

Another Word April 9, 2024

To our family and friends of First Christian Church

Now you see it, now you don't! Quite a show that happened in the sky yesterday. I hope many of you got to try out the stylish yet very practical eyewear to watch the spectacle. At the Community Choir practice last night, there were many with really nice sunburned cheeks and foreheads from gazing at the sun. More on the eclipse later.

I want to thank everyone who helped during our Lenten and Easter journey. And I pray that all who worshipped with us were touched by God's unending love. Jesus' passion was done for you and me.

I would like to begin another Bible study soon, and possibly finish the 5<sup>th</sup> book in the "Art of living" series, "Freedom- Finding peace in anxious times." I have 4 extra books available. I'm thinking of starting Tuesday, April 30<sup>th</sup> at 10:30 and 6pm. If you are interested, I will have a sign-up sheet in the gathering area.

Our scriptures for the next few weeks are as follows:

April 14- Psalm 4. Our serving Elder is Dale Campbell. Luke 24: 36b-48, "You are the witness!"

April 21- Psalm 23. Elder Lana Bell. John 10:11-18. "I Am the Good Shepherd."

April 28- 1 John 4:7-21. Shelley Carpenter. John 15:1-8. "Will you be a branch that bears good fruit?"

Let's go to the Lord with prayer.

Holy God. As we celebrate the risen Christ, guide our thoughts and actions that we may never take for granted His sacrifice, and that it lives within us stronger and clearer each day. May our hearts always be

open to Your call so that we can be bold and confident as we spread the word of your unfailing love. Hear our silent prayers for our families and friends who are in need of your comfort and healing. \_\_\_\_\_. Show us Your will dear Lord that we may always follow. In Jesus' most precious name, Amen.

As Donita and I were sitting on our patio watching the eclipse, a few thoughts ran through my mind. I also received a short article that was sent to me by Bill Freytag. I will condense them here for your consideration.

First, I'm sure millions of people yesterday witnessed the moon pass directly between the sun and the earth. How many actually considered or gave even a moment of thought toward the Creator who placed the sun, moon, and our home in perfect positions that allow life as we know it to exist? If our world was just a few degrees away or closer to the sun, there would be no life. We cannot possibly know God's mind, but only see and marvel at His grandeur and wisdom. Events like this are God's way of reminding us that He is God and we are not. We need to keep our eyes and minds open to the thousands of ways that He shows us His omnipotence every day.

And second. Many in the world are unknowingly "stuck" in the shadow of the eclipse. What do I mean? Many ask the question, "Why am I here?" The one true answer to life's biggest question is found in Colossians 1:16. Paul reminds us that, "we are all created by God, and for God." And each of us is an awe-inspiring and magnificent creation that also displays His power and might.

However, there are times when our lives can turn dark. Our hearts can be broken, sadness overwhelms us, and even fear can overshadow us. Let's face it, we all can get lost in the dark. Especially when something

comes in the way of our light source. So, what gets in the way of the light? Isaiah 59:2 tells us, “Your sins have separated you from your God.” In other words, we try to run our lives the way we want, ignoring all that our loving God has provided. And what happens? We end up in darkness. A darkness just like we experienced when the moon blocked the sun.

But here is our hope. Remember the “I Am” statements over Lent? Jesus says, “I Am the light of the world.” John 8:12. Think of God’s Son as the sun. The moon is our sins. What can we do to let the sun shine on us again? We must allow Jesus into our hearts. In darkness on that Good Friday, Jesus took all our sins on Himself. He paid our death penalty, and then returned three days later, defeating death and sin. If we repent and allow Jesus into our hearts, our sins are removed and the Son will be able to shine His light on us.

Why would He do this? Paul, I think, says it best. In Galatians 2:20 he says, “He loved me (and yes, that’s also you and I) and gave Himself for me.” Without Jesus, we all would be in a total eclipse, and eternal darkness. But with Him, we will be in His eternal light and eternal life!

Praise God, Jesus is Risen Indeed!

In His unending Peace,

*Rich*