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Weekly Letter – 5th April 2026

Matthew 28:1-15

'this story is still told'

We look forward to Easter as a celebration of new life and the resurrection of Jesus as the basis for hope. The combination with the new life of Spring around us, lifts our spirits.

The resurrection rests on finding the empty tomb and meeting the risen Jesus and Matthew tells us how the women do both on that Easter Sunday morning. He adds a stone rolling angel and an earthquake to underline the world-shattering nature of what has happened. The earthquake and rising from the grave also link back to his account of the crucifixion (Matt 27:51-52).

The guard is also distinctive to Matthew's Gospel. The chief priests and pharisees request it from Pilate on the Saturday, on the basis that Jesus said he would rise on the third day, and his disciples might try to fake it. Pilate says, you have soldiers, make it as secure as you can. On resurrection morning the guards are stunned by the angel and earthquake. The chief priests bribe them to say that the disciples stole the body while they were sleeping (not much of a guard then!). 'And this story is still told among the Judeans to this day.' (v15) which was the time when Matthew's gospel was written.

However, that cannot silence the story that is still told of Jesus risen to new life, regathering his disciples and entrusting them and us with his continuing work. This story is still told, because people are still meeting the risen Jesus, in the words of the Bible, in the needs of people around us, through God's Spirit in us. In a world of propaganda and fake news, that's something to celebrate: Happy Easter!

Simon

**Sunday Morning Worship in Christ Well, and on Zoom at 10.30 am will be led by Rev Simon Walkling
We will celebrate Communion. Bible Readings: Matthew 28:1-1: Matthew 28:11-15**

Cycle of Prayer in the Region – we will pray for Tabernacle, Mumbles

THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST

Hidden with Christ in God

(Lectionary Readings: Acts 10.34-43: Psalm 31.1-6: Psalm 118.1-2, 14-14: John 20.1-18: or Matthew 28.1-10)

Hallelujah!

We share the song the angels sing, the praise that overwhelms the world,
the joy that cannot be undone,
the hope that never will be gone.

Hallelujah!

We join the few who first were shown the empty tomb,
who touched the wounds that always mark your hands,
who heard you speak the peace of God,
who joined you in a world transformed.

Hallelujah!

We hear again the witness of your Word,
that death no longer marks an end,
that sin no longer overwhelms,
that love and mercy overflow.

Hallelujah!

We enter into all that this day brings,
we join your church rejoicing and amazed.
We come with all there is within our lives,
and find you, waiting, watching, welcoming.
Saviour, Holy One,
Let this day and every day be touched with your rising.

Amen.

Neil Thorogood (URC Prayer Handbook 2026)

