



THE BISHOP OF EBBSFLEET

Hill House, The Mount, Caversham  
READING RG4 7RE

### **Easter Message 2018**

Χριστός ἀνέστη!

‘There was a new begetting this day –  
and if a new begetting, a new paternity, and fraternity both.’

So wrote our great Anglican teacher and preacher Bishop Lancelot Andrews, very nearly four hundred years ago (Sermon 16, On the Resurrection, 21 April 1622). The resurrection is the new birth of the human race, the creation of a communion among human beings that cannot be destroyed, because humanity is caught up in the glory of Christ as he conquers death and sin.

We need to hear this news, each year, because we still give so much of our energy and skill to dissolving the bonds there are between human beings. It’s the measure of our estrangement from the life of God; and it is only as we rediscover the promises of the Risen Christ that we learn where the reconciliation that endures can be found. Through the cross and the empty grave *alone* Christ has made us ‘no longer foreigners and aliens, but fellow-citizens with God’s people’ (Eph 2.19). We are reconciled to each other because he has reconciled our fallen humanity to the Father.

These last months, even weeks, we have seen in many situations, national and international, the breaking-up of our bonds and our trust. Power and death and division are still hold sway in our relations. So, as we celebrate the Feast of Feasts, let our joint prayer be that the Spirit of the Risen Christ will bring us truly to a ‘new begetting’, a new birth; that the Church will be God’s instrument of lasting peace; and that humanity may have the strength to resist the power of death in the Name of the One who has overcome it for ever.

With prayers and every blessing:

The Right Reverend Jonathan Goodall

Easter Eve, 31 March 2018