

Isaiah 65:17-25

¹⁷ For I am about to create
new heavens
and a new earth;

the former things
shall not be remembered
or come to mind.

¹⁸ But be glad and rejoice
for ever
in what I am creating;

for I am about to create
Jerusalem as a joy,
and its people as a delight.

¹⁹ I will rejoice in Jerusalem,
and delight in my people;

no more
shall the sound of weeping
be heard in it,
or the cry of distress.

²⁰ No more
shall there be in it
an infant that lives but a few days,
or an old person who does not live out a lifetime;

for one who dies at a hundred years
will be considered a youth,
and one who falls short of a hundred
will be considered accursed.

²¹ They shall build houses and inhabit them;
they shall plant vineyards and eat their fruit.

²² They shall not build and another inhabit;
they shall not plant and another eat;

for like the days of a tree
shall the days of my people be,

and my chosen
shall long enjoy
the work of their hands.

²³ They shall not labour in vain,
or bear children for calamity;

for they shall be offspring
blessed by the LORD—
and their descendants as well.

²⁴ Before they call I will answer,
while they are yet speaking I will hear.

²⁵ The wolf and the lamb shall feed together,
the lion shall eat straw like the ox;
but the serpent—its food shall be dust!

They shall not hurt or destroy
on all my holy mountain,
says the LORD.

Acts 10:34-43

34 Then Peter began to speak to them:

I truly understand
that God shows no partiality,
³⁵but in every nation
anyone who fears him
and does what is right
is acceptable to him.

³⁶You know the message
he sent
to the people of Israel,
preaching peace
by Jesus Christ—
he is Lord of all.

³⁷That message spread
throughout Judea,
beginning in Galilee
after the baptism
that John announced:

³⁸how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth
with the Holy Spirit
and with power;
how he went about
doing good
and healing
all who were oppressed by the devil,
for God was with him.

³⁹We are witnesses to all that he did
both in Judea and in Jerusalem.

They put him to death
by hanging him on a tree;

⁴⁰but God raised him on the third day
and allowed him to appear,

⁴¹not to all the people
but to us
who were chosen by God
as witnesses,
and who ate and drank with him
after he rose from the dead.

⁴²He commanded us
to preach to the people
and to testify
that he is the one
ordained by God
as judge
of the living
and the dead.

⁴³All the prophets
testify about him
that everyone
who believes in him
receives forgiveness of sins
through his name.'

Luke 24:1-12

But on the first day of the week,
at early dawn,
they came to the tomb,
taking the spices
that they had prepared.

²They found the stone
rolled away from the tomb,

³but when they went in,
they did not find the body.

⁴While they were perplexed about this,
suddenly two men
in dazzling clothes
stood beside them.

⁵The women were terrified
and bowed their faces
to the ground,
but the men
said to them,

'Why do you look for the living
among the dead?

He is not here,
but has risen.

⁶Remember how he told you,
while he was still in Galilee,

⁷that the Son of Man
must be handed over to sinners,
and be crucified,
and on the third day rise again.'

⁸Then they remembered his words,
⁹and returning from the tomb,
they told all this
to the eleven
and to all the rest.

¹⁰Now it was
Mary Magdalene,
Joanna,
Mary the mother of James,
and the other women with them
who told this
to the apostles.

¹¹But these words
seemed to them
an idle tale,
and they
did not believe
them.

¹²But Peter got up
and ran to the tomb;

stooping and looking in,
he saw the linen cloths
by themselves;
then he went home,
amazed at what had happened.

Reading the Prophet at Easter

The RCL offers us Trito-Isaiah, 'Third Isaiah'
A vision of a 'new heavens and a new earth'
Amplifying last week's 'Second Isaiah' song

As last week, it's more 'turn from lament to hope'
Than it is 'forget the past'
And imagine a 'new Jerusalem'

Near the end of a federal election campaign
Compare the promises of v20-23
From infants to old age, safe homes and work

Closing verses are less concrete, 'eschatological'
Wolf and lamb, lion and ox, snake and children
a 'holy mountain' vision – not always on Easter:

2010: Imagine That!

<http://www.billbrucewords.com/2010/11/imagine-that.html>

2013: Celebrating Easter

<http://www.billbrucewords.com/2013/04/celebrating-easter.html>

2015 REDress

<http://www.billbrucewords.com/2015/10/imagining-new-heavens-and-new-earth.html>

2019 Children's Sunday

<http://www.billbrucewords.com/2019/11/imagine-this.html>

2022 Buy Nothing Day

<http://www.billbrucewords.com/2022/11/buy-nothing-day-on-black-friday.html>

Reading Acts of the Apostles at Easter

The RCL walks through Acts in Easter season this year
It opens in c.10, Peter's response to a vision,
Affirming an open inclusive community of faith

The rhythm of Acts is a great story,
Then an eloquent operatic speech by a key leader
More drama than historic accuracy

People had to talk about bridging difference
Because it was hard in the earliest church
We needed a 'meta-narrative' of pitching bigger tents

What's our challenge,
To make our practice fit our operatic speech,
About inclusive diverse affirming community?

I'll wait on Session –
But feel readier to engage Revelation through Easter season,
Rather than the Acts of the Apostles!

Victoria Day 2009:

<http://www.billbrucewords.com/2009/05/inclusive-or-diverse.html>

Easter 2016 Calgary:

<http://www.billbrucewords.com/2016/04/easter-changes-rouse.html>

Reading the Third Gospel on Easter Day

As I asked for Palm – what's different in this Third Gospel?

Compare Matt 28 and Mark 16 and John 20

The RCL offers us the choice, most years,
between a couple to use, to give John a chance

I notice this year:

'Why are you looking for the living among the dead?'

the women's names, delayed to the ending

Peter checking right away after the women

So what?

What's our context this Easter?

2007 leaving Beach – Immortality

<http://www.billbrucewords.com/2007/04/immortality-luke24.html>

2010 Thornhill Gob-smacked

<http://www.billbrucewords.com/2010/04/gob-smacked.html>

2011 Recognizing Resurrection

<http://www.billbrucewords.com/2011/04/recognizing-resurrection.html>

2019 Trinity Kitchener

<http://www.billbrucewords.com/2019/04/why-look-for-living-among-dead.html>

2020 first Easter in COVID, Caledon

<http://www.billbrucewords.com/2020/04/recognizing-company-we-keep.html>

2022 Idle Tale – Trinity Annan

<http://www.billbrucewords.com/2022/04/an-idle-tale.html>