

## Another Word

May 27, 2020

Just when we thought spring would never arrive, wham! We jump right into summer. Oh, don't misunderstand, I am enjoying our new found friend. Warm breezes, light showers, and abundant sunshine are beautiful reminders of God's love and the wonderful gifts he lavishes on us. I hope you are inspired to venture outside, catch some sun, possibly plant a few flowers, and just marvel at the beauty of our world.

We had a beautiful service for Doctor Vera Chalfant Saturday the 23<sup>rd</sup>. The family expresses their thanks for the love shown by her many friends.

We are watching how the reopening of our city, county, and state progresses. There are many good signs that we are getting back to some semblance of "normal." We are eager to return to "live" worship in the near future, but of course your safety is our main concern.

Our pavilion is becoming quite the gathering place. Hardly a day goes by that someone (couples, families, friends) doesn't show up to have coffee, lunch, or just to get out into the fresh air. There is plenty of room, so come out when you can. This Sunday at 11am, a group from The Ashland Pregnancy and Care Center will be holding a prayer service in the pavilion.

The sanctuary will remain open each Tuesday through the month of June from 10am to 2pm for those wanting to pray, listen to music, or watch our latest service at 1pm. You, as well as your friends, are always welcome. Come when you can, leave when you must.

May we pray. Most Holy God, we are so blessed by your love for us. In the midst of our daily lives and challenges we often forget to stop and just say thank you. Please forgive us when we think of ourselves first, when we stray from you, when we become stiff-necked and disobedient. You are our one and only true God, and we do love you so.

May we always listen for your voice and follow you to do your will. We pray for your guidance and wisdom to be used by our national, state, and local leaders, and may that wisdom spread around the world for peace, healing and mercy for all your children. We raise this prayer to you as one voice, in the precious name of Jesus, Amen

Have you ever seen a child heading to school with a backpack that is larger than they are? It's amazing how much those bags can hold. If you ask them if they need help carrying the bag, the answer is usually, "no, I can do it myself!" we are an independent lot, aren't we.

Like the child mentioned above, a lot of us are carrying a heavy pack on our backs everywhere we go, and it is seriously weighing us down.

Marley from Dicken's "A Christmas Carol" didn't realize the weight he was carrying until it was too late. The weight can be overwhelming. When we sin, when we do things we shouldn't do, or don't do, the guilt of past mistakes, the fear and uncertainty of daily lives, even the shame of neglect can fill "our life's backpack" so it becomes ponderous, a crushing weight that we can no longer ignore.

So, what can be done? For the child, we can walk with them and take a few books from their bag to lighten the load. But what about the load we carry? Who will walk with us? Who will take on our burdens? Jesus said in Matthew 11:28, "come to me, all you who are worried and burdened, and I will give you rest." Jesus loves us and He offers to take our burdens on Himself so we can live the rest of our lives free from the weight. But there is a catch. We need to take all our burdens to the cross and leave them there.

Like the child, we want to be independent by saying "I can do it myself". But you can't. You may fool yourself for a little while, but no one is strong enough to carry their burdens alone, let alone for a lifetime.

God sent Jesus to take the weight off our shoulders and to carry it Himself. He paid a high price on the cross so that He could. But we must allow Him carry them for us, to leave our sins at the foot of His cross, forever, and walk away forgiven, and into a new life in Christ.

In His Peace,

*Rich*