

## *ENews for Holy Week and Easter 2021*



This special week is when we commemorate the Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ and Celebrate his resurrection.

This year I am delighted to welcome back 62 people to the in-person and live streamed 7:00 p.m. Maundy Thursday service as well as the Good Friday, 12 noon

service. Please be sure you make a reservation on our website [www.strcihards.org](http://www.strcihards.org) for those services.

We will have Stations of the Cross on Good Friday at 6 p.m. and on Saturday, April 3 we will have the Great Vigil of Easter outside in our memorial garden at 7:00 p.m. No reservations necessary for those outdoor services.

Then Easter Sunday we will again gather outside at 8 am and have limited in-person seating for our live stream worship at 10:30 a.m. Please plan on tuning into the live stream at 10:15 a.m. this week as Dr. Carl MaultsByy, Director of Music, has prepared a very special prelude.

I leave you today as we enter the three-part, three day observance of Jesus' death and resurrection with a poem by George Herbert called Easter. You can see the text of the poem and an explanation of it in the text portion of the enews below.

George Herbert was a skilled pastor and teacher, as well as an accomplished musician, and this poem is a beautiful illustration of both. Easter was originally two separate poems. But the call in the first verse, 'Rise heart; thy Lord is risen', and the musical images of verses two and three, find their fullest expression in the song of praise of the final three verses.

'Easter'

Rise heart; thy Lord is risen. Sing his praise  
Without delays,  
Who takes thee by the hand, that thou likewise

With him mayst rise:  
That, as his death calcined thee to dust,  
His life may make thee gold, and much more just.

Awake, my lute, and struggle for thy part  
With all thy art.  
The cross taught all wood to resound his name,  
Who bore the same.  
His stretched sinews taught all strings, what key  
Is best to celebrate this most high day.

Consort both heart and lute, and twist a song  
Pleasant and long:  
Or since all music is but three parts vied  
And multiplied;  
O let thy blessed Spirit bear a part,  
And make up our defects with his sweet art.

I got me flowers to straw thy way:  
I got me boughs off many a tree:  
But thou wast up by break of day,  
And brought'st thy sweets along with thee.

The Sun arising in the East,  
Though he give light, and th'East perfume;  
If they should offer to contest  
With thy arising, they presume.

Can there be any day but this,  
Though many suns to shine endeavour?  
We count three hundred, but we miss:  
There is but one, and that one ever.

Commentary

The poet draws on Scripture to illustrate the poem: the words of praise from Psalm 57:8-10 and the theme of Paul's letter to the Romans, with its exploration of how people are made right with God - justified - through Jesus' death on the cross.

Christ, stretched out in death on the wood of the cross, becomes God's instrument, playing a melody of love to the world. The heart responds to the melody by joining with it, as instrumentalists join together in consort to make music. But since none can sing this tune per-

fectly, a further strand needs to be woven: that of the Spirit who makes up 'our defects with his sweet art'.

In the following song of joyful celebration, the poet sees the day of Christ's resurrection as unsurpassed in glory. 'Can there be any day but this' - the sun that rises each day of the year cannot shine as brightly as the Son of God as he brings light to the world.

Vaughan Williams set these words to music in his 'Five Mystical Songs', and the first three verses form one of the hymns composed by Barry Ferguson in the hymn-book 'Another Music'.