
THE LIGHT

NEWSLETTER OF THE UNITED REFORMED CHURCH OF CLIFTON AND PASSAIC
"A Church UNITED in faith, hope, & love!"

ISSUE NO. 98 March – April 2013

NOW THE GREEN BLADE RISES

Easter is early this year, but already spring bulbs are pushing shoots through dead leaves still littering our flowerbeds. Winter is the time of rest and death. Before we experience the green beauty of spring, we must first past through the dark, barren months of winter. Like a bulb planted in the ground, we must die in order to live.

Fortunately, life is more powerful than death. Winter gives way to spring, and dead seeds spring up green. Perhaps this is what Jesus had in mind when he said, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit. He who loves his life loses it, and he who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life. (John 12: 24-25)" Jesus died so that we might have life. He invites us to do the same.

John Crum expresses the same idea in his lovely Easter carol, "Now the Green Blade Rises."



**When our hearts are wintry,
grieving or in pain,
By Christ's touch He calls us
back to life again**

*Now the green blade rises from the buried grain,
Wheat that in the dark earth many days has lain;
Love lives again, that with the dead has been:
Love is come again, like wheat that springs up green.*

*In the grave they laid Him, Love whom hate had slain,
Thinking that He'd never wake to life again,
Laid in the earth like grain that sleeps unseen:
Love is come again, like wheat that springs up green.*

*Christ sprang forth at Easter, like the risen grain,
Jesus who for three days in the grave had lain;
Quick from the dead, the risen One is seen:
Love is come again, like wheat that springs up green.*

*When our hearts are wintry, grieving or in pain,
By Christ's touch He calls us back to life again:
Fields of our hearts that dead and bare have been:
Love is come again, like wheat that springs up green.*

As we enter Holy Week, let us die with Christ on the cross so that we may also rise with him.

In Christ's love,

Pastor Mike