

Devotion, Fourth Week of Eastertide, 2023
Rev. Jeanne Simpson

On April 16, I had two hymns I thought were oldie goldies that everyone would recognize – “And Can It Be?” and “Victory in Jesus.” Boy was I wrong. Eliot and Xavier had to ask him how slow I wanted to play “Victory in Jesus.” My answer – it’s not a funeral dirge – it’s victory!! You’ve got to play it at a good clip. Then the choir announced that they didn’t know “And Can It Be?” Huh? It’s a Charles Wesley hymn – it’s been around forever. Well, sure enough, the congregation didn’t know it either. So I told them we’re going to have to do a revival to each everyone these wonderful, old hymns. So watch out – we might have song fest one day this summer, and I’ll pull out all the old Bible-thumping hymns I can find.

In the meantime, I invite you to go read the words to hymn 347, “And Can It Be?” They are wonderful. Here’s part of verse 2:

“He left His Father’s throne above; so free, so infinite His grace.
Emptied Himself of all but love, and bled for Adam’s helpless race.
‘Tis mercy all, immense and free, for O my God, it found out me.”

The chorus speaks the entire theme of Eastertide” “Amazing love! How can it be that Thou, my God, shouldst die for me?”

That is what resurrection is about – through love, Jesus died for us. He didn’t have to – he was on his Father’s throne, free. But he came to earth in the flesh with nothing but love for us to make him face a cruel death. So it is up to us to carry on that love as we walk Jesus’ path – how could it be that God’s Son would die for us? How indeed? Because of His incredibly immense and free mercy.

Jeanne