

Good morning and welcome to our Easter Sunday service, which includes the act of communion. Welcome, whether you are here in person, or online or indeed a visitor, we look forward to sharing this time together.

Our service this morning, marks the end of Michael Dockers ministry here with us at Tyndale after nearly 20 years. Many a word was said yesterday, but I would like to express our thanks here today, for all you have done for us Michael and the services and worship we have appreciated so much over the years. Thank you for leading our worship this morning, and we look forward to celebrating Easter today with you.

This week, Tuesday Coffee Shop will be held in the sanctuary as usual, from 10am until 12 noon. Do come along and join us for refreshments and conversation.

On Tuesday evening at 7.30pm we have our Church members meeting which will be taking place online. The meeting includes our Annual Election of Deacons. We have received three nominations and they are Margaret Clements, Rachel Molyneux and Dorette Morgan. As we are meeting via zoom, there will be an electronic vote available on the night as used last year, and there will also be a postal vote which can be done by contacting Bruce by either email or by telephone by the end of today. Ian Waddington has been appointed as the scrutineer for the voting, and the joining details for all members will be sent out shortly.

Also, regarding our May church meeting on the 10th May, which is also our AGM. We will be holding the election for the post of Treasurer. The closing date for this is next Sunday and nomination forms are available from Bruce or myself.

Time@tyndale is having a week off and will return the following week on the 27th April, with David Bell leading the evening, where the discussion is titled 'Doubting David asks the questions'.

Our online coffee shop on Thursday will take place this week, as usual at 11am, with the joining details on our website.

At the end of our service today, we are serving tea, coffee and cake, to give us all another opportunity to speak to Michael and wish him well, so do join us. Thank you.

Welcome one & all in church or on-line to this most momentous day; the very heart of the whole faith – Easter Day; a day for rejoicing, bewilderment & fear to give way to wonder & amazement- a day when all the terrors of the world, all the news that surrounds us, all our own fears & frailties, are taken up, overcome, subverted & overturned by the amazing, mysterious, joyful news of Easter

'On the darkest day of all'

Matt Osgood

Call to worship –

Happy Easter! Jesus is risen, He is risen indeed. We gather with bewilderment in a suffering world, surrounded as we are with news of death and destruction, but this day we discover the great surprise and we wonder; He is not here, He is risen! – and we worship..

'See what a morning'

Stuart Townend & Keith Getty

Responsive reading – BPW 696

Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good;

Let Israel say:

Let the house of Aaron say:

Let those who fear the Lord say:

I was pushed back and about to fall, but the Lord helped me.

Shouts of joy and victory resound in the tents of the righteous:

The Lord's right-hand is lifted high;

The stone the builders rejected has become the capstone;

This is the day the Lord has made;

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

The Lord is God,

You are my God, and I will give thanks;

Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good;

his love endures forever.

'His love endures for ever.'

'His love endures for ever.'

'His love endures for ever.'

The Lord is my strength and my song; he has become my salvation.

'The Lord's right hand has done mighty things!

the Lord's right hand has done mighty things!'

the Lord has done this, and it is marvellous in our eyes.

let us rejoice and be glad in it.

From the house of the Lord we bless you.

and he has made his light shine upon us.

you are my God, and I will exalt you.

his love endures for ever.

Prayer

Lord, your love endures for ever; on this day if we have only half-believed it now we can say with full voices & glad hearts *your love endures for ever*: because we hear the good news of Easter & we absorb the joyful truth of Easter in the words of the gospel ' *He is not here, He has risen*' – *Alleluia, He is risen indeed*'..Alleluia – Lord, we worship you in the name of the one who is risen today, who has defeated death today, who, this day, shows us a love that is endless & true &

greater than anything we can imagine – a love shown shining from an empty tomb, a love thrown into the world in the glad message of the angels; a love felt tingling in the hardly-daring-to-believe of the women, a love known more and more each day by the wondering & amazed followers – Lord, we're like them today; we have cowered nervously in a suffering world; we have heard once more that Jesus is risen and now, as we worship, we believe and we gather to prepare to take the 'love that endures for ever' into the world you have made – by the power of the risen Christ..

Lord's Prayer:

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen

Choir 'Out of darkness'

Christopher Walker

Today is significant here at Tyndale *both* because it is Easter Day *and* because today my ministry draws to its conclusion. To say this has been a happy time of ministry, for me, is an understatement; I have been richly blessed and deeply fulfilled here – to have been a minister at Tyndale with the support of so many fine people over such a long time has been an extraordinary privilege – I hope I have been able to express my deep sense of thankfulness adequately in the Link and yesterday and I can do no more than to reiterate that thanks – not least to Cheryl, Andrew and Rosie, to our friends and to you all here – and beyond..

Judgments as to the effectiveness or otherwise of this ministry are for others, of course, and not really for today, but it is right that this service should include voices other than mine – objective voices, indeed..first Ken Stewart – thanks, Ken for kindly offering to lead us in prayer – and then Dave – thank you Dave, for bringing us the reading of Scripture

Prayers for the ending of a ministry – Ken Stewart

Readings – Dave Bell

[Isaiah 65.17-25](#)

[Luke 24.1-12](#)

Sermon

Lord, we give you this time; may what is spoken ring with truth; may what is heard and understood be touched by your Spirit, and may what is decided lead us on towards your Kingdom –

Happy Easter - so much to rejoice over; so much to be thankful for; unless you're in Ukraine. I wonder what priests & ministers in Ukraine are talking about this Easter?

Still, for us, here – so much to rejoice over – at last, Michael is going! So much to be thankful for – *finally!*

For me – so much to rejoice over; the friendship, love & forbearance of so many over so long...so much to be thankful for – the joy & privilege of being a minister at Tyndale.

For us all: Easter Day: laughter after tears; sunshine after rain; spring after winter...light after darkness...

Joy.... - Mary, Mary Magdalene; Joanna, Mary the mother of James, & the other women – imagine, if you can..

They began the day filled with grief; laden with spices, ready for mourning duty. Then, on Easter Day...an empty tomb...bewilderment, terror & fear, memories, all that fading away & giving way to incredulity....amazement.....hardly daring to breathe.....at last. *joy*

Easter Day: a day for joy! One of the no doubt many things I could be criticised for is a lack of joy. Somebody said way back about one of my Easter services – not much *joy*..

I admit it – glass half empty, me, it's often been said. In ministry terms everybody has one of two theologies – either the Theology of the Cross or the Theology of the Resurrection

Me – the Theology of the Cross every time..Lent is my season....and Advent – yearning (!!) – a ministry focussed on the difficulties, suffering, faith in the real world.

I must have told you this before; (one of the problems of a long ministry – you're in danger of repeating yourself) in my first church I lined up with other clergy – Anglicans, Methodists, Roman Catholics – they were all in their dark cloaks and cassocks; I was wearing a black academic gown –

on Good Friday, for a march of witness round the streets; it was raining, cold and grey..we stopped at various points for readings from the passion; Jesus carrying his cross; weeping women in Jerusalem – you know the kind of thing – Easter Sunday that year dawned warm & sunny; we all held services in our churches while the local house church had a big, loud, colourful 'picnic of praise in the park'....toddlers in push chairs, colourful dresses, banners, guitars and drums, free food and drink.

Which version of Christianity do you think was more *joyful*?!! Mine has always been the Good Friday version – you must know that by now.

But it *is* Easter Day. I wonder what ministers in Ukraine are talking about this Easter?

Here's something from a description of Easter in Ukraine..

The preparation begins two months in advance. People fast with strict devotion; the country is passionate about adhering to the faith. Everyone awaits Easter day; a festive mood blooms throughout the country & families come

together to celebrate with food.

Easter, by the way, is the Orthodox church Easter – this year it's next week

What are the priests talking about this year? New life? Spring? Easter Eggs, food, community – all the rest? It must be hard, don't you think – to find joy in Ukraine ATM – at Easter or at any other time for that matter

The Theology of the Cross then...? But you know, we can't leave it there, not if we want to be true to the Christian faith in its entirety – it's not one or the other, is it? It's both –

As I'm sure I've said before – (more than a few times probably; that's the thing about a long ministry – one is in danger of repeating oneself...fortunately, mostly no one can remember what I said from one week – one *minute!* - to the next...!)

Good Friday & Easter Day *together*..The theology of the Cross & the theology of the Resurrection *together*..

Mary and the other women, in the story, go on Easter Sunday to the tomb & find it empty, & in their bewilderment and terror they meet two strangers in dazzling white who tell them 'He is not here, but has risen' – they run to tell the disciples, who think it's all an 'idle tale' – fake news...staged...a conspiracy? so Peter goes to have a look for himself & he returns home 'amazed at what had happened'

But did you notice what the men said? '*Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here, but has risen. Remember how he told you, while he was still in Galilee, that the Son of Man must be handed over to sinners, & be crucified, & on the third day rise again.*'

Easter, I think, depends on where you stand. 'Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here, but has risen. Remember how he told you, *while he was still in Galilee*

That's where the joy begins for us today, my friends...while he was still in Galilee..while they were still in Ukraine...while we are still in this ministry for that matter – not long to go now...!

While he was still in Galilee..you see, this Easter as every Easter really – as every day – we are living in the shadow of the cross and the light of the empty tomb *every day*..

We are living by faith *every day*...*every day* is Good Friday and Easter Day for us - *the Son of Man must be handed over to sinners, and be crucified, and on the third day rise again.*'

That's what Jesus said *while he was still in Galilee*...that's how he lived...by faith – imagine Jesus saying those words, knowing they applied to him, yet just like us having to believe, to trust – the Son of Man...handed over...crucified...rise again....

that's how we are to live....death lies all around all the time – Ukraine...Afghanistan.....

Syria....a hospital bed.....

Our faith is a faith for the present age not because it's wallowing in all the death and destruction; not because it's shackled to all the death and destruction

But because *in* the death and destruction; in the Galilees of the world *today*....in Ukraine, in Syria, Afghanistan, wherever – we are called to *live by faith*....:

Isaiah: *I am about to create new heavens and a new earth; the former things shall not be remembered.....be glad and rejoice for ever in what I am creating; I am about to create Jerusalem as a joy, and its people as a delight. no more shall the sound of weeping be heard in it, or the cry of distress. No more shall there be in it an infant that lives but a few days, or an old person who does not live out a lifetime;*

They shall build houses and inhabit them; they shall plant vineyards and eat their fruit....

like the days of a tree shall the days of my people be.. They shall not labour in vain, or bear children for calamity; for they shall be offspring blessed by the LORD—

The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, the lion shall eat straw like the ox...They shall not hurt or destroy on all my holy mountain, says the LORD.

See? That's the vision – that's what we have to live by...when we stand at a committal; when we watch a news report out of Ukraine; when we think of abandoned families in Afghanistan, or destroyed homes in Aleppo or Mariupol, or murdered civilians in Bucha..

Or when we struggle to overcome our own worst instincts; or when we can't let go of past hurts..or when we wish things in our lives or amongst the ones we love were better than they are.

Or when we wish a ministry would end so we can get on with another one...

Then the vision...*then* the voice of those men in dazzling white rings in our ears....'why do you look for the living among the dead?'

I like to think that has been the inspiration behind my ministry. This service isn't about me, really, but there's no getting away from the fact of this ending today – and maybe Easter Day is an appropriate time for it.

I have been greatly privileged to minister here, among such a fine congregation of people, with such support and friendship over the years...

But many of the main things about this ministry have been when I have come alongside this or that person in grief and loss and we have shared, often enough, in all the pain

From my very first weekend back in 2002, through many others over the years – too many to count, really, too many to relate, certainly...so many times, over so many years –

And each time, in various ways & various locations we've gathered at a crematorium, or in here – you know the words: '*in this building, used to the sound of singing, place of baptisms, funerals, weddings, dedications- this building, where some have wept, and some been filled with joy...*'

Each time we've faced the mix of joys and sorrows that are part of every human life...and at those times I have tried to live by faith – 'why do you look for the living among the dead?'

That's Easter, for us, wouldn't you say? OK this year it's a bit different because of all that's happening – and surely in Ukraine next week Easter will feel very different...

But the joy isn't tied to the bright colours and spring flowers and painted eggs or gorgeous costumes and gold and all the rest –

The Christian joy is there anyway...and the guns shall fall silent; and the shells shall no longer rain down...and the tombs shall be empty

'See, the home of God is among mortals. He will dwell with them; they will be his peoples, & God himself will be with them; he will wipe every tear from their eyes. Death will be no more; mourning and crying and pain will be no more, for the first things have passed away.'

& God's Kingdom shall come..that's Easter...Easter joy – that's the promise of today.

Thank you for the opportunity to minister in that joy – the joy of cross and resurrection - here these many years.

I wish you all well as you live by faith – and as, once more, we come to this table, those words ring in our ears...:

'Why do you look for the living among the dead?'

Offering Prayer

Lord, we come to you. If still, today, we are mired in confusion & if the circumstances of our world hover very near, still, for this time & on this day we would lift our eyes & have our spirits lifted by the glorious Easter message – we are surrounded by its mystery & surprised by its joy & as we give of ourselves in these & all our gifts we would continue to live by faith in the crucified Lord who is alive for evermore, that the world may see..

Grace

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy spirit be with us all, evermore, Amen.

'The Lord of all', (The bread of life, the carpenter's own son)

John Bell & Graham Maule

Communion

Invitation

The table of the Lord is spread. It is for those who will come and see in broken bread and poured out wine – not merely symbols, but the very substance of his life shed for us on the Cross and raised again the third day. The risen Christ is present among his people and it is here that we meet him. The invitation is for all those who are seeking him and who are weary of their sin and doubt to come and share the feast.

Confession

Lord our God, we humbly make confession. Here at this table we confess our part in a fearful world, where people huddle together for security, and look for their salvation only among the things they already know.

We confess the church's fear and its inward-looking spirit, rarely ready to let the Word of life go in a needy world.

We confess our own fear; fear of our own thoughts, fear of each other, fear of new understanding. Father forgive us and set us free once more in the spirit of the risen Christ to live and be unafraid; to live in hope, in joy and in love in Jesus' name, who is Lord and Saviour of all.

Listen to the good news before the Cross, *'Do not be afraid, for I have overcome the World'*.
Listen to the good news of Easter – *'Do not be afraid, for he who was dead is alive for evermore'*.

Thanks be to God, Amen.

Institution

For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you; the Lord Jesus on the night he was betrayed took bread, and when he had given thanks he broke it and said, take, eat, this is my body which is for you, do this in remembrance of me. In the same way after supper he took the cup saying this cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this whenever you drink it in memory of me – for whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

Thanksgiving

Lift up your hearts,

we lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give him thanks and praise.

It is not only right, it is our duty and our joy at all times and in all places to give you thanks and praise, Holy Father, almighty and eternal God, through Jesus Christ, your only Son, our Lord..

Therefore with angels and archangels and with all the company of heaven we proclaim your great and glorious name, for ever praising you and saying

Holy Holy Holy, god of power and might. Heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the lord. **Hosanna in the highest!**

God our Father, pour out the Holy Spirit on all your people, that we may have faith, and upon these gifts of bread and wine and this eating and drinking, that this may be for us the mystery of the body and blood of our risen Lord – so that we may receive Christ to ourselves once again, for the strengthening of our faith, the assuring of our hope, and the deepening of our love.

Responses

Leader Here is bread

All **For us to feed on Christ**

Leader Here is wine

All **For us to refresh our souls**

Leader How shall we eat at Easter?

All **Feasting on the banquet of God's Kingdom,**

Leader To celebrate the risen Christ

All **He makes us whole**

Leader How shall we drink at Easter?

All **Drinking the new wine of the Kingdom,**

Leader To celebrate the risen Christ

All **He brings us new life.**

Leader The risen Christ bids us eat and drink and live

All **We eat and drink in faith**

The Bread & Wine

BPW260 'Thine be the glory'

Prayer after communion

Strengthen for service, Lord, the hands that have touched holy things:

Our ears have heard your word – now make us deaf to clamour and dispute, and ready to listen for every whisper of peace and reconciliation in a warring world

Our tongues have sung your praise. Now make them free from deceit, and ready to speak only the truth in love in a deceitful world

Our eyes have witnessed the drama of salvation in broken bread and poured out wine. Now make them shine with hope and look for signs of your Kingdom in a suffering world

Our bodies have been fed with your body. Now refresh them by your Spirit and make us ready to work for your Kingdom in a world shot through with signs of glory.

Our lives this day have been filled with the risen life of Christ; now make us live by faith in His coming, when the Kingdoms of the world will become the Kingdom of the Lord. Amen.

We will hail the name of Jesus,
Lord of life, of death and birth;
We'll proclaim his healing spirit
Over all the wounds of earth:
We'll proclaim him, (we'll proclaim him)
Over all the wounds of earth.

We will stand by Christ for ever,
Hail his rising, his return,
We'll proclaim his peaceful Spirit
While the nations crash and burn:
We'll proclaim him, (we'll proclaim him)
While the nations crash and burn.

We will follow Christ who loves us,
Tell his stories, live his words.
We'll proclaim his gentle Spirit
While the powerful hone their swords;
We'll proclaim him, (we'll proclaim him)
While the powerful hone their swords.

We will grieve with Christ who grieves as
Wealth lets poverty rampage,
We'll proclaim his generous Spirit
To the Spirit of the Age
We'll proclaim him, (we'll proclaim him)
To the Spirit of the Age.

We'll rejoice as Christ's life triumphs
Over all the world's sad ways;
We'll proclaim his rising Spirit
By our service, faith and praise
We'll proclaim him, (we'll proclaim him)
By our service, faith and praise.

Tune: Regent Square 878787 (BPW631)
Michael Docker

Benediction

May the blessing of God almighty, Father, Son & Holy Spirit be with us & remain with us always

Thanks to everyone who has made this service possible, and thank you all for being here or joining in on-line. Today we go forward into our various lives on various paths, in the season of Easter; holding each day to the love of Good Friday *and* the hope of Easter Day – indeed, to live by the Easter faith – to care for one another and to show God's love in our lives – until we meet again....