

Jesus is risen. Jesus is King. Rev. Dr. Simon Lee

Dear brothers and sisters of RCAC,

The Easter of 2021 has come and gone, but the message that Jesus is risen lives on.

Every year we try to highlight the centrality of the Easter story, and this year it was made difficult again by the Covid 19 pandemic, now in its second year. Every year I struggle at these annual junctures when the same old story must be proclaimed again, as I feel duty-bound to lead our people to the cross of Calvary, lest we forget. I struggle because after preaching the same material over so many years, I feel I have nothing more to say that has not already been said. But this year was different.

For one thing, this year I asked the rest of the pastoral staff to preach on Good Friday and at each of the five services on the Easter weekend, and each pastor shared the load admirably and eloquently. Not only were the sermons fresh, clear and to the point, but they were also both devotional and evangelistic. The services were very creative, the music heart warming, and the messages uplifting. Thanks to all who made them possible and allowing me to sit back and enjoy my Easter this year by soaking in every word of the great story of Easter.

Another reason it has been different because I realized much more personally that the Easter story is made alive in the powerful stories of all the saints who lived and died believing the resurrection of Jesus was true and is live changing. One verse reverberates in my mind as I listened to each and every sermon, in all three languages: "If Christ has not been raised, our preaching is useless and so is your faith... But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep." (1 Cor. 15:14, 20)

As I sat through each service, and as I was leading the communion in the English service, I think of how each of my friends and colleagues who have recently "fallen asleep" in the Lord, were filled with hope and peace, all because Christ has risen, He has risen indeed. As I prepare for the Celebration of Life for Pastor Matthew on April 10, his words "March into God's Paradise" echo in my mind. As I was reading the parting thoughts of my UM university mate, Dr. Cynthia Chan, she talked about, in a matter-of-fact manner with peace in her heart, how the Lord used 6 years to train her to be a doctor, and now also 6 years to be a patient. They all lived by faith, in the promise of God, "... they were longing for a better country – a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared a city of them." (Heb. 11:16)

In our last quarter, following our theme for the year: "Crown Him with many crowns," we have completed the survey of the kings of Israel and Judah, both the good and the bad. The Jews in their exile and in their return from exile were constantly looking to the coming of their "messiah" king, who would save them from bondage. Now, with Easter, the ultimate triumph of Jesus on the cross and with His resurrection from the dead has been declared. Christ was variously cheered by the mass as King (hosanna) and mocked as "the King of the Jews," in the passion week. In this quarter we turn our eyes again to Jesus, and trace in more details how Jesus was truly the messiah king. We shall use as our text the book of Matthew, written mainly with Jewish readers in mind, to look at the early life of Jesus. We shall start with how the wise men came to find Jesus to worship Him, move onto how John the Baptist prepared the way for the Messiah, and then how Jesus the Messiah was tempted before He launched out into His mission, ending with the revelations of the identity of the Messiah.

As we study the life of Jesus through the lens of Jesus as the Messiah King, it is my hope and prayer that we start to appreciate how the eventual accomplishment of Christ in his death and resurrection was preceded by Jesus living a life each step of the way in obedience to God and in fulfilment of the Old Testament promises of God.

Crown Him with Many Crowns!

Your servant in Christ,

Pastor Simon

耶穌已復活！耶穌是君王！

李耀全牧師

列宣家親愛的弟兄姊妹：

2021年的復活節已來臨，卻又已瞬息過去，但基督復活的信息仍然清晰地迴響在心中。我們在每年都試圖強調基督復活事實的重要性，鑑於本年正是疫情大流行的第二年，令我們傳達信息倍感困難。我在每逢遇到這重要時節，必須再次宣揚同樣的老舊信息，也難免掙扎一翻，因為自感到有責任領導會眾回到各各他的十架下，以免我們忘記主的大愛。每年我也努力地花費不少心血作準備，但因宣講了這麼多年的相同題料後，自覺已傾盡心思，無話可說了。可是今年卻不一樣。

在一方面，由於我今年邀請其他牧者同工分別負責傳講受難節和復活節崇拜的五次信息，容讓我能全心投入敬拜及享受各堂崇拜所傳達的復活節偉大故事。各位牧者也善於表達、令人讚賞地傳講信息。他們的信息不僅新鮮、清晰、切題，並且竭誠盡心、基要地宣講。感謝所有參與事奉的肢體，各堂崇拜的信息不但振奮人心，也極具創意，音樂也使人的心靈得著提昇。

令我今年的復活節不一樣的另一個原因是：我更切身地意識到復活節故事在所有相信耶穌真確復活的人來說，不論是在活著或已死的聖徒中，他們生命改變的有力見證，基督的復活得以栩栩如生地活現出來。正當我在參與三種不同語言的崇拜時，在聆聽講道中，一節經文迴響於腦際：“如果基督沒有復活，我們所傳的就是枉然，你們的信也是枉然，...現在基督已經從死人中復活，成為睡了的人初熟的果子。”（林前 15:14, 20）

在我參加三種不同語言的崇拜，以及主領英語堂聖餐時，我想起最近在主裡“睡了”的每位朋友和同工，我的心充滿了盼望與平安，皆因基督已經確實復活了！當我為著 4 月 10 日為王允志牧師舉行的生命禮讚追思會作準備時，他所說過的話：“邁向神的樂園”在我的腦海中不住迴盪。更在我閱讀以往於緬省大學的同學陳兆儀醫生(Dr. Cynthia Chan)的離別贈言時，她以踏實的分享，流露出她內心的平靜，細訴陳述在過往，神怎樣以 6 年的時間訓練她成為一名醫生，現在又用 6 年的時間訓練她成為一名病人的體會。他們都如聖經所形容，憑著信，抓緊神的應許：“...他們所嚮往的，是一個更美的、在天上的家鄉。所以，神不以他們稱他為神而覺得羞恥；因為祂已經為他們預備了一座城。”（來 11:16）

我們在上一季之內，按照本年度的主題：“擁戴我主為王”，完成了對以色列國王和猶大國王，包括好王與壞王的研讀的講道系列。猶太人從被擄到回歸，他們一直在等待“彌賽亞”君王的來臨，拯救他們脫離捆綁。在預苦期內，基督被群眾歡呼為王(和散那)，並被嘲笑為“猶太人之王”。現在，隨著復活節的到來，我們看到主耶穌在十架上的最終勝利與從死裡復活的宣告。在本季中，我們再次將目光轉向耶穌，並詳細探討耶穌如何真正成為彌賽亞君王。我們將透過馬太福音，主要針對猶太讀者而寫的書卷，來研讀耶穌的早期生活。我們先從東方博士如何尋找敬拜耶穌為君王開始，到施洗約翰如何為彌賽亞君王鋪路，接著是基督耶穌在實踐神使命之先如何面對試探，開始傳揚天國的福音至祂顯示祂彌賽亞的身份為止作一段落。

在我們透過耶穌作為彌賽亞君王的鏡頭以研究基督的生平時，我所盼望和禱告的，就是讓我們能開始去領會及欣賞耶穌如何藉著祂生命的每一步順服神，以應驗神在舊約中的應許，至終藉著祂的受死和復活去完成神的使命。

讓我們同來擁戴我主為王！

主僕，
李耀全牧師