



April-May 2025

## Living the Resurrection:

### "Easter as a Season, Not a Day"

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When the lilies have faded and the alleluias have echoed through the sanctuary on Easter Sunday, it might be tempting to think the celebration is over. But in the Episcopal Church—and in the rhythm of the Christian year—Easter is not a single day. It is a **50-day season** of joy, renewal, and deep spiritual meaning.

The Easter season, often called "**The Great Fifty Days**," stretches from Easter Sunday to Pentecost. It invites us to dwell in the reality of the resurrection—not just as a past event, but as a living truth that shapes our daily lives.

So how do we live the resurrection?

We begin by looking for signs of **new life**. This could mean rekindled relationships, healing, second chances, or hope in unexpected places. Each moment of forgiveness, each act of kindness, is a reflection of resurrection power.

We might also embrace spiritual practices that reflect Easter joy:

- Saying daily prayers of thanksgiving.
  - Reading Acts of the Apostles to follow the early Church's journey.
- Participating in community outreach as a sign of resurrection life extended to others.

The resurrection tells us that death does not have the final word—God's love does. And that is worth celebrating every day.

"Let us keep the feast!" — from the Easter liturgy



## Heritage of a Hymn

### "Were You There (When They Crucified My Lord)"

As we entered a reflective season in the Christian calendar one of the most poignant and enduring hymns of Holy Week: "*Were You There (When They Crucified My Lord)*." may have come to our thoughts. But where did it come from—and why does it resonate so deeply?



Click on the picture above to hear a recording of the song.

## Roots in Suffering and Hope

"*Were You There*" originated in the 19th century, sung by enslaved African Americans in the southern United States. Though first published in 1899 in *Old Plantation Hymns*, the song was part of a rich oral tradition long before it was written down. Like many African American spirituals, it weaves together Biblical imagery and lived experience, using the crucifixion of Christ as a mirror for the pain endured under slavery.

The lyrics unfold as a series of haunting rhetorical questions:

*Were you there when they crucified my Lord?*

*Sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble...*

## Musical Legacy and Liturgical Power

The hymn's slow, meditative melody and repetitive structure are hallmarks of traditional spirituals, meant to evoke deep reflection. Often sung a cappella or with minimal accompaniment, it draws listeners into an intimate space of mourning, empathy, and awe.

In 1940, it became one of the first African American spirituals to be included in a major denominational hymnal (The Episcopal Church), affirming its universal power and beauty.

## A Defining Performance: Marian Anderson (1941)

One of the most revered renditions of the hymn comes from the legendary contralto Marian Anderson in a 1941 recording arranged by John C. Payne. Her performance is marked by an almost reverent stillness—slow, deliberate, and full of emotional nuance.

## Manuscripts and Milestones

The earliest printed appearance of the song was in 1892, in *The Story of the Jubilee Singers*. Later, it was included in *New Jubilee Songs* (1902) and *Folk Songs of the American Negro* (1907), ensuring its survival and spread.

Today, it remains a staple of Good Friday services and a profound reminder of both Christ's suffering and the enduring spirit of those who, in their own suffering, found solace in the hope of resurrection.

## Do you have a favorite hymn?

What would you like it sung during one of our services?  
Requests welcome!

Music has been added before and after the service.  
Come and enjoy and make a request if you like.

Please email the name of the hymn/song or just the hymn number to Jim High ([carlyhi@aol.com](mailto:carlyhi@aol.com)) or just drop your request off at the office.  
If it's not well known or not in our hymnal, a link would help.

**Thanks!!**



## Are you a “Bridge Builder”?

The poem “*The Bridge Builder*” shows us the one thing you can do today to make the world a better place.

The poem was written by Will Allen Dromgoole. This poem challenges us to realize we can make a mighty difference regardless of our age. It prompts us to look for opportunities to empower others to achieve greatness in their lives. And it reminds us that, despite mighty needs in the world today, the time has never been better to knock down walls that separate in order to build up bridges that unite. This poem gives a pause to appreciate the individuals who elevate life and reminds us of our own opportunities to do likewise for others.

### **The Bridge Builder**

*By: Will Allen Dromgoole*

An old man going a lone highway,  
Came, at the evening cold and gray,  
To a chasm vast and deep and wide.  
Through which was flowing a sullen tide  
The old man crossed in the twilight dim,  
The sullen stream had no fear for him;  
But he turned when safe on the other side  
And built a bridge to span the tide.  
“Old man,” said a fellow pilgrim near,  
“You are wasting your strength with building here;  
Your journey will end with the ending day,  
You never again will pass this way;  
You’ve crossed the chasm, deep and wide,  
Why build this bridge at evening tide?”  
The builder lifted his old gray head;  
“Good friend, in the path I have come,” he said,  
“There followed after me today,  
A youth whose feet must pass this way.  
This chasm that has been as naught to me  
To that fair-haired youth may a pitfall be;  
He, too, must cross in the twilight dim;  
Good friend, I am building this bridge for him!”

My friends, we’ve all been fortunate to have others build bridges for us. They believed in us before we believed in ourselves, guided us when we lost our way, or propelled us forward when we were stuck.







## The Church Mouse

**The rummage sale**—where old lamps, questionable fashion choices, and VHS tapes nobody can play anymore go to find new life—has humble and slightly soggy beginnings. The term *rummage* originally comes from the nautical world. In the 16th and 17th centuries, sailors would “rummage” through ship cargo to arrange it properly (and perhaps sneak off with a few exotic trinkets for Aunt Mabel). When items were damaged or surplus, they’d be sold off dockside in what was essentially the first version of a garage sale... if your garage floats and smells like fish.



Fast forward to the 19th century: churches, charities, and community groups in the United States started organizing rummage sales to raise funds. Instead of cargo, they now “rummaged” through generous donations—aka that weird lamp from your great-aunt or 37 mugs that say “World’s Best Boss.”

These sales grew in popularity through the 20th century, especially in the post-war boom, when Americans realized their attics were full of both clutter *and* fundraising gold. It was the perfect combination of community spirit, recycling, and the thrilling hope that someone might actually want your ceramic duck collection.

So today, the rummage sale stands as a noble tradition—a chance to declutter your home, support a good cause, and maybe (just maybe) score an antique lawn mower touched by George Washington for three bucks. A win for everyone.



## Honoring the Heart of the Family: The History and Meaning of Mother's Day



Every May, families around the world set aside a special day to honor the women who raised, nurtured, and inspired them. While Mother's Day may seem like a modern invention of cards and flowers, its roots run deep into history—woven through ancient traditions, social reform movements, and heartfelt personal advocacy.

### **Ancient Beginnings**

Long before brunch reservations and gift bouquets, ancient civilizations celebrated motherhood through their deities. The Greeks honored Rhea, the mother of gods, while Romans paid tribute to

Cybele, their version of the Earth Mother, with festivals marked by music and feasting.

In early Christianity, Mothering Sunday took root in Europe. Falling on the fourth Sunday of Lent, this day was originally meant for worshippers to return to their “mother church.” Over time, it also became an occasion to honor actual mothers, often with small tokens of appreciation.

### **The Modern Movement in the United States**

The American version of Mother's Day owes much to the tireless efforts of two women—Ann Reeves Jarvis and her daughter, Anna Jarvis.

In the mid-19th century, Ann organized Mother's Day Work Clubs to address health and sanitation concerns in Appalachian communities. After the Civil War, she promoted Mothers' Friendship Days to encourage unity between families divided by conflict.

Enter Anna Jarvis. When her mother died in 1905, Anna campaigned to create a national holiday to honor mothers' sacrifices. In 1908, the first official Mother's Day celebration took place in Grafton, West Virginia. Thanks to her persistence, President Woodrow Wilson signed a proclamation in 1914 making Mother's Day a national holiday, observed on the second Sunday in May.

### **A Day of Gratitude – and Complexity**

Mother's Day is widely celebrated with flowers (especially carnations, which Anna Jarvis associated with purity and love), handwritten notes, and family gatherings. But it hasn't been without controversy.

Ironically, Anna Jarvis became disillusioned with the holiday she created. She decried its growing commercialization, believing it had strayed far from her original vision of heartfelt appreciation and reflection. She spent the latter part of her life trying—unsuccessfully—to reverse its official status.

### **In Reflection**

Mother's Day reminds us to pause and appreciate those who have shaped us with their care, wisdom, and love. Whether with a simple phone call, a handwritten card, or shared time together, the gesture matters. Because behind the flowers and festivities lies a universal truth: mothers matter—profoundly, and always.



And it didn't rain on our parade —

## Nor the ice Cream either



Memorial Day, we hosted our annual Ice Cream Social in front of St. Stephen's along the parade route — and let's just say, it was a *spirited* success, but without any alcohol!



Things started sweetly enough. Kids ran wild with cups of ice cream along with their favorite toppings. Many brave parishioners dished out scoops of "Heavenly Vanilla" and Deacon Lynne brought joy to some parents with a game for their kids to run off some of their sugar high.

Rumors of 2 dollar "make your own Sundaes" and maybe even some soft-serve sacraments(?) spread fast. A few parade-goers may have left more sprinkled on the table than there was when they arrived.

The event wrapped with laughter, stickiness, and renewed fellowship... and I think we sold out! Apologies to all you who were looking forward to having ice cream at Coffee Hour after church.



## Celebrating Pentecost:

### The Spirit in Our Midst



Pentecost marks one of the most powerful moments in Christian history—the day when the Holy Spirit descended upon the disciples like wind and flame, igniting the Church into life and mission.

Falling 50 days after Easter, Pentecost is sometimes called the **"birthday of the Church."** But it's much more than a historical marker. It's a reminder that the same Spirit who moved among the apostles continues to move among us—calling us to courage, creativity, and compassion.

The Holy Spirit equips us to:

Speak truth with love.  
Offer our unique gifts for the good of the community.  
Step into new ministries and forms of service.  
Listen for God's voice in the midst of change.

As we celebrate Pentecost this May, you might consider:

Wearing red to church, symbolizing the Spirit's fire.  
Praying for a fresh outpouring of the Spirit in your life and in our parish.  
Reflecting on what new thing God might be inviting you to do.

Let us welcome the Holy Spirit—not just with candles and color, but with open hearts ready to be transformed. "Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in them the fire of your love."

### A Prayer for Peace and Protection



God of mercy and justice,  
Our hearts ache for lives lost and communities torn apart by gun violence.  
We ask for your comfort for those who mourn,  
Your strength for those working for peace,  
And your wisdom for our leaders.  
Help us to be instruments of your peace—  
To speak out, to act, and to love in the face of fear.  
Guide us toward a world where all may live in safety and hope.  
Amen.





"WELL, PASTOR, IT WASN'T DAD'S BEST ROUND, BUT IT SURE WAS HIS QUIETEST, PLAYIN' WITH YOU."

## Altar Flowers

If you would like to donate flowers for the altar in memory or thanksgiving of someone special or an event you want to celebrate, please sign up in the booklet at the back of the church, or email the information to [ststephensepiscopalnhny@gmail.com](mailto:ststephensepiscopalnhny@gmail.com)



# HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

## April Birthdays

3<sup>rd</sup> Jim High  
7<sup>th</sup> Lindsay Huckabone  
9<sup>th</sup> David Rauscher  
11<sup>th</sup> Phil Roman  
14<sup>th</sup> John Gillmeister  
14<sup>th</sup> Brett Huckabone  
30<sup>th</sup> Jim Beyel

## May Birthdays

4<sup>th</sup> Judy Gilbert  
9<sup>th</sup> Mike Kilian  
14<sup>th</sup> Emily Smith  
15<sup>th</sup> Peggy Young  
29<sup>th</sup> Ashley Mundrick  
30<sup>th</sup> MaryAnne Sheldon

## June Birthdays

2<sup>nd</sup> Rose Kolwaite  
14<sup>th</sup> Marissa Mundrick  
Burnup  
15<sup>th</sup> Becky Topham  
16<sup>th</sup> Deacon Lynn Walton  
23<sup>rd</sup> Betty Doerner

We encourage all our church members to submit their birth dates if they would like to receive a birthday greeting from the church.  
Nancy Tibbitts can take this information.