



“He is Risen!”

The Benefice of Upper Wensleydale



Edition 4

‘Church in the Home’

Easter Sunday & Easter Week: April 12th – April 18th

A spring walk in Bainbridge:

Heather Cumpstone

One morning last week we took Theo out for a walk to get some fresh air and enjoy a brief change of scenery. We passed a grassy verge by the road which was covered in dead foliage and dried long grass; and just as I was complaining that the view was hardly inspiring, Andrew pointed at something. At first I couldn't see it for all the brown twigs and grass that seemed to overwhelm the landscape, but as I moved closer I spotted it. Bursting through all the dead foliage was this small but vibrant yellow flower, very much alive and thriving *despite* what was going on around it. There is so much hope in this picture! Out of something so bleak and barren came something new and full of colour! It's the very nature of God to bring life where there has been barren wasteland. Remember, the very reason for Jesus coming to the world in the first place: to exchange 'a crown of beauty for ashes, a joyous blessing instead of mourning, festive praise instead of despair' (Isaiah 61:3). God is in the business of working in difficult seasons and showing his mercy when we're feeling at our most helpless. It wasn't until I got home and tried to make sense of what God had put on my heart, that I remembered the scripture that has been very much on our hearts over the last year... *'See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland.'* (Isaiah 43:19). With all my heart I don't feel like this is some pleasant anecdote to make us feel 'nice' - I believe it's a promise



***Jesus Christ is Risen Today
In Christ alone***

***Music thoughts
from Sarah***

This traditional Easter hymn was initially written in the 14th century as a Latin hymn, but reworked and translated into English in 1708, so it is an expression of unity, connecting us all with those who have gone before us. *In Christ alone* came 3rd in the BBC Songs of Praise Top Ten Hymns of 2019. Written by Stuart Townend & Keith Getty it is a wonderful proclamation of resurrection truth. I just love the phrase *'Jesus commands my destiny'*. I believe the last verse is something we should all be singing every day right now; Here is a link to a virtual choir singing these amazing truths.

Jesus Christ is risen today, Alleluia,
our triumphant holy day; Alleluia,
who did once upon the cross; Alleluia,
suffer to redeem our loss; Alleluia!

But the pains which he endured; Alleluia,
our salvation have procured: Alleluia,
now above the sky he's King; Alleluia,
where the angels ever sing: Alleluia!

Hymns of praise then let us sing; Alleluia,
unto Christ our heavenly king: Alleluia,
who endured the cross and grave; Alleluia,
sinners to redeem and save: Alleluia!

Sing we to our God above, Alleluia!
Praise eternal as his love; Alleluia!
Praise him, all you heavenly host, Alleluia!
Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Alleluia!

https://youtu.be/_6sj9ljVsfk

In Christ alone my hope is found,
He is my light, my strength, my song;
This Cornerstone, this solid Ground,
Firm through the fiercest drought & storm
What heights of love what depths of peace,
When fears are stilled, when strivings cease!
My Comforter, my All in All,
Here in the love of Christ I stand.

In Christ alone! – who took on flesh,
Fullness of God in helpless babe.
This gift of love and righteousness,
Scorned by the ones He came to save:
Till on that cross as Jesus died,
The wrath of God was satisfied –
For every sin on Him was laid;
Here in the death of Christ I live.

There in the ground His body lay,
Light of the world by darkness slain:
Then bursting forth in glorious day
Up from the grave He rose again!
And as He stands in victory
Sin's curse has lost its grip on me,
For I am His and He is mine –
Bought with the precious blood of Christ.

No guilt in life, no fear in death,
This is the power of Christ in me;
From life's first cry to final breath,
Jesus commands my destiny.
No power of hell, no scheme of man,
Can ever pluck me from His hand:
Till He returns or calls me home,
Here in the power of Christ I'll stand.

<https://youtu.be/Ry4CW5pte98>



Bible Readings for Easter Sunday:

Ps.118:1-2, 14-24, Acts 10:34-43, Col. 3:1-4, Matt.28:1-10

Click on this site, type in the reading you want and then listen to David Suchet read it to you.

<https://www.biblegateway.com/audio/suchet/nivuk/Gen.1>

Reflection K6LIGCIIOU

Coronavirus: 'They said a mask and some gloves would be enough to go to the local shop – they lied. Everybody else had their clothes on!'

Things are different. Life is not the same. It's been a very unusual lead up to Easter hasn't it? Who would have thought our lives could all change so swiftly? How different our approach to shopping would become - A mask and gloves? 'Physical distancing'? Closed church buildings? 'Lockdown'?

On that first Easter morning, the disciples were also in a lockdown and viewing their lives in a very different way. They had locked themselves into their room in fear for their safety. Their lives and the way in which they lived them had changed very swiftly indeed. Circumstances were out of their control. What was going on? It's the women on a very early visit to the tomb who discover the truth and hear the angel and Jesus give the same command: *'Do not be afraid'*. At the time they arguably had many reasons to feel afraid and yet the presence of Jesus removes them all. And there is the message of **hope** for today. It's a message of hope that has withstood the ages, a message of hope that has remained unchanged across the millennia, because it's a message that is not built simply upon some man made ideal, but upon a living relationship with the risen Jesus. Jesus was not in a state of 'Lockdown' then and he isn't in a state of 'lockdown' now: *'He is not here .. he has been raised from the dead'* Matt 28:6-7

Unlike the hidden virus with which we are presently contending, there was no hiding of Jesus. The gospel accounts speak of him appearing publically at least 10 times over the next 40 days and these are only the occasions that have been recorded. He appeared to individuals, to couples, to small groups and to large crowds. In one instance to over 500 people at the same time.

Dr. Simon Gathercole of Fitzwilliam College, Cambridge writing in the Guardian paper in 2017 declared that there was overwhelming documentary evidence to support the fact that Jesus Christ lived and died. The really interesting question we all need to answer in our lifetime however, is whether Jesus Christ died and *lived*. So many authors across history have set out to undermine the message of Hope that is in a risen Jesus and time after time as they have undertaken a thorough investigation of the evidence, they have encountered him for themselves and ended up writing a completely different story. See Gilbert West and Lord Littleton, American General Lew Wallace, Lawyer and journalist Frank Morrison to name but a few. But the real excitement is in the countless testimonies of billions alive today who have experienced the reality behind the words of the angel: *'He has been raised from the dead'*. These words and the truth that lies behind them have changed the whole course of human history. They are words that are filled with confidence, joy and hope. They are words that add substance to the instruction; *'Do not be afraid'*.

Just days before, the disciples were a cowering group of frightened men in their 'lockdown' situation. Locked in to a hiding place to preserve their very lives. Now, everything has changed. They are bold and they are confident, full of hope and full of courage. They are changed and together they help to change the world. What else could have driven such a fundamental alteration in their behavior, what else would take them to a situation where they would be willing to face torture and execution unless it was all true? Unless Jesus really *had* risen from the dead? Encountering the risen Jesus changed people then and still changes people today.

What can we offer to the worried, the weary and the bereaved? There remain these words of truth and hope: *'He has been raised from the dead'*.

The resurrection of Jesus brought power and the resurrection of Jesus *brings* power. Power to transform lives, power to break addiction, power to revolutionize society, power to set hearts free, power to turn despair to hope, sorrow to joy, weakness to strength, shame to honour and defeat to victory. A mask and gloves may offer us some hope in the supermarket but the real hope is the Easter Hope, and that's why disciples of Jesus are 'Easter People'.

In these unusual and challenging days may you know the presence, the joy and the hope of the risen Jesus. He's not locked down and he's not locked in! **Happy Easter**

Rev Dave

Prayers



Heavenly Father, we thank you for what it says in the Psalm in our readings that you are good and your mercy endures for ever; we recognise our need and look for your saving help.

We thank you so much for the Easter reading from Acts, and that you have a remedy for sin for all people, the man Jesus Christ, who is Lord. Help us discover afresh the message that Jesus is the judge of all the earth and everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name.

Father, we rejoice this Easter, and though afraid as were the original disciples, we welcome your news of new days and resurrection life.

Father we lift up to you the needs of the world. In particular those who are ill at this present time, in hospital or at home, and we pray for their health and full recovery. We pray for all NHS workers and carers, we ask that you would protect them and give them strength and peace to care.

We thank you for what has been achieved in this country in such a short space of time with people working together to fight this disease; keep us mindful and vigilant and to do the right thing. We pray for all key workers and thank you for them, please keep them safe at this time.

We pray for our government and all those in authority at this time. Please help them to make wise choices and steer our country out of danger and into a place of recovery.

We pray for our churches in Hardraw, Stalling Busk, Askrigg and Hawes; for all who worship there, and we bless them in your name. May they know the joy of the Lord as their strength and the peace which passes all understanding. We especially bless our children this Easter, who will be missing school and their friends. May you give them understanding beyond their years to know all the more about Jesus and his message.

Father, we pray for those who do not know the Saviour. May your mercy re-envision them with your life, drawing them to the chief corner-stone Jesus. We pray too for a fresh touch for ourselves, to be anointed with the Holy Spirit and power to continue your works on the earth and impact those we know and love.

Julian Spykerman

Keep us, good Lord, under the shadow of your mercy.
Sustain and support the anxious, be with those who care for the sick,
and lift up all who are brought low; that we may find comfort
knowing that nothing can separate us from your love in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Amen.

Merciful Father; accept these prayers, for the sake of your son, our saviour, Jesus Christ. Amen

'The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you; the Lord turn his face towards you and grant you peace.' Numbers 6:24



SPRING HARVEST

Spring Harvest Home is a completely free online conference programme with content suitable for everyone in the family. Lined up for the week after Easter, there is some amazing material all built around the 2020 theme of "**Unleashed - The Acts Church Today**". Never has there been a more appropriate time for us to gather together as a community to worship, learn, laugh and pray together.

https://youtu.be/bw_t1J2734g

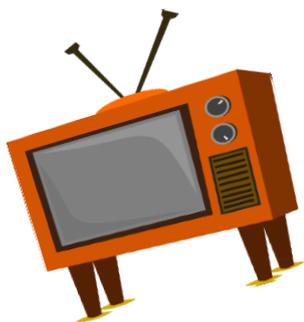


THE FILLING STATION

We can't meet at the Filling Station at the moment so how about investigating this site: **Read Scripture** section of the **Bible Project** which has short You Tube clips giving an overview for each book of the bible.

The Ezra – Nehemiah link is below:

<https://bibleproject.com/explore/ezra-nehemiah/>



Sundays: Radio 4 - 8:10 Morning Service

BBC 1 10:10-11:00am – 'Britain's Easter Story' with Gareth Malone and Karen Gibson

13:15 Songs of Praise

Lots of resources and information and the Family section on our website:



www.upperwensleydalechurch.co.uk

Virtual Stations of the Cross:

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLrd9oadgqWxw9qiJifQyqAhOudPLLnF-c&feature=share>

On Line: Lots of resources on the Church of England Website

<https://www.churchofengland.org/>