

# 2025 Easter Message: Christ Is Our Hope

Greetings in the name and love of the Risen Christ!

Celebrating Easter, as followers of Christ and United Methodists, is a sacred and profound experience. Easter lies at the very heart of our Wesleyan heritage: rooted in grace, hope, and the transformative power of Christ's resurrection.

It invites us to embrace new life through God's abundant love.

Easter is the pinnacle of our Lenten journey—a season of prayer, fasting, and self-reflection that prepares our hearts for the celebration of Christ's resurrection.

In our Wesleyan tradition, we hold dear these spiritual disciplines, which draw us closer to God's grace.

The resurrection of Jesus Christ is the triumph of this journey, bringing renewal and transformation to our lives through God's unfailing love.

**Easter is a resounding celebration of God's victory over sin, death, and darkness.**

Through the resurrection, Christ opens the way for all people to experience new life, offering an unshakable foundation of hope for those who follow Him.

It is the ultimate reminder of the boundless grace of God—a grace that redeems, renews, and restores.

Each Easter, I find myself deeply moved by the Gospel of Matthew, chapter 28, verses 1-10, where Mary Magdalene and another woman encounter the risen Christ.

This passage overflows with boundless hope, rooted in the transformative power of God's grace.

Indeed, Jesus Christ is our eternal hope.

Let us pause and reflect on the experience of these women on that miraculous morning.

Imagine their grief as they walked to the tomb of their beloved Teacher—the weight of despair they carried, believing their hope was lost.

They had witnessed His love, His ministry, and His miracles.

They saw Him heal the sick, feed the hungry, and extend grace to sinners.

YET, in their darkest moment, the angel declared, "Do not be afraid... He is not here; He has risen, just as He said!" (Matthew 28:5-6)...and their sorrow was transformed into joy.

When Jesus Himself met them on the road, their lives—and the world—were forever changed.

This encounter encapsulates the heart of Easter: the gift of new life through Christ's resurrection and the renewal of hope.

In our Wesleyan tradition as United Methodists, hope is not an abstract idea; it is the living assurance of God's abundant grace.

This grace renews us from within and equips us to share Christ's love and justice with the world.

The resurrection's power extends to us today, inviting us to encounter the Risen Christ and experience peace, light, and unending hope.

As 1 Peter 1:3-9 reminds us, in Christ, we are given a living hope—eternal and unending.

There are many reasons to rejoice in the Living Hope of Jesus Christ.

**We have hope because Jesus loves us unconditionally.**

United Methodists affirm God's prevenient grace—that Christ's love reaches for us even before we know Him. Nothing in all creation can separate us from His love (Romans 8:38-39).

**We have hope because Jesus offers forgiveness and reconciliation.**

Through His death and resurrection, Christ reconciles us to God, offering pardon and inviting us into a relationship marked by grace and renewal (John 3:17).

**We have hope because Christ's grace is for everyone.**

The inclusive nature of God's grace is central to our tradition, breaking down every barrier and uniting us in Christ's love (Romans 10:12).

**We have hope because His resurrection shows us a better way.**

The Risen Christ calls us to live as His hands and feet, sharing love, compassion, and justice in a world yearning for transformation.

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Easter's hope is a gift meant to be received, shared, and lived. Inspired by Matthew, Christ's love is a calling for us to carry forward, just as Mary Magdalene did by sharing the Good News.

Pray to God daily, asking the Holy Spirit for opportunities to share your faith and Christ's healing love with others. Seek sensitivity to the needs around you and courage to act meaningfully. Together, as a congregation, be a beacon of faith and hope offering spiritual growth across generations.

**Live Easter in the Community:**

Address hunger and poverty through food initiatives.

Promote reconciliation with workshops or mediation spaces.

Celebrate diversity by hosting cultural events that proclaim God's inclusive grace.

Support mental health by partnering with local counselors.

Break barriers by advocating justice for vulnerable communities.

**Be Agents of Renewal**

Commit to acts of kindness and reflect Christ's love.

Care for creation through recycling, composting, or tree planting.

Invest in community renewal with beautification projects like gardens or cleanups.

Let Easter's boundless hope shape your actions every day!

This Easter, I invite us to reflect on the following questions,

**What spiritual disciplines or practices have drawn you closer to God during Lent, and how will you carry them forward in the Easter season?**

Think about how prayer, fasting, and self-reflection have shaped your faith and prepared your heart for the celebration of Christ.

**How does the resurrection of Jesus Christ transform your understanding of hope and grace in your own life?**

Reflect on how the Easter story of redemption resonates with your journey of faith and spiritual renewal.

**In what ways can you embody the love, compassion, and justice of Christ in your daily life?**

Reflect in how you can embody Christ's hope in your workplace, family, or neighborhood? What tangible steps you can take to proclaim and be God's hope with those around you.

This Easter, let us renew our commitment to living as disciples of Jesus Christ.

Let us share Christ's love with a world in need, embodying the grace and hope we have received through Jesus's resurrection.

Easter is more than a historical event—it is an invitation to participate in God's redemptive work, reminding us that we are empowered to live with hope and serve as agents of transformation in our daily lives as we live the gospel and embody God's love with all our neighbors.

Together, we can reflect the light of Easter in every corner of our lives.

As John Wesley proclaimed, "The best of all is, is that God is with us."

Easter is the ultimate affirmation of this truth.

May the words of the angel, "do not be afraid", echo in your heart as a constant reminder of God's peace.

May you live with the joy and assurance of the empty tomb, knowing that Christ is risen, just as He said.

May you carry the light of resurrection hope, sharing Christ's love with the world around you.

AND may the grace of the risen Lord, the love of God, and the power of the Holy Spirit be with you now and always. Amen

Peace of God be with you.