

President's Note for April 2018

"Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here, but has risen." Luke 24:5

NRSU

He is risen indeed! The Greatest Story Ever Told never ceases to astound and humble. This newsletter is set to be released on Easter Sunday, a day of great jubilation after days of turmoil and despair. A great deal can happen in a week. Christ rode into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday welcomed as King only to be crucified a few days later before rising triumphantly. I've mentioned a friend of mine before who is struggling with a form of stage four cancer. Back in the late seventies we both attended Sac State and took a class in Metaphysical Poetry. He recently reminded me of a poem by Henry Vaughan, I believe I've mentioned this one before in another column, "I saw Eternity the other night, like a great ring of endless light..." Christ is the light and came into the world for our salvation. This world may be fleeting and ephemeral, but as the poet John Donne relates in a poem of his own, Death be not Proud, "One short sleep pass'd, we wake eternally, and death shall be no more. Death, thou shalt die." Christ took the world's sin upon himself, those "thoughts words, and deeds" that separate us from God, died and rose that we may live.

Your church council and subcommittees within the council have been busy. As I write this message we've just signed a new five year lease with our friends and brothers and sisters in Christ from Grace Sacramento Presbyterian Church, formerly known as City of Grace Presbyterian. I give thanks to Erik and Punky for their work on this project and to Mike Boyd and Pastor Brad Carpenter from Grace Sacramento for their willingness to go the extra mile to see this agreement to fruition. And with the vote and consent of the congregation from our annual meeting we have selected Garrick Heating and Air to install a new HVAC system in the social hall, Saunders Hall. The new system not only benefits Grace Sacramento on some of Sacramento's famously hot summer days, but improves our campus and makes the hall more usable for us and more attractive for special events like wedding receptions, anniversary celebrations, milestone birthdays and such. We're blessed and moving forward. Thanks to all who have made this improvement possible.

And while I am passing out thanks and accolades, thanks to Tom and Dede for coordinating this year's Easter breakfast and to Rand, Jenna and all who are assisting. We're also trying to do more in terms of evangelism and reaching out. If not up already, you'll soon see some signage on the lawn showcasing our young folks' talent at work. Our most recent addition to the church council Sandy Wolpert is spearheading this endeavor. Soon too there will a cleanup, spruce up day spearheaded by Grace Sacramento where some needed pruning,

painting, planting and such will take place. There is even talk of a rummage sale and restarting WELCA meetings. While we don't want to bite off too much, with the Lord's and our neighbor's assistance we will give it our best at being more vibrant, active and visible to the greater community while having a little fun along the way.

On a more somber note we say goodbye for now to our former interim pastor, guide and friend in Christ Reverend Gene Jewell who has gone to the Lord after a lengthy illness. Farmer Gene is likely back at work in the spiritual garden of the world to come, telling all who will listen tales of God's grace and life in Iowa. We're called upon to be "little Christs" in this world and Pastor Gene truly modeled that spirit, a spirit of humility, compassion, friendship and grace, always with an affable smile and sometimes with a cold beer.

We enjoyed our Lenten Soup Suppers and watching a video on the life of St. Augustine. We are looking towards watching another video together in coming months. Stay tuned! We did miss seeing a few of our members who typically attend these devotionals as they struggle with health issues. We hold them in our prayers and look forward to them returning to our worship and social gatherings.

So, as we celebrate Easter, spring, life and the risen Christ I'll close with a short quote by a contemporary author with whom I am not particularly familiar, but whose words I believe sum up the essence of hope and jubilation that Easter brings.

"The very first Easter taught us this: that life never ends and love never dies." Kate McGahan

Hallelujah,

Chuck Prewett

Council President