

25 March 2025

## A Message for Easter 2026

Dear friends,

This Easter comes to us in a world that feels more troubled, more uncertain, and more weary. War continues in Ukraine and Gaza, and now with Iran. The climate emergency looms large. The cost of living remains a real strain for many. Lots of us carry this weight in one way or another: through the news we hear, the anxieties we feel for the world, or the personal burdens we bear in our own lives and ministries.

And it is into just such a world that the message of Easter is spoken. The women came to the tomb in grief, expecting only to tend the body of the one they had lost. They were not expecting hope. Yet they found that God had already been at work before they arrived. The stone was rolled away, and death did not have the last word.

That is the heart of Easter still. The resurrection does not deny pain or make light of suffering. It does not pretend that the wounds of the world are unreal. But it does proclaim that despair is not the end of the story, because the crucified Christ has been raised.

Easter tells us that God is never absent from the places that seem most hopeless. The risen Christ comes not to those who are strong and certain, but to those who are fearful, grieving, and unsure what to do next. That is why Easter hope is more than optimism. It is the deep assurance that even where death, failure, or despair seem to have the upper hand, God is still at work, and love will have the final word.

For many churches, this is not an easy season. We know the weight of change, uncertainty, and limitation. We know what it is to grieve what has been lost, and to wonder what the future may hold. Yet Easter reminds us that God's life is not confined to what is familiar, manageable, or already known to us. The risen Christ goes ahead of us, calling us not backwards into memory, but onwards in hope.

This Easter, may we be given grace to hold on to that hope. Not a shallow optimism, but the deep and steady hope that comes from knowing that God is faithful, even in the darkness. May we notice the signs of resurrection around us: acts of kindness, courage, love, and quiet perseverance. And may the peace of the risen Christ sustain us, renew us, and lead us on.

With prayers for a blessed and hopeful Easter,



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