

Another Word March 16, 2021

To our friends and family of First Christian Church

Top of the morning to you! Wednesday is Saint Patrick's Day, a day we use as an excuse to eat corned beef and cabbage and for others, to consume copious amounts of green dyed beer. However, the real story of Patrick is quite a tale. He was abducted as a youth, sold as a slave, was persecuted and threatened his whole life, but through it all, brought Christianity almost single handedly to Ireland. Snakes excluded, he had quite an amazing journey.

There will be a Maundy Thursday service, April 1<sup>st</sup> at 7pm. We hope you will be able to worship with us. For those who can't be there, the service will be available on our website and YouTube.

Our scriptures for the fifth Sunday in Lent are: Psalm 119: 9-16, John 12: 20-33, "Who do you serve?", and the reading for the "Crown of Thorns" is, Mark 14: 53, 55, 60-64. Linda Gardner will be the Elder.

As a reminder, if you are interested in participating in a Bible study after Easter, let me know your preference of either the Book of Mark or Romans.

The cards collected this week are being delivered to Kingston. More cards will be available on a table in the gathering area for anyone who forgot to bring one.

The Baby Bottle campaign is in full swing. They are due back and filled the Sunday after Easter.

May we be in prayer.

O Most Holy God. May your Glory shine on us this day. May we be still and hear your voice, and live in your grace and love each day. We hold up to you our leaders, our service and health care workers, and all who are working to bring peace to the world, and an end to the pandemic. As spring begins to renew itself, we pray that our hearts also are renewed and strengthened because of your love and guidance. We pray this prayer in the name of Jesus, your ultimate gift of love to us, Amen.

I love going to the grocery store. Often, I go for one or two items and return with multiple bags. Here in lies the problem. Wanting to get out quickly, I often will just say, "I'll carry them out myself." I could use a cart, let someone wheel them out for me, or even drive up and have them put in the back of my car. But Nooo! I can do it myself. 8 bags per hand and out I go. Thank goodness for automatic doors. As I get close, a sensor responds to my motion and the doors slide open. Whew!

Note the word motion. To get the store's doors to open, you need to start moving in that direction. When you want God to open a door, you need to start moving toward it before it will open.

An example of what I mean is found in the book of Joshua, chapter 3. The Jewish nation is ready to move into the Promised Land. The first step of this journey is to cross the Jordan River. The problem is that the river is at flood stage. It is very deep and running extremely fast. The priests are to lead the way, but there are no bridges, boats, nothing to help them. Starting at verse 8, God instructs them to pick up The Ark of The Covenant, go to the river and when you reach the edge, to "go and

stand in it.” What!?! You want me to do what?! If I was one of the priests, I think I would have said, “Why don’t you part the river like you parted the Red Sea? Then I’ll step in.” But note, God said “Step into the water and I will then part it so you can cross.” The priests did as they were told, and as soon as they touched the water, the river parted and the whole nation crossed over, as promised.

Notice, God wants them to do something before He acts. It’s always the same. Jesus changed water to wine, but the servants needed to bring jars of water. To feed 5,000, the disciples needed to bring Him what they could find and then organize the crowd. Jesus then fed them. Even to raise Lazarus, Jesus had someone roll away the stone first. There always needs to be some action, some motion from us; beginning with prayer. In other words, God responds to our faith, our trust, our belief, and our obedience. (Obedience to God being the key word.)

Is there something in your life where the door seems to be closed between you and God, and what He wants you to do? Have you been waiting for something to happen, something to begin? Maybe God is waiting for you to start walking in the direction of where you believe He wants you to go, even if there is a closed door or a flooded river in front of you. Our great God will take care of the obstacles; we just need to get moving in the direction He is leading.

As for my predicament; if I can now just figure out how to get my car door open without putting down all my groceries in the parking lot!

In His peace,

*Rich*