

Easter 2021



Four years ago – on my first Palm Sunday in the UK for many years - we awoke to news of bomb attacks at churches in Egypt. I wore my Egyptian robes with a feeling of grief and resilience at the same time. We saw on the news a week later – Easter Sunday - that same grief and resilience as Coptic Christians gathered to celebrate the Resurrection. Literally standing on the floor that they cleaned blood from during the week so they could proclaim the resurrection.

We do not feel quite the same this year – but we will stand together and proclaim victory over death while at the back of our minds we know how many have died from Coronavirus in our nation since last Easter.

Like the first disciples we have a testimony, we bear witness to things we have seen and experienced. The good and the bad. The life changing and the life restoring together with those things that drag us down.

Our Gospels are disciples telling us of what they had seen and experienced – their testimony. The model testimony for all of us comes from Mary Magdalene. It is humble, truthful and simple: “I have seen the Lord.” It may be that if you say that this year, people will scoff at you – just like they did to Mary. But she had seen him, so she was insistent. I hope and pray you have seen the Lord in the past year too. Perhaps in the increase of food provision in our Parish. Perhaps in the different ways we have managed to proclaim the Gospel, online, outside and on the phone. (Many thanks to all those who have enabled us to ‘be church’ without using our buildings – you have been amazingly creative and resilient)

Maybe you have seen the Lord in the way the church has ‘become family’ to those who have been isolated or lonely in lockdown. Perhaps the tough questions of life and death at the lips of the whole world has given you the opportunity to say “I have seen the Lord” more often this year.

This year – as every year – we still say “I have seen the Lord” and in our outdoor service we will say “He is risen!!” My prayer for us all is that our testimony of this long and difficult year will make that shout of praise all the more poignant.

Once again we cannot meet during Holy Week in our familiar ways, but we can be church together by remembering our Christian story day by day as we follow the readings from John’s gospel. Please see overleaf for the readings we will read ‘together’.

Happy Easter – He is Risen!

Chris

Rev Chris Chorlton

HOLY WEEK 2021

Readings following Jesus' journey to the cross.

Palm Sunday: John 12: 12-19

Monday 29th March: John 12: 1-11

Tuesday 30th March: John 12: 20-36

Wednesday 31st March: John 13: 18-38

Maundy Thursday: John 13: 1-17 & 18: 1-14

Good Friday: John 18: 15-38 & 19: 1-30

Easter Eve: John 19: 28-42

Easter Sunday: John 20: 1-18