



As I am writing you this letter of Easter greetings, I am listening to the Hymn, “Because He Lives”. I encourage you to take a few minutes to listen to it for yourself as it is a constant reminder, “Jesus lives!” giving us the strength, courage, and wisdom to face tomorrow.

It is an honour and privilege to be able to write you this letter today. I hope these words find you in good health and anticipating the Easter season. As I get older, this time of year tends to mean a focus on food, family, friends, faith, and fellowship. I hope that you have the joy and pleasure of each of those during your Easter season.

Food is a centerpiece of not only our daily lives but also special celebrations. Special celebrations like Easter often include extraordinary flavours...foods that are prepared for us with tender loving care. Communion is the centrepiece of our worship time together as the bread and wine is the body and blood of Christ for us and for our salvation. Like gathering around the table for Communion, we also gather round the table to celebrate, to make memories, and enjoy each other. In our dining room sits the family table that has hosted generations over the last several decades. I trust that you too have many wonderful memories of Easter meals celebrating with your loved ones young and old alike.

This year, you may be making new memories...perhaps someone will be missing from your table due to illness or death. Perhaps your children no longer live at home, and it is difficult to plan that family meal. Or even per chance, you have received the telephone call and Easter dinner will be held at another family member’s home this year and rejoicing in the presence of new little ones. May I encourage you to celebrate those special moments with family and friends, no matter where you are enjoying the Easter celebration meal this year.

It is so challenging to try and fit in the time that is appropriate to spend with family and friends. Over the years, we may have tried to fit in as many gatherings at Easter as possible.

The challenge is that that experience can leave you exhausted. Perhaps one option is to spend time with the people you enjoy the most and add only those who are absolutely critical to visit, the intention being that both you and they are blessed by the encounter.

Life's circumstances tend to influence the timing of these encounters. Perhaps its true that you are meant to spend time with those whose calendars can fit you in, or perhaps you want to prepare a list of those to whom you want to be able to say "I value you...you are important to me, and I love you. I pray for you everyday."

The Easter story is real, relevant, and revitalizing. I encourage you to give yourself the gift of worshipping during this Easter season and Holy Week. Please also take a few moments to read the resurrection story in scripture (Luke 24:1-13). Perhaps, even to take a few moments to pray for God's guidance and direction in your life's choices during this Easter season. I believe that our Lord came to this world to teach us about love, grace, mercy, forgiveness, and compassion. I also believe that He died to offer us salvation. I am convinced that God granted Him the resurrection to set the world free from sin, oppression, prejudice, and brutal behaviours that disable us from fully embracing all that life has to offer. It is my hope and prayer for you this Easter that you get an opportunity to listen to the Easter story and to come to a renewed awareness of Christ's extraordinary love for you.

Fellowship is so important at Easter time. I want to invite you to worship with us at St. George's. Each and every one of the services have a vital role in telling the Easter story but if I was to focus on only four, they would be Maundy Thursday 7 pm, Good Friday at 8:15 or 10 am, Easter Vigil on Saturday at 7:30 pm and last but certainly not least, Easter morning at 8:15 or 10 am. This is your personal invitation to participate in these worship services. I believe they will be a blessing in your life. It is a time to renew your faith, engage in fellowship, and even reacquaint yourself with some old friends. We all know the phrase that tomorrow is not yet here, yesterday is gone, and all we have is this moment in time. May you celebrate every moment with those who are around you this year.

My prayer for you this Easter is that the Holy Spirit will touch you, bringing you renewed hope and joy in your life. May God bless you and your family.

Yours in Christ,

Rev. Canon Dr. Stephen James Hendry