

If you read the newspapers or watch the news on TV you are not likely to get the impression that we are approaching the best of times. To the contrary, things look pretty bleak. The Iraq War has dragged out over six years and the war in Afghanistan has gone on even longer. Despite all the deaths and destruction, there is no decisive end in sight for either conflict. Here at home the economic situation is the worst the country has seen since the 1930's. Some companies are closing while others are making major cutbacks. Unemployment is the highest it has been in years. The future is uncertain.

But we are an Easter people. Because we believe that Jesus was raised from the dead we declare that the future is not bleak and uncertain. Instead it is guaranteed by God. Despite the present state of the world, there is no reason for despair. There is no crisis so big that God cannot overcome it. Certainly God may not work on our schedule or work in the way we would have chosen. But God does work even in the most desperate of situations to bring life and light.

The resurrection of Jesus is an event that declares that even when there seems to be no hope there is hope in God. The resurrection declares that even when all we can see with our eyes is tragedy, God can turn it into victory. The resurrection declares that even when all appears to be covered with the dust of death, God can bring forth life. The resurrection declares that even when there seems to be no future, with God the future is filled with promise.

The worst of times can be the best of times because Jesus Christ rose from the dead. For those of us who are Christians, Easter is not just one special day each year. Rather it is the theme of our lives. We see in the wondrous, grave-robbing resurrection of Jesus a sign for what God has in store for us. "We will be like him," scripture tells us (1 John 3:2). Like the resurrected Christ! Because of this we can face set-backs, hardship and tragedy with confidence in the transforming and redeeming power of God.

Plan to be with us in worship on April 12th – Easter Sunday – and bring your friends. Let's all celebrate the hope giving resurrection of Jesus.