

## Another Word

July 7, 2020

Dear friends and family of First Christian Church,

As Nat King Cole sang, welcome to the “lazy, hazy, crazy, days of summer...”

The sun is shining, flowers are blooming, the grass is growing, the air is warm, the grass is growing; did I mention the grass growing? I hope you have been able to get outside, have a picnic, and enjoy God’s handiwork.

Speaking of outside. Our outdoor services are going well, and we hope to soon see those who haven’t been able to attend but come only as you feel able and safe. Until then, please know we will continue to post our services on our website. The weather is cooperating so we will again be at the pavilion July 12<sup>th</sup>.

As a reminder, The Ashland Care Center’s Annual “Virtual” Banquet and fund raiser will be shown in our sanctuary August 6<sup>th</sup> at 7pm. The keynote speaker is Abby Johnson, author of the book, “Unplanned.” Please contact me to reserve a seat.

Baby bottles should be turned in by this Sunday. If you can’t bring it in, I will be happy to pick it up.

Don’t forget that the graduation party for Alexis, Rachel, and Lauren Hastings is July 25<sup>th</sup> from 2-6 pm. At their home.

It’s hard to believe, but July 28<sup>th</sup> is the 10-year anniversary of moving to King Road. Yes, we are planning a celebration. More details to follow.

Scriptures for Sunday: Psalm 119: 105-112, Matt: 13: 1-9, 18-23

And please remember Arlene, Carol, and Marcia in your daily prayers.

Dear heavenly father, we rejoice this day for your gift of life, and the new life offered through your son Jesus Christ. We also give thanks to you for the love of family, the affection of friends, and giving us strength and abilities to be able to serve you each day. We especially pray for those who are in great need; the homeless, the widowed, the orphaned, the lonely, the outcasts, the persecuted. Guide each of us this day to make a difference in someone’s life. Give us courage to be a witness of your wondrous love and to share in the work you have given us as your disciples, in Jesus’ blessed name, Amen

It has been so hot that I thought I would tell you a “cool” story!

In 1914, Ernest Shackleton, a famous English explorer led an expedition to cross the Antarctica. A daring feat that was unsuccessful. His ship, The Endurance, became trapped in the ice and was crushed by the terrific pressure. He and his crew salvaged lifeboats and some supplies and began the long and arduous task of trying to find land, while on a moving ice flow. With no way to communicate with the outside world, it became a test of endurance to just stay alive. By a stroke of luck, the flow took them close to Elephant Island. Although uninhabited, it was at least land. While most of the crew stayed behind, Shackleton and 5 crewmen, after fitting one of the boats with a crude shelter and makeshift sail, set out into the raging ocean on an 800 mile two week journey, hoping to reach South Georgia Island, the closest inhabited port in the South Atlantic.

This “failed” expedition became a victorious success when upon reaching South Georgia, they were able to commandeer a ship, return to Elephant Island and save every crewmember. All thanks to their courage and their endurance!

The apostle Paul knew what it was to endure. On his way to Rome to face trial for his belief in Jesus, the ship he was on was about to sink. Paul encouraged the men with the promise of God that all would survive, despite the loss of the ship. (Acts 27: 23-24)

When disaster strikes, we tend to want God to make it better, IMMEDIATELY! (can I get an Amen on that!) However, God gives us faith to “endure,” to grow, and to trust. In Romans 5:3, Paul writes to us, “Suffering produces endurance.” Knowing that, like the crew of Shackleton, we can endure all of our hard times by staying together, encouraging one another, and by trusting in God.

Holy God, guide us, keep us going with endurance, even when the going becomes difficult, and seemingly impossible, Amen

In His Peace,

*Rich*