



CHRIST CHURCH
CROUCH END HILL
LONDON N8 8AX
CROSSLINKS

WHY SEEK THE LIVING AMONG THE DEAD?

A MAGAZINE OF THE CHURCH ON THE HILL



AN EMPTY GRAVE IS THERE TO PROVE THAT JESUS LIVES

APRIL 2006 ISSUE 6.73

Vicar's three minute reflection
DO NOT BE AFRAID- JESUS IS ALIVE



Let us take a journey back to that first Easter morning. While it is still dark, through the deserted streets of Jerusalem, three men run along, hurrying to the residence of the High Priest Caiaphas. In the courtyard, a guard stops them and says "See Caiaphas now? Impossible! You'll have to wait until dawn at least!" Later, after the sun had risen, Caiaphas meets with the three soldiers, and hears the incredible news that the tomb they were charged to guard is empty. Caiaphas at first is puzzled, then angry, then thoughtful, for the men have no other explanation. Repeated questioning will not shake their story. No, they had not fallen asleep. There had been some strange stirring in the garden, an earthquake had shaken the ground, the stone was dislodged, and the tomb was empty. And so Caiaphas, the sly politician, came up with an idea. The Scriptures tell us, "When the chief priest had met with the elders and devised a plan, they met with the soldiers and gave them a large sum of money, telling them, 'Say that his disciples came during the night and stole him away while you were asleep.' "But nothing could have been further from the truth.

**See the place
where he lay? He is
not here.**

For while this whole charade was going on, the despair and disillusionment of the disciples were almost complete. Take Simon Peter for instance. His heart was filled with despair over his own shameful denial of Jesus, and his mind was clouded with disillusionment over the fate of Jesus. The One in whom they had placed their hopes was now dead. The women, too, were dealing with their grief the only way they knew how.

So it is difficult for us to blame them for their reaction that Easter morning when they saw an empty tomb with the stone rolled away for everyone to see. You know what they did. They ran for their lives!

The angel who greeted the women at the tomb said: "Do not be afraid. You are looking for Jesus of Nazareth who was crucified. See the place where he lay? He is not here.



He has risen. Go and tell the disciples." And just as suddenly as the new day dawns, Mary understood.

She understood that for all who turn to Christ in faith, that same light of a new day, the light of Easter, will shine, bright and glorious. For that is the message of Easter -- By the power of God Almighty, Christ had risen, bringing with him the promise of life everlasting.

How many have stood or dreaded standing where those faithful women stood before the dawn of Easter morning - in the valley of the shadow of death? How many have experienced the fear and dread that are ours when tragedy strikes or sickness comes calling or a loved one or someone near us dies? It is then that we need to hear the words of the angels, "Do not be afraid. He has risen!"

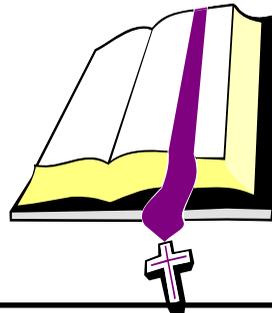
That's the message of Easter. It says: "Stop! Stop and listen. Stop and hear Jesus call your name. Hear God call you from places of darkness and death into the light of His resurrection. Let Easter dawn upon you. Let the resurrection of Jesus fill you with faith and hope and obedience to the voice of God. Dear friends, there is only one way I know to take the risk out of living and dying. It is to trust in God and to live out our faith. The headline this morning should read, "Christ takes the risk out of dying." Death is defeated. He is risen! Alleluia! Amen.

Dele Agbelusi

Memory Verse

"Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here; He has risen!"

Luke 24: 5



FORGIVENESS IN RELATIONSHIPS



One of the most important messages we can share this Easter is the very reason Christ came to earth—to sacrifice Himself so that we could experience forgiveness for all we've done wrong.

We also believe one of the most important messages we can proclaim to the world we live in today is that the single greatest gift we can ever give someone is forgiveness.

In our 27 plus years of marriage, Iyabo and I have had to give the gift of forgiveness to each other many times. It's never been easy, but we both know that if we hadn't "forgiven as Christ has forgiven us", our relationship would not be what it is today. Steve and Mary Prokopchak in their book "Called Together" share some principles about forgiveness that we all need to remember and employ if our marriages are to be truly "Christ-like".

**Forgiveness
doesn't start with
feelings but with
a decision.**

1. Choose to forgive. Just as Jesus "chose" to forgive us, so we must choose to forgive our spouse when they hurt or sin against us. Forgiveness begins with a decision that, in Jesus' name, we will obey God and forgive the one who has hurt us. Ephesians 4:32 says "Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you."

But what about feelings? Forgiveness doesn't start with feelings but with a decision. You don't need to wait for the right "feeling" before deciding to forgive. Just think where we'd all be if Jesus waited until He "felt" like forgiving us. We do need to be alert too. Satan may try to bring some feelings of resentment back into your life (1 Peter 5:8-10). You don't need to feel guilty about these temptations but you do need to deal with them. Since you've already made your choice to forgive, you need to stand firm on having already forgiven your spouse in "Jesus' name".

(continued on next page)

Forgiveness in Relationships

2. Confess your sin to God. This can be a hard truth to swallow but unforgiveness is a sin against God. It's disobedience to His command to forgive others as He has forgiven us (Ephesians 4:32). There's no place in the Bible that "lets us off the hook". **Our unforgiveness can keep people from experiencing God's forgiveness.** Our unforgiving attitude will sometimes make others "slam their ears shut" and block the way of their seeing the revelation Christ has for them.

3. Ask forgiveness of those you wronged. Once we recognize that we are the guilty party in a situation with our spouse—we should make the first move to restore the relationship. Accept responsibility for the wrong you've done and ask your spouse for forgiveness. If you don't know what you did wrong, ask God to show you. Simply ask for forgiveness.

Don't go into details that would do more harm than good. It's good to look right at the person when you tell him/her what you did wrong and ask, "Will you forgive me?" Wait for an answer. If they say, "Yes, I'll forgive you," this will bring a release to them also. **However, regardless of their answer, by confessing your sin and asking for forgiveness, you have been obedient. You can now leave the situation in God's hands.**

4. Ask God to bless the person who hurt you. "Bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you" (Luke 6:28). Ask God to truly bless the person who hurt you. And as you do this, follow the example of Jesus in asking God to bless them by forgiving them!

5. Do something nice for the person who hurt you - expecting nothing in return. "Do good to those who hate you (Luke 6:27). "Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good" (Romans 12:21).

(Continued on next page)

Forgiveness in Relationships

6. Accept your spouse the way he or she is, even when they're wrong. Don't defend what they've done, but defend them as a person. You're not approving of their behaviour but you still need to treat them with dignity, respect, love and kindness anyway. "Accept one another then, just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring praise to God." (Romans 15:7)

7. Look at your spouse through the eyes of faith and believe God to change them. Don't concentrate on areas of weakness, sin or irritation. Rather concentrate on seeing that person as God wants him or her to be. Believe that God will answer your prayers for them. Begin to think and speak positively about them (1Corinthians 13:7). Love "always trusts, always hopes..."

Don't defend what they've done, but defend them as a person. You're not approving of their behaviour but you still need to treat them with dignity, respect, love and kindness anyway.

Marriages heal when we stop looking at what our partner should do to make our marriage better and instead, look at what we need to do. The first step in all of this is to forgive as we have been forgiven—looking to Christ as our example, and as One who can give us the power to "set the captive free". Eventually **we'll discover that we have been the captive all along for as long as we have failed to forgive.** There is a damage that an unforgiving spirit does to us and to everyone else whose lives we influence.

With Christ as our example, it's our prayer that God will show us in our marriages how to empty ourselves of all but love—to give love, forgiveness, and grace as we've been given love, forgiveness, and grace—through all that Christ did for us in His life here on earth—through all He did for us through His death on the cross—and all He did for us through His resurrection. May we never forget! Because of Christ.

NOTICE BOARD

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

29 th April	Unlock sponsored walk
30 th April	Christ Church AGM
10 th May	Swearing-in of Churchwardens, Christ Church Cockfosters
11 th May	PCC meeting
14 th -20 th May	Christian Aid Week
17 th June	Away Day, venue to be arranged
16 th July	Church Barbecue and Church Family photograph (this is to replace the one on our notice board taken in 2000).

TRANSITION

We commiserate with the Agbelusi (our vicar) and Lambert families at their recent bereavement. Dele's uncle died on 13th February and one of his elder brothers died on 18th March. The daughter of Barbara Lambert passed away on 20th March. The burial of all the deceased took place in the last week of March. Let us continue to uphold the Lambert and Agbelusi families in our prayers.

DROP US A LINE

Do you have a juicy and inspiring story? Would you want to tell us how we can improve our magazine or how you have benefited from reading it? Drop us a line. The address for correspondence is on the back page. We would be glad to hear from you.

THANKSGIVING AND PRAYER REQUESTS

This month we pray for members of our church family whose surnames begin with T, U, W

Tasker Rosemary, Thomas Claudia, Topping Constance & Roger, Tucker Diana, Turner Carol, Tumalu Annette, Watson Granville, Wharton Nikki, Wheeler Sheila

THE TRUE STORY OF JEREMY

Jeremy, a terminally ill student, was twelve years old and still in the second grade. He couldn't learn, made unusual noises, and often drooled. To most kids he was an object of humour; to his teacher, Jeremy was an exasperatingly difficult student.

Three months before he died, both students and teacher changed their opinion of him. Miss Miller gave an assignment before Easter that required all of the students to take an empty plastic egg and bring it back the next day with something in the egg that represented new life.

The teacher planned to call Jeremy's parents that night and explain the assignment so that Jeremy would do what she asked, but several emergencies prevented her from calling. When she opened the nineteen eggs with the children, the first one had a flower in it, and the teacher affirmed the fact that a flower represents new life. The second egg contained a butterfly, which everyone agreed signified new life. A third egg with a moss-covered rock demonstrated new life as well.

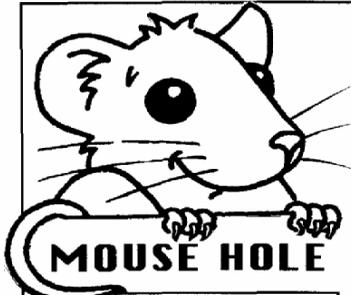
To the chagrin of Miss Miller, the fourth egg was empty. She quickly guessed it was Jeremy's egg and laid it down without comment. Jeremy called the teacher's attention, "Miss Miller, aren't you going to talk about my egg?" Flustered, she said, "Jeremy, your egg is empty."

He looked softly into her eyes and replied, "Yes, but Jesus' tomb was empty, too!" Miss Miller later spent the recess period crying with a softened heart. Three months later when Jeremy died, his theology was represented by nineteen plastic eggs on his casket--all of which were empty. The great hope of Easter is found in an empty tomb that promises new life.

(The names have been changed for the sake of privacy.)



PUZZLES



I **light** the way so you can see,
I **show** the path, just follow me.
I **guide** you on the way to go,
I **teach** you all you need to know.

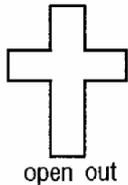
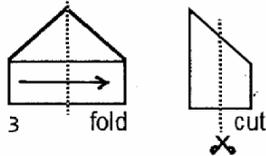
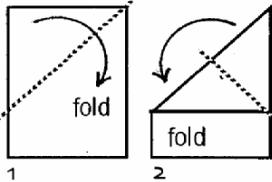
I **rescue** you, I set you free,
I **love** you, just as God loves me.

I am the **way**,
the **truth**,
the **life**.

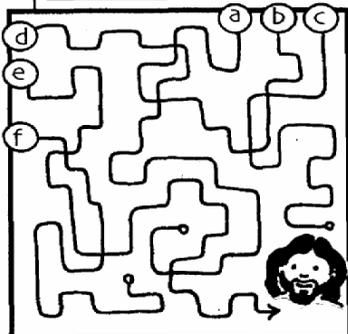
I am **JESUS**



Fold-a-Cross



Decorate
with
Easter
colours
and
patterns



Which way to Jesus?

Look up the Bible verses, fill in the blanks!

I _____ John 8:12
 A _____ John 14:6
 M _____
 T _____ John 14:6
 H _____
 E _____ John 11:25

LAUGHTER LINES

DANGEROUS CROWD

Three-year-old Shawn accompanied his dad to church on Easter day. The father wanted his son to understand the meaning of Easter, so he tried to explain the significance of the cross which hung at the front of the church. He said, "Jesus died because people nailed him to the cross." The little boy's eyes widened as he scanned the church. He asked his dad, "You mean these people?"



"Understanding the Times: the 90s," Lee Strobel, Seeds Tape Ministry, Oct. 4, 1992

A TIME FOR JOKES

In the tradition of the ancient Russian Orthodox church, the day after Easter was devoted to telling jokes. Priests would join with people in unveiling their best jokes for one another. It was an interesting tradition of imitating the cosmic joke that God pulled on Satan in the Resurrection. Satan thought he won on Friday but God had the last laugh on Easter Sunday. We would do well to laugh more often about the joyous victory we have through Christ.

Christian Reader, March/April 1990, p. 12

MISERLY CHRISTIANS

A man was once asked for a donation for some church purpose, but excused himself by saying: "I'm fattening a calf, and when it's fat, I'll give the proceeds." The same excuse was given three times over in response to appeals. One day he was approaching church a little late, and heard the choir singing, "The half has never yet been told," and thought, in the distance, the words were, "The calf has never yet been sold." Conscience stricken, he sold the calf, and gave the proceeds to the church.

Those who see God's hand in everything
can leave everything in God's hands.

LAUGHTER LINES

ETERNAL SMOKE

A concerned church member asked his pastor, Rick Warren, if he would go to hell for smoking. Dr. Warren answered, "No, but you'll smell like you've been there." * Encouraging Word, Rick Warren

MARRIAGE COUNSELLING BREAKTHROUGH

After months of working with a fighting couple, the marriage counsellor saw a ray of hope when the wife addressed her husband as "Hon." "There's still hope for this marriage if you can call him 'Hon,'" the skilled counsellor pointed out. "Huh! I've been calling him that for years," said the wife. "Attila the Hun."

* Seven World's Publishing, May/ June 1991

DO NOT UNDERRATE HER CONTRIBUTION MISTER

A successful CEO had the opportunity of going to his wife's hometown and meeting her high school boyfriend. The CEO couldn't wait to see what kind of guy his wife dated in school. As it turned out, her old flame had become the night manager of a gas station. After they met, the CEO could hardly wait to get back in the car and hear his wife's reaction. "Well, what did you think?" he asked. She said, "Nothing much." After a long silence he couldn't contain himself. "Honey, aren't you glad you're married to the CEO of a successful company instead of a manager at a gas station?" She responded as only a wife can. "Get this straight. If I'd married Billy Bob, he'd be the CEO of a successful company, and you would be managing a gas station."

Jokes Inc., Sept. 1991

ME ME ME

In exasperation, a middle-aged woman unloaded years of frustration when she told her husband of a recent insight she gained. "The reason our marriage has stayed together all of these years is because we're both in love with the same person--**YOU!**"*

Winning Walk, Ed Young

EASTER AND YOU

To some, Easter may conjure images of egg hunts and holidays. But the importance of the Easter season is so much more than candies and pursuits of leisure. For the Christian, the reality of a risen saviour holds eternal significance.

The resurrection of Jesus Christ validates three crucial points for the believer. First, it authenticates the Scriptures. Second, the resurrection validates our redemption through faith in Christ. Third, the resurrection speaks directly to our own spiritual victories.

The most important facet of the resurrection must be the predictability of it. For God had said, the chosen one would reign. A dead messiah could not complete such a task. Yet, how could anyone be surprised that God raised his beloved Son? It had been declared centuries before in the Old Testament. For a dead king cannot be a reigning King. The marvellous fact that no other faith proclaims a living sacrificial deity is fairly impressive alone. But, coupled with the fact that numerous verses predicted such an event serves only to strengthen our faith in God and the Scriptures. I Corinthians 15:4 testifies: "and that He was raised on the third day, according to the Scriptures." Paul, a learned scholar of the Old Testament was familiar with the numerous predictions of a risen Messiah. Despite Israel's blanket refusal to accept Jesus as the promised One, God remained faithful to fulfilling and authenticating the promises of the Old Testament.

Now, we all accept that Jesus needed to die in order to perform humanity's final atoning sacrifice. But consider how important it was to raise the chosen Son of God. Just as the voice at his baptism and transfiguration proclaimed to those witnesses God's satisfaction, the resurrection proclaimed to the ages "it is finished." I Corinthians 15:14 reminds us of the importance of the resurrection. "And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is worthless..." Why would our faith be worthless? Romans 4:25 answers that question for us. "...And was raised because of our justification." (continued next page)

Easter and You

Christ's resurrection results in God's ability to consider us justified. Therefore, our preaching is not in vain - what we tell others about Jesus is eternally significant. What we as Christians believe is eternally significant."

Finally, the resurrection of Jesus authenticates our ability to be victorious in our Christian walk. Romans 8:11 exclaims, "But if the Spirit of [God] who raised Christ from the dead dwells in you, [God] who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies by [God's] Spirit who dwells in you." With the spectacular miracle of the resurrection came an awesome gift. Colossians 3:1 - 17 also appeals to our new life of faith through the resurrected Lord. In the opening verse, Paul encourages us to live in the victory of our new life. He states, "Therefore, if you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above...." His appeal is simple: become in experience what you already are by God's grace. Our victory over life circumstances, defeated thinking, and various periods of testing is assured. Our ability to overcome, as outlined in these seventeen verses, is possible because of the truth of the first verse.

So, we have an authenticated faith. We have a God who honours promises. Above all, through the resurrection, we have ultimate victory in life and in death. In rising from the dead, God proved that God "is." In rising again, Jesus confirmed God's approval and assures us that there is absolute victory through our faith in him, and that, God enables every one who believes to share in the victory of Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit until the end of the age.

Let us all attempt to keep the wonderful miracle alive all year long as we walk triumphantly in the power of the Holy Spirit. For the meaning of Easter is not in a greeting card, a bag of candied chicks, or chocolate bunnies. The significance of Easter is intended to encompass our entire walk of faith.

D.A.

TITANIC AGAIN?

Catering to the rich and famous, this luxury liner was advertised as unsinkable. On *Titanic's* fateful night, passengers who somehow still believed the advertisement refused to get in the lifeboats, even though they were told the ship was going down.

They held to their belief in the advertisement that the ship was unsinkable—and were actually offended by officers who told them to climb into a cramped lifeboat when they had paid enormous sums for luxurious accommodations.

Other passengers were unable to enter a lifeboat because of the selfish privileged who felt no concern for anyone but themselves. The first-class passengers feared that added weight in the lifeboats would jeopardize their chance for survival. As a result, many of the ship's lifeboats, which were made to hold up to 60 people, left the ship with only 15 people aboard. Although there were enough lifeboats to save hundreds more, people either refused to use them, or they were left stranded on the sinking liner.

Although there were enough lifeboats to save hundreds more, people either refused to use them, or they were left stranded on the sinking liner.

The death and resurrection of Jesus Christ provided the lifeboat we all must climb aboard. To miss that lifeboat is to perish. Many people either continue to believe that the world can offer them happiness or salvation through their own efforts, or they are left stranded because Christians have been too selfish to reach out to them. There is more than enough room at the Cross for those who are perishing.

QUOTABLE QUOTES

HE IS NOT HERE

When we wander through a graveyard and look at the tombstones, or go into the church and examine the old monuments, we see one heading to them all, "Here lies." Then follows the name with the date of death, and perhaps some praise of the good qualities of the deceased. But how different is the epitaph on the tomb of Jesus! It is not written in gold nor cut in stone, it is spoken by the mouth of an angel; and it is the exact reverse of what is put on all other tombs: "He is not here."

--Rev. S. Baring-Gould, in the Expositor

From the book Best Sermon Illustrations by J. G. Lawson

THEY ARE WRONG

Many think the Christian religion has run its course, and that the gloom of Good Friday is now settling over the long history of the church. But they are wrong. The reality of the resurrection cannot so easily be undone. In truth, it is the world of unbelievers that remains on notice of judgment.

-- Carl F. H. Henry in Carl Henry at His Best. Christianity Today, Vol. 38, no. 4.

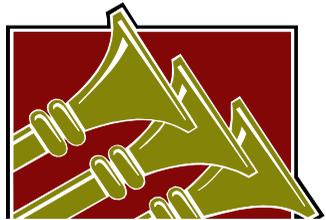
I STILL HAVE WINGS

In the midst of a storm, a little bird was clinging to the limb of a tree, seemingly calm and unafraid. As the wind tore at the limbs of the tree, the bird continued to look the storm in the face, as if to say, "Shake me off; I still have wings."

Because of Christ's resurrection, each Christian can look the experience of death in the face and confidently say, "Shake me off; I still have wings. I'll live anyway."

Wayne A. Lamb in 100 Meditations on Hope.

Christianity Today, Vol. 40 , no. 4.



**Because Jesus lives,
I can face tomorrow.**

Motto /Text for the year

“I CAN DO EVERYTHING THROUGH HIM WHO GIVES
ME STRENGTH” *PHIL. 4:13*

FINDING OUT ABOUT ...CHRIST CHURCH?

Tel/Fax: 020 8340 1566

We are a family of men and women, boys and girls who are trying to live for God in a world that has largely chosen to ignore Him.

We believe that it is God's world and that He has given the answer to all human problems in Jesus Christ.

As a body of believers, we offer to all who come regular opportunities for worship and service that point the way to God as our strongest resources in all aspects of life.

We will be pleased to welcome you to any of our activities. You will find a warm welcome at Christ Church.

Times of worship and fellowship are shown below:

- Sunday** - **8.00am.** Holy Communion (Book of Common Prayer)
- **10.30am.** Main service with Crèche facilities

There is family/parade service once every month– usually the third Sunday of the month unless otherwise indicated.

- **6.00pm.** Evening worship

WEEKLY ACTIVITIES

- Monday - Baby n' Toddler Group (**10.00 am to 12 noon**) -Term time only
- Brownies meeting in Church (**5.30 pm**)
- Prayer meeting 23rd April (**8pm**)
Wednesday - Bible Fellowship in the Hall (**7:30pm**)
Friday - Home Group at Flat 10, 3 Waverley Road, N8 (**2.30 pm**)
- Scouts meeting in church and hall (**6.00 pm**)

Enquiry/Counselling - please phone 020 8340 1566

Editorial Board: Iyabo Agbelusi, Grace Macauley, Dele Agbelusi

Vicar: The Revd Canon Dele Agbelusi

Church Wardens: Peter Green, Charles Murphy

Readers: Richard Mercer, Iyabo Agbelusi

Organist: Harold Randall

YOUR COMMENTS AND CONTRIBUTIONS ARE WELCOME

**PLEASE WRITE TO THE EDITOR, CROSSLINKS,
THE VICARAGE, 32 CRESCENT ROAD, LONDON, N8 8AX
E-MAIL: christchurchN8@aol.com**