

Another Word June 22, 2021

To our friends and family of First Christian Church

I'm sure some of you noticed the new cement walk from the pavilion to the storage building. What a great addition, and it makes it so much easier to set up for our outdoor services. Please join me in thanking Mitch and Jenny Hastings for their generous donation!

We will once again host a "Front Lawn" fireworks viewing party on Sunday, July Fourth. The building will be open, and snacks will be available. Believe it or not, we already have enough in donations and all the snacks have been purchased. We have such a generous congregation! This is a great time to meet and make friends with many from our neighborhood, and is really a fun time. Hope to see you there.

There will be a dedication service this Sunday for Lane Shakley, son of Robin Long and Seth Shakley. Please come and be a part of this family's commitment to God and each other.

Our scriptures for this Sunday are; Psalm 130, and Mark 5: 21-43, "Believe and have faith." Mona Campbell is the Elder.

Please remember George and Ruth Paulsen and all who are in need of physical and spiritual healing...May we all find peace and refreshment in our Lord..

Dear most Holy God. We gather as one in our community of believers to offer ourselves in praise and adoration to You. Help us to conform

our minds more closely to the mind of Christ. And we welcome with open arms, the renewing gift of the Holy Spirit. We dedicate this day and all that we are to Your glory. Accept our heartfelt praise through Jesus Christ, who is our peace, Amen.

With Independence Day fast approaching, I thought it appropriate to talk a little about one of our National Monuments; in particular, The Washington Monument.

Among a number of plans submitted in 1836, the drawings of Robert Mills were chosen, and he was awarded the honor of building a monument to our first President, George Washington. The drawings and plans were to build the world's tallest obelisk; a symbol that would express the timelessness of ancient civilizations. The monument would also embody and express the respect, love, and gratitude of a nation toward its most essential founding father.

But from the beginning, the project faced many setbacks and delays. First, it was to be privately funded. The money didn't come in. Construction was delayed for 12 years. And when construction finally began, the land chosen was found to be unstable, and a new sight had to be located. Then saboteurs destroyed a prized block of marble and vandals repeatedly defaced the ongoing construction. By 1854, it was little more than an ugly stump on a hill, all donations dried up, and work was halted. For 18 years Mills struggled with the project. He passed away a year later broken, discouraged, and dejected.

Twenty two years later, as the country was mending after the civil war, many building projects resumed, including the monument. So, in 1876 Thomas Casey took over the project. However, instead of private funding, Casey appealed to the patriotism of the public and encouraged them to donate and help finish the monument. Funds began to come in, work resumed, and in 1884 the capstone was set in place.

It would be easy to compare any number of situations in the Old Testament with this story. How the city of Jerusalem, or the Temple was destroyed. Not to mention the many problems, disappointments, and delays the Jewish people faced while trying to rebuild the walls and gates of their beloved city. I could also talk about how, you and I constantly run into our own problems, delays, and setbacks in our day to day lives. Then to be left wondering how we will cope, get back on track, and overcome our disappointments. (Can I get an Amen here?)

So the question becomes, how do we overcome our problems? What can we do to see a ray of hope, a glint of sunshine? First, we need to see our problems not as obstacles, but to see them as opportunities. Then, we must remember that discouragement, self pity, and worry drain our spirits. We need to persevere and to press on in the knowledge that God is always with us. And to know God always works things out for our good. So, what do we do as we wait for His perfect timing? As we wait for that “first ray” of hope? The answer is at the top of the Washington Monument!

On an aluminum plaque mounted on the capstone are the words, “LAUS DEO,” Latin for “Praise be to God!” Paul writes in 1 Thessalonians

5:16-18, “Be joyful always; pray continually; give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus.” Yes that’s right. We are to praise God, and to praise Him in all circumstances. It doesn’t matter whether our “construction” has stopped, or if our lives are running smoothly. God is always there, because He is faithful, and He is true. He is the one thing in our lives we can always depend on. And that makes Him worthy of our praise. So, Praise Him continually, and in all things give Him thanks!

Oh, and one more thing. It’s about the plaque. It faces due east. And because the monument is the tallest structure in Washington, it is the first surface to meet the sun each day. Imagine, the first thing to greet each new day in our Nation’s Capital is, “Praise be to God!”

Psalms 113: 3 states, “From the rising of the sun to the place where it sets, the name of the Lord is to be praised.” Wouldn’t it be wonderful if every home, every building, and every monument, as well as every heart around the world called out each morning, “LAUS DEO!”

In His Peace,

*Rich*