

Another Word      April 20, 2021

To our friends and family of First Christian Church

I pray your week is filled with joy, peace, and wonderment. As I sit here trying to decide what “pearls of wisdom” I should write, it occurs to me that quite often we either get bogged down with too many projects to work on, or worry that we have nothing of importance to contribute to life. They both can get in the way of our happiness, our sense of worth, our sense of belonging, and can cause us, in our distress, to forget God.

Sometimes it’s good to postpone a project and take time to re-center your life as to where God is leading you, or to step out of your solitude and get involved in something God is pointing you to. Either way, there is always one thing you must do. As the old hymn says; “Take time to be Holy, speak ‘oft with thy Lord.”

First, take time to be holy. We need to, as Jesus shows us, be still, clear your thoughts and listen for His voice. This sometimes isn’t as easy as it sounds. Many a morning when I start my prayers, I find my mind has already sprinted from 5 to 10 tasks needing my “attention” while I am praying. I stop, ask for His forgiveness then read a Psalm. I then try to settle and clear my thoughts then listen through the silence. Once there is silence, it becomes much easier to speak and bring up my concerns, wants, and needs. And then to hear what is truly important to know and what He requires of us.

The hymn continues, telling us that we need to “Abide with Him, and feed on His Word.” Reading a chapter each day of His word and thinking what the meaning is for you is a great way to understand more

deeply His desire for your life. What always comes out of my prayers, after all my complaints, grievances, and personal concerns, is the realization that what He wants of me is to, as the third line of our hymn says; “Make friends of God’s children, help those that are weak.”

We all need to realize we can’t individually change the world, but by befriending and loving our neighbor, we can, through God’s love, help change the world of someone else. And it can start with a kind word, a card or phone call, or even just a simple smile. God will lead us where He wants us, if we listen then act.

The last line of our hymn says, “Forgetting in nothing, God’s blessings to seek.” In other words, if we keep His word in our hearts and minds and never forgetting to follow, then God will shower you with His joy, His peace, and His wonderment. Yes, that is indeed my prayer for you.

May we pray. Dear loving God. We lift your name above all names. There is nothing or no one greater than you. Your power and strength and wisdom open the path to everlasting life. As we pause and listen for your voice, give us clarity, patience, and understanding. May we not allow the world and its distractions to drown you out. We ask for your continued guidance, and your healing touch for those we now lift up to you..... We ask for continued protection for our front line workers; police, fire, health, and military. We also ask for your wisdom to fall on our world leaders that they may, through your compassion, aid and protect the underserved. May we each reach out to help one another in our quest for peace and harmony in our broken world. We acknowledge your love, and pray for your blessings to fall over your creation, in Jesus’ precious name we pray, Amen.

Please remember to mark your calendars and plan to attend The Celebration of Life service for Arlene Whitmer, Saturday, May 8<sup>th</sup> at 2pm at the church pavilion.

Also, please send in a picture of your mother to [ashlandfcc@gmail.com](mailto:ashlandfcc@gmail.com). The deadline is April 30<sup>th</sup>. These will be shown on Mother's Day, May 9<sup>th</sup>.

Our scriptures for this Sunday are Psalm 23, John10: 11-18, "I am the Good Shepherd". Ellie Wells is Elder.

Brian and the Elders are planning a special service May 2<sup>nd</sup>. If you love singing, listening to soloists, and hearing inspiring stories, this will be a service not to miss. This will also be a wonderful opportunity to invite someone to come with you and share in the beauty of Jesus through music.

In His Peace,

*Rich*