



Clifton Pastoral Charge
Old Barns and Hilden United Churches
Easter 2026

Dear Friends in Christ,

After the long road of Lent, witnessing to the trial, crucifixion and burial of Jesus, we live now in the moment of resurrection. **Hallelujah, Christ is Risen! Christ is Risen, indeed!**

I have to say that my favourite account of the resurrection narrative is found in the Gospel of Luke. Luke 24 tells us about the women and men who followed Jesus, how the women shared an account of the fact that they could not find Jesus' body when they had gone to the tomb, the men didn't believe them, and then they all remembered that Jesus had said that He would rise again on the third day.

Imagine the scene at the tomb. Everyone is shaken. This person and this Messiah whom they had loved, their Rabbi, teacher, had gone from them, and in such a horrific way. The authorities, both religious and civil, watched the whole event unfold and there were many bystanders who felt powerless and without hope to do anything but watch and witness. They were grief-stricken, confused, and still there was joy and hope amidst all of that absolute amazement.

We know now that the story unfolded to watch, witness, and wait...

One of the lines that stands out for me in this part of the story is this one,
"Why do you look for the living among the dead?"

This line stays with me because it rings true for me; in my life, in the church, and in the world. Often, we do look for the living among the dead. We become so attached to the past that it is difficult to live in this moment of what God is calling us to do. The invitation of the resurrected life is to live without attachments, to be present to this moment, and to trust where the road is leading.

Just like the first followers of Jesus, we, too, will experience grief, surprise, amazement, and hope as we journey. In these times, it is so important to remain hopeful and aware, attentive and accountable to one another, so that we do not feel powerless. Instead, we can look for the voice and presence of the Spirit, leading us and calling us to colour outside the lines a little in our ministries and see where it takes us. We can feel the grief we need to express and hold the joy in our hearts, all at once.

The Resurrection of Jesus invites us to new possibilities. As a church, we plan to have some sessions of Creative Conversation in the season of Easter. I truly believe that, in order for the church to thrive and not only survive, we need to become experimental in our faith communities, be willing to try things out, and to expand our sense of what's possible. Please come and be part of these conversations, as you have been an important part of the life of the church over the years. Thank you for the gifts and possibility you bring to the community of Clifton Pastoral Charge.

May the story of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection astound and amaze us all as we witness how God is doing something new when we least expect it. Let us journey together on the road of faith, encountering God's presence as we seek to do good in the world. May God bless you all!

Amen. Hallelujah!!

The Reverend Dr. Darlene Brewer

