



Faith Country
Shared Ministry

Faith Country Chronicle

April 2018



April 2018 Message for Congregations and Lay and Rostered Leaders

Dear Beloved of God –

I love the account of Jesus journeying on the road with two of his followers to Emmaus.

Their hearts are heavy with grief. As they walk they are talking with each other about all that had taken place, and while they were walking and talking, Jesus comes to them and walks with them.

“What are you discussing with along?” Jesus asks. “Are you the does not know the things that days?” “What things?” And the then Jesus, beginning with interprets to them the things scriptures.

Invited to stay with them, he took and gave it to them. Then their recognized him...and they Jerusalem to the eleven and shared what had happened on been made known to them in the

In our increasingly polarized and unknown, Jesus our risen and to make His presence bread.

Eugene Peterson in his book, “The practice of resurrection is project. It is God’s project and carrying it out. Grace is actively doing for and in us practice of resurrection. So, what Receive. Receive the gift.”

May we, this Easter, once again recognize our Risen Lord, Jesus, walking with us – opening our hearts and minds to God’s living Word – and filling us with the hope and peace that surpasses our human understanding.

In Christ Jesus – Shalom,

+Bishop Larry Kochendorfer



each other while you walk only stranger in Jerusalem who have taken place there in these conversation continues. And Moses and all the prophets, about himself in all the

bread, blessed and broke it, eyes were opened, and they returned that hour to their companions. Then they the road, and how Jesus had breaking of the bread.

world, amidst fears both known Lord continues to walk with us known in the breaking of the

Practicing Resurrection, writes: not a do-it-yourself self-help God is engaged full time in everywhere. God is Christ is everything involved in the is there left for us to do?

An Easter Meditation

by William Ryzek

Christian Living

I hate death. I hate it because it's just not supposed to be here. It flies in the face of God and His creation. How could the living God, the God Who is Life, create anything other than life and how is it that death remains to this day the destroyer of life?

Most Christians believe that death's appearance in creation is the fault of our parents, Adam and Eve; it was not there 'in the beginning' when the Living God made everything 'good'. Since we are all connected to the first Adam we all sin and every sin carries the death sentence. But, death is not confined to just human experience but robs the essence of all living things thereby reducing them to coldness, darkness and decay. We see this everywhere around us; dying forests, dying oceans, dying atmosphere, dying earth, dying animals and, it seems to me, all this is on the increase.

However, death extends far beyond mere natural things because it is a supernatural phenomenon, an eternal death (called the "second death" by Jesus in Rev 2:11) and every person confronted by the truth of the Gospel therefore makes a spiritual life and death decision. Christians choose the life demonstrated by Jesus' resurrection, the final and complete overcoming of death. Paradoxically, Christians live to die, a dying to self, a narcissistic self driven by hubris and through this 'death' experience the resurrection life of Jesus now and for eternity.

The only alternative view is that death is the final, inevitable, necessary result of blind evolutionary, materialistic and purely 'natural' processes. Buying into this 'creation story' generates a 'nauseating nothingness' (see Sartre's Being and Nothingness) forcing an already dead person (it may take decades, but we are all born dead) to forge some kind of self-defined 'meaning' out of a terrifying meaninglessness. The nearly universal lawlessness, terror, societal disintegration, political mayhem and constant war shows the kind of 'meaning' humanity has come up with.

Dismissing the Gospel and the message of Easter as some kind of religious fairy-tale, wishful thinking, or an irrational denial of the "natural order of things" is to already have chosen death over life. Anyone so choosing remains the enemy of God and continues hating God (see Romans 5:10). All who reject Him will eventually discover that natural, physical death is not the end after all, that their soul, which they probably deny exists at all, is forever separated from the Living

God, the Source of eternal Life, Joy, Peace and Happiness.

So, what's the point of all this? Those of us who have chosen life over death through Jesus must bring the message of life to all who remain dead. It is a formidable task for the enemies of God and champions of death, both natural and supernatural, are arrayed against us. But, we know this war was already won the day the Son of God arose from the dead and makes our victory today assured. Armed with this knowledge and faith, the gates of hell cannot prevail against us and we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. We can rejoice at these words of Paul this Easter Day:

Romans 8:31–39

Nothing Can Separate Us from God's Love

³¹ What shall we say about such wonderful things as these? If God is for us, who can ever be against us? ³² Since he did not spare even his own Son but gave him up for us all, won't he also give us everything else? ³³ Who dares accuse us whom God has chosen for his own? No one—for God himself has given us right standing with himself. ³⁴ Who then will condemn us? No one—for Christ Jesus died for us and was raised to life for us, and he is sitting in the place of honor at God's right hand, pleading for us.

³⁵ Can anything ever separate us from Christ's love? Does it mean he no longer loves us if we have trouble or calamity, or are persecuted, or hungry, or destitute, or in danger, or threatened with death? ³⁶ (As the Scriptures say, "For your sake we are killed every day; we are being slaughtered like sheep.") ³⁷ No, despite all these things, overwhelming victory is ours through Christ, who loved us.

³⁸ And I am convinced that nothing can ever separate us from God's love. Neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither our fears for today nor our worries about tomorrow—not even the powers of hell can separate us from God's love. ³⁹ No power in the sky above or in the earth below—indeed, nothing in all creation will ever be able to separate us from the love of God that is revealed in Christ Jesus our Lord.

William Ryzek, PhD has been both a pastor and academic for several years. He has published articles in various magazines and newspapers.



FAITH COUNTRY SHARED MINISTRY

~ April 2018 ~						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 9:30 Trinity Easter Breakfast 10:30 Trinity Communion Service	2	3	4	5	6	7
8 9:15 Eucharist Service - St. John's 11:15 Communion Service - Hope 1:00 Hope Council Meeting	9	10	11	12	13	14
15 10:30 Trinity Song Service 11:30 Trinity Worship Committee	16	17	18	19	20	21
22 9:15 Morning Prayer - St. John's 11:15 Communion Service - Hope	23	24	25	26	27	28
29 No Services Today	30	Notes:				



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