



I am the Resurrection and the Life

March 20, 2013

Dear friends at Kensington Church,

We enter into this holiest time of year with a sense of joy, anticipation, and awe. It is a tremendous privilege, as a community of God's people, to remember and share in Jesus' life – recalling both the reality of his suffering/death and the reality of his healing/life. How these disparate realities can be held together in one life and in one moment is a great mystery. Yet this is the mystery of Easter

In the northern hemisphere the reality of Easter corresponds with the arrival of spring, and the church has long observed the link between the renewal of spring and the new life of Jesus Christ. At some level there is something appropriate about this relation of hope – thus the image of flowers that appears at the top of this page.

At the same time however, we should hesitate a little in our embrace of the imagery of spring in the Easter season. The reason for this hesitation is the awareness that there is something entirely “natural” – something necessary and inevitable – about the arrival of spring. Spring follows winter as surely as morning follows night.

When it comes to the resurrection of Jesus, however, there is nothing necessary or inevitable about it. There is nothing “natural” about it. The resurrection of Jesus, after his being whipped and facing a painful death, was not expected by anyone who knew him or followed him. Resurrection, then as now, wasn't something normal or possible. And yet this is the astonishing witness of the New Testament – that the impossible, the unnatural has happened.

History has been interrupted. Life has been forever changed. Something new – in the most decisive sense possible – has happened. We rejoice and are glad as we celebrate the one who said of himself: “I am the resurrection and the life.”

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This coming Palm Sunday we will celebrate Jesus' joyful entry into Jerusalem, and will also share together in the Lord's Supper. We look forward with expectation to our encounter with Christ in bread and wine, at the table at which he presides as a gracious host. As is becoming our tradition, you are invited to bring a non-perishable food item, or a personal care product, to be contributed to the NDG Food Depot. As we receive from Christ, we extend his compassion to those around us.

We will also hold our annual Good Friday service, on March 29th at 10:30 a.m. All are of course welcome as we remember the darkness of that day, as we dwell for a moment with Christ in the valley of the shadow of death.

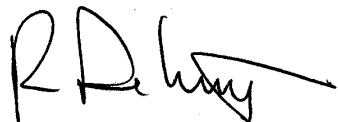
On Easter morning, our worship will be held at the usual time of 10:30 a.m.

Let me mention a couple of other upcoming events. This coming Sunday (5:00 – 7:00 p.m.) we will hold another installment of **Thrive** – focusing on the events of Holy Week as we consider our life with Christ. And on Friday, April 26th (from 5:00 – 7:00 p.m.) we will hold a new and experimental worship/community time called **Messy Church**. We'll share more information with the congregation about this intergenerational church event in coming weeks.

Enclosed with this letter you will find an envelope for your Easter offering – all contributions go to support the ministry, music, and mission of our congregation.

I trust that you will know the blessing and presence of Christ and of the Holy Spirit in these days of Easter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "R. D. Long". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.