

Easter Day
Sunday, 17th April 2022



Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ, We are an Easter People, and our song is Alleluia!!!

***‘Why do you look for the living among the dead?
He is not here; he has risen!’***
(Luke 24: 5)

It feels hard to rejoice about anything at present. News from Ukraine and other pockets of the globe beset with war, injustice, poverty, hunger, power and greed are devastating. Many of us feel helpless and hopeless, though as Christians, this Lent we have been learning to focus on helping those we can by whichever means we are able.

‘Imagine,’ asks John Lennon, ‘no possessions, no need for greed or hunger. Imagine all the people sharing the world...’ This is the understanding we have of the eternal life God will give to all His faithful children. It is the eternal hope we can offer to the countless innocents who are praying for deliverance from the oppression and fear of their earthly lives.



‘The Třeboň Altarpiece’ Source: National Gallery in Prague

Isaiah's words from the mouth of God, which we are given to read this Easter Day, are a comfort: *'Never again will there be in it an infant who lives but a few days, or an old man who does not live out his years.'* (Isaiah 65: 20)

God speaks, returning to Creation – to the very point of rupture, where human beings first disobeyed Him. God is saying that He will begin all over again - describing to us what eternity will look like in His love. This new heaven and new earth will be a place of safety, and plenty; a place of peace. And it will happen through His Son, Jesus Christ.



'The Resurrection of Christ' by Peter Paul Rubens

Luke's account of the resurrection starts in darkness and despair. The women go to the tomb frightened and fearful yet also in grief and love to tend to the body of their beloved friend. What they find, or rather what they don't find, is incomprehensible to them.

Back at the safe house, none of the other disciples believe them, but Peter feels he has to go and check things out for himself. On the way, he must have been remembering what had happened only days before. How he denied Jesus, not once, but three times.



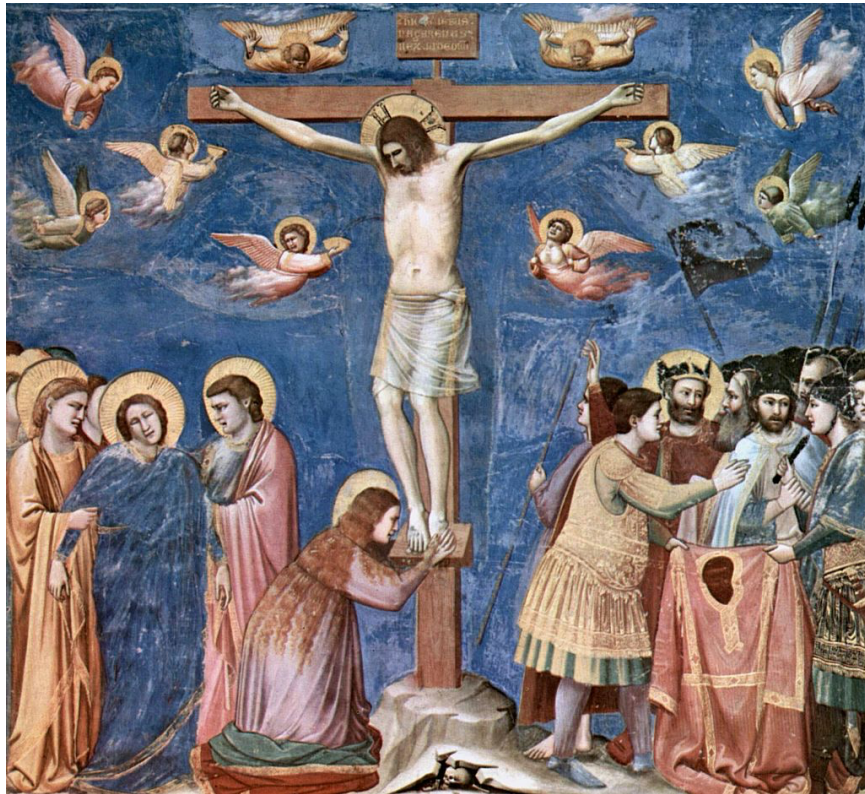
'Resurrection of Christ' by Raphael

As he too arrives to see the empty tomb, does Peter begin to be overtaken by a wild and desperate hope? Is Jesus alive? Slowly the truth dawns on him. Slowly he pieces together all that Jesus had ever told them; all the things he had ever seen and heard Jesus do. Does he dare to sense the living, thrilling presence of God that had been so much a part of Jesus' life and which seemed such a cruel joke after His death?

'Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here; he has risen!'

Peter is given a second chance. His betrayal of Jesus is not the end as he had feared, merely the beginning! Jesus now entrusts His Gospel to Peter and all the friends who had abandoned him at the cross.

The Good News of the resurrection is that for all of us who say 'yes' to following Christ and trust in His truth, He comes back to us, and with him comes a liberating promise of unconquerable and eternal life. No longer do we have to be paralyzed by tragedy and suffering and death.



'Christ Crucified' by Giotto di Bondone

This Easter Day is an opportunity for us to think deeply about what God has done – going back to the beginning of creation and starting again: breaking through from Heaven in Jesus Christ.

On Easter Day, we remember what Jesus has done for us, by taking all our sins upon Himself at the cross. He died for you. He died for me. And three days later He broke the bonds of hell and death and rose into New Life. This is the life of which God speaks through Isaiah. And it is the best reason of all to rejoice!

We know that, like Peter and Mary and the disciples and all those who recognise the living Christ, we too will be able to run to that place where a great stone seemed to block our way and find a path opened up again and New Life on the other side. May this be an eternal comfort to our hurting world.

May Easter fill your hearts with peace,

Jax

Rev'd Jax Machin, Rector, The Downs Benefice.

Collect Prayer for Easter Day

Lord of all life and power,
who through the mighty resurrection of your Son
overcame the old order of sin and death to make all things new in him:
grant that we, being dead to sin and alive to you in Jesus Christ,
may reign with him in glory;
to whom with you and the Holy Spirit be praise and honour, glory and might,
now and in all eternity.
Amen.



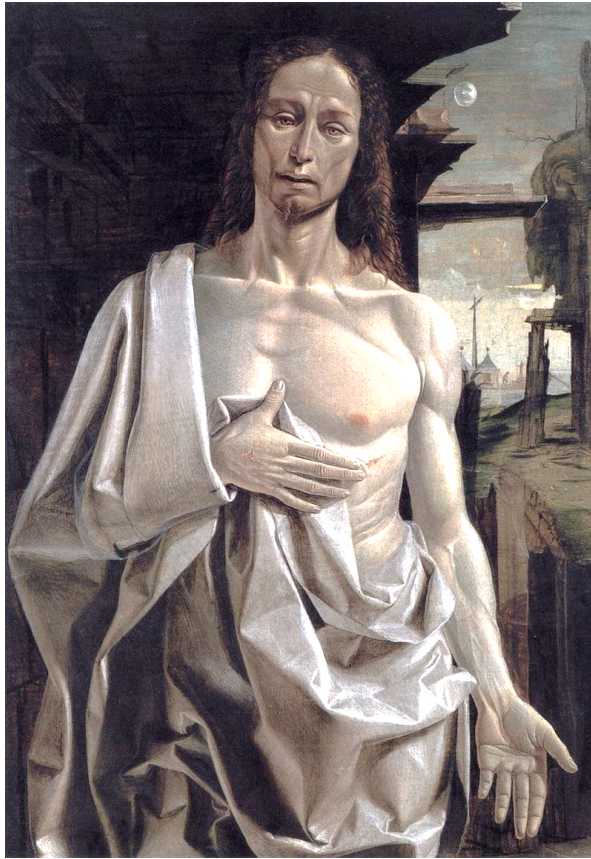
Isaiah 65: 17- 25 - New Heavens and a New Earth

‘See, I will create new heavens and a new earth. The former things will not be remembered, nor will they come to mind. But be glad and rejoice forever in what I will create, for I will create Jerusalem to be a delight and its people a joy.

I will rejoice over Jerusalem and take delight in my people; the sound of weeping and of crying will be heard in it no more. Never again will there be in it an infant who lives but a few days, or an old man who does not live out his years; the one who dies at a hundred will be thought a mere child; the one who fails to reach a hundred will be considered accursed.

They will build houses and dwell in them; they will plant vineyards and eat their fruit. No longer will they build houses and others live in them, or plant and others eat. For as the days of a tree, so will be the days of my people; my chosen ones will long enjoy the work of their hands. They will not labour in vain, nor will they bear children doomed to misfortune; for they will be a people blessed by the Lord, they and their descendants with them.

Before they call I will answer; while they are still speaking I will hear. The wolf and the lamb will feed together, and the lion will eat straw like the ox, and dust will be the serpent’s food. They will neither harm nor destroy on all my holy mountain,’ says the Lord.



'Cristo Dolente' (Man of Sorrows) by Bramantino (Bartolomeo Suardi)

Luke 24: 1-12 - Jesus Has Risen

On the first day of the week, very early in the morning, the women took the spices they had prepared and went to the tomb. They found the stone rolled away from the tomb, but when they entered, they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus. While they were wondering about this, suddenly two men in clothes that gleamed like lightning stood beside them. In their fright the women bowed down with their faces to the ground, but the men said to them, 'Why do you look for the living among the dead?' 'He is not here; he has risen! Remember how he told you, while he was still with you in Galilee: 'The Son of Man must be delivered over to the hands of sinners, be crucified and on the third day be raised again.' Then they remembered his words.

When they came back from the tomb, they told all these things to the Eleven and to all the others. It was Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and the others with them who told this to the apostles. But they did not believe the women, because their words seemed to them like nonsense. Peter, however, got up and ran to the tomb. Bending over, he saw the strips of linen lying by themselves, and he went away, wondering to himself what had happened.

Schedule of Services

Now that all national Coronavirus restrictions have been lifted, it is no longer necessary to book seats in our parishes for services. Neither is it mandatory for you to wear masks in church. However, Coronavirus is still very much with us. There are a number of people in our villages with it at present, so we are encouraging people to observe social distancing measures.

<i>Date</i>	<i>Ch</i>	<i>Cr</i>	<i>Li</i>	<i>Sp</i>	<i>Wh</i>
<i>14th April Maundy Thursday</i>				6pm - Holy Communion with Washing of the Feet	
<i>15th April Good Friday</i>	<i>With Wh</i>	10am - Easter Garden	12 noon - Good Friday Meditation		3pm - Good Friday Meditation
<i>17th April EASTER SUNDAY</i>	Easter Holy Communion	Easter Service	Easter Holy Communion	Easter Holy Communion	Easter Service
<i>24th April</i>			Morning Prayer	Morning Worship	8am – BCP Holy Communion
<i>27th April WEDNESDAY</i>			Holy Communion		
<i>1st May</i>	Morning Prayer		4pm – Café Church		
<i>8th May</i>			Holy Communion followed by APCM		Morning Prayer and Pet Service
<i>15th May</i>	Holy Communion	Morning Worship	6pm – Peace & Wholeness	8am – Holy Communion (BCP)	
<i>22nd May</i>			Christian Aid Morning Prayer Service	Morning Worship	8am – Holy Communion (BCP)
<i>26th May Ascension Day</i>			7.30am – Holy Communion followed by Breakfast in the Church Room		
<i>29th May</i>		5 th Sunday Benefice Holy Communion			