

Another Word April 25, 2022

To our family and friends of First Christian Church

Good morning to all! I hope our journey through Lent and Easter was as meaningful to you as it was for me. We indeed have a faithful and loving God! Thank you for your kind words of encouragement through these most Holy of days.

I would also like to give a big thank you to Linda and Ellie for preparing and sending these letters over the past few weeks, giving me a little breathing room during Lent. Their letters and stories were all first rate and I hope they will agree to write others in the future.

And speaking of our "Another Word" letters; it was April 15, 2020 when our first letter was sent. Yes it's been 2 years since we began writing them. We hope they have been informative, a little humorous, as well as inspirational. It has been a wonderful way to keep connected, and we don't see them ending anytime soon.

Can you believe that this Sunday is May first? We will be at Belmont Towers at 2pm to worship with the residents. We invite you to join us if you can.

Our scriptures for this Sunday are Psalm 30, and John 21: 1-19. Shelley Carpenter is our serving Elder. My message is entitled "Details, Details."

Through your generous giving, and matching funds, we will be sending \$3,040 through Church World Services to the food pantry in Moldova. The small country of Moldova has taken in over 100,000 refugees from Ukraine, and is in great need of food. May God's hand touch those in need through our gifts!

As we prepare ourselves for prayer, please remember Dale, Kim, Mary Bee, and Chase. Let us be in 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. In Jesus' most precious name, Amen.

In my 30 plus years as a salesman, I clocked some 2 million miles by car. During those trips there was plenty of time to think, plan, and to reminisce. Reminisce, means to look back. One of the harsh realities of reminiscing though, is you quite often only remember the hard times in your past. Memories that crowd out all others as you look back in time. That's called baggage.

Now in my travels, I also had the opportunity to fly to conventions and meetings. If you have ever flown and checked you luggage, you always end up at the baggage claim. And as you stand there waiting for your luggage, invariably there is always one suitcase that goes round and round with no one there to claim it. You just keep watching that old baggage go by again and again.

I hope you see my connection. We seem to dwell on the past, dredging up all of our old baggage. Run it round and round in our minds. And as we do, it triggers feelings of fear, anger, resentments, and helplessness. That's not what God wants for us. In Isaiah 43:18-19, God says, "Forget the former things; do not dwell in the past. See I am doing a new thing! It is springing up before you. Do you not perceive it?"

We can't totally forget our good or bad memories, but God tells us to "Not dwell on them." Our adversary, the evil one, is happiest when we look back, live in the past, dwell on things that cannot be changed.

Because by dwelling in the past, we forget about God, we miss His “New thing,” and become filled with despair and live with no hope.

So, what’s the answer? We are to keep driving forward. Yeah, you can check the rearview mirror from time to time, but if you only look back, you will eventually crash. And as for the unclaimed luggage; leave it on the carrousel. Let it only be a distant memory, because “Look! God is doing a new thing,” just for you.

In His Peace,

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