

Another Word. May 3, 2021

To our family and friends of First Christian Church,

Greetings from Ellie & Linda! Pastor Rich is on a well-deserved break this week. He will return for our Mother's Day Service on May 9th.

Please keep Rich and Donita in your prayers for their safe travel. If you have a concern, please contact Linda or myself or leave a message on the office phone as all calls will be answered.

There will be a Celebration of Life for Arlene Whitmer on Saturday, May 8th at 2:00. Weather permitting, it will be in the pavilion.

Your cards to the nursing home went to Brethren Care this week.

Please take a minute to sign a card on the table or bring a few signed cards from home. These cards mean so much to those in our nursing homes. In May we might try to remember our own shut-ins with cards. If you need a list, please see me – I will put some sheets with the addresses on the "card table".

Our weekly church services are reaching and blessing people across our country. We are receiving cards and emails from many folks expressing their thanks for being there each week and giving them hope, peace, and courage in these troubling times. Please continue to spread the word to others to tune in to our services found on our website.

<http://www.firstchristianashland.org> or YouTube firstchristianashandohio

May we pray.

God of life and love. We lift our voices as one in praise and honor to you. We thank you for the gift of life, and the wonderful opportunities you provide. Amid the fears and uncertainties that surround us, we are strengthened by the knowledge that you are ever present in our lives. We lift up to you those who need strengthened, who need hope, who need healing and who need peace. Be with our first responders, our

city, state, and government leaders as they guide us, with your wisdom, that we may emerge stronger in our commitment to you and one another. You, and You alone are our God, and all praise and honor we lift to You. In Jesus' Name, Amen

Now, this is where Pastor Rich tells us a story, but since I can't think of a story I will relate a passage from one of my Max Lucado books. 'Let the Journey Begin'. Titled, "Have You Lost Your Hearing?"

Once there was a man who dared God to speak.

Burn the bush like you did for Moses, God, and I will follow.

Collapse the walls like you did for Joshua, God, and I will fight.

Still the waves like you did on Galilee, God, and I will listen.

And so the man sat by a bush, near a wall, and close to the sea

And waited for God to speak.

And God heard the man, so God answered.

He sent fire, not for a bush, but for a church.

He brought down a wall, not of brick, but of sin.

He stilled a storm, not of a sea, but of a soul.

And God waited for the man to respond.

And he waited . . . And he waited . . . And waited.

But because the man was looking at bushes, not hearts; bricks and not lives, seas and not souls, he decided that God had done nothing.

Finally he looked to God and asked "*Have you lost your power?*"

And God looked at him and said "*Have you lost your hearing?*"

I wonder how often we look for God the same way. Right here and now, God could be answering our prayers in a way we don't quite conceive.

We too may be looking for burning bushes! We need to listen for God's voice every day. He is speaking to us. Maybe through a passage we read in the Bible, a friend, a stranger we happen to meet on the street. We don't want God to ask us *if we have lost our hearing?*

In His Peace,

Ellie & Linda