

Another Word    March 30, 2021

To our friends and family of First Christian Church

I pray your personal journey through this season of Lent has given you time for thought provoking reflection, a time for conscience clearing, has been spiritually uplifting, and that your heart has been opened even wider to the love of Jesus.

During this most holy of weeks, we will be offering our Maundy Thursday Service, April 1, at 7pm. On Good Friday, April 2<sup>nd</sup> at 3pm there will be a showing of “The Passion of The Christ” in the sanctuary, and then our celebration of the resurrection of Jesus, Easter Morning at 10:30 am. We hope you can join us for worship.

Please remember to bring your “baby bottles” (filled with change) this Sunday.

There were so many Easter cards brought in that I have distributed them between all 4 nursing homes along with the regular group of cards delivered to Crystal Care. Thank you for your continued love for others.

Our scriptures for this Sunday are: Isaiah 25: 6-9, John 20: 1-18, “The Greatest Act”; presented in 3 acts, and Acts 10: 34-43, the light that will never be extinguished. Linda Gardner, Elder.

May we pray.

O Holy and gracious God, we come to you today with concerns, fears, and wonderment in our hearts. Over the past 6 weeks we have heard and read the stories of the brutality inflicted on your Son, Jesus. Our hearts are heavy because we see the same brutality being used on others even today. We wonder how and why? What can be done? But you continue to love us, to care for us, direct us, and guide us to better lives. You are unchanging, always the same, regardless of the time or place. We ask for your strength to be strong, and filled with courage to stand, like Jesus, and pass your love on to our neighbor, for it's the only way to change the world. This is your message of Easter. It's a message of love and compassion, a message that leads us to victory. In Jesus' perfect name we pray, Amen.

Napoleon was all about power. And he got it. He waged war against much of Europe, and won almost every battle. His control went well beyond the borders of France. But that wasn't enough. As the story goes, he called all his generals together in a room with a large map on a table. On the map was a red spot. The red spot was England. Pounding his fist on the red spot he yelled, "If it wasn't for that red spot, I could have it all!"

Here's another scene; Satan and his followers standing around a large table with a map on it. It's a map of the world. There is just one red spot on it. That red spot is a small hill called Golgotha, just outside Jerusalem. On that hill is a blood stained cross. He screams and pounds his fist on that red spot and cries out, "If it wasn't for that red spot, I could have them all!"

History records that there was a brutal death by crucifixion of an innocent man on that hill, at that red spot. But God has a different story. In the book of Colossians, chapter 2 verse 13, Paul writes, “He forgave us all our sins.” Every lie, every selfish act, every thought we have had, all rebellious acts against God are forgiven.

And it all took place at that red spot. Verse 14 states, “He took it away, nailing it to the cross.” When Jesus was nailed to the cross, every bad thing we have ever done was nailed there with Him. Then verse 15 exclaims, “And having disarmed the powers and authorities, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross.” No wonder Satan is so mad! You see, when Jesus died, He won! He shattered sin’s power over us. Satan “has been disarmed.” I love that statement!

Of course there is something, a commitment we all must make. But we need to understand that we can’t earn this love, this protection, this victory. There is absolutely nothing we can do to “buy our way to heaven.” However, all we need to do is believe in Jesus, and place our lives in His hands! That’s it! That is what ensures our victory!

My prayer this Holy Week, is that you open your heart to Jesus, let Him in, and send the forces of evil to their grave.

In His Peace,

*Rich*