

Dear Friends

A Sunday school teacher had just finished telling her class about how Jesus was crucified and placed in a tomb with a great stone sealing off the only way in or out. Then, wanting to share the excitement of the resurrection, and the surprise of Easter Sunday morning, she asked, "And what do you think were Jesus' first words when he came bursting out of that tomb alive?" A hand shot up into the air. It belonged to an excited little girl. Leaping out of her chair, she shouted out excitedly, "I know, I know, I know!" "Good," said the teacher, "Tell us." The little girl, extending her arms high in the air, sang out, "**TA - DA!**"

I always feel like that on Easter Sunday - Ta da, it's happened, it did happen, God is so powerful, so mighty, he is able to raise his son from the dead! On Easter Sunday, when we celebrate Jesus' resurrection, I am reminded that no event in history has shaped the world like the life, death and resurrection of Jesus. And I am reminded of this simple fact about life; Life does not go on forever. There is death. Every one of us must face our mortality. These last few weeks, death has been all around us. This pandemic is catastrophic for the world, and not just our nation and our communities. People have been isolated from family, friends and loved ones, people have been hospitalised and not allowed visitors, ministers have conducted funerals with one and two mourners, people have been unable to leave their homes for weeks on end.

So, in the light of where we are as nation, how on Easter day can we proclaim hope, the hope of Jesus' resurrection? How can we proclaim that hope when we cannot even celebrate it in our churches? We are bereft, sad, we are missing the fellowship the community, singing the great hymns - Thine be the Glory, Up from the grave He arose, Christ is alive let Christians sing - praying together and of course sharing the gift of bread and wine at the Lord's table.

In Winnie the Pooh, Pooh and Piglet take an evening walk. For a long time, they walk in silence, silence like only best friends can share. Finally, Piglet breaks the silence and asks, "When you wake up in the morning, Pooh, what's the first thing you say to yourself?" "What's for breakfast?" answers Pooh and then asks. "And what do you say, Piglet?" Piglet says, "I say, I wonder what exciting thing is going to happen today?" You and I can't really plan to meet the Risen Christ because we never really know when or where He's going to show up. But you can be sure of this, He will show up. If you believe, He will show up. And the attitude you need

to meet him is the attitude of Piglet, "I wonder what exciting thing is going to happen today?"

If we had any doubts at all that Jesus really was God's Son, they are now smashed by the sheer audacity of the resurrection. Our view of Jesus must change as we worship a risen Saviour. This Jesus is still the healing miracle maker, the teacher, healer, shepherd, friend, light of the world, and he remains our hope. He is the good news. Because Jesus died and was raised from the dead, we too can experience eternal life. How exciting is that! So in the midst of this global pandemic, of fear, concern, loneliness and isolation, we hold fast to the facts; Jesus is alive, and in every situation we find ourselves, he is there close to us, reassuring us, loving us, caring for us. Why? Because he is the Lord of the resurrection. We will come through this pandemic, but life will never be the same again for some, and we hear the last words of Jesus that he uttered on this earth; not TA DA! but "Surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age"

Have a blessed Easter,

With love and prayers

Lorraine Mellor

Chair of the Nottingham and Derby Methodist District.