

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

Jesus is risen indeed. This a message of hope for everyone; there is a new start for everyone who turns to Christ and death is not final, but a new beginning where earthly values disappear, pain and suffering are no more and those we have loved are set free in God's Kingdom, where in God's time we will join them. Of course, I cannot prove anything, but I firmly believe that it is so! New life.

Every morning is a new beginning for us, a chance to begin again, to put right anything that didn't quite go to plan yesterday and to plan ahead in a positive way, rather than dwelling on past hurt or failure. Some mornings this is easy, at other times it feels an uphill task, but as long as I try, each day at least begins well; I hope and pray it works for you too!

As I've written before, we are so fortunate to live in one of our three beautiful villages, in our Parish nestled here on the South Downs. I thought today I'd reflect on our Parish Mission Statement; I wonder how many of you know what this is! It was formulated before I came here but was one of the first things I saw in Findon Church, on the banners just outside the Lady Chapel, made so many years ago by Liz Hobden. We are called to be **"Walking together in the Way of Christ and sharing his love with others"**.

'Walking together' is something we can celebrate and be proud of here in Findon, Clapham and Patching. Both as a Parish community and as Village communities, I have seen how well we care for our neighbours, how warmly new residents are welcomed into our communities. This was of course evident during Lock-down, but the care was already there and continues as we watch out for those living near us, offering support when needed. Don't forget, if there is someone you're aware of who is lonely or housebound, you can always let Colin or myself know and we can arrange a visit.

So, what is 'the Way of Christ'? This, simply put, means doing our best to live according to Jesus' example. His life was one of service to others without expecting anything in return but that we would also love as he loves us. As humans, we cannot expect to live a perfect, holy and sinless life, but we can all try our best; remember what I said earlier about each morning being a new start?! This trying, day by day, is what is meant by the final phrase: 'and sharing his love with others'. That love was demonstrated graphically on the cross as Jesus died for us all, saint and sinner alike, himself without sin. His glorious resurrection is a beacon of hope. As he promised his disciples just before his ascension – ***I am with you always, to the end of the age***. God's great love for his creation revealed in his Son, Jesus, is with us always, to strengthen and guide us as we navigate the challenges of life; thanks be to God (that is what Alleluia means!).

Alleluia, Christ is risen. He is risen indeed, Alleluia.

Every blessing,

*Helena*

