

Another Word April 18, 2023

To our family and friends of First Christian Church

We hope that during this Lenten season and Easter you have experienced a deeper love and understanding for our Lord and Savior. His sacrifice was done for each of us. Over the next few weeks we will experience memorable moments in the lives of the disciples as they (and we) approach the coming of the Holy Spirit.

The worship committee wonders if you would be interested in attending an "Ascension" service on Thursday, May 18th? Let us know your thoughts.

The Ashland Community Prayer Breakfast is May 4th at the University's Convocation Center. We have 4 tickets available.

Our scriptures for April 23rd are: Psalm 116: 1-4, 12-19, and Luke 24:13-35. "Walkin' with the Lord." Our serving Elder is Todd Whitmer.

For April 30th: Psalm 23, and John 21: 1-19. "Forgiveness is served." Our serving Elder is Lana Bell.

Please remember Lennie Reich, Randy Gearhart, Logan Zehner, Linda Gardner's brother Ron, Shelley Carpenter's daughter Ashley, and Alice Metcalf as we go to prayer.

Holy God of life. As we celebrate the risen Christ, guide our thoughts and actions that we may never take for granted His sacrifice and that it lives within us stronger and clearer each day. May we also be bold and confident as we spread to a hurting and desperate world, the word of your unfailing love. Please give healing and hope to all that are feeling physical and spiritual pain. In Jesus' most precious name, Amen.

If you recall in our March 15th letter, Peter found himself in a real dilemma. When the chips were down, he chose to abandon Jesus and then deny even knowing Him; not once, but 3 times. Could he ever be forgiven, or did he miss his one and only chance?

I was listening to one of my favorite singers from the 60's and 70's today and a line in one of his classic hits jumped out and got me thinking about the answer.

The line is, "If you had just a minute to breathe, and they granted you one final wish... would you ask for something like another chance?"

We all have found ourselves in situations where we either think there is no way out, or no chance for a pardon, let alone forgiveness. Imagine Peter's inner struggle when he sees Jesus that first evening. There is joy mixed with guilt and shame! Jesus returns a week later and Peter's struggle intensifies! He then sees Jesus for a third time on the shore of the sea of Galilee. Everyone around him is happy that Jesus is alive. But Peter can only remember how he abandoned and denied Him. I can only imagine the hopeless, sinking feeling he must have felt when Jesus says, "Hey Peter, let's take a walk." Peter thinks, "Ok, this is the end. First, He's going to lecture me, then He will tell me to pack my bags, and never show my face around here again. And honestly, I don't blame Him in the least."

However, to Peter's surprise Jesus asks him not once but 3 times, "Do you love Me?" Peter is taken aback. He utters, "Love You? Love You?! Of course, I love You!!" Jesus then reminds Peter as to why he is one of His chosen. "Peter, you are to tend My sheep, my lambs, and to follow Me." John 21: 15-19.

Jesus, our Lord brings forgiveness to all who are broken. To all who feel abandoned and lost. And because of His love for us, all we need to do is, like the song says, "ask for another chance." Even when it feels as if we are in the darkest of times, we will always be welcomed back into Jesus' loving arms through our confession and repentance. And that is the promise of Easter!

And now you know, the rest of the story!

In His Peace,

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