**Easter Day – 12 April**

**Collect:**

God of glory,   
by the raising of your Son   
you have broken the chains of death and hell:   
ﬁll your Church with faith and hope;   
for a new day has dawned   
and the way to life stands open   
in our Saviour Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

**Gospel:**

After the sabbath, as the first day of the week was dawning, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to see the tomb. And suddenly there was a great earthquake; for an angel of the Lord, descending from heaven, came and rolled back the stone and sat on it. His appearance was like lightning, and his clothing white as snow. For fear of him the guards shook and became like dead men. But the angel said to the women, ‘Do not be afraid; I know that you are looking for Jesus who was crucified. He is not here; for he has been raised, as he said. Come, see the place where he lay. Then go quickly and tell his disciples, “He has been raised from the dead, and indeed he is going ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see him.” This is my message for you.’ So they left the tomb quickly with fear and great joy, and ran to tell his disciples. Suddenly Jesus met them and said, ‘Greetings!’ And they came to him, took hold of his feet, and worshipped him. Then Jesus said to them, ‘Do not be afraid; go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee; there they will see me.’   
 *Matthew 28:1-10*

**Easter Anthems:**

Christ our Passover has been sacrificed for us  
Therefore let us keep the feast;  
Not with the leaven of corruption and wickedness  
But with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.  
Christ being raised from the dead dies no more,  
Death has no more dominion over him:  
In dying he died to sin once for all,  
In living he lives to God.  
See yourselves, therefore, as dead unto sin  
But alive to God in Jesus Christ our Lord.  
Christ is risen from the dead,  
The first-fruits of those who sleep.  
For as by man came death,  
By man has come also the resurrection of the dead;  
As in Adam all die,   
Even so in Christ shall all be made alive.

**Making Meaning**

Welcome to Easter Day! …probably the strangest Easter Day you’ll ever experience. And welcome to Matthew’s second earthquake, a none-too-subtle reminder of the earth-shattering news: Jesus is risen, conquering sin and death. God has the last word in the battle between good and evil, life and death.

The rest of the story is about messengers and message. An angel (lit. messenger) is needed, and Mary Magdalene becomes that urgent messenger. Then, even better, in the process or sharing the urgent message, they meet the risen Lord Jesus, who greets them. Their response is pure and simple: they worship him… and then more message-taking to more people for more meetings with the risen Christ.

In this strange time of Covid19 lock-down we are learning new ways of being the church and being the community. In particular, we’re using social media and the telephone to get our messages to people, to ask for help, to arrange to give help, or just to chat to stop us getting stuck in the misery of the pandemic. But today the message is one of resurrection joy and hope. The virus may not be beaten yet, but we have been brought back to God through the death of Jesus, and death itself has been defeated through the resurrection of Christ. So, I invite you to make a noise about this today, fill the phonelines and the Facebook pages with the message of Easter as you stay at home. And remember the key word: “Hallelujah!”

**Hymn:**

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.   
  
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.

**Easter Blessings to all! Hallelujah, Christ is Risen.**