**Wednesday Morning on 21 April 2021**

**Readings:** Psalm 33, 1 Corinthians 15:12-19

*This is the second in the series we are doing post Easter from 1 Corinthians 15 the great chapter written by Paul about the resurrection.*

*Some reflections*

*Todays reading could be summarised*

*“If you say there is no resurrection than there is no faith, and no hope”*

\***No resurrection?** These words of Paul were probably written about 25 years after the resurrection, and before any of the gospels were written. There were some who denied the resurrection (v.12). In last weeks reading (v.3-7) make clear that Christ has been raised from the dead and many of the witnesses of the resurrection are still alive to testify to this. The followers of Jesus had been dramatically changed by what had happened on the first Easter Day. From being a sad, dejected group at the crucifixion they began to boldly proclaim that Jesus who had been crucified had been raised from the dead. And they were continuing with this message, now repeated by Paul some 25 years later. In v.15 Paul makes it quite clear that those who deny the resurrection are false witnesses to the evidence.

\***No faith?** Paul is emphatic that the denial of the resurrection means that our preaching is useless (v.14) so is our faith which becomes futile and we are still in our sins.

\***No hope?** If there is no resurrection then there is no hope, those who have fallen asleep (i.e. died) are lost, and we are to be pitied because our hope is limited to this life. These words of Paul are central to our understanding of life and death. Because Christ has been raised from the dead we can confidently proclaim that Jesus is alive today, our faith is not futile but one of simple but deep and profound belief in the risen Lord. As we face the future with all the uncertainties of today we can go forward with a sure and certain hope because Christ has been raised from the dead and we can enjoy the benefits of Christ’s victory in his death and resurrection.

\*The Duke of Edinburgh died on the day we commemorated Dietrich Bonhoeffer a Lutheran pastor who was shot by the Nazis on 9 April 1945. Bonhoeffer’s last recorded were “This is the end, but for me the beginning of life”

\*The great Easter hymn sums up the message well

“Thine be the glory, risen conquering Son

endless is the victory, thou oe’r death has won”

*Collect for last Sunday- 3rd Sunday of Easter*

Risen Christ

You filled your disciples with boldness and fresh hope

strengthen us to proclaim your risen life

and fill us with your peace

to the glory of God the Father

Amen

*A Prayer for this season of Easter*

God of glory

by the raising of your Son

you have broken the chains of death and hell

fill your Church with faith and hope

for a new day has dawned

and the way to life stands open

in our Saviour Jesus Christ

Amen

**Intercessions**

For the people of God, that we may proclaim the risen Lord

Our use of God’s creation that everyone may meet their responsibility to care

Those in despair and darkness, that they may find the hope and light of Christ

Those in the fear of death that they may find faith through the resurrection

For the effect that lockdown has had on families, and the vulnerable

The Government as they plan the future especially the arrangements to combat the virus

The vaccination programme and how the vaccine can be used in the poorer countries of the world

All in medical and caring professions with the extra load and problems because of the virus

All who live in the parish especially those living in London Road East and West. For all who minister and lead at Bourne End.

For those who have been affected by the virus, especially those who have been bereaved and those in hospital

For our Vicar Rebecca and all in positions of leadership and responsibility and the planning for the future life of the church

For the Queen on this her birthday especially as she mourns the death of the Duke of Edinburgh

 *John Kirkby*