

ROCHFORD CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

Welcome to

CHURCH AT HOME

Sunday 12th April 2020

EASTER DAY

Read through this outline and join with everyone else at 11 am

An Easter hymn No 357

Jesus Christ is risen today, *Hallelujah!*
Our triumphant holy day,
Who did once, upon the cross,
Suffer to redeem our loss.

Hymns of praise then let us sing,
Unto Christ, our heavenly King,
Who endured the cross and grave,
Sinners to redeem and save. *Hallelujah.*

No 453

Low in the grave He lay, Jesus my Saviour,
Waiting the coming day, Jesus my Lord.

*Up from the grave He arose,
with a mighty triumph o'er His foes,
He arose a victor from the dark domain.
And He lives for ever with His saints to reign,
He arose! He arose! hallelujah Christ arose.*

Easter Chorus

Jesus is alive today! Jesus is alive today!
Jesus is alive today, very much alive
Jesus is alive today
He is living in the hearts of ordinary people.
Teaching them to love both God and man.
Giving them the faith to look for a miracle
Helping them to know they count in His plan!

PRAYER *(It would be good if you said this out aloud)*

Our glorious, gracious God we worship You today with
joy in our hearts and thanksgiving on our lips.

It was such an act of great love that caused You to give
Your only Son to die on the cross for our sins and the
sins of the whole world.

And then when the powers of evil had done their worst You
raised Him back to life again.

So amazing! So wonderful! Enable us this morning to
worship You, to ponder afresh this amazing act.

Simply we bow in Your presence and thank You for this special
day that reminds us that You give us new life.

You fill us with Your love and You enable us with risen power
to live our lives for Your glory, honour and praise.

AMEN

You may like to say the Lord's prayer also.

BIBLE VERSE FOR THE WEEK

Selected from Matthew 28:1-10

***"He is not here , HE HAS RISEN, just as He said. Come and see the place
where He lay, then go quickly and tell His disciples" (verse 6,7)***

Reflect that we too must **come and see** and then **go and tell**.

THEN IT WAS SUNDAY !

The story of Good Friday and Easter is about people who feel and think they have lost everything suddenly finding hope, joy, peace and new life. It was early dawn on the Sunday morning when two women made their way to the tomb/grave where Jesus was placed in a hurry so as to comply with Jewish law and practice. The sky is still dark but then the past week has been a dark week. Dark with Peter's denial, dark with the betrayal, dark with Pilate's cowardice, dark with Christ's anguish. All the boasts of bravado and all those declarations of devotion lay broken and shattered at the gate of Gethsemane's garden. We are not told where the disciples

went when they ran away. We do not know what they said or did. It was just the end of a very dark week in their lives. **And then it was Sunday !**

Has the last week or so been dark for you ? Is it how you have felt with this Covid-19 virus? The past weeks have just kept getting darker and darker. Listening to the resume of what was happening around the world all I could do was bury my head in my hands and cry out "*God have mercy on us*" over and over again. It is so dark. With all the restrictions so dark.

And then here comes Sunday!

The Sunday PROBLEM "*who will move away the stone*"

The two women were not looking for an empty tomb, they do not know this is the first Easter. They are there out of a sense of duty and devotion. For them the stone was all about the despair that death brings . It was about the efforts of others opposed to Jesus Christ. The stone can be about a person, a place, a situation, an issue in our lives. On the road to Emmaus for those two walking there how could they find comfort in the face of sorrow. For Peter the professional fisherman deciding to go back to his old life the frustration in the face of so much failure. For Thomas all the questions and doubts that consumed his thinking. What about us? What is the stone for you ? Certainly the Covid-19 virus looms large.

The Sunday PERSON "*here is not here, He has risen, just as He said*"

The Resurrection was a total surprise to the disciples and to everyone else who would encounter Jesus. The past impressions for some was that He was a great man, some thought He was a prophet, others that He would lead them in a revolt against the power of Rome. All underestimated Him because now they see He is the risen Lord. Consequently He will turn these discouraged, fearful disciples into an irresistible force that would change the world. He is here today to touch your life, guaranteeing His help. He is alive! This is a day of victory. When life does its worst, God gives His best.

The Sunday POWER "*see the place where He lay*"(NOT lies there!)

God is still in control of this world. Our deepest needs will be met. Sunday is here and now! He is alive! This is the day of victory. Trust Him- you will experience help beyond your wildest dreams.

DPS