

Tarves Parish Church – Easter Sunday 12 April



**Christ is risen!
He is risen indeed! Hallelujah!**

An Easter Hymn **CH4 410** As you read this hymn you might like to sing/shout/speak the Alleluias aloud after every line....

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| <p>1. <i>Jesus Christ is risen today, Alleluia!
Our triumphant holy day, Alleluia!
Who did once upon the cross, Alleluia!
Suffer to redeem our loss Alleluia!</i></p> | <p>3. <i>But the anguish he endured
Our salvation has procured;
Now in heaven Christ is King,
Where the angels ever sing.</i></p> |
| <p>2. <i>Hymns of praise then let us sing
Unto Christ, our heavenly King
Who endured the cross and grave
Ruined sinners to redeem and save.</i></p> | <p>4. <i>Sing we to our God above
Praise eternal as his love;
Praise him all you heavenly host,
Father, Son and Holy Ghost.</i></p> |

The Easter Gospel – **St John 20:1-18**

20Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the tomb. ²So she ran and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved, and said to them, 'They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him.' ³Then Peter and the other disciple set out and went towards the tomb. ⁴The two were running together, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. ⁵He bent down to look in and saw the linen wrappings lying there, but he did not go in. ⁶Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb. He saw the linen wrappings lying there, ⁷and the cloth that had been on Jesus' head, not lying with the linen wrappings but rolled up in a place by itself. ⁸Then the other disciple, who reached the tomb first, also went in, and he saw and believed; ⁹for as yet they did not understand the scripture, that he must rise from the dead. ¹⁰Then the disciples returned to their homes.

11 But Mary stood weeping outside the tomb. As she wept, she bent over to look into the tomb; ¹²and she saw two angels in white, sitting where the body of Jesus had been lying, one at the head and the other at the feet. ¹³They said to her, 'Woman, why are you weeping?' She said to them, 'They have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid him.' ¹⁴When she had said this, she turned round and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not know that it was Jesus. ¹⁵Jesus said to her, 'Woman, why are you weeping? For whom are you looking?' Supposing him to

be the gardener, she said to him, 'Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away.' ¹⁶Jesus said to her, 'Mary!' She turned and said to him in Hebrew, 'Rabbouni!' (which means Teacher). ¹⁷Jesus said to her, 'Do not hold on to me, because I have not yet ascended to the Father. But go to my brothers and say to them, "I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God." ' ¹⁸Mary Magdalene went and announced to the disciples, 'I have seen the Lord'; and she told them that he had said these things to her.

You might like to read that Bible passage again – more slowly. If you are familiar with it try and imagine that you are reading it for the first time. What do you notice? Does anything surprise you? Take a moment to ponder the resurrection mystery at the heart of our faith

**Christ has died, Christ has risen
In Christ shall all be made alive
Blessing and honour and glory and power
Be to our God
Forever and ever, Amen**

Easter Message

Sunrise services have always been a popular feature of Easter. Sometimes they are held on beaches, sometimes on the top of hills, sometimes just in the local park. They always have something in common. Those attending set out in the dark in the expectation that light will dawn. But their journey begins in the darkness. And is that not often the way life is? Before there can be sunrise we must pass through the darkness.

Darkness is often used to symbolise the place of loss or death. This was certainly the case for Mary. In the Easter story as we read it in John's Gospel, Mary sets out in the dark. What I wonder were her expectations? What did she expect to find when she arrived at the tomb? In the midst of her grief over Jesus death, did she remember Jesus promise that he would rise again? Even if she did not fully understand that promise was it that which drew her out into the darkness? Or was it simply that she could not sleep and instinct drew her to the place where she had last seen her friend? Maybe she was simply doing the only thing she could under the circumstances.

Throughout life we can see that pattern of darkness and light repeated – it begins at birth. As babies we are thrust from the darkness of the womb into the harsh glare of the world – not much wonder the first sound a baby makes is a cry! It has to leave behind the safety of the life which it knew to experience a new and greater reality! What must have felt like death for the baby was birth into life of a new kind, in a new dimension.

There is another darkness into light, death into life experience when a child starts school for the first time. A parent may feel bereft as if in some way they have lost their child – something precious has died. Yet it has to die if their child is to grow up.

Twelve or thirteen years later when the child leaves school for the last time she will feel that something has died - been lost forever. But the familiarity of school life must be left behind because a wider world is waiting.

Fifty years later when the adult who was that child retires, the sense of loss that accompanies that transition can be overwhelming. Often there is a mourning for the loss of a career. And yet retirement can free us from the incessant demands of the time clock to enjoy experiences undreamt of. And so again from darkness and death new life emerges.

In the Easter story Mary too makes the discovery that from death comes life. After she has shown the disciples the empty tomb they leave her on her own to the darkness of her grief. Mary stands in the garden, isolated, totally bereft, with the light slowly dawning on a new day. The warm mist rises from the grass; the fragrance of the flowers fill the air as they open up to greet the sun; the bird song splits the skies as the dawn chorus begins. In the distance the sound and smells can be heard of a city awakening. And there as the new day dawns, the darkness of Mary's grief is dispelled as she encounters the risen Jesus.

For Jesus himself had followed that very pattern of darkness into light, of death into life. It was in the evening that his broken body was lowered from the cross and placed in the grave. And it was very early in the morning while it was still dark that God raised him to new life.

Today our world may seem a very dark and lonely place. We grieve for loved ones, for missed opportunities, for family occasions that cannot be marked, even for freedom to gather together in Church this Sunday of all Sundays. But in Easter and through Easter God shows us that the darkness does not have the last word and from the darkness new life will come. That may not be today, nor even tomorrow – the darkness may continue for a time yet. But when the light comes and new life appears in our silent towns and cities then we will celebrate. In the meantime as we hold onto God's promise of resurrection be assured that God holds each and everyone of us in his love.

The hymnwriter John Macleod Campbell Crum's puts it this way (CH4 417)

*"When our hearts are wintry, grieving or in pain,
Thy touch can call us back to life again,
Fields of our hearts that dead and bare have been:
Love is come again, like wheat that springeth green "*

Christ has died! Christ has risen! Christ will come again! Hallelujah!

Prayers for Others

Lift to God now in prayer

- All those whose lives have been impacted or changed by the pandemic
- All NHS staff and essential workers
- those who are seeking to manage and fight this global pandemic
- Christine and all Ministry candidates whose placements have been interrupted.

- the Church that we might offer a faithful witness to Christ through this time
- family, friends and neighbours
- other people and situations God has placed on your heart today.

The Lord's prayer

Our Father,
 Who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name
 Thy kingdom come,
 Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven
 Give us this day our daily bread
 And forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors
 And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil
 For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, forever,
 Amen.

CH4 419

1. *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***
2. *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.*
3. *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.*

Notices

Pastoral Care

The minister is available to help with any pastoral emergencies. Tel 851295

Care for the Community

If you hear of anyone needing practical help during this time then please contact Ruth Tel 851887

Christine's Last Sunday

This was scheduled to be Christine's last Sunday with us and although we cannot say farewell in person, I'm sure you join me in wishing her every blessing as she continues her training for the Ministry of Word and Sacrament. Below is a letter from Christine.

Dear friends and colleagues of Barthol Chapel and Tarves,

I can hardly believe the time has come for my placement with you to end. I remember very fondly the first Sunday I officially started my third placement with you in September 2019. I would never have imagined then, that by this point, we would be dealing with the Coronavirus pandemic and dealing with strict living restrictions. It has been lovely to see the efforts of the various communities supporting each other in these difficult times, especially for those who are vulnerable.

Before the COVID-19 pandemic I had planned a variety of pulpit supply throughout the rest of this year, which I will pick up when life returns to 'normal'. I am saddened my placement comes to an end amid the current pandemic and restrictions, however the circumstances are unavoidable. It is my intention to return to both Barthol Chapel and Tarves in person when normal services resume to say a more personal thanks and farewell.

For now, I would like to express my deep thanks to you all for your warm welcome when I started my placement, your continued support, encouragement, for including me and for the constructive feedback throughout my placement. My specific thanks to Alison for being my supervisor and guiding me for the past six months and to Susanna for including me as far as possible in worship and other aspects of ministry. I hope you all stay safe and wish God's blessing on you all.

Farewell for now,

Christine