

Another Word February 28, 2022

To our family and friends of First Christian Church

The most Holy time of the Christian year is now upon us. March 2, is our Ash Wednesday Service, and the beginning of the season of Lent. The service will begin at 6:30, and we hope you will be able to join us. (The explanation of the service and ashes will be later in this letter).

A B C Carpet Cleaning was in last week and not only cleaned the carpets, but also steam cleaned our sanctuary chairs. They did a wonderful job, and even removed a couple of stains we thought were permanent. Because of the above and beyond service and special pricing given to us, we hope that you would consider calling them for a quote when you are in need of this service. (This is not intended as a commercial but only as a response for a job well done).

Again, over Lent, we will be collecting loose change (or stray folding money) for the Ashland Pregnancy and Care Center. You may pick up a bottle, beginning this Sunday. Thank you for your continued support.

The scriptures for this first Sunday of lent are: Psalm 91: 1-2, 9-16, read by Lana Bell. Our New Testament reading will be Mark 14:1-25. Our message is entitled, "In Bethany and Jerusalem." We will look at Jesus' anointing; the Priests wanting to arrest Jesus; Judas agreeing to betray Jesus; as well as the last supper.

We had some great news yesterday; Lennie Reich is finally back home and resting. Please send her a card of encouragement.

As we go to prayer, please remember all those who are in need of spiritual as well as physical healing, and to pray for the safety of the thousands in harm's way in Eastern Europe. May peace overcome hatred and greed!

Let us be in prayer.

Father of creation, we offer to you our praise and thanks for life. Every day is a gift and a time to spread your love to others. We ask for blessings, guidance, and protection to all who are working to bring us healing, peace, and safety. We pray for the persecuted and abused around the world, especially in these times of war, and the rumors of war. May we all find peace, strength, and resolve through your word and in our trust in Jesus. We thank you for your love and assurance that comes from knowing and following your Son. And in His perfect name we offer this prayer, Amen

It is said, that when a Roman General defeated the enemy in a resounding victory, he was given a special honor. Upon returning to Rome he was given a hero's welcome with a lavish parade. Placed prominently in a golden chariot, he would be driven around the main thoroughfares of Rome, basking in the cheers and adulations of the roaring crowd. Imagine the General, and how his pride would soar while trying to absorb this, the greatest honor of his life. I'm sure he would begin to feel invincible, even immortal!

However, legend has it that a servant would be standing close behind the General, whispering in his ear, "Memento mori." (Remember, you will someday die). In the midst of all the cheers and adulation, the

General needed to be humbled, to be brought back to reality, and to be reminded that he was indeed, mortal.

The world is such a wonderful place. It is filled with beauty and great abundance. Our loving God has spared us nothing. However, we need to understand that the world is also filled with many distractions and enticements. Like our Roman General, we also can fall for the things of the world, become absorbed by its calling, and begin to feel invincible. In a very real sense, that is what Ash Wednesday is all about. It is to remind us that God created us from dust (Genesis 2:7), that He knows and remembers that we are dust (Psalm 103:14), and that to dust, we all will someday, return (Ecclesiastes 3:20).

The ashes placed on the forehead are to be our “Memento mori”, the reminder that we are not immortal, but are God’s creation. So, humbly submit your life to Him. Hope to see you Wednesday evening.

In His Peace,

*Rich*