

PASTOR SCOTT'S

MONTHLY MESSAGE



“Resurrection Redux”

We just passed the “half-way mark” of 2021. But on the liturgical calendar we are a little farther through the year, 7 months and a week. We have passed all the major celebrated religious seasons and holidays: Advent, Christmas, Lent, Easter, and Pentecost. We are now in the longest “season” of the liturgical calendar - the longer of the two seasons of Ordinary Time.

In Ordinary Time we focus on the teachings of Christ. The liturgical Gospel readings during this season highlight Jesus’ parables and his teachings reflected in how he engaged the world. But, another opportunity during this season is to look back upon the earlier, more celebrated, events of the liturgical year, maybe with a calmer approach/perspective from not being wrapped in the fervor of the particular season. Let’s try Easter.

Rev. Dr. Thomas G. Long is a Presbyterian pastor and professor, and is widely recognized as an outstanding preacher. In an article he wrote about Easter he opened with this quote: “You know, I like Christianity, but I would not like it without the resurrection. Show me your resurrection.” Zen Master to a Trappist Monk

Which raises a good question, how do we show Christ’s resurrection - yes, at Easter, but also now as we drift further from that season?

As we return to gathered worship, Tonna Strasko has replenished the basket that holds packs of food and water. All are invited to take a pack and give it to someone in need - someone on a corner, a neighbor, a person looking lost ... It is a small gesture, but in giving a meal it is reminiscent of the risen Christ breaking bread with the two he journeyed with on the road to Emmaus. In acknowledging another’s existence and need, and in sharing a meal, are we not showing the resurrected Christ. What other ways may we “break bread” to “Show me your resurrection”?

We are still living with Coronavirus. There has been much tragedy and suffering from this pandemic. But in the midst of this we raise prayers, and maybe even hymns come to our or others’ lips in the face of these troubles. Long states: “When hope and trust in God, even in the midst of terrible loss, rise up in people’s throats as prayer and song, perhaps we have glimpsed the risen Christ moving through our lives, giving comfort to the grief-stricken.”

I believe that when love is sown, particularly when such true love is the opposite of what might be expected in the given situation, we are showing the resurrection. When we have been troubled, threatened, endangered, frustrated, challenged or aggravated by another, but respond with love rather than escalating with an in-kind reaction we become a demonstration of the resurrection.

Matthew’s gospel ends with Jesus sending the disciples to the ends of the earth to teach of and reveal Christ. St Francis of Assisi is attributed with saying, “Preach the gospel at all times, when necessary use words.” We teach with our words. More powerfully we teach with our actions of compassion and caring, of sacrifice, of putting the needs and wants of others ahead of our desires, and revealing our awe in the face of God’s blessings. In speaking and living the life Christ invites us into we “show the resurrection” to the world.

Let’s be open during Ordinary Time to other ways Christ invites us to reveal his resurrection to those anxious to see it (whether they realize it or not)!

Peace,

Pastor Scott