



Easter Hope

It's been a year, a long year. We went into lockdown for the first time shortly before Easter 2020. And here we are, approaching Easter 2021.

And there is an appropriate symmetry to the coincidence of corona and Holy Week. The cross and the resurrection of Jesus are the heart of the Christian faith.. We cannot go forward with God unless we go via the cross and we do not grasp the cross unless we see beyond it to the empty tomb.

One of the great things about St Barnabas is the cross that stands at the head of the church. It is what we look towards whenever we come in. That cross reminds us of the God who comes to us in all our mess.

As we look back over 2020 and the start of 2021 we grieve. Some of us are grieving, literally, for loved ones who have died or grieving over physical and/or mental health with which we are struggling. Others are grieving for those dear to us whom we have not been able to see, or hug or support. Others of us are grieving for precious plans

and hopes that have been dashed – a job lost, education curtailed or stopped, a wedding or a concert we were planning and which has come to nought. It's a bit of a mess.

The first Good Friday was much more than a mess. It was, seemingly, a disaster. The disciples ran, not just because they were afraid, but because any sane person could see that the Jesus project had, seemingly, hit the buffers. The first Easter sees two unnamed disciples, with consummate irony, explaining to the risen Jesus 'what had happened in Jerusalem'. Only they had no real idea what had really happened – and as Jesus opens up the scriptures to them, their eyes are opened to the reality that Good Friday was not the end, but the start.

We approach Easter 2021 so much more aware of our weakness than as we approached Easter 2020. But the Jesus we meet on the cross and at the empty tomb is not going to leave us there. There is power in the blood of Christ. We are weak, but he is mighty.

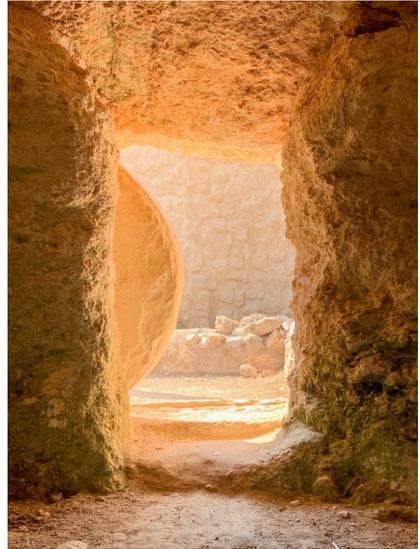


Photo by [Pisit Heng](#) on [Unsplash](#)

This has been a hard twelve months, extremely hard for many, but our difficulties are not where the story ends. That is the Easter hope and it is our hope too.

As we approach Good Friday and Easter Day, I urge you to make the most of Holy Week and Easter. The cross and resurrection of Christ are the heart of our faith. They can hold us and guide like nothing else. We will be the better for the depth with which we engage with God this Easter – and, as we become Easter people, we will bless others greatly too.

David Goodhew

New Series on Sunday Mornings from 25th April: How to read the Bible



St Barnabas is a church which has as one of its key four values that it is 'Bible-based'. What does that mean? What things do we need to do to read the Bible well? Conversely, are there mistakes that we can fall into when we read scripture? On Sunday mornings from 25th April we begin a five week series where we look at how to read the Bible.

The five weeks map out as follows:

April 25 How to Read the Bible

May 2 The Old Testament: the Bible Jesus Read

May 9 What Did Jesus Mean by That ?

May 16 How the First Christians Read Scripture

May 23 How the First Christians Shared the Good News

Giving for Mission Sunday—an update

St Barnabas held its 'Giving for Mission Sunday' on 14th March. Thank you to everyone who has returned a response card to our treasurer, Phil Edwards. Thank you for your generosity. We have much for which to be grateful. It is also true to say that we can only take forward our Mission Action Plan if we can resource it well. So, if you have yet to return your response card, please do so in the next few days. Financial giving is far from the only way by which we give, but it is an important way by which we give.

Next PCC and APCM

A reminder that the next PCC is on Monday 19th April at 7.15 pm and the APCM is on Monday 24 May at 7.30pm. If you want to vote at the APCM, you need to be on the electoral roll by Sunday 9th May.

PCC in March



There was the usual review of church life in the current restrictions and reports from Mark Walley on ministry with children and families and Alistair Bolton on the buildings.

Discussions on coming out of lockdown and the Diocesan vision process were introduced and will be continued at future meetings.

Dear St Barnabas Church family

Thank you so much for your loving concern for Gordon and me. Your prayers have carried me along and I cannot thank God enough for you. His grace and peace be with you all,

Marjorie Harrison

From the Registers

Funeral at the Crematorium

17th March

Betty Rice



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