

# **Crown Terrace Methodist Church, Aberdeen**

## **Easter – Light and Life**



**April 2015**

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### **A meditation by John McNeill**

Easter may be a movable Feast but it always falls sometime in the Spring, a time in the year when the earth gives birth to new life whether it be in the shape of flowers that bloom, streams that gush and flow, lambs that bound across the fields, or birds that sing their sweet songs from the tree-tops. Spring can remind us that the long, dark nights of Winter are behind us and that the long, light-filled days of Summer are before us. It can be seen to sit between these two contrasting seasons, not quite a twilight zone for it has a beauty intrinsic to its own.

Easter, with all that happened to the Lord Jesus Christ in the long, dark nights of his passion and in the light-filled days of his resurrection, can also be seen to sit between two points. In terms of human life as we know and experience it, it can remind us, on the one hand, of our human frailty and mortality in this world, but on the other hand, of the hope to be found in Christ of eternal life, understood in both in its qualitative and quantitative sense.

Interestingly, the Gospel writers give us the historical facts of Christ's passion and resurrection but they do not necessarily unpack the significance or full meaning of these facts. It takes the Apostles such as Paul, Peter, and John to expound how these facts might affect our lives and the world in which we live. And what they suggest is a certain generativity or life-givingness that comes through saving faith in Christ's death and resurrection.

To think that the passion events of Easter are only a drama, and nothing more, is, I believe, to neutralise the true significance of these events. The deeper and more biblical truth is that God is most himself with us in the death and resurrection of Christ as we are drawn into it by the power of the Holy Spirit.

As we allow the movement of God's Spirit to impact our lives in accordance with these events, we also are changed and transformed into a people of God's own choice, an 'Easter People' 'born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead' (1 Peter 1:3). For the same power that raised Christ from the dead can also become demonstratively true in our lives, all 'according to the working of his almighty power' (Ephesians 1:19).

Jonathan Edwards, a contemporary of John Wesley, very beautifully illustrated how these benefits can become ours by drawing an analogy between us and a spring flower: The soul of a true Christian, as I then wrote my meditations, appeared like such a little white flower, as we see in the spring of the year; low and humble on the ground, opening its bosom, to receive the pleasant beams of the sun's glory; rejoicing as it were, in a calm rapture; diffusing around a sweet fragranc; standing peacefully and lovingly, in the midst of other flowers round about; all in like manner opening their bosoms, to drink in the light of the sun.

The abiding truth is that Jesus came into our world not to leave us in a kind of twilight zone but to bring us into the light and life of his eternal kingdom to the praise of God's glory.

May this be true for us all this Easter and always.

*John*

## **Praying for the work of God**

Pray for the Methodist Connexion that we may become a church that grows instead of declining and regains the gifts of the Spirit that set us on fire and longing for revival instead of watching the dying embers.

Give thanks for new members joining our fellowship as they confess their faith in Jesus Christ or transfer from other congregations.

Pray for the growing number of young children and their parents, and for the parenting group.

Give thanks for our links with the church in Ghana and for the visit of Dan French and members of the Scottish Methodist Ghanaian Chaplaincy on April 12.

Pray for the church council and the stewards that they may provide enthusiastic, Spirit-led leadership at a time when the weakness of the churches is all too visible.

Pray for the provision of pastoral care throughout our Circuit despite the shortage of ministers in the denomination, and pray for more members to train not just as preachers but also as youth leaders and teachers.

Pray that we may see how we can share what we have to offer to other Circuits and to receive what they can give us.

## The Emmaus Road

The weary pair, Emmaus bound  
with all their hopes dashed to the ground  
could not believe the women's word;  
for them, it was just too absurd

Jesus has risen from the dead  
was what they thought the women said  
downcast they knew not as they walked  
'twas Christ who listened as they talked.

Scant comfort they found when he spoke  
the words of comfort and of hope  
he quoted Scriptures that they knew  
but did not change their point of view.

'Twas only as he broke bread  
they saw Christ risen from the dead  
such news they simply had to share  
first with the twelve, who spread it everywhere.

Now we have Scriptures old and new  
and know all Jesus said of you  
and we, too share the broken bread  
reminding us of what he said  
we have the Comforter to show  
God's love, and how we ought to go;  
so let us now give thanks and sing  
and please God for everything.

Evelyn Young