

Tidings of Peace

April

Newsletter of Peace Memorial EPC

From the Pastor...

Dear Friends,

It was August of 1527 and the bubonic plague had come to Wittenberg, Germany. Everyone who could get out of the village was getting out. The Elector of Saxony, John the Steadfast, ordered the famous professor and reformer, Martin Luther, to leave. He refused. Along with his pregnant wife Katharina, Luther stayed in Wittenberg, opening his house as a ward for the sick.

A particularly virulent and awful disease, the bubonic plague killed its victims quickly and painfully, causing high fevers and large, weeping boils. It was highly contagious and had an astronomical mortality rate (80%). In the Black Death of 1347, for instance, the disease struck Europe killing an estimated 60 percent of its population.

A product of the bacteria *Yersinia Pestis*, the bubonic plague was spread by infected fleas and could also be transmitted through the air. But neither the cause of the disease nor its mode of transmission was known in 1527. What people did know was that being in the presence of someone who was ill was dangerous. One medieval doctor, for example, theorized that “instantaneous death occurs when the aerial spirit escaping from the eyes of the sick man strikes the healthy person standing near and looking at the sick.” The conventional wisdom was clear: “stay away from the sick.”

As a result, historians tell us that healthy people did all they could to avoid the plague. They fled the cities leaving behind their sick and dying. The shops were closed. Doctors refused to see patients and priests refused to administer the last rites.

Martin Luther’s refusal to leave Wittenberg stands in stark contrast. He chose to stay to minister to the sick,

literally living his life in the shadow of death. As others fled, another pastor asked Luther whether it was okay for a Christian to leave.

In a letter entitled, “Whether one may flee from a deadly plague,” Luther explained the importance of caring for our neighbor. He wrote about the community and taking the necessary steps to protect others. And he emphasized the giftedness of serving.

Martin Luther explained his view that it was not necessarily wrong to flee from death (as indeed King David had fled from both Saul and Absalom), but that one’s community and family responsibilities first must be considered. In order to leave, one was required to make sure one’s neighbors were cared for:

[N]o one should dare leave his neighbor unless there are others who will take care of the sick in their stead and nurse them.... we are bound to each other in such a way that no one may forsake the other in their distress but is obliged to assist and help them as they themselves would like to be helped.

Martin Luther was surely correct that we “are bound to each other.” As the term “community-spread” makes clear, the actions and choices we make have an impact on others.

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(From the Pastor, Continued...)

Luther emphasized the importance of prevention. In advice remarkably similar to the CDC's guidelines today, he urged people to take medicine, to disinfect their homes, and to avoid people and places so as not to spread the disease (the admonition to avoid people and places applied only if assistance was not needed).

Luther also wrote about the special responsibilities of public officials in times of crisis. These officials had a duty to remain in areas affected by the plague. Their authority was meant to be exercised in an effort to protect and preserve their communities. For Luther, public service was just that — service.

In a prescient passage, Luther described the benefits of hospitals. "It would be well," he wrote, "to maintain hospitals staffed with people to take care of the sick so that patients from private homes can be sent there." In Luther's time, however, hospitals were few and far between. Today, doctors and nurses are the heroes of our time. While we practice social distancing and work remotely, they head into work to care for our sick, knowing there is a high probability they will treat someone with the coronavirus.

The plentiful health care currently available in the U.S. wouldn't have gotten Luther's parishioners off the hook. Luther makes clear that, while doctors and nurses may be on the front lines, we all have a part to play. We can practice social distancing and protect ourselves and our neighbors. Further, hospitals can only care for medical needs, they are unable to bring a sack of groceries to a senior citizen or to watch a mom's kids for the afternoon.

An offering of help and kindness during a time that can be isolating for American families can help bind us together. Martin Luther defined godliness simply, as serving God. For Luther, the way to serve God was to serve our neighbor. As he reminds us, "Blessed is he who considers the poor. The Lord will deliver him in the day of trouble." (Psalm 41:1). Regardless of one's background, we've all experienced the paradox of gifting: that it is more blessed to give than to receive.

Whatever transpires with COVID-19 cases in our community, nation and across the globe, we would do well to return to Luther's words. To take reasonable preventative steps and to love our neighbors. This may mean to step up and engage our neighbor in service. It may also mean to set aside our God-given rights to assemble in worship for the well-being of the weak.

Above all, when we choose to set aside the love of ourselves - either for our own physical safety, or for our rights when such an exercise could put others at risk- and instead choose to love God by loving our neighbor as ourselves, we put the Gospel into practice, and the Love of God becomes a beacon of hope in us to the world.

May such a light shine from each of you.

For He is Risen!

Pastor Aaron

PS: for the full text of Luther's letter on "Whether one may flee from a deadly plague" go online to www.blogs.lcms.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Plague-blogLW.pdf

alleluia!
Christ has Risen!

SPRING CLEAN-UP DAYS (Stay flexible, these may need to change)



INSIDE WORK DAY: SATURDAY, TBD at 9 am

OUTSIDE WORK DAY: SATURDAY, APRIL 18th at 9 am

LUNCH WILL BE PROVIDED BOTH DAYS

If you have any questions contact Jim Zeller at 541-274-1942

DEACONS DOINGS

Please don't forget the Food Barrel stationed in the church lobby. Make a habit of picking up a few items for the barrel each time you go shopping. The donated foods are used by those coming to our door, looking for something because they're hungry, and by the Food Bank (who is contacted periodically to empty our barrel). Though any nonperishable food is appreciated, especially needed are meals-in-a-can (chili, soups, stews), canned meats (Spam, tuna), fruits & vegetables, and peanut butter.

And don't forget pets.

Many transients have a "travel companion" and low-income families have a furry family member.

Thoughts from an Elder: by Joe Riker

A Sunset Road!

This is another of the immortal short stories of the world. It tells of two people who were walking towards the sunset. Emmaus is west of Jerusalem. This is the third and final Resurrection appearance narrative. Read Luke 24:13-35.

The two travelers from the village of Emmaus had spent the Sabbath in the overcrowded city of Jerusalem and were headed home, a westward journey of seven miles. The long walk was going quickly as they talked about all the news in Jerusalem. They barely heard footsteps behind them over their own voices, but when they did, they invited the fellow traveler to walk along with them.

They didn't recognize this person, although they had seen and heard Jesus before. In their minds, Jesus was dead and the possibility of the man on the road being Jesus of Nazareth was beyond their thinking

The man asked them what they were talking about. The two stopped surprised that he didn't seem to know. They felt fresh sorrow as they began retelling all the recent events. One of them, a man named Cleopas, said, "You must be the only visitor to Jerusalem who hasn't yet heard the news!"

"News about what?"

"About Jesus of Nazareth" they answered. "He was a prophet-- not only a great preacher but a miracle worker before God and crowds of people. The chief priests and other leaders had him sentenced to death and crucified. We were grief stricken because we had hoped he was going to save the nation of Israel. This was three days ago, and now some women we know are telling this amazing story. They went to Jesus' tomb early today and couldn't find his body. When they reported to us, they said they saw angels who claimed Jesus is alive again. When some men went to check out their story, they verified what the women said. His body was gone, but they never actually saw him alive."

They still didn't recognize Jesus when he started to give his analysis of the news. "You two are so foolish and your hearts so slow to believe. Don't you know what the prophets predicted? Didn't you know that the Messiah had to suffer all these atrocities and then enter his glory?" As they walked the rest of the way to Emmaus he gave them a lesson in Old Testament quotations and stories, beginning with Moses and ending with the latest prophets—all about the Messiah.

Reaching the village that was their destination, the two started into town, and Jesus kept on going as if he were going all the way to Joppa. They had been so mesmerized by his teaching and wanted to hear more, so they invited him to stay in Emmaus—not the usual courtesy invitation of hospitality but an impassioned plea to join them for dinner and spend the night. "Please stay at our home. It's almost dark," they urged. So Jesus went home with them to Emmaus.

When they had washed and settled down for dinner, Jesus conducted himself like he was the host rather than the guest. He took the bread, broke it in pieces for everyone at the meal, and spoke a prayer of thanksgiving. When they heard him pray, they took another look and suddenly recognized that their guest was Jesus. He was indeed alive again! When he finally left and they discussed what had happened along the road, they asked each other, "Wasn't that amazing? The way he opened the Scriptures to us was wonderful. Our hearts nearly exploded with joy."

Thoughts from an Elder: Continued

A Sunset Road!

The more they talked, the more they wanted to tell Jesus' friends that they had been with Jesus and that he was fully alive—talking, walking and eating. They especially wished to tell Jesus' eleven disciples, but it was after dark and they faced a seven-mile walk back to Jerusalem.

The couple from Emmaus agreed that this couldn't wait until morning. They put on their sandals and returned to Jerusalem in search of the eleven disciples. And they probably weren't all that easy to find. When the two finally found the right house, the eleven were all together. The pair from Emmaus thought they were going to have this wonderful news to report, but when they entered the house they were told, "It's true!

The lord has risen! Peter saw him!" All were trying to be the first to tell their own experiences. When the Emmaus pair got their turn, they gave a detailed account—from the teaching on the road to dinner and their recognition and realization that they were with Jesus.

"How he had been made known to them in the breaking of the bread" (v. 35). I like this phrase. There are so many accounts in the Scriptures of Jesus sharing meals with people—isn't it appropriate that it is over a meal that these two recognized him after the Resurrection? We too will have meal with Jesus in the coming love Feast.

Have you had moments when God's vision began to take hold; open your horizon, struck home in a way that made sense that gave hope and changed your view of the world, of the Faith, of yourself?

It happened along the road to Emmaus. Those disciples could be us, Jesus reached them. "Were not our hearts burning within us while he was talking to us...while he was opening the scriptures to us." Walk for a moment with them. With Jesus, once the scriptures have been opened, all manner of things open up. Yes, we find God, but we also find our neighbors and ourselves.

APRIL BIRTHDAYS

1ST SUSAN ORTON

3RD EMILY BELLM

14TH ABBEY HARVEY

16TH SALLY LOVINS

27TH ASHER GREEN

30TH GRACE JOHNSON

APRIL ANNIVERSARIES

10TH CHUCK & GERI COKER

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

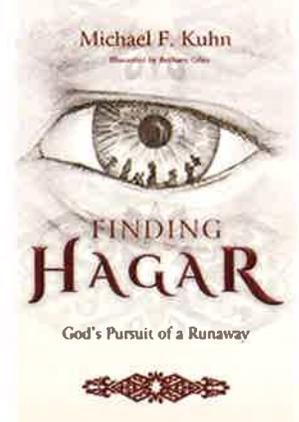
Upcoming Bible Studies

Hagar (Women's Study)

On the Fourth Wednesday of each month

@12:00-1:30 Fireside room

Finding Hagar probes the relentless pursuit by the living God of a fugitive woman who falls outside the line of his chosen people. This pursuit ensures Hagar's destiny by giving her an identity as one who is seen and known by God himself.



THEOLOGY ON TAP (TNT)

The book of Hebrews

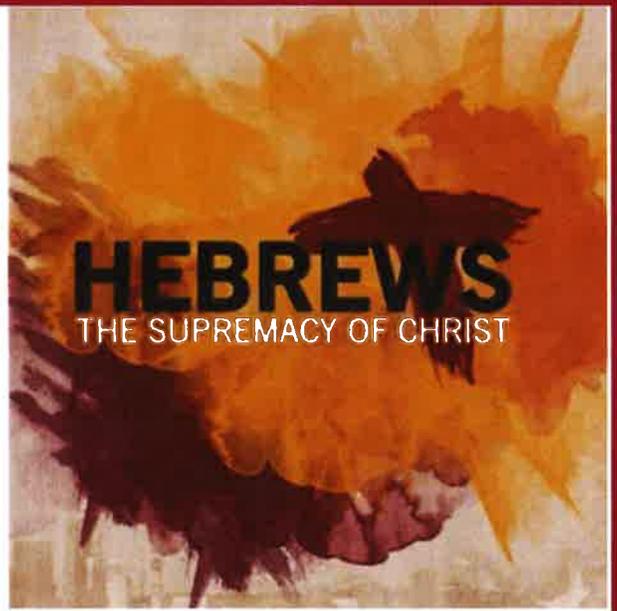
With Pastor Aaron Beaty

1st and 3rd Mondays of each month

At Mia & Pia's Pizzeria

3545 Summers Ln,

Klamath Falls, OR 97603



FROM JACOB TO THE WILDERNESS

A study of Genesis, Exodus and Numbers

With Pastor Aaron Beaty and Deacon Geri Coker

Sundays 9:00-10:00



Stewardship & Finance Committee

Financial Report

February 2020

At a glance

| | |
|--------------------------|-------------------|
| Operating Inc.: | \$10,532.00 |
| Operating Exp.: | \$11,103.85 |
| Monthly Net: | (\$571.85) |
| Ckg Acct Bal 2/29 | \$27,000+ |

February, 2020

Here is our monthly update on finance:

February Operating Income: \$10,532.00

Expenses: \$11,103.85 Net: **(\$571.85)**

Year-to-Date Net: **(\$954.72)**

Greetings All!

Expenses beyond regular operations in February were building insurance quarterly payment, world missions donations, and Presbytery expenses.

The annual audit was conducted on March 13, 2020 and it went very well, with no issues or recommended changes to our accounting processes. Hoping you are all safe and well during this unprecedented time and that we will see you all in the near future. Many Blessings,
Kathy Todd



Give



Serve



Attend



Grow

Stewardship
a way of life



Peace Memorial
Presbyterian (EPC)

4431 South 6th St.
Klamath Falls, OR 97601

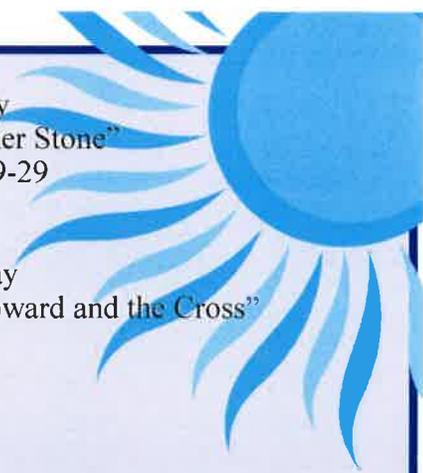
Phone: 541-884-5057

E-mail: office@peacepres.org

Pastor: pastor@peacepres.org

We're on the web!
www.peaceEPC.com
"like" us on Facebook

"In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight"
-Prov. 3:6



4/5 - Palm Sunday
"Placing the Corner Stone"
Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29
Matthew 21:1-11

4/10 - Good Friday
"The Kiss, the Coward and the Cross"
Matthew 26

4/12 - EASTER
"He is Risen!"
Matthew 28:1-10
Romans 6:3-11

The Book of 1 Peter

4/19 - 1 Peter Part I: "Born Again"
1 Peter 1:1-12

4/26 - 1 Peter Part II: "the Call"
1 Peter 1:13-25

Your SESSION

Elders

- | | |
|---------------------|-----------------------|
| Pastor Aaron Beaty- | Session Moderator |
| Noreen Rhoades- | Clerk of Session |
| Kathy Todd- | Finance & Stewardship |
| Don Perryman- | Christian Education |
| Linda Dart- | Mission and Outreach |
| Jim Zeller- | Building and Grounds |
| Sally Heaton- | Worship |

Your DEACONS

Geri Coker- Chair

Bev Moulton

Susan Orton

Jocelyn Shellito

Vicki Zeller

The Deacons meet the third Sunday of each month following worship.

Your

TRUSTEES

Harold Heaton

Sheryl Keady

Stephen Goode

Session meets the 2nd Wednesday of each month from 6-8PM.

