

Easter – 2 Corinthians 5:17-21

Something extra ordinary, unprecedented and unimagined happened that day
Jesus was dead—very dead and there was no disagreement on that fact!
Now Jesus is alive—very alive! Bodily alive!

God—the creator of the whole world—had begun a new creation
A recreation
Jesus conquered death and in that everything was new

This new creation was now—
The resurrection is not about going to heaven after death
The resurrection is about God remaking the whole world starting with Jesus
The kingdom of God has become present, joining heaven and earth
The kingdom of God is now

The new creation took everyone by surprise and came in the middle of misery and sorrow
Jesus' followers see and understand Jesus' recreation through tears and sorrow
Mary Magdalene—Peter and John—the Disciples—

It wasn't a "it will be ok in the by and by on the other side"
But Jesus came into the middle of situations—no matter how bad
And transforms them with new life

Easter is not good news that took place a long, long time ago
Easter is not good news in the by and by
Easter is good news now—"in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself" 2 Corinthian 5:19

It is our message to tell the world—to announce repentance and forgiveness of sin
This message is rooted in the resurrection
New starts are possible for nations, communities, people
Recognize the truth of your situation
Repent! (it isn't about shame) Begin again! Turn and go in a new direction!
In doing that God says, "I'll release you from the past that enslaves you"
Both as individuals and as whole communities

Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you." When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained." (John 20:21-23 NRSV)

Jesus gave us the task of announcing forgiveness
Paul said we are given the ministry of reconciliation

Repentance and forgiveness flow out of the resurrection
because it is all about God saying there is a new creation
Follow Jesus into new life!
The good news is now!
The Kingdom of God is here on earth in all of its fullness!
All creation is new!