

SERMON: Easter Sunday - 4 April 2021 – Rev Alistair Cowper

Christ is Risen - Love Lives Again

Mark 16:1-8

Buried in the Easter tomb, Love and Light and Life is hidden deep within. It takes time to emerge from the depths.

When we are surrounded with loss and pain - as has been the case perhaps more than usual in this past year - Love can seem distant.

But the empty tomb and the Risen Christ is a foretaste of what will certainly come - life in all fullness.

It's incredible that the greatest event in history happened in total darkness.

No one was there to see Christ rise. Only the incidentals were left for people to see - the empty tomb, the linen wrappings folded neatly, the angel's message.

Mark's gospel doesn't tell us that Mary met the Risen Christ thinking he was the gardener.

That's not to say it didn't happen, for I'm sure it did, but it's to acknowledge that these truths can take time to emerge from the darkness of our understanding or from the pit of our failures, or from the tomb of our own deadness.

Mark tells us only that the women who went to the tomb - Mary, Mary and Salome - were trembling and bewildered and ran from the tomb. They were so afraid that they said nothing to anyone.

Did they fear being accused of tampering with the dead body? Was the word of the angel not enough to reassure them?

'He is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see him, just as he told you.' (16:7).

The day would come when they would see him but for now they were trembling and bewildered, frightened, cowering.

What this version of the Gospel says to me is that it's ok to acknowledge that not everything is ok.

Yes there is bright hope for tomorrow but actually today might still be hard for many.

There are losses to be borne and tough days to be got through.

But let the flickering candle of Easter hope be the light to get us through those days together.

There is work yet to be done for the Christ's kingdom to come.

And we can only share that glorious burden together because there will be days when it feels too much to carry by oneself.

But we can know this, that Christ is Risen indeed and nothing can change that.

The Risen Saviour is commander in chief and is working his purposes through each and every one of us by faith.

And gradually, love, light and life is emerging from the darkness of our lives.

“Love lives again that with the dead has been. Love has come again like wheat that springeth green.”