



Christ
Church
Orpington

Family News, 2nd April 2022

Lent 5 What Does Easter Mean?

What does Easter mean? Let me suggest three things that we all need to know and need to remember.

First, Easter is about God's *involvement* with us. Some people believe in a God who is like some orbiting satellite, floating high above the earth and viewing us all with curiosity but no concern. The God of the Bible is not like that. At Christmas we see how God's love for the human race compelled him to become one of us in Jesus, but at Easter we see how deep that love made him go. Here Jesus descends to the worst depths of human experience; he is betrayed, abandoned by friends, given a sham trial, tortured and then brutally executed. He is not like some celebrity who, in the face of a tragedy, turns up for two minutes, poses for a brief video clip and is then helicoptered away. Jesus is described as 'Emmanuel: God with us' (Matthew 1:23) and Easter reminds us that he didn't opt out from being 'with us' when things got tough. In these days it's thought-provoking that in his crucifixion Jesus would have experienced painful isolation – 'My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?' (Matthew 27:46) – that he died in agony and was buried in haste. It is a reminder that we have a God who, in Jesus, became totally involved in our world, from accepting a birth in poverty to enduring a death in cruelty. If you are not yet a believer in Jesus, then this is the God who invites you to know him. If you are a believer, then be comforted: in whatever situation you find yourself, Jesus remains close to you. He is involved in all we are and all we suffer.

Second, Easter is about God's *intervention* for us. The good news of Christianity is that God did more than just come alongside us in the darkness of life; he did something about it. Easter is all about how God intervened in the brokenness of our lives in this world in order to redeem and restore it. At the heart of that intervention for humanity is Jesus' death. On the cross, he grappled with all that is evil and absorbed it into himself. It is as if, in dying, Jesus created a spiritual black hole that drew in and neutralised all those 'viruses' that wreck lives: sin, guilt, evil and even death itself. The Easter story comes in two parts and we cannot linger on Good Friday. Part One ends with a hurried burial that appears to be, most definitely, the

end. But there is Part Two: on the Sunday we see Jesus risen from the dead – not just alive but as *life* itself. It is the proof that Jesus didn't just grapple with evil but triumphed over it. In his death, death died. If you are not yet a believer in Jesus, then this is the heart of the matter: an intervening God who takes the sin, guilt and pain that you cannot bear and bears it himself at the cross. And if you are a believer, then be comforted: in whatever situation you find yourself, Jesus is victorious over the worst this world can throw at you.

Finally, the real Easter is about God's *invitation* to us. Wonderfully, God became involved in the human race and intervened for all of us. Yet the important and unmissable part of the Easter story is that it is not merely about humanity in general; it is about you in particular. Jesus offers each one of us an invitation. It is an offer to let him intervene on our behalf, to take our sin and guilt. It is an offer to know the power, love, joy, peace and hope of the resurrection that we all need at this time. It is an invitation that demands a response from you and me. This Easter, why not accept it? And if you have already accepted it, can I just encourage you to trust in it. Let the Easter message that Jesus has died and risen from the dead be with you in all you do. Can I encourage you to receive Jesus Christ or reaffirm your faith by praying this prayer:

*Dear Jesus, thank you for dying on the cross for me.
I believe you are alive today and you are Lord
and God.*

*Please forgive all my sins and guilt and cleanse me
from all the wrong I have ever done.*

*Set me free from the past. I invite you into my life
by your Holy Spirit. Fill me with your power,
presence and peace.*

Help me from this day on to follow you.

I pray this prayer in Jesus' name. Amen.

J. John

Reverend Canon

www.canonjohn.com

Dear Christ Church

I just wanted to convey to Christ Church fellowship our appreciation and gratitude for the gift of £3500 for refugees. This was very generous and we are already using this money for refugees - helping them here in Latvia and in different cities in Ukraine.

With much love, Victor, Ester & Lukas

What's on...

All 10.30am services will be both in church and online (if we have the Tech Team to provide this)

Closed for Easter - Community Club
Café Mosaic
Tea and Toys

Sunday 3rd April

10.30am Holy Communion
6.30pm Evening Worship – Reflect

Monday 4th April

Gospel Choir, 7.45pm until 9.30pm in the Church

Wednesday 6th April

Holy Communion, 10am in the Chapel

Palm Sunday, 10th April

9.00am Holy Communion
10.30am All Age Service
6.30pm Evening Worship - Go Deeper

Maundy Thursday, 14th April

8.00pm Seder Meal & Holy Communion

Good Friday, 15th April

11.00am Churches Together Service,
Orpington Market Square
2.00pm Reflective Mediation in the church

Saturday 16th April

4.00pm Messy Easter Church
(please see CCO website for booking details)

Easter Sunday, 17th April

10.30am Holy Communion & Baptism Service
6.00pm Freedom to Praise – Orpington Gospel Choir

For online services:

through the Christ Church Orpington website:
www.ccorpington.org

or on Facebook (you don't need to have a Facebook account)
<https://www.facebook.com/ccorpington/live>



Join **Heather Kroiter** for zoom coffee after church on Sunday morning from 11.45am

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83647192653?pwd=VVQzSVZqb25kUHZLTE1SZy8yOStQZz09>

Meeting ID: 836 4719 2653, Passcode: 1SXhK5

Sunday 3rd April

10.30am Holy Communion

Welcome, Notices

Opening Prayer, Confession

Worship

Song Living Hope
Song I believe in Jesus

Bible Reading

John 12 v 1-8

Sermon

Intercessions

Peace

Worship

Song Here is love

Holy Communion

Worship

Song Praise my soul

Final Prayer & Blessing

6.30pm Evening Worship – Reflect



Easter church flowers

The flower arranging team would like donations of foliage on **Saturday 16th April**. Please bring foliage to church from 9.30am.

We would also welcome volunteers to help with arrangements as we have fewer helpers than previously. No experience needed! Please come along from 9.30am

Notices for the next issue of CCO Family News

email them to Vernon vandjmapp@gmail.com

by **12noon Thursday 7th April** please

Northumbria Daily Prayer



You are invited to come along to Daily Prayer at 9.00am to 9.20am in the chapel on Mondays and Tuesdays led by Helen Musson

There will be readings from Scripture, a short meditative reading, prayer, reflection and silence.

Dates we are meeting until Easter are:

4th and 5th April.

Christ Church membership

Do you consider yourself to be a member of the congregation of this church?

Would you like to enter more fully into the life of the church?

If so, then perhaps you would like to take the first step by applying to be put on the Electoral Roll of the church. Application forms are available from the table at the back of church. An explanatory leaflet 'Belonging and the Electoral Roll' is also available.

Please feel free to speak to either myself, one of the churchwardens or Sharon, our Vicar, if you have any queries. You need to be 16 or over to apply.

Roger Wilkinson

P.S. Please note that if you are already on the electoral roll and your details have not changed since last year there is no need to complete another form.

Would you, or one of your family like to be baptised? Or would you like to renew your baptism vows?

On Easter Sunday, April 17th, we will celebrate Jesus' glorious resurrection by holding a service of Baptism in our 10.30am service. So, if you would like to be baptised, or renew your baptism vows, please contact Sharon on sharon@ccorpington.org or phone the office on

01689 871601 and leave a message.

Would you like to be confirmed?

Confirmation is the second part of the Christian journey that began with Baptism where we look more fully at our Christian faith. It is the rite that opens up for us the chance to come to the Lord's Table and receive the Bread and Wine – His Body and His Blood (when Covid-safe to do so).

If you would like to be confirmed, please contact Sharon on sharon@ccorpington.org or phone the office on 01689 871601 and leave a message.

Church Work Mornings

Saturday 23 April & 21 May, 9am till midday

We would love you to come and join us on one or both of these work days. You truly only need **enthusiasm** and do not need any special skills.

Jobs on the day will include indoor and outdoor tasks and any time you can give to maintain and care for the church building and grounds will make such a big difference. Even if you cannot stay for the whole morning, just **an hour** is great!

Come pick a task, have some fun, meet new people and enjoy a **bacon sandwich** and coffee for your efforts.

Please put your name on the signup sheet at the back of the church. Thanks, Pieter

Maundy Thursday

You're invited to a Maundy Thursday Passover Seder in church on **Thursday 14th April at 8pm.**

The Seder tells the story of the Exodus - God saving his people from slavery in Egypt. We will share in symbolic food and drink as we journey through the story. The Seder will lead into a celebration of Holy Communion.

If you would like to come along, please book by contacting Helen on helen@ccorpington.org or 07942 357029, phoning the office 01689 871601 or by signing the list at the back of church.

"If you would like to give to Christ's work here at Christ Church, the best way to give is via our bank account, Sort code 40 52 40, and account number 00095465, or by sending a cheque payable to

'Christ Church PCC Orpington'

to 165 Charterhouse Road, Orpington, Kent BR6 9EP

Thank you so much for your wonderful generosity."

The Data Protection Act 2018 is the **UK's implementation of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)**. Everyone responsible for using personal data has to follow strict rules called 'data protection principles'. They must make sure the information is: used fairly, lawfully and transparently.

Meina is our GDPR representative and if anyone has any queries relating to GDPR to please contact her on: gdpr@ccorpington.org

Dates for your Diary

On **Tuesday 10th May**, we look forward to welcoming Pat Blanchard, who is going to come to spend an evening with us updating us on her situation and her ministry in Peru, as well as coming to thank us for our support over the years.

You are most welcome to arrive at 7.30pm for refreshments, ready for an 8pm start.

And then on **Tuesday 17th May**, we look forward to meeting Robert de Berry and Release International, as they invite us to an evening of prayer with them as they embark on a sponsored bike ride in stages from Kent to Land's End. We will begin at 7.30pm and finish at 9.00pm.

If anyone would like to join them on the first stage, getting sponsorship and heading off after breakfast to Sevenoaks or Tunbridge Wells, you would be very welcome to do so. Please speak to me if you would like to so I can pass your details on to Robert.

Hope to see you there,

Sharon

Thank you so much for hosting us for prayer and with accommodation:



We begin in Kent on May 14th, pray and ride to Penzance by May 31st. We resume after the Queen's Jubilee celebrations and after the TURO conference on June 6th, head east and end back in Kent on June 24th

An enormous thank you to your church for hosting us on the evening of May 17th when we ride through and have times of friendship and prayer with you on our bike pilgrimage. We ride and pray to raise attention levels for persecuted Christians through prayer and financial support. We're very grateful, too to those who are hosting our cyclists and car-drivers with overnight hospitality

We do this through the ministries of RELEASE INTERNATIONAL and CHRISTIAN SOLIDARITY WORLDWIDE (CSW). We really want people here to strengthen those Christians who put up with so much persecution and restriction in many countries of the world.

Those of us cycling are young and old, though most of us are retired. I guess that in being eighty this year,

I am the oldest. My family didn't think I'd make the whole of this pilgrimage, so secretly bought me an "e-bike". At least I shall now keep up! I think that our youngest is Samuel, who is in his early thirties. He works on an eco-project of recycling waste in Nepal last year because of very strict COVID "lockdowns", he was holed up there for six months! Amongst us are various professions - a marine engineer, a couple of computer boffs, a managing director of a food company, a retired dentist, a former theatre sister, some retired clergy, plus a variety of others. Four of us are riding from North Foreland Point (Kent's most easterly point and always a focal point in the daily weather shipping forecasts) to Land's End, and then by a different route back to Kent. We zig-zag around for about 900 miles and take about five weeks to do it! Forty-four churches are hosting us, which is fabulous. We don't pressurise our pedals too heavily and take time to lift our gaze above the tarmac. Another forty cyclists will join us for shorter lengths of the route.

Just before COVID, Jeremy Hunt, the then foreign secretary commissioned the Bishop of Truro, Philip Mountstephen, to launch a commission of enquiry into the terrible oppression to which Christians and other religious minorities are subjected. This had input from CSW and Release, as well as from OPEN DOORS and other agencies, and indicated government seriousness in raising issues of persecution in so many countries - countries, which like Pakistan, have been generously supported by UK overseas aid.

The top ten countries in which it is most difficult to be a Christian are Afghanistan, North Korea, Somalia, Libya, Yemen, Eritrea, Nigeria, Pakistan, Iran and India. There are many others. Sadly, new legislation in China, introduced on March 1st, has enforced further restrictions on Christians there. Nevertheless, in all these countries, even those where Christian numbers are very low, there is an inspirational vibrancy of faith. Again and again, Christians in these countries thank us not only for financial support but for our prayers. The websites of CSW and RELEASE INTERNATIONAL constantly update us with news of critical danger for Christians.

When we come your way, we are longing for people to come to pray with us. The times of prayer will include speakers from CSW or RELEASE and DVID input for information. When Paul was in prison in Rome, his appeal to the Colossians was not that God would get him out of there, but his instructions were, "Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful. And pray that God will open a door for us to proclaim the mystery of Christ, for which I am in chains". It will be lovely to meet and pray with members of your church.

CRUCIFIXION

Who is this man upon the cross? Some say he is *the* King
I heard he did some "miracles", healed the sick, that sort of thing.

You'd think if he's as great as that he'd get down from that tree.
Perform one of his "miracles"--now *that* I'd like to see!!

Oh look! They've given him a crown, thorns digging in his head.
You can see the flies upon his face, stuck to where he's bled.

They're buzzing round that awful wound, for that there was no need.
To spear him in the side like that, it really made him bleed.

There's water too, I think he's dead. The crowd begins to move.
There's Joseph speaking to the Guards and Nicodemus too.

They're lifting down his body and taking him away.
I heard they have a tomb for him, a place where he might lay.

I don't know why, but I feel strange. Anticipation? Awe?
I've never had these feelings when I've watched these deaths before.

What's happened on this day was told by prophets and by seers.
Their words have truly come to pass after all these years.

Perhaps there was more to this man, Jesus was his name.
Since he arrived I have to say things haven't been the same.

I'm going home, it's getting dark. I must be on my way.
I wish I'd met this Jesus man before this awful day.....

Christine Amos 19/03/2022

Orpington Gospel Choir invites you to:

Freedom to Praise!

Easter Sunday 17th April 2022

6pm to 7.30pm

Christ Church Orpington, Charterhouse Road BR6 9EP

Come join and sing along to gospel favorites like 'Oh Happy Day' and some well known hymns too.

With some spoken word and time for reflection.



Let's celebrate Easter evening with singing.

