

Another Word April 11, 2022

To Our Family and Friends of First Christian

As we prepare for the final steps in our Lenten journey, we have now begun Holy Week. We celebrate the empty tomb and the Risen Christ on Easter Sunday. The journey wasn't always pleasant but we know it is worth it.

Our scripture for Easter Sunday is John 20: 1-18. Pastor Rich's message is titled "Dancing From The Garden." Dale Campbell is serving Elder and will be reading Isaiah 65: 17-25.

This Thursday (April 14th) is our Maundy Thursday service at 6:00. Pastor Rich has invited Pastor Matt Potosky and his congregation from Albion Brethren Church to join us. If you cannot join us in the sanctuary, the service will be live streamed.

We will be taking Easter baskets to our shut-ins this week. Thank you for bringing in the candy and crackers for these baskets. If anyone would like to help deliver one or two baskets, please let me know.

As you know, we have all been praying for people of Ukraine. We have a chance to do more for them through a donation to Church World Service. CWS sponsors a food bank in Moldova, a small country in Eastern Europe, which is next to Ukraine. They are now taking care of more than 100,000 Ukrainians who have escaped to Moldova. If you care to donate to Church World Service to help maintain supplies for this much needed food bank, please write your check to FCC and mark for CWS. If you want to give cash please mark your envelope for CWS.

The church will match any monies collected for this outreach. Thank you for your prayerful consideration.

Pray please for healing for Rich & Donita's nephew Chase as he received his heart and lung transplant on Sunday. Pray also for the family of the 18 year old who lost his life. Thank you God for this long awaited surgery.

Let us pray:

Triumphant God, who comes to us as one who seeks and serves, lead us through the events of this Holy Week that we may receive Christ afresh into our lives, and embody Christ's spirit into the world. Bless us as we gather with Christians around the world to celebrate the holiest of all weeks in the church's life. As Christ completes his work as God's Messiah – to suffer, to die, and to rise again, we remember and we share and we have hope for eternal life. In Jesus name, Amen

As some of you know by now, I read daily devotions and have many books by Max Lucado. I love his work and I will share his devotion from this morning titled "No More Curtain."

On Calvary's Hill Jesus cried out in a loud voice and died. Then the curtain in the Temple was torn into two pieces, from the top to the bottom. What did fifteen-hundred years of a curtain-draped Holy of Holies communicate? Simple – God is holy!

God is holy, separate from us and unapproachable. Even Moses was told, "You cannot see my face because no one can see me and live" (Exodus 33:20). God is holy and we are sinners, and there's a distance between us. But Jesus hasn't left us with an unapproachable God. "There is one God and one mediator between God and men; the man, Jesus Christ" (1Timothy 2:5)

When Jesus' flesh was torn on the cross, the curtain was torn in two. With no hesitation we are welcome into God's presence – any day, any time. The barrier of sin is down. No more curtain. Max Lucado

This is what we need to remember - we don't need Priests or Elders behind a curtain to talk to God now. He is approachable and we can pray to him any day, any time, and any place. In John 14: 13 Jesus tells us. "Whatever you ask in my name, I will do it so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask me anything in my name, I will do it." We must love him and keep his word and he will make our home with him.

In closing, I am reminded of one of my favorite hymns, "Open Our Eyes Lord"

"Open our eyes Lord, we want to see Jesus. To reach out and touch him and say that we love him. Open our ears Lord and help us to listen. Open our eyes Lord, we want to see Jesus."

"Blessed are the pure in heart for they will see God." Matthew 5:8

We hope you join us for our Maundy Thursday Service at 6:00 p.m. on April 14th, then again on Easter Sunday. Rich and Brian have planned a beautiful service for us. God Bless you always!

In His Peace.

Ellie & Linda

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