

Dear friends,

Alleluia Christ is Risen.
He is risen indeed, Alleluia.



Easter Sunday morning ecumenical service on the beach started at 6.30 am. A large crowd gathered for this special event. I was asked to say the Eucharistic prayer this year. Saying Holy Communion facing towards the rising sun is the traditional way and is why all traditional churches are aligned facing East (The altars were originally against the wall so the priest faced the away from the congregation and towards the rising sun). As you can see from the photo it was a clear but cold morning and the sunrise didn't disappoint! It was a bumper day for the RMC as 200 people came to the

morning services at St. Peter's (35 at the 8am and 165 at the 10am) and well over 100 people attended a service at either All Saints or St. Michael's.

This was the climax of Holy Week but of course we believe in death and resurrection not just resurrection and Good Friday was very potent with two services – the “cross of Christ” at St. Michael's at 12 noon and “Good Friday reflections” at 3pm collectively attracting around 140 people. There is a lot happening in the churches nationally that is controversial perhaps but at ground level, the core of our faith is still well observed in Budleigh and surrounds!

Sunday 16 April – 2 of Easter

I will be presiding at both services at St. Peter's this Sunday. Due to illness and tragic unforeseen circumstances the presidents at All Saints and St. Michael's will be decided upon soon.

Acts 2:14a, 22-32. Peter begins the day of Pentecost by telling the assembled Jews how everything that happened to Jesus was in full accordance with scripture and quotes from psalm 16 as a prophesy of King David that attested to the resurrection. One can assume that this was one of the texts the ascended Jesus explained to the disciples.

1 Peter 1: 3-9. In his first letter Peter expresses the joy of the Christian belief in the resurrection. No matter what our present conditions or what we might be going through, we are inheritors of something that is “imperishable, undefiled and unfading”. It is this faith that will carry countless generations of Christians through thick and thin for ever more.

John 20: 19 – 31. Though forever saddled with the label “doubting” it is Thomas who delivers the clearest statement of the divinity of Jesus in the Bible – “My Lord and my God”- and actually went on to found the church in South India (His tomb is in Chennai – formerly Madras – in Tamil Nadu). This piece of scripture also includes the giving of the Spirit to the disciples on Easter Sunday, predating Pentecost by 50 days.

Thought for the day.

After a tiring schedule of services that started on Palm Sunday, the event that introduced the final week of Jesus' life, it is good to look back and reflect. I introduced the week as the original "clash of civilizations" between the kingdoms of this world versus the kingdom of God. It included the inauguration of the Eucharist immortalised by John's gospel as the occasion of Jesus washing his disciple's feet, the crucifixion on Good Friday, when the world thought they had won a great victory against the kingdom of God by getting rid of Jesus once and for all, and ending with the events of Easter Sunday when God demonstrates that evil will never have the final word, that life and light will always have the last word. It is that central hope that fires the soul of every Christian then and now. Christianity is a religion of hope, a belief that love will prevail, that divine life is indestructible. When we meet to worship in our churches we consciously join together with that divine life in the elements of bread and wine. Divinity is present in the ordinary, especially present to those that believe and raises our lives into the life of God. The Eastern church have a word that describes the eternal Trinity of God and it is called perichoresis which means "an eternal divine dance". We join in with that divine dance whenever we act in accordance with God's will so my Easter message to you is – Keep Dancing!

The Prayer for Today

Lord God, through Christ you have given us peace that the world cannot give. Let your Spirit of truth abide with us so that we may live in hope, grow in faith, and keep your commandments of love; in the name of Jesus Christ we pray.

Love and peace,

Martin