

**SUNDAY April 5, 2026      “Because Jesus Lives...”**  
**Isaiah 25:6-9, I Corinthians 15:19-26 Luke 24: 1-12 and John 20:1-18**

Christ is Risen! Christ is Risen indeed!. Because Jesus Lives we have hope renewed, restored given and the gift and promise of ETERNAL LIFE!. This is the meaning of Easter. Because Jesus Lives-- so do we-- if we believe and have faith in God, in His Son, the Risen Christ and the Spirit which guides us and leads us always even into eternity. Through Christ's resurrection we are given the hope of eternal life.. and the only catch is this-- believe, trust and know Him as your messiah, your saviour your master, friend, teacher and guide for all of life.

Because Jesus Lives is the theme for this season of Easter. It resonates with me because our theme for Advent, anticipating Jesus' birth was Because of Bethlehem which lead to the birth of Jesus in this obscure town. But it is because of what that baby born in the stable did as an adult teacher, healer, rabbi. He died for the sake of the sin of others which leads us to a new understanding of life and hope.

One of my favourite Biblical passages is John 20. The race to the tomb. Mary Magdalene saw that the stone had been removed from the tomb where Jesus' body had been lain. She knew where he was buried as she had witnessed and been a part of the traditional acts for burial. But when she saw that the stone was out, she was unsure of what to think. She ran to where Simon Peter and the other disciples were and told them that 'they had taken the Lord out of the tomb and we don't know where they have laid him. Then Peter and the other disciple race to the tomb. The other disciple gets there first, saw the linen wrappings, but did not go in. Simon Peter goes in, see the wrappings and the cloth that had been on Jesus' head. The other disciple enters, sees what he sees, and believed. The two leave the tomb and return not to where they had been together-- but to their homes.

But Mary Magdalene- was weeping she did not know what to think. She saw two angels in white. They ask, "Why are you weeping?" "They have taken away my Lord and I do not know where they have laid him.

She turned around and saw a man whom she thought was the gardener. The man asks the same question, 'Why are you weeping? She answers the same. But something amazing happens. And this is why I like this part-- Jesus says her name, Mary. Only her name and she knows his voice, she looks again at the man and calls him Rabboni- Teacher. She knows him, and she wants to hold him and hug him. But Jesus says no- Don't hold me I have not yet ascended to my Father." Mary leaves Jesus and runs to where the disciples are shouting, "I have seen the Lord.!" Just how happy- really happy is Mary! She runs to the see the disciples her weeping turns to joy. She has seen Jesus alive!

The way Luke writes the story is about the women who to the tomb at early dawn to place spices around Jesus' body. They weren't sure how they could get into the tomb but upon arrival, the stone is rolled away and they went in. They did not find the body But then angels appear and they ask, "Why are you looking for the living among the dead?" He is not here. He is risen. The angels then explain how Jesus had told them that the Son of Man must be handed over to sinners and be crucified, and on the third day rise again. They remembered this. They left the tomb and went to tell the disciples.- It was the women- Mary Magdalene Joanna, Mary the mother of James and the other women who spoke to the apostles. But they did not believe them. But Peter did- and ran to the tomb, stooped down saw the linen cloths by themselves then went home amazed at what had happened.

It is the angels who tell the women-- Jesus is risen. The women tell the disciples. They do not believe their story- except Peter goes and checks it out. So who believes in the Risen Christ- Mary, the other women and Peter. There is still some uncertainty and doubt with the disciples but this lead us to what happens after Jesus sees them together in what we call the Season of Easter.

But let us ask this question first: What difference does it make to you that Jesus lives? How would you fill in the statement:... *because Jesus Lives*.... ..? What is important for you because of Jesus dying and rising to new life? How does this impact you spiritually? Emotionally? Physically? Or mentally?

Spiritually Jesus lives is a statement of faith that for those who believe know what will happen after death comes for them-- they will abide in God's heaven for eternity.

Emotionally- Jesus lives and leads us from the wonder of Jesus' ride into Jerusalem with shouts of hosanna save us to crying at the cross. And as he is alive-there is joy in our hearts!

Physically- we have much to celebrate today-- with friends and family who share together in a celebrating with traditional food, with desserts and by doing this we are nurturing our body with good energy sources to do the work God calls us to do in telling others.

And Mentally-- we have hope restored because Jesus lives. Without hope in the Living Christ, where would those who are ill, facing treatments or surgeries, or going through stressful times be? Mentally knowing that there is hope beyond this moment because Jesus guides and leads us allows us to calm our minds to doing what is needed for clarity for the future.

Mary spoke with Jesus and ran to tell the disciples. Because Jesus Lives her life would change again and so would the lives of the disciples. She did not know how except that Jesus the Son of God was alive. According to Luke's version it is the angels who remind them of what Jesus said and what would come to pass. And they remembered this teaching. She had grieved and mourned; wept and cried when he died and now she was overjoyed and excited.

When was the last time you were truly overjoyed and excited? When the joy of your heart felt good and you were excited. Maybe it was hearing good news about someone who had been ill getting stronger. Maybe it was hearing good news about new life coming into your family with a baby. Or maybe it was hearing good news that there was healing happening. Or maybe just maybe you sat down and were excited about being a disciple, or faithful follower of Jesus and how you might do this even better. Because Jesus lives... what will it matter in your life?

Will there be changes in behaviour? Kindness shown more often or even caring a little bit more. What does Jesus' resurrection mean to you. Because Jesus Lives... what will you do?

Let's pray

God of grace and love we praise you for your gift to us in Jesus who died and rose again for our sakes. Help us to feel the joy and experience the wonder of His resurrection in our lives by making a difference in the lives of others. Enable us to truly sing that because Jesus is alive we have received the gift and promise of eternal life. Hear our prayers we ask. Amen.