

**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. A word of warning as we talk about the staggering, amazing power of the resurrection of Jesus. There is no guarantee that from now on life will be a bed of roses. What is important is the realisation that the same power which raised Jesus is there for us. Why and How ? To see us through our problems.

Easter Sunday is here and now! Jesus is alive!

This is the day of victory. He is a living Saviour. He, and He alone can grant eternal life, because He, and He alone, is the author of life. *"I am the resurrection and the life,(He said) and he who believes in me will live"* (John 11:25) Can you remember the last breakfast on the sea shore that especially proved so challenging to Peter. The second chance moment, the challenge to get back on track as Jesus called Peter back into His service. Easter was all about that too.

Everyone of us will have fallen short, messed things up, some time or other. We have not been what we should have been or we could have been. There is something of Peter in all of us -pride, arrogance, failure . None of us deserves to serve Him but Jesus is in the business of rekindling cold hearts and restoring the broken. The Saviour is still calling *"Do you love Me? Then go and serve Me"*

After this dreadful pandemic year this is my Easter pledge 2021 *"Lord, I am here, help me to start afresh. Enable me to serve you the best I can"* Would you be prepared to do the same so together we can watch our church rise again like a Phoenix from the ashes. Trust Him- you will experience help beyond your wildest dreams.

**DPS**

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!

**Final word:** Eagerly waiting to hear what the government has in store for us.

**ROCHFORD CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH**

Welcome to  
**CHURCH AT HOME**

Sunday 4th April 2021

**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.*

Vainly they watch His bed, Jesus my Saviour  
Vainly they seal the tomb, Jesus, my Lord.

Death cannot keep his prey, Jesus my Saviour.  
He tore the bars away, Jesus, my Lord

**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.

### **Then it was Sunday !**

Has the last week, month (and now we realise - it has been a year) or so been dark for you ? Is it how you have felt with this Covid-19 virus? The past months have just kept getting darker and darker. Listening to the resume of what is happening around the world as politicians argue over the vaccine and make their idle threats .God where are You in all of this ? . It is so, so dark. With all the restrictions it has been **so very** dark. Will they be lifted soon? Is next week when the next restrictions are lifted going to be a major change moment.

Just a moment - 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 but there might also be some other issue or situation. Think about it for a moment.

### **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.