



Happy Easter

Demonstration of Love

Tim Van Cleave, pastor, Christian Life Center

Romans 5:18 says, "But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us."

Human love falls so short of the kind of love that God demonstrated to us. God not only says that He loves us, but He showed His love to us by giving His Son to die for us. Jesus paid the greatest price ever. He not only died for us, but He suffered as no other human has ever suffered. His physical suffering was extreme, but His greatest suffering was when He took all the sins of mankind upon Himself and faced the rejection of God, His father.

It's a tragedy to know about the wonderful demonstration of God's love to us, and yet not experience it in our lives in a personal way. It's like knowing where a million dollars is hidden but not doing anything about it. Just knowing about the money but not using it doesn't do us any good. In the same way, just knowing about the

Easter message of Jesus' death on the cross and His resurrection from the dead doesn't do us any good. We must experience it by developing a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

We cannot develop this personal relationship with Jesus by merely attending church, being baptized, obeying the Golden Rule or living by the Ten Commandments. We must begin this relationship with Jesus by receiving Him into our lives and being born again.

John 1:12 says, "But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God; to those who believe in His name."

John 3:3 says, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." When we are born again, we must repent of our sins.

Acts 17:30 says, "God now commands all men everywhere to repent." This means that we turn from our sinful ways and obey God. We do things God's way instead of our own way. Once we have been born again, we then express our love for God by obedience to His commands which include baptism, church attendance, good works, etc.

This Easter why not experience God's love rather than just knowing about it? Why not begin a personal relationship with Jesus Christ? Then you won't just know about the Easter story, but you will have experienced it.

As you celebrate Easter this year, don't merely acknowledge the fact that Jesus died, was buried, and rose again. Instead, experience the greatest joy of all by receiving Him as your Lord and Savior.

An Easter Message

Rev. Stan Hoobing, Hope-Valby Lutheran Church

It was dawn of the first day of the week when Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome brought spices so that they might prepare the body of Jesus for proper burial. Along the way they talked about the events of the past week and pondered over how the stone would be rolled away from the tomb. When they reached the tomb, it was empty. The body of the Lord was gone. They were disappointed, no, devastated! Had someone stolen the body of the Lord, the one person who had changed their lives and given them hope? They were dumbfounded, no, shocked. After all the mockery and suffering the Lord Jesus of Nazareth had endured did he have to suffer this final indignity?

An angel dressed in white stood near the tomb and asked: "Do not be alarmed; you are looking for Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified? He has been raised; he is not here. Look, there is the place they laid Him. But go, tell his disciples and Peter that He is going ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see Him; just as He told you." (Mark 16:6-7 NRSV). But the women were not joyful. They were bitter and shocked and left in silence.

Easter which is normally a joyful occasion can be a traumatic time especially if we feel angry, bitter and disappointment over a very uncertain future.

But thanks be to Almighty God, who, through crucified Jesus Christ, has gotten us the victory over sin, death and devil. And thanks be to Almighty God who has not been defeated by the enemy, but instead defeated the enemy and has liberated us from our anger, bitterness and disappointment. And thanks be to Almighty God, who has given us a new lease on life through the resurrection of our Lord and Savior, Jesus the Christ. A life full of promise and hope.

Why an Easter?

Rev. Bob Dowrey, United Methodist Church

At this writing, my third to the last living aunt is in a bad way health-wise, and could die anytime. Couldn't any of us? I wrote her daughter, my cousin, back in Massachusetts, to tell her, among other things, what I felt to be her shining hour. This is it:

Years ago, during a Sunday School policy meeting back home with

everyone present, both adults and children, my aunt stood up during the meeting at a critical time and said, "What would Jesus have done?"

How the meeting ended up, or even what the issue was I have long since forgotten. But I'll always remember Auntie Irene's positive Christian witness.

If it weren't for Easter and the Resurrection, this Jesus, whom my aunt suggested that we look to, would just have been another good man, another religious idealist, or simply another spiritual teacher and not the Savior of the world, to whom we all owe allegiance and faithful service.

He probably would have been forgotten and nobody would have heard of Him. But God raised Jesus to be with us forever—as Savior, redeemer, example, friend and companion, etc. Let's follow Him.

"Eastering"

Rev. Lea Mathieu, Lone United Church of Christ

Consider "Easter" as a verb. To Easter: God Eastered, God is Eastering, God will Easter. What would it mean?

Since Easter isn't really a verb, the possibilities are great. It could mean to be resurrected, or to resurrect; to be reborn, or to give birth in a spiritual sense. It could mean to sweep out the tombs in our own lives and leave our own burial wraps behind. It could mean to encounter the living God, face-to-face. It could mean to burst free, to astonish, and to experience great and holy joy. Etc.

And who would Easter? Certainly God in Christ originated the action. But not only did God Easter nearly 2,000 years ago; God also calls us constantly to be reborn, resurrected, joyful and free.

On Easter Sunday, we celebrate a long-ago event. But we are also challenged to experience that event here and now, to look in the dark places and find our Lord saying to us, "Do not be afraid, and do not weep. I am here. Go in joy." To Easter!

Easter, the triumph of life over death

Father Gerry Condon, St. Patrick's Catholic Church

Easter is the message of the triumph of life over death; the life of Jesus Christ over sin. The empty tomb says "He is Risen".

The Bible says "He is Risen". The Angel said "He is Risen". The message of Easter tells us that Jesus was everything He said He was.

When Jesus died, the apostles were disillusioned, disappointed and disheartened. Two of the disciples on the road to Emmaus wanted to put distance between them and the scene of his death. The others hid themselves. When he appeared to them they were frightened for they did not fully understand the scriptures. Even though he had predicted several times that he would die and rise again, it took them time to come to believe such an astounding truth.

We need to ask ourselves what is the meaning of the resurrection for us. Does it challenge our faith? For those who believe, the resurrection is the most convincing proof that Jesus is truly God come to earth. It is a truth that inspires people to follow Him, to live His teachings, to speak to Him in prayer, and to understand that He is the ultimate answer to man's deepest desires.

On this Easter, let His risen life be our source of strength to bear the difficulties of life; let it be our inspiration to live His teachings; and let it bring to us always the peace of mind and heart and soul that only He can give.

Dennis Swanson receives honor

Dennis Swanson, former Lone resident, and his wife, Joann, were recently named Citizens of the Month February 1994 by the Auburn Washington Area Chamber of Commerce.

Dennis, a pilot and Joann, a homemaker, have both been extremely active in their community and their church, participating in volunteer activities ranging from coaching soccer to collecting for a cancer drive.

Dennis provided the wood and built a fence for the South King County Youth Shelter. Joann coordinates, contributes and collects furniture for several organizations and they contributed funds for appliances for

the facilities. "Their contributions always include hands-on work and the use of any vehicles they have, including pickup trucks and back hoes," said an Auburn Chamber spokesperson. Both also spent considerable years as consultants for the Juvenile Court Conference Committee.

"They have big hearts and large and gracious personalities," said the Auburn Chamber spokesperson, who added that the Swansons were "volunteers extraordinaire".

Dennis is the son of Irene Swanson, Heppner. His brother, Jim, lives in Lone and sister Jean Ann Turner lives in Heppner.

Lutherans plan Maundy Thursday

The congregation of Valby Lutheran Church will gather at 6 p.m. Maundy Thursday, March 31, for a potluck dinner and cultural sharing with Japanese students from Kyushu Jogakuin

Lutheran Women's School of Kumamoto, Japan. The congregation will observe a solemn Communion service and stripping of the altar at 7 p.m. Pastor Hoobing will deliver a meditation called "Hands", based on reading of the seventh last word from the cross: "Father, into your hands I commit my spirit".

On April 1, Good Friday, the congregation of Hope Lutheran Church will gather at 6 p.m. for a soup supper and cultural sharing experience with the Japanese friends. A service of Darkness for Good Friday will follow at 7 p.m. Pastor Hoobing will again preach on the theme of "Hands".

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O'Ducky race winners announced

Greg Smith became the \$100 winner in the St. Patrick's weekend O'Ducky Race when his plastic duck crossed the finish line on Willow Creek first.

Kelsie Fox's duck came in second for a \$75 prize; Stan Kemp's duck was third for \$50; and John Murray's duck was fourth for \$25 in prize money. Kisha Vernaza, Tony Doherty and Roger Mortimore each won \$10 for fifth through seventh places.

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