

The Standard

UCU COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER

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Our view Let's leave a legacy

We are celebrating 100 years of existence this year. As an institution, we are thankful that God has brought us this far. The onus is now on all of us to show that we appreciate what God has done to make us what we are today.

Celebrations of this kind are meant to enable us to not only remember where we came from, where we are and where we are going, but to also recognize and honour the architects of our history. It is important that we galvanize activities that reflect the history of our institution. In doing so, we should remember that we are not alone. We are inextricably bound together with schools and healthcare institutions, not to mention Sts Philip and Andrew's Cathedral as one unit of the greater Church of Uganda.

It is clear that the planners of those institutions had the ultimate goal of spreading Jesus' gospel and the best way was through provision of formal education and healthcare. The gospel can only be spread to educated healthy people. That is the reason the Church pioneered the founding of those institutions.

It is individuals who make history. We must use the centenary festivities to remember the contribution of various individuals to our history. Although the first to come to mind are the greats such as Hamu Mukasa, who donated the chunk of land on which the university and other church institutions sit on today, and Bishop Alfred Tucker who pioneered the establishment of this institution, we should not lose sight of those who have kept the fire burning. We cannot name them all. But former principals of BTTC have done a lot. Rev. Dr Stephen Noll, the first vice-chancellor of this university, and his successor, Rev. Dr John Senyonyi, cannot be ignored either.

The question is: What can we do to leave a lasting legacy of those architects of this great institution? There are many ways but we think the best and simple one is to make sculptures of these individuals so that they can be laid out in a secure building for posterity to view and remember them.

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Opinion Opinion Opinion Opinion Opinion



Christ's sacrifice at Easter is the hope of the Gospel message and the reality of God's grace, a supernatural grace that goes far beyond our human sensibilities.

The Light of the World in the darkness of hell

THOMAS FROESE



The darkness of hell is the last place one would expect to find the Light of the World, but there they are, the passages buried in some lesser-known pages of the New Testament, in Peter's first book.

Peter, of course, is that apostle who often comes to mind during Easter because of what he said at the fireside outside of that cold, all-night kangaroo trial of Jesus.

'No,' he said. 'I never knew him. No, you're quite wrong. No, no, no, I never knew the man, this fellow, this trouble-maker Jesus. Now go and leave me alone.' Three times.

We're not privy to how, outside of divine revelation, Peter later saw what he did so clearly, how he could report the utterly stunning news that "Jesus preached to the spirits in prison," and that "The gospel was preached even to the dead, that though judged in the flesh like men, they might live in the Spirit of God."

The notion seems strange and more than strange. Even sort of blasphemous. Jesus in hell? It's a little too dark a patch for stainless Jesus to visit, isn't it? How very offensive, just like, well, say, Jesus washing our feet, or Jesus hanging around with the riff-raff of his day, or Jesus shedding very real and human tears.

But this is Easter and there are mysteries to wrangle with. There's Jesus in common fear, sweating great drops like blood in Gethsemane. And there, less than 24 hours later, God's lamb on the cross, bleeding out, crying in shame to his father, his Abba, his Daddy: 'Why have you left me?' So never mind hell. The thought of God's Son coming even to earth is a mystery. So is grace.

When one runs in circles that are filled with believers of one sort or another, it's easy to lose sight of this. It's easy to hear common words - like grace - so often that they become like a favourite garment: fashionable and comfortable but increasingly worn of meaning.

Easter gives us a disturbing shake out of it. Yes, it's mystery. It's also horribly violent.

Imagine this. You love someone very deeply. And that true love returns their love to you. Then, one night, someone breaks into your home and murders your loved one. Right in front of you. It's a terrible crime and we all know what should happen to the killer.

If you were to work for that killer's conviction and punishment - life in jail or even capital execution - that would be justice. If you were to work for his acquittal and freedom and let him go, that would be unusual grace.

But what if you worked for that killer's freedom and then invited him to live with you? What if you fed and clothed him and gave him an education? What if you then formally adopted him?

Now imagine that you're very rich and you said to that killer, "What I have is yours. All my inheritance. I will lavish it all on you. There is nothing you won't have. I love you that much."

What would this be? It would be supernatural grace, the kind that has to be real if for no other reason than because it's both beyond and offensive to our imaginations, fallen and broken and human as they are. We can't fathom this grace. Not really. Not ever. Not without that divine help.

Yes, this is Easter, the time when Jesus was afraid, the time when he doubted, the time when, like any man might have, he died at the bloodied hands of his enemies, a violent death in a violent world.

It's also the time when Jesus went into hell, even more violently, to take back what was his all along. You. And me. And anyone else who tends to make their bed there.

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