

## An Easter Message From Our Vicar, The Reverend Ian Greenwood

Well Spring is definitely on its way! I love the spring and summer months, the new warmth in the sun, the rich green grass and the increased brightness which to me makes everywhere look cleaner and brighter. Then there's the colour of the flowers that bring a new dimension to the garden that has seemed bland and dead for the past few months.

In recent weeks I've been struck by the increased bird song whilst walking the dog, another sign that spring is sprung! And the final thing that proves it above all else, last Friday was the first day out on my Motorbike since last November!!!! Spring and Summer are well on the way!

As April launches us into a new season, so it is with the Church calendar. We've been journeying through Lent for the past few weeks, during which we have had the opportunity to take stock, to reflect and to prepare for Jesus' return, as well as the opportunity to go deeper with Him in our individual journey of faith. And now we move into Holy Week, a time for us to focus on the most important events that mark the fulfilment of Jesus' earthly ministry.

We will need to go through the depths of sorrow as we enter into the stark reality of Maundy Thursday and Good Friday before experiencing the joy of the resurrection on Easter Sunday!

In every sense the story of Easter can be seen in the season of spring. We have come through the darkness and the depths of the winter months, during which nothing grows, in fact things seem bleak and dark, the trees and the plants appear dead and the air is silent as the animals do their best to survive the cold nights. Then suddenly, new life begins to burst through, accompanied by the bird chorus and the sounds of new life!

And so the resurrection in all its glorious beauty offers that new life through Christ, life in relationship with God, and the promise of eternal life for all who believe in Him. Along with the promise that through his Spirit we can know his presence, love and peace in our daily lives here and now.

The minute we accept the Easter message, that Jesus died for our sins, and if we whole heartedly believe in the power of the resurrection, we too are born to new life (born again). The very moment we accept Jesus as our saviour and ask him into our lives, we have passed from darkness into glorious light!! That's a transformation that demands a response, that we are to live for him as Easter people and be the light that shines in the darkness.

I wonder how you might shine for him this Easter?

Our HOPE EXPLORED course which starts on Wednesday 15th April 7.30pm and runs for 3 weeks speaks into the real and lasting Hope that is only found in Jesus Christ. Why not come along to find out more?

May you experience the joy of the Risen Lord Jesus this Easter.

Every Blessing

Ian