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*Alleluia! Christ is Risen!*  
*He is Risen, indeed! Alleluia!*



Passiontide and Holy Week have given way to the joy of Eastertide! More than any other Season, Easter is the time of Christian joy and celebration. Christmas, with all its wonder and beauty, only announces the birth of the Christ-Child, who would one day redeem the world from sin and evil. Easter on the other hand brings to us the announcement of new life, eternal life, and the good news of our salvation in Jesus Christ, who has defeated death and risen in glory.

Ours is an Easter Faith. During the fifty days of Easter we will celebrate as people of faith; an Easter people charged with the spirit of the Risen Christ; eager to spread the good news, and to share with all we meet the joy which is ours as Christians. And in the conditions of our present world, with war and violence, terrorism, and so many innocent lives taken without thought, it is all the more important that we live as people of faith, hope, and love. People of faith who believe in Jesus Christ, the Lord of all and Saviour of the world – the ‘same yesterday, today, and for ever’.

Regardless of what may happen in our world or in our lives, we know Christ lives. He has told us not to be anxious or afraid – He is ever with us, even in our darkest hours; has overcome the world. In His abiding presence we need not fear the powers of evil at work around us. We need not fear the power of the enemy nor the power of death. We need not fear the grave nor gates of hell; Jesus has overcome all and shown us the way to God. He who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life.

We, who profess belief in the Resurrection from the dead of our Lord Jesus Christ, profess not only an historical fact, a religious belief, but a way of life. As Christians, we walk with the risen Christ each day; we know the power of His presence in their lives: transforming, healing, forgiving, loving, empowering. As we read in the Easter Gospel, it was only when Mary Magdalene turned her back away from the grave that she beheld the living Lord. When we turn our backs on sin and death, and away from a life lived only for self, then we too are transformed and experience the power and the joy of the Risen Christ in our lives. Life was not the same for the Apostles and disciples who, on Easter morning, stood before the empty tomb and then beheld Jesus, risen from the dead! And it will never be the same for us who profess with our hearts, our souls, and our lives the reality of the Resurrection. We are people of faith and hope!

As we rejoice in the blessings of Easter, we know our journey of faith is not yet complete. We have many more trials and triumphs, joys and sorrows, to encounter and overcome; but we do so in the knowledge that we are not alone; we are part of the family of God, brothers and sisters in Christ, much loved by the Father and precious in His sight. Let us therefore live on in His love as ‘the children of God, members of Christ, and inheritors of the kingdom of heaven’.

May I extend to you all my blessings and prayers for a most joyous Eastertide.

*+Shane*