

“THE CORNERSTONE”

APRIL, 2022 – MAY, 2022

First Presbyterian Church PC (U.S.A.)

206 E. 20th Street P. O. Box 444

Falls City, Nebraska 68355

402-245-2650 – <http://www.fallscitypres.org>

Worship Time: 11 am

Pastor's Reflection

Christ is risen! He is risen indeed! Alleluia!

Now what do we do? Our Lenten Journey is over. We traveled to the upper room on Maundy Thursday with Jesus and his disciples. We heard Jesus say those powerful, effective words that are still effective when we hear them on Sunday mornings, “Given and shed for you for the forgiveness of your sins” (Matthew 26: 28). We traveled to the foot of the cross on Good Friday and heard Jesus utter a lonely cry of abandonment, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me” (Mark 15: 34)? We heard the words of finality that Jesus spoke with his last breath, “It is finished!” (John 19: 30), paying in full the price for our Sin that separates us from God. We traveled to the empty tomb along with the group of women early on the first day of the week to find it empty. We heard once more, the words of the angels at the empty tomb, “He is not here, but has risen” (Luke 24: 6). The final, culminating Day of the Resurrection is over. Now what do we do?

The month of April reminds us that Easter is *more than just one day*. Easter is an “every Sunday” celebration during which we come together to receive the fruit of the cross and resurrection of Jesus—the forgiveness of sins and the certainty of eternal life with God. Easter is also an “every day” celebration in which we live each day trusting in God through Christ, knowing that Jesus is “the resurrection and the life” (John 11: 25) for us. So, *what* do we do now as we go forth from the empty tomb? Let us follow the example of the first witnesses of the empty tomb. After the two angels reminded Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and the other women that Jesus had risen, St. Luke tells us that “they remembered the words, and *returning from the tomb they told all these things* to the eleven and to all

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the rest" (Luke 24: 8-9, emphasis mine). They went forth from the tomb changed by the resurrection of Jesus. They went forth from the tomb to bring an "every day" witness of God's power over Sin, Death, Hell, and Satan himself.

So *where* do we go when we leave the empty tomb? Let us follow the example of Jesus' first disciples. After Jesus walked through locked doors and appeared to the eleven disciples and showed himself to Thomas, seven of the eleven disciples went back to their fishing business (John 21: 1-14). They went back to their vocations or stations in life and took the witness of the resurrection with them. They lived in the joy of the resurrection of Jesus while carrying out the daily, ordinary labor and responsibilities given to them.

Similar to the women at the empty tomb and the eleven disciples, we are "every day" witnesses and participants in the resurrection of Jesus. We believe and are baptized. We have the hope of eternal life. We have the joy of the resurrection *living* inside of us. Also, like the women at the empty tomb and the eleven disciples, we have vocations or stations in life that God has given to us as a gift. Most of us are not fishermen, but all of us have one or more of these callings: father, husband, mother, wife, son, daughter, brother, sister, grandparent, employee, retiree, friend, and neighbor. Each of these callings comes with a set of duties and responsibilities. As repentant Christians and with God's grace, we wrap the daily duties and responsibilities of our vocations in the joy, love, peace, and forgiveness of Christ. More than likely, others will take notice and God will bless your faithful work by giving you opportunities to "tell all these things to all the rest" (Luke 24: 9).

Now, we go forth from Easter Sunday and the celebration of the empty tomb free as God's forgiven children in Christ. Now we go forth empowered by God's Spirit living and active within us to live in the joy of the resurrection as "every day" witnesses. "For thee delightfully employ whate'er thy bounteous grace has giv'n, and run my course with even joy, and closely walk with thee to heav'n".



Recommended Reading

31 Verses to Write On Your Heart by Liz Curtis Higgs
The Librarian of Boone's Hollow by Kim Vogel Sawyer
Love Without Limits by Nick Vujcic with Kane Vujcic
A Warrior of the People by Joe Starita (This was reviewed at a Women's Circle Group several years ago. Is worth reading again!)

+++++++PARISH NEWS+++++++

UPDATE FOR THE DIRECTORY

We will be updating the church directory over the next several months. Please submit to the office by email or lay on the secretary's desk your current address, telephone number, email address and a picture, if possible, to include in the directory. We will also create a list of those who don't have pictures and take them at a later date.

JOINT LENTEN SERVICES

The Falls City, Hiawatha and Humboldt Presbyterian churches held a joint Ash Wednesday service with Falls City as the host. Maundy Thursday services will be held jointly in Hiawatha on April 14th at 6:30 pm.

FIRST FRIDAY BREAKFASTS

Due to speaker conflicts, our First Friday Breakfasts dates for April and May have changed. April's breakfast will be held on the 8th with guest speaker, Tim Heckenlively, Superintendent of Falls City Public Schools. On Wednesday, May 4, we will have Randy Gottula, long time radio and sports broadcaster as our speaker. Contact John Martin 402-740-5900 or the church office at 402-245-2650 so we may plan food needs accordingly. Start your day off with a great breakfast and interesting speakers. If you have speakers in mind or would like to hear about a topic let John know and he will take it from there.

IT'S NOT TOO LATE FOR ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING!

The One Great Hour of Sharing campaign kicked off on March 6. These gifts are a reminder that through the simple act of sharing, we are blessed, and we experience God's abundance in surprising ways. Whether it is offering relief from natural disasters or access to food, water and healthcare, our gifts are needed. If you wish to donate and have not had the opportunity, an envelope is enclosed and can be mailed to P. O. Box 444 or dropped off at the church. We will complete our campaign with a dedication on Easter Sunday, April 17. Envelopes and coin boxes for this special offering are also on the table at the back of sanctuary. Thank you for your consideration.

PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN

The Homestead Presbyterian Women of our presbytery will be visiting churches, Saturday, April 2. They will be at the Palmyra church for morning coffee and the Auburn church for lunch. They plan to be in Falls City at 3 pm for tea and cookies. They will bring the cookies and we will provide coffee and tea. Our Presbyterian friends from Humboldt and Pawnee City have been asked to join us. Please plan to come to church that afternoon for a time of fellowship with other PW friends.

BLANKET SUNDAY

Blanket Sunday will be held on May 10th. How fitting as Mothers wrap their arms around their children for comfort, we also will bring comfort to others with blankets. If you wish to donate to this cause, please use a pew envelope marked Blanket Sunday or mark your check as such, so it may be posted accordingly.

DIAPER CLOSET

Please keep the diaper closet in your prayers as they continue to provide a great service to those in need of baby items. Their inventory is varied and available to all. They can always use volunteers to help out on Mondays 4-6 pm. Contact Jennifer James for additional information on volunteering and also current closet needs.

COMMUNITY NEWS

The Community Easter Cantata will be held at Humboldt United Methodist Church on Palm Sunday, April 10, 2022 at 3 pm. Members of the community have been practicing every week since February and will present a meaningful and faithful program. See you there!

THOUGHTS TO PONDER --

The Lord is my peace-I shall not live in anxiety.
He puts me under His wing of comfort and calms my spirit within me.
He takes all my anxieties on Himself and helps me to focus on Him.
Yes though, I walk through a time of grave uncertainties and fierce anxieties,
I will not fret-for You are my peace.
Your word and Your presence calm me now.
You hold my uncertainties in the palm of Your hand.
You soothe my anxious mind.
You smooth my wrinkled brow.
Surely serenity and trust in You shall fill me all the days of my life,
And I shall keep my mind stayed on You forever.

Forth in Thy Name, O Lord, I Go

Forth in Thy name, O Lord, I go,
My daily labor to pursue,
Thee, only Thee, resolved to know
In all I think or speak or do.

The task Thy wisdom has assigned,
O let me cheerfully fulfill;
In all my works Thy presence find,
And prove Thy good and perfect will.

Thee may I set at my right hand,
Whose eyes my inmost substance see,
And labor on at Thy command,
And offer all my works to Thee.

Give me to bear Thine easy yoke,
And ev'ry moment watch and pray,
And still to things eternal look,
And hasten to Thy glorious day.

For Thee delightfully employ
Whate'er Thy bounteous grace has giv'n,
And run my course with even joy,
And closely walk with Thee to heav'n.

Lutheran Song Book #854

NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

All newsletter articles for the June-July newsletter will be due to the office by **MAY 15TH**. Please submit an article for the newsletter. Keep everyone informed about the activities of the church. Thank you for marking this *important* date on your calendar!