



Kaurihohore Historic Church

P O Box 4118, Kamo, Whangārei 0141



Kaurihohore / Kamo Co-operating Parish Easter Sunday 31st March 2024

The service this morning is led by Freddy De Alwis

Welcome to Kaurihohore Historic Church

In working together on our shared mission, we commit to seven core values:

Togetherness, Humility, Curiosity, Love, Inclusive, Justice, Sustainability.

Justice : we hope for a better world for all and work together to be part of making that happen.

Mission Statement: Sharing God's love, creating hope, working for justice.

Welcome and introduction:

Sentence: Sing praises to the Holy One, lift your eyes and see the cross.

Open your heart to God's word today; come and praise the Living God.

Call to Worship:

Open wide the way to renewed life that all may enter and give thanks to God.

Our prayers have been answered, and God has become our salvation.

Christ has risen!

Alleluia, Christ has risen indeed!

This is Love's doing; it is marvellous in our eyes.

This is the day that God has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it.

Christ has risen!

Christ has risen indeed! Alleluia!

Hymn 150 HFTC: *All creation join to say: Christ the Lord is risen today*

All creation join to say: Christ
the Lord is risen today!
raise your joys and triumphs high; sing,
you heavens; and earth reply:

Hallelujah!

Love's redeeming work is done;
fought the fight, the battle won; see,
our Sun's eclipse has passed; see,
the dawn has come at last!

Hallelujah!

Now he lives, our glorious King; now,
O death, where is your sting? Once he
died our souls to save- Where's your
victory, boasting grave? Hallelujah!

So we rise where Christ has led, Following
our exalted head:

Made like him, like him we rise; Ours
the cross, the grave, the skies:

Hallelujah!

Hail the Lord of earth and heaven!
praise to you by both be given;
every knee to you shall bow, raise
Christ, triumphant now
Hallelujah! *Charles Wesley*

Prayer of Confession and healing:

God the Lover of all people, grant us your pardon we pray.
For the sins of our lips; for words untrue and words unclean and words unkind;

Lord have mercy

For all careless work and deeds of darkness, for any action that hurt another, or
which made another to go wrong;

Christ have mercy

For the sins of our minds, for the blindness to the truth and for the refusal to face
the facts, for all dishonest thinking; **Lord have mercy**

For the sins of our hearts; for all pride, all wrong desires, and all false loves:

Forgives us O God.

Assurance of Forgiveness:

God proves his love for us in that while we still were sinners Christ died for us. --
Romans 5:8

So, I declare to you: In Jesus Christ we are forgiven. **Amen.**

Thanks be to God.

Hymn: *Christ is alive*

-Alleluia Aotearoa 15

1. Christ is alive, and the universe must
celebrate, and the stars and the suns shout on
this Easter Day!
Christ is alive, and his family must celebrate
in a great alleluia, a great alleluia
To praise the power that made the stone roll
away.

2.

Here is our hope; in the mystery of suffering
is the heartbeat of Love, Love that will not
go,
Here is our hope, that in God we are not
separate,
and we sing alleluia, we sing alleluia To
praise the power that made the stone roll
away.

3. Christ Spirit, dance through the dullness of humanity to the music of God, God who has set us free!
You are the pulse of the new creation's energy;
with a great alleluia, a great alleluia We Praise the power that made the stone roll away.

First Reading: Romans 5: 1-11

Second Reading: Luke 24: 1-12

Message: The risen, crucified God

Introduction

The usual way of talking about Christ in the Easter message is to call him “the crucified and risen One”, but in the context of our world today we need to reverse this phrase to “the risen crucified One”.

Last few years at this time the whole world was experiencing the shadow of the Cross due the corona pandemic, which has not left us yet, but we manage to live with it. Furthermore, due to the unwanted proxy wars in the world, especially in Ukraine and Palestine, in Palestine it's genocide, killing innocent cavillations, women's and children. Starvation, hunger, fear, uncertainty and insecurity prevail more than at any other time in the history of humanity. Today around the world most of the Churches were celebrating on Easter Sunday while some people around the world even in our country NZ were living under the shadow of the Cross.

It is ironic to mention that the poor were crucified with poverty and their children were dying in unwanted proxy wars and in hunger, and even today, millions are confined to refugee camps as we continue the 2000-year tradition of celebrating Easter while God is in the mission of getting the poor and vulnerable down from the Cross. Do we feel any kind of solidarity? Millions are living with fear and have boneyard lives, or are experiencing the shadow of the cross.

With that same fear, there is a large number of children among these most vulnerable populations. Today, there are nearly 40 million children who have been uprooted from their homes, including over 20 million internally displaced within their home countries, 12.7 million refugees and 1.1 million asylum seekers. All of them are living under the shadow of the Cross.

Each day, wars, disasters, climate change and extreme poverty drive people from their homes to the Cross. The war and violence have taken away what they had called “theirs.” Their husbands and fathers were killed and today they are left with “nothing.” Is this not the Cross that we are talking about? Are they not humans created in the image of God? We talk about new Life, Hope, and the Resurrection, what does it mean to those people? Those millions of people are groaning to be liberated. And, we know that the whole of creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth for liberation, right up to the present time, Romans 8:22.

In that sense ‘the Cross’ which is central to the Christian faith is not a past incident but an ever-present reality. Therefore, the image of the crucified God is here right in our midst. In today’s context the crucified God is re-incarnated amidst and within the poor, the war victims and in the midst of over a million people who are still fighting against poverty. The Liberation that Jesus brought to us through suffering and death was not a play act or a drama. On Thursday our Lord went through horrific agony till his blood vessels opened, it was a lonely battle in the darkness. Jesus threw himself face downward on the ground, and prayed, “My Father, if it is possible, take this cup of suffering from me! Yet not what I want, but what you want.” Matt. 26:39.

On Friday he was handed over from one to another, he became non-human, a thing. Then the powerful at the time, with the aid of colonial power, dragged Him to the cross where he experienced the cruellest horrific death of the time. He became a victim and even felt his Abba Father deserted him, but despite being a victim he created space for the offender, victimiser, executor, “Father forgives them.” The executor praised God, saying certainly he is a good man Lk 23:47, other people went back home beating their chest in sorrow Lk 23: 48. My point here is that the Liberation he brought to human beings cost him His sweat, blood and His life.

1. The cross was the battle field of good and evil, truth and untruth. So, Jesus was crucified. That horrific form of public execution was the normal way that the Roman Empire dealt with sedition or resistance of any kind.

- It was meant to terrorise the population.
- It was meant to demoralise and break up any anti-Roman movements.
- It was very common in Palestine under Roman occupation.

More than a thousand insurgents were crucified in and around Jerusalem about the time of Jesus’ birth. Tens of thousands were

crucified when Rome destroyed the Temple and took back the city of Jerusalem from the rebels in 70 AD.

It is no coincidence that this is around the same time the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke were being composed around stories of Jesus' passion and death. Among the first readers of the Gospels, almost everyone would have known someone who had been crucified just like Jesus – a neighbour, an uncle, a father, a husband, or a son. They knew for themselves what it meant to be “the least” or “dispensable or disposable thing” in the Empire of Rome. They knew it in their own broken hearts, their own wounded spirits, their own damaged minds and imaginations.

The incarnated God, the Ultimate truth was dragged to the cross like a disposable thing and nailed; According to the human mind, it was a victory to evil and untruth. They thought they have nailed, killed and buried the Ultimate Truth, who would never come back to life. His two disciples felt sad and disappointed. Lk 24:20-21...And we had hoped that he would be the one who was going to set Israel free! Besides all that, this is now the third day since it happened It was a victory to evil or darkness and the untruth, because with the death of Jesus Christ the whole community, were defeated and like living dead and had no life. Christ also died on the cross with these words on his lips; “my God my God why have you forsaken me?” His death not only seemed to have buried all hopes for liberation but also destroyed the disciple's faith. We see the devastation in the youth on the road to Emmaus LK 24:21, Had death been stronger than so great a Love? Can death bury the ultimate truth or the incarnated God? 2. The ultimate eternal truth cannot be buried for too long,

A few days after Jesus' death an unheard-of event, unique in the human history occurred...God raised him up from death! Acts 2: 24, The ultimate eternal Truth cannot be buried for too long, it came back to life again. This was great news for the whole community of Christ who thought they were defeated, dead, faith and hope all gone with the power of death. But with the power of resurrection the whole community came back to life, to breathe life into the dead and crucified. The

resurrection of Christ gave meaning and life to the crucified, dead, defeated humanity, it is the reality of any time and in any context. This is the real meaning of the resurrection for us and to the people, who have been crucified, by the power of the poverty, hunger, malnutrition, war, fear, uncertainty etc.

So that's what I've been reflecting for Good Friday and Easter and that's how the gospel of the risen crucified one still pits the Kingdom of God against the contemporary Empire which counts some people as disposable, - those who are old, or who have medical complications, refugees, asylum seekers and their children, the homeless, child

soldiers, people living in poverty ... This all looks different after “the explosion of the resurrection” of the crucified one. Amen.

Prayer:

God of life, do not darken your light to us
God of life, do not limit your joy in us
God of life, do not shut your door to us
God of life, do not refuse us your mercy
O God of life, eternity cannot hold you,
nor can our little words catch the
greatness of your kindness. Yet in the
space of our small hearts
and in silence you can come close to those
who are suffering to heal them.
Heal them Lord! We plead your Mercy at your cross,

Heal them Lord! Heal them!

O loving Christ, hung on a tree yet risen in the morning,
Scatter the flaws from our souls as the mist from the hills;

In you we place our hope, our great hope, our living hope, this
day and evermore. Amen.

Prayers of the People & Intercessory Prayers:

Let us pray together

**Eternal Spirit,
Earth-maker, Pain-bearer, Life-giver,
Source of all that is and that shall be,
Father and Mother of us all, Loving God, in whom is heaven:
The hallowing of your name echo through the universe!
The way of your justice be followed by the people of the world!
Your heavenly will be done by all created beings!
Your commonwealth of peace and freedom sustain our hope and come on earth.
With the bread we need for today, feed us.
In the hurts we absorb from one another, forgive us.
In times of temptation and rest, strengthen us
From trials too great to endure, spare us From
the grip of all that is evil, free us.
For your reign in the glory of the power that is love, now and for ever. Amen.**

Offertory Prayer:

Greeting of Peace:

The joy and peace of the risen Christ be with you

And with you also

Let us greet one another with Easter greetings.

Hymn 167 HFTC: [Yours be the glory](#) Tune; [MACCABAEUS](#) (*Thine be the glory*)

1. Yours be the glory, risen, conquering Son,
endless is the victory, over death you won;
angels robed in splendour rolled the stone away,
kept the folded grave-clothes,
where your body lay.

Yours be the glory! risen, conquering Son.

Endless is the victory Thou o'er death has won.

2. See! Jesus meets us, risen from the tomb;
lovingly He greets us, scatters fear and gloom;
let the Church with gladness,
hymns of triumph sing! for her Lord is living,
death hath lost its sting.

Yours be the glory! risen, conquering Son.

Endless is the victory Thou o'er death has won.

3. No more we doubt you, glorious Prince of
life; what is life without you? aid us in our strife;
make us more than conquerors,

through thy deathless Love; bring us
safe through Jordan to your home above:

Yours be the glory, risen, conquering Son.

Endless is the victory over death you won

Edmond Louis Budry

Benediction & Grace:

Beyond death is abundant life.

We will live it.

Beyond the shadows of hatred and isolation is the light that draws us into community.

We will follow it.

Beyond the stone covered tomb is a dance called resurrection.

We will move with it.

Christ is risen!

Christ is risen indeed! Alleluia!

Let us go into the Eastertide to live in the resurrected Spirit of Christ. **We go in the name of risen Christ.**

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all. Amen, Amen, Amen.