



Dear friends,

This letter bears Easter greetings to you and your dear ones.

**Alleluia! Christ is risen!
He is risen indeed! Alleluia!**

We say these words with, to and for one another as so many have done down the centuries, call and response, assuring and reassuring, bearing a message of hope. I have friends who I am not in regular touch with...but on Easter morning, as soon as we see a glimmer of light, we text our alleluias. No matter what, those words say, Christ *is* risen, God *is* with us, there *is* hope of new life.

I wonder which of the Easter gospels you are most drawn to? Matthew with earthquakes and angels, Luke with Peter running to see if the women spoke the truth, John with Mary in the garden, or Mark with the fleeing, silent, fearful women? Each has a different perspective to open for us as we encounter the mystery of the resurrection. Often I have found myself most at home with Mark to begin my journey into the Easter season. Early in the morning, just as the sun has risen, a small group of women go to the tomb. They are talking amongst themselves, wondering how they will do what they have come to do. What they encounter when they reach the tomb fills them with such terror and amazement that they flee...saying nothing to anyone...

Of course we know that they did eventually speak, they must have broken their silence...because the story has come down the ages to us. But it took time.

As we noticed last month, many of us are still experiencing disorientation of some kind or another after a year which few of us could have anticipated. It will take time for us to tell our stories. It will take time for us to make sense of what may have happened to us, to those we love and care for, to those we have encountered in news reporting; time for us to grieve, to learn and grow. The good news is, God's presence with us is eternal, the Risen Christ holds hope for and with us, God's Holy Spirit both comforts and challenges us. Easter is a season, not a day...

Looking on towards our journey into Easter, we will be providing common resources for Sunday 11th April. The whole Circuit will have the opportunity to share in worship together, as we pray for ourselves as Christian communities, and for the life of the Circuit, through the continuing challenges of this time. Whether worshipping at home with our written worship, on Zoom, or in person at one of the church buildings which will be open (please check on the rolling plan), we will share scripture, song and prayer. We will hear Jesus' words of peace and sending, and reflect on the gifts we bring into the community of faith, and share with the world.

We hope you will also find time to explore the booklet of reflections you will receive next week. Staff and others in the circuit have taken words of Jesus from the first Easter Day, and used them as a springboard for their own writing. We hope they will form part of your wondering and praying over these next weeks. If you are inspired in your turn to write, paint, draw, compose...or whatever... and would be willing to share your creativity with others, do let us know.

And so we end as we began.

**Alleluia! Christ is risen!
He is risen indeed! Alleluia!**

Peace, Jo