

Monday, April 1, 2024 // The Rev. Ben Robertson

### An Easter Message



The village of Acomb sits in northern England, near the city of York. A few years ago, a local church wanted to make a big splash for Easter, perhaps welcome a few visitors for Sunday worship. So, they made a banner, not unlike the banners we fly on River Road. The banner was big and white with large red letters and it was meant to read “Christ is Risen!” But the banner printed by the local sign shop did not read “Christ is Risen.” It read, “Chris is Risen.” Perhaps the Rector’s name is Chris and he has a habit of sleeping through his alarm clock. A local newspaper article about the humorous oops featured the headline, “More T vicar?”

This story is silly and funny, and we can laugh at the buffoonery of it all. I have a cousin named Chris and the fact that he gets out of bed in the morning is fairly miraculous. And perhaps we could say the same about some of Chrises (and Bens and Donnas and whoever) who worshiped with us during Holy Week. However, if we really think about it theologically, “Chris is Risen” is almost as profound a statement as “Christ is Risen.”

For, because of Jesus, God is with us everywhere. God is with us at All Saints. God is with us in school or at work or at the coffee shop. God is with us in the hospital room or at the park bench or in the prison cell. God is with us in the waters of baptism and in the bread and wine of the Eucharist. God is with us in Jesus.

And on Easter, that same God who is with us also reminds us that everything we worry about, everything we are anxious about, everything that the mere thought of makes us weep and gnash our teeth, everything that stinks of death, all of it will be OK. As St. Julian of

Norwich once said, "All shall be well ... and all manner of things shall be well." Or as we read yesterday from the prophet Isaiah, the Lord, "will destroy ... the shroud that is cast over all peoples, the sheet that is spread over all nations; he will swallow up death forever. Then the Lord God will wipe away the tears from all faces."

So, because of the Easter miracle of God's redemptive resurrection, Chris is risen. And Blair is risen. And Cary is risen. And Lucy is risen. And Helen is risen. And Warren is risen. And Henry is risen. And you – yes, even you – are risen.

We are risen and will rise again. Because Christ is Risen. AMEN.