

RISEN

Christ Church Cathedral, Fredericton NB Holy Week / Easter 2024

Dear Friends,

This year on Sundays we're reading predominantly from the Gospel of Mark. If you are as all Christians need to be at some level a student of the Bible, you may know that Mark is unique. Being the earliest and the shortest of the four gospel accounts, scholars believe that all of the other gospel writers were aware of and, sometimes even relied on, the text of Mark's gospel in the creation of their own – the majority of its words can be identified, sometimes verbatim, especially in the gospels of Matthew and Luke. But Mark had his own reasons for penning an account of the One who was born, suffered, died and rose again and how those events impacted those who belonged to "The Way" – the first Christians. (*See Acts 9:1-2*)

Among the most notable of the unique characteristics of the Markan text occurs near its end, including questions about when it actually ends. A couple of lines of text following Mark 16:8 is known as the "shorter" ending and Mark 16:9-19 is the "longer" version. Either of those endings make one thing very clear – the whole of the gospel culminates here. The reason Mark wrote this gospel was the shock, bewilderment, confusion, amazement and joy that set in on the third day after the crucifixion of Jesus.

Mark's reasons may have been many and scholars have deduced some of them from the cultural context and his words affirming the reality in which he and his contemporaries lived. The Gospel of Mark was written during very troubled times. His were times of political instability, religious conflict, violence, terrorism, war, persecution and bloodshed. Mark's time was full of doubt, disillusionment and insecurity. Does this sound at all familiar?

For Mark the struggle for believers was to commit to Jesus and his Good News in the face of only Bad News. The unmistakable character of the times was the struggle to believe in the face of suffering, loss and death. We don't need to look too far beyond our own backyard for a description of Mark's times to be one also of ours. There was need for reassurance and faith where there was only doubt and witness to the truth that in the end good triumphs over evil.

The Good News is the same for us as it was for Mark. Jesus met darkness head on, died so that we need not die eternally and, is the Light that continues to shine even though a cold dark tomb once held him. Our reaction to this news can only mirror that of the author of Mark and rightly so: shock, bewilderment, confusion, amazement and joy. The Easter proclamation is "Alleluia! Christ is risen. The Lord is risen indeed. Alleluia!" God has spoken and the Word is Life.

Blessings to you during this Holy Week and Eastertide. The Holy Week and Easter schedule is included here.

Yours sincerely,



Geoffrey Hall (The Very Rev'd)
Dean of Fredericton
GMH



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Holy Week and Easter 2024

Christ Church Cathedral, Fredericton NB

Monday - Thursday: 8:45 a.m. Morning Prayer and 4:45 p.m. Evening Prayer

Worship on 30 March is the first Eucharist of Easter

Passion/Palm Sunday

(24 March 2024)

8:00 a.m. Liturgy of the Palms and Holy Eucharist

10:30 a.m. Liturgy of the Palms and Holy Eucharist

Monday 5:15 p.m. Holy Eucharist

Tuesday 5:15 p.m. Holy Eucharist

Wednesday 10:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist

5:15 p.m. Holy Eucharist

Maundy Thursday 5:30 p.m. Simple Soup Supper (Memorial Hall)

7:30 p.m. Holy Eucharist and Stripping of the Sanctuary

Good Friday 10:00 a.m. Celebration of the Lord's Passion (Come Worship)

12:00 Noon Tre Ore - The Seven Last Words - Three Hours *

Easter Eve 8:00 p.m. The Great Vigil of Easter, Holy Baptism and Eucharist

(30 March 2024)

Easter Day 8:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist

(31 March 2024)

10:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist

11:45 a.m. Come Worship Eucharist

** feel free to attend all or part, come and go during the three hours as you prefer*

