now that's a faith to live by and to go on living by forever!

BIBLE READINGS

[Colossians 3:1-4](#)

[John 20:1-23](#)

[Acts 10:34-43](#)

SUGGESTED SONGS

See What a Morning (Resurrection Hymn)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6xM-fpXayUg&list=PLmrBIgtDhwk-LjbJOBXctgtp8m5b3laqE&index=5>

Come People of the Risen King

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9j07fbl3uY>

PRAYER

Thank you Lord Jesus, that today we can say with certainty that death is not the end, that because you have been raised from the dead we can live fully assured that all your promises of forgiveness and eternal life are true. Heavenly Father, we thank you that you did love this world so much that you gave your one and only Son, so that whoever believes in him will not die but have eternal life. Risen Lord Jesus, today we bless you and praise you that you came that we might live life in all its fullness. Amen.

TO PONDER

If someone were to ask you what Easter is all about, how would you answer them? There are two fundamental answers that you could give. Firstly, you could say that Easter is all about the death of Jesus on the Cross. Secondly, you could respond that Easter is about Jesus rising from the dead. Well, is Easter about death or resurrection? 'Its about both,' you quite rightly reply. However, if you could only have one answer, which would it be? The message of Easter is that life wins every time. Death has been defeated at the Cross; the rising of Jesus and the empty tomb proves the point incontrovertibly. Jesus comes that we might live life in all its fulness (John 10:10); the promise for those whose life and faith is in Jesus is that they will live forever (John 6:58).

TIME OF PRAYER

There is a lot of fear and anxiety around in our world at this time, particularly in light of the coronavirus pandemic. How does the good news of Jesus' resurrection speak into this despair? Pray for those who are frightened and alone, who do not have the peace and hope of a faith in the risen Jesus. Pray for those who are able to speak and to minister to them at their time of crisis. Ask God to give you the words so that you can encourage someone or say something that will help them to get to know Jesus for themselves—maybe a family member on the phone, or a friend you've renewed contact with, or a neighbour over the garden fence. Pray for those on the frontline of care, but also pray that you might have the courage when someone reaches out to you for help.

SUGGESTED SONGS

The Power of the Cross

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=RDLNIP8Sy23XE&feature=share&playlistnext=1>

Because He Lives

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oPW9xYEyijQ>

MINI-SERMON OUTLINE

Introduction. Have you ever been in a situation where you have been completely flummoxed and you don't know what on earth is going on? Even though

in retrospect everything becomes clear, at the time what you experience is almost the exact opposite of what you expect, although actually more than you might ever have dared hope. Confusing, isn't it? And yet there is something of this in what the first disciples faced on that first Easter morning, and which took them a while to come to terms with, to get their heads around, even though Jesus had prepared them for it.

Bible. The last time Mary and the other women had seen the tomb was when they had prepared Jesus' dead body for burial and the stone had been rolled over its entrance. Now as she approaches the tomb she sees that the stone has been rolled away so runs to Peter and John to tell them that the body has been removed and hidden. The disciples enter the tomb in turn and see the grave clothes still lying there, before returning to their lodgings and leaving the crying Mary behind. It is to Mary that the risen Jesus first reveals himself, after she at first mistakes him for the gardener but then recognises him as the Teacher once she has been called by her name, Mary. She learns quickly that the Lord is risen, and learns too what she must do next. She must confess what all who know Jesus must confess: 'I have seen the Lord!' Jesus later meets the disciples gathered together, he blesses them with his peace, commissions them with the ministry of forgiveness, and empowers them with his Holy Spirit.