

WE BELIEVE

BE IN CHRIST
Holy Week Guide



MARCH 24-31 2024





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Each year the Be In Christ Church provides a devotional experience at Easter and at Advent to help you find meaning in these significant seasons. At Christmas we provide both a digital and printed guide, at Easter only a digital version. You can find these resources at www.beinchrist.ca.

For Holy Week 2024 we are focusing on the essentials of our faith by looking at the Apostles' Creed.

When someone asks you what you believe they are looking for more than a scripted answer. They are looking for a description of what you really are convinced of. One of the most important descriptions of the Christian faith that was often used for teaching "the basics" is the Apostles' Creed.

The Apostles' Creed was produced by the early church and was believed to contain a summary of the teaching of the apostles themselves. It sets forth their doctrine "in sublime simplicity and unsurpassable brevity."

This "holy week" we will be taking a look each day at a section of the creed and reflecting on its meaning for our lives. We invite you to journey along. It would be best to read the entire creed over each day and perhaps you might want to even memorize it. Each day we have provided a section of the Creed to focus on, a scripture, a short devotional thought, and a prayer.

May you find this journey through Easter once again to be a time of great meaning as you focus in again on all the riches we have in Christ Jesus!

Charles Mashinter

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
Be In Christ Church of Canada

The Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ,
his only Son,
our Lord,
who was conceived
by the Holy Spirit
and born of the virgin Mary.
He suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died,
and was buried;
he descended to hell.
The third day he rose again
from the dead.
He ascended to heaven
and is seated at the right hand
of God the Father almighty.
From there he will come to
judge the living
and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy Christian church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.



Our Father and Maker

BY RYAN MCNAMARA

Read John 1:1-14

"I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth."

Reflect Today's section of the Apostles' Creed is a strong, clear and enduring foundation for the Christian Church. We believe in the Father, who is a creator, and is almighty. In a very touching and creative revelation he wants us to know him by getting to know His Son, Jesus. In Him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. Jesus reveals the Father to us.

If God calls himself our Father and Maker then he has demonstrated an incomprehensible commitment to us and we should aspire to make a similar commitment in return. What heartache it is to read "He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him" but what incredible grace to read that "all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God".

Many still today want to receive him and believe in his name so let us carry this light into the darkness and remember the light will not be overcome.

Pray Heavenly Father, you are the creator of all things. In you we find life and that life is the light to all humanity. You are gracious and compassionate; you welcomed us in after being rejected by your own. Your commitment assures us that we do not walk alone. Shine your light in all the places it has not reached and make us worthy to carry such a light. Amen.



Monday | March 25

Jesus At The Centre Of It All

BY LAURA JORY

Read Luke 1:26-38

"I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary."

Reflect There is a beautiful dichotomy in the way that Jesus came, and in the ways that he continues to be present in the midst of our everyday lives. What a profoundly moving idea it is to state in one sentence that Jesus is the Son of God, and yet also that he would enter into the world in the humble miracle of birth.

This picture of who Jesus is, and how he is with us, makes space for an intersection between the regular and the sacred, and that intersection changes everything. Because of Jesus there is no longer any separation between the sometimes mundane or even overwhelming pieces of our everyday lives, and the rich, abundant presence of the Son of the Most High. He is with us in the very middle of the places that are hard and heavy, as well as in the moments of joy and delight. He is present with us, the Saviour of the World.

Mary gives a beautiful example of one who says yes to the presence and purposes of God. Even when she was afraid, when she still had questions, she chose to partner with the work of the Spirit, and live in the beautiful in-between of the sacred and the ordinary: the place where we meet Jesus.

Pray Lord, we want to say yes again to your presence in the middle of our everyday lives. Come and show us the way again we pray. Amen.



What Happened On Good Friday?

BY AUSTIN GAGNE

Read Isaiah 53:1-6

"He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to hell."

Reflect On the surface, there is nothing good about Good Friday. Jesus is suffering. There's nothing good about that. But there's more here than what's on the surface. From today's passage, I'm taken by the words "and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all." They help us understand what happened on Good Friday.

Let's do something tactile. Grab any book. Lay your right hand flat. That represents you. Set the book on that hand. It represents sin. If God is skyward, that book is a barrier between you and God. That's what sin has done. It has separated us from God. Now take your left hand. It represents Jesus. Place it on top of the book. Rotate your hands so your right hand is now on top. While you do this echo Isaiah's words, "he took up our pain and bore our suffering... the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all." Now separate your hands, with the book now in your left hand. Look at your right hand. Do you see where this leaves you? The barrier between you and God has been removed. That's what happened on Good Friday. And that is good news!

Pray God, thank you for what was accomplished on Good Friday. Thank you for suffering and removing the barrier that sin had created. May I walk in the freedom that the cross brings. Amen.



Why Is The Resurrection Such A Big Deal?

BY TODD LESTER

Read I Corinthians 15:1-8

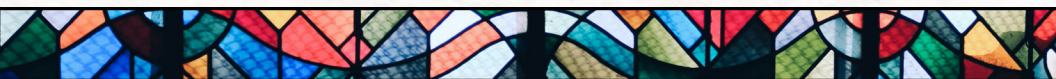
"The third day he rose again from the dead."

Reflect The Apostles' Creed identifies the pillars upon which Christianity stands, especially when it says, "The third day he rose from the dead." The importance of this idea for the Christian faith cannot be overstated.

Upon his death, Jesus could appear as yet another martyr. But the difference between a martyr and a Savior is a single idea, the resurrection. The resurrection is a game changer. Yes, this is the one time that cliché is appropriate. Whatever transaction happened on the cross is impossible for us to fully know, but the resurrection that followed three days later transforms the rest of history. It is a hinge moment because everything that happened before this moment would be another entry in the records of martyrdom if not for the resurrection. Instead, the resurrection means that never again will there be any doubt that Jesus was whom he claimed to be. Never again will we wonder if death has been defeated. Never again will we fear death's sting because Jesus has triumphed and ascended to the Father.

Christianity is the empty tomb religion. It's true, but more importantly, as Paul says in Ephesians 1:19-20, the same power that raised Jesus from the dead is available to you.

Pray Father in heaven, let us live into the power of the resurrection so that we can love as Jesus loved. Amen.



Thursday | March 28

The Helper

BY JONATHAN MANAFO

Read John 14:15-27

"I believe in the Holy Spirit."

Reflect There is a lyric on Lauren Daigle's new album. It rings true for me: "To know me, you would have to know my friend" ('To Know Me'). Lauren is simply telling us, through song, that if we really want to know her well, we have to know her friend. I relate to this and I think it helps us understand the Holy Spirit.

The only way we can fully know and appreciate Jesus is if we become well acquainted with his Spirit, or in the words of the Creed, "believe in the Holy Spirit".

John 14 describes who the Spirit is and what the Spirit does. The Holy Spirit... is an advocate, a helper, the presence of authentic truth, lives with you and is in you, enables you to see and know Jesus, follow Jesus, and then be Jesus to others. If we cooperate, the Spirit will work in us and through us.

How are your relationship and reliance on God's spirit? When you read this line in the Creed, how personal is it to you?

Pray Holy Spirit... my advocate, helper, friend... the one who draws me close to Jesus, help me to see you for who you are, and what you want to do in me and through me. Forgive me if I ever thought I could do this Jesus life without you. Today, I invite you to be close to me, to be truth to me, to be teacher to me, and to be peace to me. May all of your fruit be evident in my life. Amen.



Why Not Just Go It Alone?

BY MELANIE WIGG

Read 1 Corinthians 12:12-26

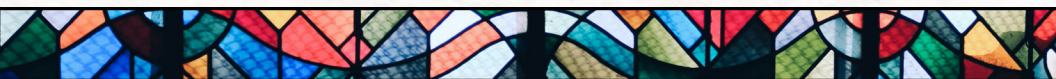
"I believe in the holy Christian church,
the communion of saints"

Reflect Many parts of the Bible are hard to understand. We study and ask ourselves how these stories and instructions from the ancient world speak to our lives in the 21st century. However, 1 Corinthians 12 feels like Paul is writing directly into our modern world. Perhaps this is because he is addressing a fundamental part of the human condition. We struggle with both an unhealthy independence ("I don't need you") and an insecure identity ("You don't need me").

Paul reminds us that these paradigms are untrue. We are all needed and we all need each other. That is how God made us. We were created for connection and interdependence. God's rescue plan for the world involves a restored relationship with Him. It also involves healed relationships with each other. It is profoundly important that Jesus said that people would know we are his disciples, not by how much we love Him, but by how much we love each other. (John 13:35)

Jesus said that the greatest commandments are to love God with everything and to love everyone. When we do, we are living into God's restoration plan for the whole world. A plan to restore shalom among all people, the state he'd always intended.

Pray Jesus, thank you for your incredible sacrifice on Good Friday. Empower us to live out your kingdom values of love, peace, and reconciliation. Amen.



Saturday | March 30

Forgiveness

BY HOLLY DEBOER

Read Psalm 103:8-17

"I believe in the forgiveness of sins."

Reflect I'll never forget that day in my early twenties when I prayed to ask Jesus into my heart. It was simple; believing He sent His Son Jesus to die for me and then would welcome me into the family of God forever. I was delighted to have friendship with Jesus and gladly shared my newfound faith. But I must admit that it wasn't until I started to read the Bible for myself that I began to understand what Jesus had done for me in response to what I genuinely needed.

It was on the pages of Scripture where I was confronted with my own depravity and how I had sinned against a holy God and was in desperate need of forgiveness. My eyes were opened to my lack of goodness within myself apart from Christ. God sees us for who we truly are in our weakness, remembering that we are only dust and yet He is merciful and gracious, compassionate and slow to get angry and filled with unfailing love. Here is where I came to understand the forgiveness of sin and my need for it, and it humbled me. "I (do) believe in the forgiveness of sins..." because of the greatness of God and the willing sacrifice of His one and only Son.

Pray Father God, thank you for removing our sins as far as the east is from the west and choosing to remember them no more. May we continue to expose our hearts to the transforming power of the written and Living Word. Amen.



Easter Sunday | March 31

Everlasting Life

BY KEN HOLLEY

Read John 3:1-17

"I believe in the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting."

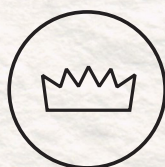
Reflect This passage of scripture tells us some very basic but key things about the Kingdom of God. First, the kingdom of God is a spiritual kingdom. It can only be understood once you have been born of the Spirit of God. Second, the key to gaining entrance into this kingdom is a changed heart. However you came to the Lord, whether gradually or through some profound experience, the main thing that matters is your attitude towards Jesus and who you believe Him to be. And third, everyone starts out at the same point - lost and in need of a saviour. This third point goes directly against a culture that largely believes that people are basically good and just in need of some minor moral direction.

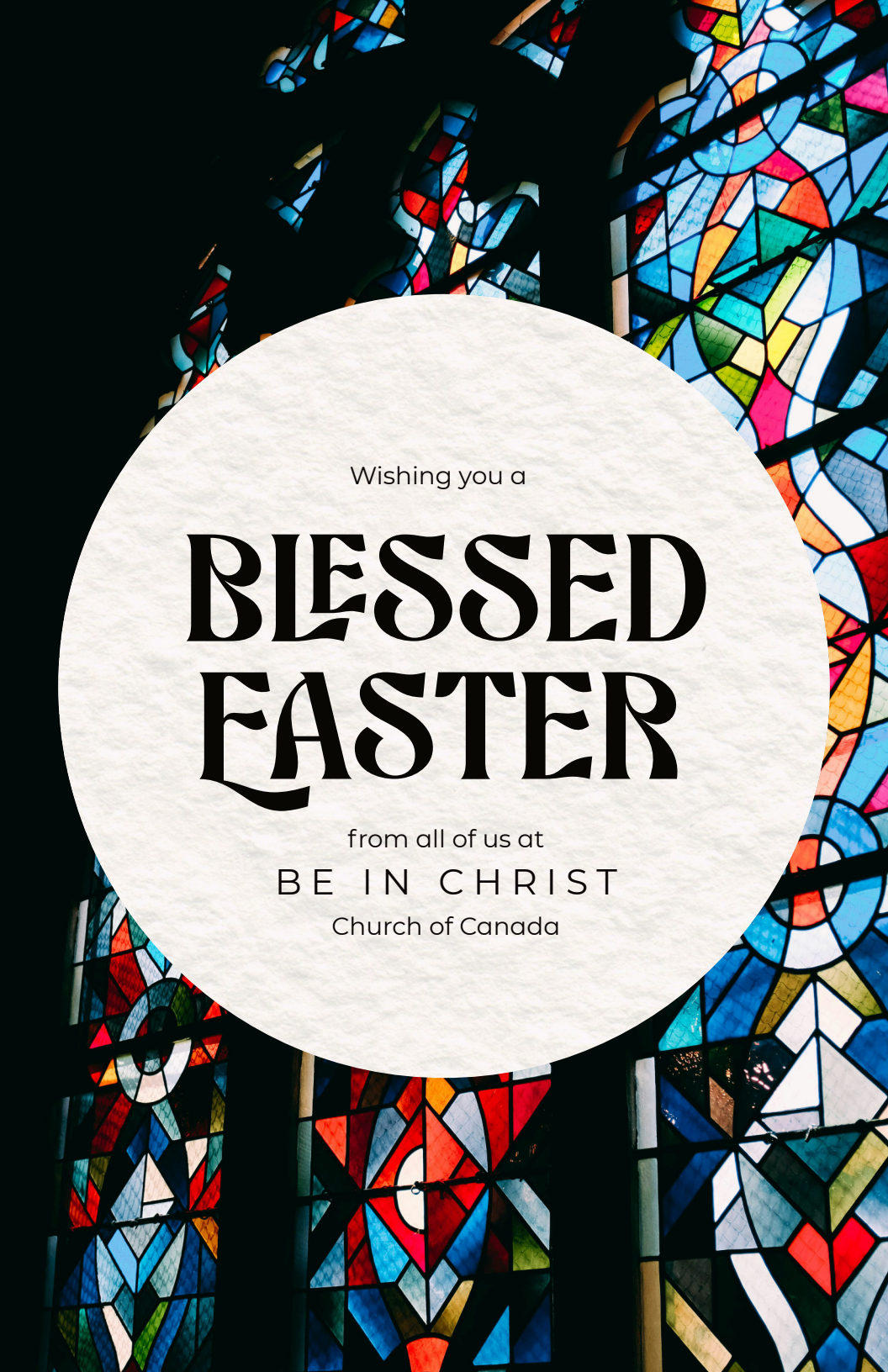
Nicodemus was a fine religious person - maybe even a bit of a celebrity in his day, but that wasn't going to get him into the Kingdom. After his conversation with Jesus that night, I believe we see a new understanding in Nicodemus of the Kingdom of God beyond the grave and a changed heart as he appears again to help care for Jesus' body after the crucifixion.

Pray Jesus, we believe you have conquered death! Thank you for opening our eyes and hearts to the Kingdom of God beyond the grave. Thank you for life everlasting! Amen.



HE IS
RISEN!



The background of the image is a vibrant, colorful stained glass window. It features various geometric shapes and patterns in shades of blue, red, yellow, and green. A large, white, circular overlay is centered on the image, containing the text.

Wishing you a

BLESSED EASTER

from all of us at
BE IN CHRIST
Church of Canada

About the Creators

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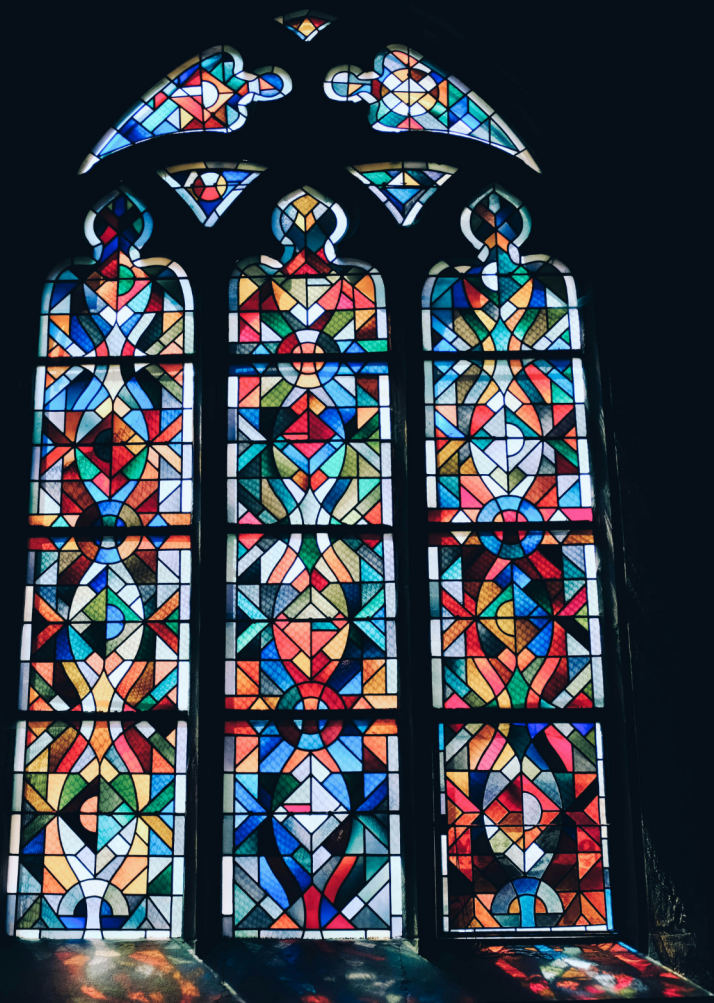
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