

## **The Joy of the Gospel**

**Alleluia Christ is risen.**

**He is Risen he indeed Alleluia.**

It has probably never been more important that with confidence we make the Easter acclamation above. There are, of course, the signs of hope around us that nature brings as plants come to life and new life is seen around us. Yet, for the Christian to be able to currently proclaim the confident hope which the resurrection is and represents is vital.

We hear a great deal about people's health and well being. We have lived through an extraordinarily difficult time and many people have experienced grief, bereavement, and financial uncertainty. They have also, of course, experienced their own ill health. This Easter week represents our time to clearly proclaim the hope of the risen Christ. That, as we know, from our own Christian story, even in the light of the most difficult circumstances when even death seems to have triumphed, God can prevail.

Naturally enough, for many people these next few weeks and months represents both hope and a measure of anxiety. Hope of life beyond the experience of the pandemic and soon we expect to be able again to spend time with our loved ones in ways that for most of our life we have taken for granted. Hope that we can continue without the restrictions that we have had to keep for so long. Yet, we know in all this there is reason for some anxiety. I have spoken to people who are emerging from their homes into public places for the first time in a year. Those first outings are going to be difficult. There remain concerns about health issues and how to live well in the light of bereavement.

Therefore, the hope and the joy of the gospel needs to shine from our lives. That even deep down when times are hard, the joy of the risen Christ lives within us and provides the hope that the world needs. That in, and through the joy of the gospel the true fullness of life to which all human beings are intended to live resides. Those of us who know this truth have a clear obligation to witness to it and share it.

A very happy Easter to you all. Christ is truly risen indeed Alleluia!

**Archdeacon David Picken**