

Easter Sunday

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Date: 31 March 2024

Preacher: Andrew Wingfield

[0 : 00] Oh, Lord, I'm gone. Oh, Lord, I'm gone.

Oh, Lord, I'm gone.

Oh, Lord, I'm gone.

Oh, Lord, I'm gone.

Oh, Lord, I'm gone. Oh, Lord, I'm gone. Oh, Lord, I'm gone. Oh, Lord, I'm gone. Oh, Lord, I'm gone.

[2 : 09] Oh, Lord, I'm gone. Oh, Lord, I'm gone. Oh, Lord, I'm gone. Oh, Lord, I'm gone. Oh, Lord, I'm gone. Oh, Lord, I'm gone.

Oh, Lord, I'm gone. Oh, Lord, I'm gone. Oh, Lord, I'm gone. Oh, Lord, I'm gone. Oh, Lord, I'm gone.

Oh, Lord, I'm gone. Oh, Lord, I'm gone. Oh, Lord, I'm gone. Thank you.

Thank you.

Oh, praise the Father. Oh, praise the Father. Praise the Son.

[3 : 52] Praise the Spirit. Bring Him one. Oh, God of glory. Majesty.

Oh, praise forever to the King. Oh, praise the Father. Praise the Son.

Praise the Spirit. Bring Him one. God of glory. Majesty.

Praise forever to the King. of me Oh praise forever to that King of me Praise forever to that King of me Praise the power Praise the power of sinners of grace who love is mighty and so is stronger the King of glory the King of love will be

Who's next? Come on! Hey! Who's next? Come on! We've known each other who we must stand in our own wonder the King of glory the King of the Holy through the sins made me pray This is the thing that you will change my face that you will stand my and free who brings our chaos who brings our chaos that needs his order who makes his order the sun and the sun the king of glory through the nations the children's justice and the rest of the nations all of his nations the king of glory the king of glory this is amazing this is amazing that you have been in my place that you have been in my life you have been in my life that I'm to be set free oh

[7 : 49] Jesus I sing all that you've done worthy is the king worthy is the king who conquered the grave worthy is the king worthy is the king who conquered the grave worthy is the king who conquered the grave worthy is the king worthy is the king Worthy is the land of the slave Worthy is the king and the king of the slave

Worthy is the land of the slave Worthy, worthy, worthy Oh, we see the main praise Ooh, we see the way Ooh, that he will take my way That he will take my way That he will take my way That I will be set free Oh, we see the king of the slave All that he's done for me All that he's done for me All that he's done for me

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[11 : 27] Thank you.

My name is Judy Pantridge and I am a deacon here at Union Baptist Church. So he has risen from the dead. Hallelujah. So we're coming to celebrate the resurrection of Jesus, his victory over death. We're coming to experience the overwhelming gift that is being offered through Jesus' life, death and resurrection.

Do you ever wonder what it must have been like, what it might have been like to be one of the people who heard that news at the first Easter?

Who heard for the first time, Christ is risen from the dead. He is alive. What would they be feeling?

[12 : 45] Excitement, joy, wonder, amazement, uncertainty maybe. Wanting to be convinced that this news really is true.

We have the benefit of knowing so much more that has happened since then. But let's not allow our excitement and our wonder and our awe to be dulled at Easter time as we come to worship our risen Savior and Lord.

So please stand with me as we declare together with joy and confidence and our most enthusiastic voices. Christ is risen.

He is risen. Christ is risen. Christ is risen. Hallelujah.

Let us pray. Lord God, as we gather before you on this Easter Sunday, we come humbly, knowing that so often we have failed to respond as we should to your love, your generosity, your blessings and mercy.

[14:00] We ask your forgiveness, Lord, and pray that you will pour hope into our hearts as you awaken us to the miracle of Easter. May we trust and believe now more than ever in your limitless power.

Let our praise be bold. Let our hearts rejoice at the empty tomb. Let our songs arise with all of creation as we worship the risen King.

For he is our Savior and Redeemer, our Lord and our Rock, who gives us life in all its fullness forever. Amen.

Let's praise him now as we sing. See, what a morning. See, what a morning. See, what a morning. Gloriously bright.

In the dawning of hope in Jerusalem. See, what a morning. See, what a morning. Gloriously bright. In the dawning of hope in Jerusalem. See, what a morning.

[15:04] See, what a morning. In the dawning of hope in Jerusalem. Hold it the great fruit to look at light.

As the angels. As the angels announced, Christ is risen. See, God's salvation man.

Locked in love. Born in pain. He played in sacrifice. Hold, building Christ the man.

For he lives. Christ is risen from the dead. See, Mary weeping.

Where is he late? As in sorrow she turns on the empty tomb. He hears the voice speaking.

[16:07] Calling her name. It's the master, the Lord. Raised to life again. The voice that speaks the ears.

Speaking life, stirring hope. Bringing peace to us. And the■. Build through the■. He of lives, for he lives, Christ is risen from the dead.

One with the Father, patient on days, through the Spirit to heart, escape with certainty.

Honor and blessing, glory and praise to the King, come to power and authority.

And we are raised with him, death is dead, life has formed, Christ has conquered.

[17:22] And we shall reign with him, for he lives, Christ is risen from the dead.

And we are raised with him, death is dead, life has formed, Christ has conquered.

And we shall reign with him, for he lives, Christ is risen from the dead.

For he lives, Christ is risen from the dead. Jesus Christ, our living hope. Death could not hold him.

And through his victory over death, Jesus Christ brings us salvation.

Death has lost its grip on all who believe in him. Hallelujah. Praise the one who set us free. Let's sing how great the chasm is.

[18:23] Play those instruments. It's great to hear them. Oh, we've got somebody joining us here.

Hello. I think probably you should go down there today. Thank you. How great the chasm that lay between us.

How high the mountain I could not lie. In desperation I turned to heaven and spoke your name into the night.

Jesus Christ, my living hope. Then through the darkness, your loving kindness. Lord, through the shadow of my soul.

The work is finished. The end is written. Jesus Christ, my living hope.

God, who could imagine so great a mercy, what heart could fathom such wondrous grace?

[19:45] The God of ages stepped down to glory To bear my sin and bear my shame The cross has spoken, I am forgiven The King of kings calls me his own Beautiful Saviour, I'm yours forever Jesus Christ, my living hope Hallelujah, praise the one who set me free Hallelujah, death has lost its grip on me You have broken every chain There's salvation in your name Jesus Christ, my living hope

Hallelujah, praise the one who set me free Hallelujah, death has lost its grip on me You have broken every chain There's salvation in your name Jesus Christ, my living hope Then it came the morning that sealed the promise Your buried body Began to breathe Out of the silence The roaring lion Declared the grave Has no claim on me Then came the morning That sealed the promise Hallelujah, death has lost its grip on me Jesus Christ, my living hope Out of the silence The roaring lion Declared the grave Has no claim on me Jesus Christ, my living hope Jesus Christ, my living hope in the victory hallelujah praise the one who set me free hallelujah death has lost its bread from thee you have broken every chain praise salvation in your name jesus christ my living heart hallelujah praise the one who set me free hallelujah death has lost its bread from thee you have broken every chain there's salvation in your name jesus christ my living heart jesus christ my living hope oh god you are my living hope oh lord thank you please sit down could i please suggest now that adults take care of the instruments until our next song and i'm trusting that adults will not be shaking and rattling them too much during that time thank you thank you we are blessed in this congregation and our fellowship to have people from representing many many parts of the world i'm going to ask my special helpers to come forward now please if they would they know who they are and some people have agreed to take part in in the next part of the service and share an easter greeting in their own language in their mother tongue then we're all going to join in so this will be a bit of a challenge to share an easter greeting in their own language in their mother tongue is so we're going to speak Spanish so we're going to have the first slide they're going to teach us what to say and then we're going to say it so can you say it first go on then Cristo ha resucitado and we're going to say Ciertamente ha resucitado can we all say that last line together Ciertamente ha resucitado Ciertamente ha resucitado Ciertamente ha resucitado ha resucitado.

Ciertamente ha resucitado. Cristo ha resucitado. Ciertamente ha resucitado. Alleluia.

[25 : 45] Yay. Thank you. Well done. Right. You're next. Okay. Personally, I find this next one quite challenging. Okay. Hands up if you can read the Cantonese.

Hey. Well done, Jen. So Andy is going to teach us how to do the same in Cantonese. So the second part is.

That's what we say. Ta-gok-sat-fuk-liu. It probably doesn't sound anything like it because you have to do the right tone and everything. But, you know, we're making a very good effort here.

Right. So you're going to say, and we're going to reply. There we go. Do-gok-sat-fuk-liu.

Ta-gok-sat-fuk-liu. Do-gok-fuk-liu.

Ta-gok-sat-fuk-liu. Do-gok-sat-fuk-liu. Ta-gok-sat-fuk-liu. Alleluia. Alleluia. Whoa. Well done.

[26 : 51] Thank you. Okay. And our last language that we're trying today is? Swahili. Swahili. And Dismas. Dismas and Josephine. Right.

Okay. Hands up. Who knows a little bit of Swahili around here? Yay. The wing feels, of course. So Dismas and Josephine are going to lead us in our Swahili. So we say, you say.

Cristo amifufuca. And we say. Quelle amifufuca. Amifufuca. Okay. We've got the pattern now.

Three times. And then. Alleluia. Cristo amifufuca.

Quelle amifufuca. Cristo amifufuca. Quelle amifufuca. Cristo amifufuca. Quelle amifufuca. Alleluia.

Yay. Well done. Thank you very much. I don't know how to say thank you in all the language. But gracias and shukri. I don't know. Something else. Merci.

[27 : 50] Just hands up. Who speaks yet another language in the congregation here? Yeah. You see. You could all have been up here. Sorry I didn't get to you first. So we take a little bit of time now to just turn around where you are.

We're a bit full so there's not too much movement around. But turn around to somebody. You might practice your newfound language skills. Or you might just ask somebody.

What do you enjoy about Easter? Somebody you haven't spoken to yet this morning. And it's Tuesday. Thank you.

Hello you, you just want to come up and join the music group, don't you? Of course she does. She's such a power, it's amazing. Right Joanne, greatest day in history.

Thank you. Happy day, happy day, I know who I say.

[30 : 27] We stay in history Death is beaten, you have rescued me Sing it out, Jesus is alive The empty cross, the empty grave And eternal you have won the day Shout it out, Jesus is alive He's alive And oh, happy day, happy day You lost my sin away Oh, happy day, happy day I'll never be the same Forever I am changed When I stand in that place

Free at last, meeting face to face I am yours, Jesus, you are mine And it's your imperfect peace Let the faith finally be seen Celebrating, Jesus is alive Is it alive?

Is it alive? Is it alive? And oh, happy day, happy day You lost my sin away Oh, happy day, happy day I'll never be the same Forever I am changed Forever I am changed Oh, happy day, happy day What a glorious day What a glorious day That you have saved me And oh, what a glorious day What a glorious day That you have saved me Oh, happy day

Oh, happy day Happy day Happy day You lost my sin away Oh, happy day, happy day Happy day I'll never be the same Forever I am changed And oh, happy day I will never be the same Well, thank you, Becca and Bethany for leading us. Please sit down and have a little bit of a rest now.

We're going to watch a video, another short clip, about the story of what happened, the true story, what happened in the few days before Easter Day when Jesus rose from the dead.

[33 : 57] Some of us have been travelling with him in services throughout the week and thinking of these different occasions. So, thank you, Garen. Thank you.

We'll show you the video later.

If the guys on the tech desk give me a wave at the end of this talk, then we'll put that on. But good morning, everyone, and happy Easter. It's so good to see you all. My name's Andrew.

I'm pastor here, and it's wonderful to be together to celebrate Easter today. Now, I have a question. Did anybody get any Easter eggs this morning? Hands up. Who's already had Easter eggs this morning?

A good number of you. Okay, hands up now. Anyone already eaten any Easter eggs this morning? Anyone eaten any Easter eggs? Some in my family. Yes, a few. Yes, yes.

[35 : 19] Very good. Yes, now we normally give Easter eggs on Easter Sunday, but what if we gave Easter eggs on other days? Wouldn't that be a good idea, I thought?

So, we've actually got four Easter eggs here for the four days. It's lovely to have a long weekend, isn't it? So, I've got four Easter eggs for the four days of the long weekend of Easter.

Now, let me move a table up here so we can look at the first one. So, the first one is for Friday. This is an egg for Good Friday.

Okay. So, I think I'm going to need a volunteer to open this egg. Yeah, I think Samuel is it?

Yeah, up you come. Okay. Okay, welcome. If you come up the steps here. Okay.

[36 : 18] Now, what I want you to do is to take the egg and unwrap it and open it up and see what we find. Okay? You can do that. You can take it off its little stand. Oh, it's coming apart.

Yeah, break it open. Let's have a look. Oh, there's something inside. Okay, take out that thing that's inside. Okay, can you unwrap that? Okay, be careful because it might be sharp.

Okay, can you tell us what you found inside the Good Friday Easter egg? What is it? Sorry, I should have given you that. What have you found inside? Nails. Okay.

Try again. Nails. There's nails. Why do you think there might be nails inside an egg for Good Friday? You don't know? Let's see if anyone else knows.

Why might there be nails for Good Friday? I think your sister's hand went up. Yeah, go on. Sorry, say it loudly. Okay, someone else?

[37 : 25] Okay, there's a hand up there. I can't see whose it is. It's Isaac. Shout it out. Thank you, Isaac. Jesus was nailed to a cross.

And that's what we remember on Good Friday. So, well done. Now, I'm going to keep the nails. But you can keep the egg as long as you promise to share it with those that you came with, especially your sister who sat next to you.

Okay, well done. So, on Good Friday, we remembered that Jesus was nailed to a cross.

Now, for today, we're celebrating Easter Sunday. But actually, we can't understand the message of Easter Sunday without understanding what happened on Good Friday.

These nails remind us of the pain. These nails remind us of the pain, the disappointment, and the broken hopes of Jesus' followers who watched him get nailed to a plank of wood.

[38 : 27] They'd listened to Jesus' amazing teaching. They'd seen him do amazing miracles.

They'd seen that he had authority over illness and nature and demons and authority to forgive sin.

And they'd come to believe that he was the Messiah. The one who had come from God to rescue.

And they'd given up everything to follow him. But when he was nailed to a cross, not only had they lost a friend, but they had lost all hope.

So, for them, if this was their hope, this is what happened on Good Friday. Are you ready?

Their hope was dashed, just like that, as they saw Jesus nailed to that cross and as they saw him die. Jesus was nailed to a cross, which was a very painful and cruel way to put somebody to death. Nowadays, we see crosses all the time. There's one behind me here. We see them on churches. We see them on jewelry. We see them all the time. And we forget that in Jesus' time, seeing a cross would have terrified people.

[39 : 42] Because they would know what a horrible thing it was. And that it was used to put people to death in a very horrible way. Now, we're going to move on to the next egg.

So, we've talked about Easter Good Friday, the cross. And now we come to Easter Saturday. So, let's put this one here. So, I need a volunteer to open the Saturday cross.

So, Dante, your hand is nice and straight there. So, up you come. That was yesterday. That was yesterday. So, we're catching up, aren't we?

Right, you stand here. Right. That egg is for you. The promising thing is it looks a bit bigger than the other egg, actually. Do you want to open it up? It's in there.

Have you? Wow. Well, here's another one for you. So, I want you to open it up. Okay, well done.

[40 : 49] You've unwrapped it. Now, can you open up that egg? Can you open it up? You might need to give it a bit of a crack. Is there a problem?

What have you noticed about that egg, Dante? It's hard. It's very hard, isn't it? Can you get into that egg? No. Okay. Oh, dear. So, that actually tells us something about Easter Saturday.

Because, if you remember what happened on Easter Saturday, after Jesus died on Good Friday, his body was placed in a tomb by some important Jews who secretly believed in him.

And a stone was rolled over the entrance to the tomb on the Friday night. So, it was sealed. Just like this egg, completely sealed. There was no way in. And there's no way out.

How do you feel about this egg? Not very good. Not very good. It's a bit disappointing, isn't it?

Okay, I'll tell you what. I've got a spare one. Okay.

[41 : 54] That's for you to share with your family. Okay. Well done. Okay. Let's give Dante a round of applause. Thank you. Thank you. It's plastic, by the way, guys.

So, I'm going to leave that there. Not worth trying to eat that one. So, that was Easter Saturday. A sealed tomb. No way in.

No way out. It was closed. And for Jesus' followers, it seemed like that chapter of their lives had closed. Jesus was no more.

So, we're going to come back to the other two legs. Eggs. Legs? Eggs. We're going to come back to the eggs later on in the service. But for now, we're going to sing again.

So, I'm going to invite the musicians up. And we're going to sing together. My Saviour, Redeemer. My Saviour, Redeemer.

[43 : 05] Lifted me from the mighty place. Almighty forever. I will never be the same as you came here.

From the everlasting. To the world we live. The Father's only God.

And you live. And you die. And you rose again. Oh, my. And you opened the way.

For the world to live again. Hallelujah. For all you've done.

My Saviour, Redeemer. Lifted me from the mighty place.

[44 : 08] Almighty forever. I will never be the same as you came here. From the everlasting.

From the everlasting. From the everlasting. To the world we live. The Father's only son.

And you live. And you die. And you rose again. All night. And you opened the way.

For the world to live again. Hallelujah. Hallelujah. For all you've done. And you live.

And you die. And you rose again. All night. You opened the way. For the world to live again.

[45 : 07] Hallelujah. Halleluia. Today's Bible reading is from Luke chapter 24.

Have we got pictures? On the first day of the week, very early in the morning, the women took the spices they had prepared and went to the tomb.

They found the stone rolled away from the tomb, but when they entered, they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus. While they were wondering about this, suddenly two men in clothes that gleamed like lightning stood beside them.

In their fright, the women bowed down with their faces to the ground, but the men said to them, why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here.

He is risen. Remember how he told you while he was still with you in Galilee. The Son of Man must be delivered over to the hands of sinners, be crucified, and on the third day be raised again.

[46 : 59] Then they remembered his words. They ran back from the tomb and told all these things to the eleven and to all the others. It was Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and the others with them who told this to the apostles.

But they did not believe the women because their words seemed to them like nonsense. Peter, however, got up and ran to the tomb. He entered and bending over, he saw the strips of linen lying by themselves.

He went away, wondering to himself what had happened. Thank you. Well, thank you, Sarah, for that reading.

So we've heard the story of what happened on Easter Sunday, and now we've caught up because today is Easter Sunday. We've heard the story of what happened on Easter Sunday, and we've got another egg to open. So let's bring this one forward.

So I need a volunteer to open this egg. Okay. Yes, but with bunny ears. I can see the bunny ears.

[48 : 28] I can't see who they belong to. Come on up. Okay. Well done.

Can you come? Oh, you can come up this way. Yes, you can squeeze through there. Thea, welcome. Here's an egg for you. Would you like to open that? Brilliant. Okay.

It looks like chocolate. It's a promising start. Okay. Now, you might have to put it flat on. Let's put it flat on the table. Okay. Now, do you think you can try and open that? You might need to give it a bit of a bash.

Shall we try and bash it? Lift it up and smash it onto the table. This is the fun bit. Can I give you a hand? Actually, I've got something here that could help. Okay.

Right. I'm going to hold it. Right. You're going to hold that and give it a whack with that really hard. Mind my fingers. And again. And again. Keep going. Oh, yes.

[49 : 31] We've broken through. Right. Have a look. What's inside the egg? What's inside? Can you tell us what's inside? Nothing. There's nothing inside the egg.

Oh. Is that a surprise? Is it a surprise? Okay. Right. I'm going to give you all these bits. Let's put them in there. Now.

I want you to take that back. And you can share that with your family at an appropriate time as deemed by your parents.

I hope that's okay. Sorry. Right. Thea. You go down with that. The empty egg. Oh. Your bunny ears. Right. Let's put them back on. Okay. Round of applause for Thea. Well done. Oh.

We've dropped the ears. Fantastic egg opening there. So. The Easter Sunday egg was empty. But we're not really surprised are we? Because actually most Easter eggs are empty inside aren't they?

[50 : 30] And that's for a reason. Because they remind us of something. What do they remind us of? The empty tomb. Because people on Easter Sunday morning found the empty tomb.

Who was it that found the empty tomb first? Who was listening really carefully to that reading? Isaac. Shout it out. Who found it? The women.

Yes. Thank you. It was the women. We're told that it was one called Mary. One called Joanna. Another called Mary. And some others as well. And in Luke 24 verse 2 it says that they found the stone rolled away from the tomb.

So what had been sealed and closed on Saturday was now open. But when they went in, Jesus' body was not there. And what happened next?

Who appeared at the tomb next? Can anyone remember? Okay. Isaac knows. I'm going to ask someone else. Jameson. Angels. Yeah. It says that in verse 4 two shining men appeared.

[51 : 32] Okay. Men don't normally shine. So these were angels. And you know whenever angels appear in the Bible it's to announce something really important. And the other thing that happens when people see angels in the Bible their response is normally that they're scared.

They're terrified. Because if you see a person actually glowing, glowing brightly, that's not normal. And it's a scary thing because you think what on earth is going on here. And the angel said to the women in verse 6, why do you look for the living among the dead?

And actually there was a point to their question. Because they weren't looking for the living among the dead. They were looking for the dead among the dead.

They went to put spices on a dead body. They were clearly not expecting Jesus' body to not be there. They were not expecting him to have risen.

They weren't going to the tomb saying to themselves, well we've got the spices in case he's still dead. But hopefully he's alive again. They weren't saying that at all. So they were surprised. They

were shocked.

[52 : 35] They were baffled. And the angels went on. He is not here. He has risen. And the angels then reminded the women of something that Jesus had said before.

It says in Luke 24, 7, they said, the Son of Man must be handed over to sinful people, be crucified, and rise from the dead on the third day. That is what Jesus had said to them before.

And then when the angels said that, the women remembered that they had heard Jesus say that.

Now sometimes people tell us stuff and we hear and we nod and we're like, yeah, yeah, heard that. But we don't actually take it in. And it doesn't actually make sense until later on. Now I don't do a lot of cooking in my house. Every now and then I try to offer to do a bit of cooking and help out.

So one day I was making a dessert. And Miriam had given me the instructions for making the dessert. And it involved putting some cream and some other ingredients, I can't remember what, but it was kind of wet, sloppy stuff, into the food mixer.

[53 : 33] And she told me the ingredients and what to do and when to put what in. And she told me, put the thing down on the food mixer. And she said, make sure you put the lid over the bowl on the food mixer. And I nodded and took it all in.

She said, have you got everything? I was like, yep, yep. So Miriam went off. And I put the ingredients in and I put down the arm of the food mixer. And I thought, well, I could ramp it up slowly, but it's going to be quicker just to go straight to max power.

And the cream and the slop went everywhere, all over me and all over the kitchen. Because I had forgotten something important that Miriam had said, which is, make sure you put the cover on the food over the bowl that stops all the stuff going everywhere.

And then as soon as it happened, I was like, oh, yeah, Miriam did tell me that. And I'd forgotten. So these women, when Jesus told them what he, when the angels told them what Jesus had said before, it was like, oh, yeah, actually, we start to remember now.

Because Jesus had actually spoken about his resurrection several times, not just once. But nobody had really heard what he was saying. Nobody had really taken it in. So they were feeling a bit confused at this stage.

[54 : 43] Could it be true, they were thinking? I think they were still feeling a mixture of fear, astonishment and confusion. But the reading says they went back and they told Jesus' other followers and they didn't believe them.

But then Peter went to the tomb and saw for himself the strips of linen and saw that the tomb was empty. So people were still very confused on that first Easter morning.

It wasn't until later on that things really began to click. Now, as we read on in the Gospel of Luke and in the other Gospels, we see that Jesus himself appeared to many people.

And he had a real body, but it was different. Now, other people in the Bible had been raised to life, but that was a temporary thing. They still died a normal death later on.

But Jesus was raised never to die. And he brought about something completely new. And Paul wrote about this in a letter which is part of the Bible in 1 Corinthians. And this is from 1 Corinthians 15.

[55 : 42] And Paul said, The lack of a corpse, the eyewitness accounts and the transformed lives of many people.

And that's good news for us today. So we've got another egg. We've got one more egg left. And this is the egg for after Easter. So this is for Monday. But actually, this is for every other day.

So, let me bring forward the Monday egg. Get the right label. So I'm going to need a volunteer to open the Monday egg.

Okay. Jameson, I think you're first. But I have to ask. I just have to risk assess this. Can you open an Easter egg one-handed? Okay. Up you come then. Okay. Yes. Okay.

So actually, that could be... Do you think you could... Would it work to bash the Easter egg with... Oh, no. Probably not. Right. Can you unwrap the egg, please? Oh, wow. He's quick. Even one-handed. He's quick.

[57 : 10] Right. Lay it down. Oh. What's inside? Sweeties. Okay. What kind of sweeties are they? Small sweeties.

Okay. Are they Quality Street? No. Are they mini heroes? Yeah. No, they're not, actually. Okay. Are they celebrations?

Yeah. Yes. They're celebrations. Because after Easter, we have a lot of reasons to celebrate. Today is a day to celebrate.

And Christians have reasons to celebrate every day because Easter happened. And these are the reasons we have to celebrate. First of all... I need this. Right.

It's the first two reasons about things being broken. So, take that. Right. And wait for it. So I'm going to tell you what we celebrate.

[58 : 07] We can celebrate that Jesus has broken the power of sin so we can be forgiven. So you can break that piece of egg. Well done. Brilliant. Excellent.

Okay. Let's stack that up. Okay. Now, next piece of egg. Something else to break. The second thing that we can celebrate is that Jesus has broken the fear of death.

So we don't need to fear death. So you can break that one. Brilliant. Okay. Let's stack that up.

Okay. And the third thing that we can celebrate... We don't need this anymore. Okay.

You're disappointed, aren't you? The third thing that we can celebrate is that Jesus is alive today because of Easter. And he shares his life with us. So we can share the celebrations. So, let's share them.

Right. Celebrations coming. Celebrations. Celebrations. Celebrations. There they come. Let's do that. Get it to the back. Let's. Here you go.

[59 : 00] One more for you. More celebrations. That's brilliant. Good sharing. Right. Now, we've made a complete mess here, haven't we, Jameson?

Mess. So. Messy. Yummy mess. So, I'm going to give you two things. One is the remains of the egg. That's to share.

Okay. The other is... More celebrations. Yeah. But these are to share with everyone. So what I want you to do is put these by the door over there so that everyone can have a celebration on their way out.

And there's more chocolate during tea and coffee, by the way, guys. So, can you manage that?

You're going to have to come back for the egg. Okay. You can come back while I keep talking.

Okay. Brilliant.

So, lots of reasons to celebrate. And I'd just like to thank... I don't know if Rachel's here. Rachel Dillon came up with the brilliant idea of the eggs. And she did this as a talk with the job club, which was fantastic.

[60 : 02] And I stole the idea with her permission. Let's talk a little bit more about the reasons that we have to celebrate today. There's three reasons. We'll clear up that afterwards. Yeah. You can come back for it at the end.

Yeah. Okay. He wants it all. Yeah. That is very thorough. Well done. Nothing is wasted. Okay. Well done. Carefully now. Whoop. Great. Let me move this table out of the way.

So, I said there's three reasons to celebrate. First of all, Jesus has broken the power of sin. You know, by ourselves, we can't be friends with God.

Because we live selfishly. And we live as if we're the boss instead of God being the boss. And that hurts God. And the Bible tells us that we deserve to be punished for turning our backs on God and living as if we're the boss.

And we deserve to be separated from God. But Jesus, when he died on that cross, he took the punishment which should have been for us. And he paid the price for the wrong things we've done by dying on that cross.

[61 : 08] If he had just died on the cross and not risen again, it wouldn't have meant anything.

Because he could have been anyone. It doesn't prove that he was the son of God. But because he rose again, it proves that he is the son of God.

And he is the only one that could have paid the price for us to be forgiven. The resurrection is like a receipt. It's God's way of stamping paid in full across history.

You know, we keep receipts sometimes to be able to say that something has been paid for. In some shops, you have to show your receipts on the way out to show that your shopping has been paid for. The resurrection shows us that the price has been paid so that we can be forgiven and that we can be friends with God.

So the second thing that we celebrate today is that we don't need to fear death. One reason that people sometimes do fear death is because they're not sure if they'll face judgment on the other side.

But we don't need to be unsure about this because the Bible tells us there is a judgment. But Jesus came to bear the judgment, to take it for us. That's what happened when he died on the cross.

[62 : 15] And because he went through death and came through the other side, we can be sure that if we put our trust in him, we will be with Jesus beyond death. And we don't need to fear judgment. Later in that letter of 1 Corinthians 15 that we read from earlier, Paul talks about everyone who belongs to Jesus following him into resurrection, into new life.

Just like a needle pierces through black cloth on the other side, Jesus passed through death and into immortality, living forever. But for anyone who puts their trust in him, we will be pulled through like thread because of Jesus.

And the third thing we celebrate is that Jesus shares his life with us now. Jesus shares his resurrection life and power with us now. Another book in the Bible, Ephesians 1 verse 19 to 20, says that God's power is available to us who believe.

And that power is the same as the mighty strength he used when he raised Christ from the dead. So we have that resurrection power available to us. And through the Holy Spirit, we can have the life of Jesus inside us.

To give us peace, to give us hope. Hope for the future. And to give us perseverance when things are tough. Now as we reflect on that, we're going to sing again.

[63 : 34] So I'm going to invite the musicians to come up. And they're going to sing, Who Breaks the Power of Sin and Darkness, as we celebrate the reasons that we have to celebrate on Easter and after Easter and every day.

Let's stand and we're going to sing together. Let's sing together.

And we pray. May you deny that you would take my place, that you would bear my cross.

If you lay down your life, then I would be set free. Jesus, I sing for all that you've done for me.

Amen. All of His brilliance.

[65 : 50] The King of glory. The King of all kings. The King of all kings. This is amazing grace.

This is unfailing love. That you would take my place, that you would bear my cross.

If you lay down your life, then I would be set free. Oh, Jesus, I sing for all that you've done for me.

Thank you. Thank you. And it is the thing that made it through the ■ Worthy is the king, the king, the king, the king, the king.

Worthy is the lamb who was slain. Worthy, worthy, worthy. This is amazing grace.

[67 : 18] This is our failing love. That you would take my place. That you would burn my cross.

You would make down your mind. That I would be set free. Oh, Jesus, I sing for all that you've done for me.

Thank you. It's time for the children to leave now. They're going for an Easter egg hunt. Yes, please sit down, sorry. Any of the younger people, teenagers, if you would like to go out to help with the younger ones, you could choose to do that or you could choose to stay in for the last few minutes here.

And it's time for the last few minutes. And it's time for the last few minutes. Thank you.

Thank you.

[69 : 14] Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. day of Holiday Club when families and children will be invited to come and share with us on Sunday. So if you are a regular attender here then please look out for those that on next Sunday who are new, who are visiting and make them feel especially welcome. Ask them about the week, what their children have done and enjoyed.

That would be great. And then next Sunday evening there will be a quieter service which you may enjoy coming to as well at 6.30 in the evening. So Roger is going to lead us in our prayers of intercession now.

Let us come together in prayer to our Heavenly Father. Almighty and eternal God, whose goodness and grace overflowed when you raised Jesus from the dead. Let your goodness and grace continue to flow upon us. In the light and the glory of the resurrection we pray for our church. We give thanks for the outreach on the Rye yesterday and on Friday. May the contacts bear fruit through your spirit working. And we pray for the Easter Holiday Club that we've just heard mentioned, the Heroes Academy. For Andrew and for Jackie as they lead, that you would keep them safe and ensure that they are able to do all that they can in that situation. For the whole team of volunteers who are giving of their time and coming alongside the children. We pray that you would give them love in their hearts for those who they teach. We pray for the children that they might grow in their

understanding of you and your love for them. And we pray too for the building of relationships with the parents and guardians of the children. Oh God, do a great work this week through this holiday club.

We pray for those struggling with illness, in hospital, or feeling desperately sad and alone. Inspire them with the glorious truth of the resurrection and of the new life promised by our risen Lord.

Lord, we pray that you would reveal your presence to those who are feeling isolated, especially those who have recently been bereaved. May all those who are missing loved ones be comforted by the risen Jesus.

We pray for the leadership of the church, for the elders and deacons. May they rely totally on you, Lord, trusting in your resurrection power and your faithfulness as they lead us in the coming months.

[72 : 26] On this Easter day, hear now our own prayers in this time of silence, as we remember before you those nearest and dearest to our own hearts, confident that you hear the earnest prayer of every heart.

Amen. Amen. On this day of new life and new beginnings, we look to all that is new and changing in the world today and for the leaders of all of our churches and all of your churches.

We pray, Lord, that you would bless and strengthen them and allow those in leadership to speak clearly about the Lord and all that he has done.

We pray for those in secular power, Lord. We pray especially for the King, our MPs, and for those who are in positions of political power all over the world.

On this Easter day, we ask that you would lead them to follow your ways of love, peace, and truth. Lord of all, we ask that you would bring peace to areas of conflict.

[73 : 49] Especially, we remember Gaza, the Ukraine, and Sudan. We pray for those who suffer pain and anguish. May they find healing and peace in the wounds of Christ.

Father, we pray on this Easter day that you would send the power of your Spirit upon your people so that we may share your good news with the world and live for your praise and glory.

Heavenly Father, you've delivered us from the power of darkness and brought us into the light of resurrection life.

we thank you and give you all our praise. Help us to live lives which are worthy of your eternal joy.

And so, merciful Father, accept these prayers for the sake of your Son, our Saviour, Jesus Christ.

Amen. Amen. Well, thank you, Roger, for leading us in prayer. Before we come to our final song, I just want to rewind a little bit because we've shared Easter eggs with the kids and we've talked about the reasons that we have to celebrate.

[75 : 05] But these are only reasons to celebrate if the resurrection is true. Now, you may not yet be ready to believe that Jesus could have come back from the dead. You have good reasons to doubt that.

So, let's look at the evidence. The first accounts of the empty tomb and the eyewitnesses are not found in the Gospels, as we might expect, but actually in the letters of Paul, which every historian agrees were written between 15 and 20 years after the death of Jesus.

And one of those letters was 1 Corinthians, which we read from earlier. And this is what it says. I read this earlier. Just read this bit again from 1 Corinthians 15. It says that he was buried.

This is Jesus. He was raised on the third day, according to the Scriptures, and that he appeared to Peter and to the Twelve. After that, he appeared to more than 500 of the brothers and sisters at the same time, most of whom are still living, though some have fallen asleep.

Now, why did Paul write this? He was inviting anyone who doubted that Jesus had appeared to people after his death to go and talk to the eyewitnesses so that they could verify those claims.

[76 : 15] Now, you couldn't possibly make that kind of statement in a public document where travel was easy during that time, only just 20 years after the event, unless it was true, because Paul would have been shown up to be a liar.

We also know that many of those who claim to have seen the risen Jesus were later tortured and put to death for saying that publicly and for calling Jesus Christ Lord.

It's very unlikely that they would have gone through that if they had made it up. Now, you might still be thinking, and many of your friends may say, but I still can't accept that Jesus rose from the dead because that's scientifically impossible.

In other words, your worldview doesn't actually allow it. And I can understand that. And actually, at the time, people in the first century felt exactly the same way.

Their worldview didn't allow them to believe in the bodily resurrection of Jesus. I'll explain why. Now, we live in a scientific age, and many people nowadays tend to think that in the first century, people were not scientific, and therefore they were open to believing things like this, and they would have found it very easy to believe that Jesus rose from the dead.

[77 : 25] But actually, the context wasn't quite like that. Where Jesus lived, there were Greeks and Romans who believed that the body was bad or weak, but the spirit was good. So if they believed in life after death, it wasn't bodily life.

It was liberation of the soul. It was a spiritual afterlife. And then you had Jews, many of whom believed that at the end of time, God was going to renew the world, and an immortal bodily resurrection was part of that, but not until the end of time.

The idea of an individual immortal resurrection in the middle of history was impossible, as far as they were concerned. It was something that nobody had ever conceived. So the idea of Jesus rising from the dead with a real immortal body was every bit as ridiculous to the worldviews of the people of Jesus' day as it is to most people today.

The only way anybody embraced the resurrection back then was by letting the evidence challenge and change the worldview. And when they did, what happened was that suddenly thousands of Jews and Greeks began to believe something that no worldview had ever allowed for in the history of the world.

It is very difficult to account for the dramatic transformation in the lives of thousands of people and in the ongoing transformation of the lives of people today, 2,000 years on, if it isn't true.

[78 : 45] You might not believe in the resurrection, but if you don't, you have to come up with a historically feasible alternative explanation for the birth of the church and the incredible worldview shift for these hundreds of other people who said that they saw him and their lives were changed by him.

And so far, nobody has come up with a viable alternative explanation. Those early Christians were transformed, not by wishful thinking, but by thinking.

And you can be transformed by thinking too. And as you think, if you're able to let these things challenge your worldview, your previously held assumptions, the Holy Spirit comes and starts to generate that hope on the inside.

It's a combination of your head and your heart. That's what I have discovered and that's what many people here have discovered. And it has given me a reason to know why justice and integrity and alleviating hunger and poverty and caring for the environment really matter.

It has given me solid hope for the future when there is so much uncertainty around me. And it's given me a deep joy inside that is not dependent on my circumstances. And I commend you to think about what really happened on that first Easter Sunday because it might just transform your life.

[80 : 10] Let's pray. Lord, we pray that you would help us to think through what we've seen and heard and sung this morning.

Something very significant happened on that first Easter Sunday which transformed the lives of thousands of people and which has gone on to transform people and communities and cultures ever since.

For those of us who are not sure what to believe help us to think through what we've heard and to make sense of it all. For those of us who want to believe please give us the gift of faith.

Help us to overcome the obstacles in the way of believing and reveal yourself to us as we take the next steps on this journey of discovery. And for those of us who believe we want to experience more of your transforming resurrection power.

Give us more hope. Give us more joy. Give us more confidence to share the best news ever with our friends and loved ones. We ask this in Jesus' name. Amen. Thank you.

[81 : 19] Judy. Judy's just reminded me if you'd like to kind of look into a bit more the stuff that I've been saying about Easter and why it's important and what the evidence is we'd love to share one of these little books with you. It's called Why Easter.

There's some on the table on the way out. Do grab one of those on the way out or come and talk to me or talk to anyone who you came with or any of our leadership. We'd love to have a chat with you. I'm going to hand over to Judy. Thanks, Andrew.

