

Faithnews

From Your Pastor



"God has been at work since creation changing the world"



apostles whom he had chosen.³ After his suffering he presented himself alive to them by many convincing proofs, appearing to them during forty days and speaking about the kingdom of God.

Pause for a moment to consider what the disciples have experienced in just a few days. How might they be feeling? Mystified? Joyful? Unbelieving? Gob smacked?

He spent forty days with them and speaking about the kingdom of God. What would you want to ask Jesus?

⁴ While staying^j with them, he ordered them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait there for the promise of the Father. "This," he said, "is what you have heard from me; ⁵ for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with^b

Acts 1:1-11 10/18/2020

It is generally accepted that the author of the Gospel of Luke also wrote the Acts of the Apostles. What we remember from the closing chapters of Luke is: Jesus' cruel death and astounding resurrection; his appearance to the women and to disciples walking to Emmaus; finally his

appearance to the disciples with instructions to remain in Jerusalem before ascending to heaven.

Acts 1:1-11

In the first book, Theophilus, I wrote about all that Jesus did and taught from the beginning² until the day when he was taken up to heaven, after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the

the Holy Spirit not many days from now.”

⁶ So when they had come together, they asked him, “Lord, is this the time when you will restore the kingdom to Israel?”⁷ He replied, “It is not for you to know the times or periods that the Father has set by his own authority.”⁸ But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”

This is a commissioning service. Jesus tells them not to worry about the timing of the kingdom’s arrival. He’s has important work for them. For now, they are to wait.

What will it mean to be witnesses, especially beyond the comforts of their homeland?

⁹ When he had said this, as they were watching, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight.¹⁰ While he was going and they were gazing up toward heaven, suddenly two men in white robes stood by them.¹¹ They said, “Men of Galilee, why do you

stand looking up toward heaven? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven.”

Sadly, it’s time move on.

They witnessed so much, probably too much. A trial based on fake facts, cruel torture, and merciless death on the cross. Their minds reeled when they witnessed his resurrected body. It took time to process all that they witnessed.

They had observed so much more, though, than the events of that final week: Jesus’ calls to become disciples; his teaching and preaching; miracles of feeding and healing; people flocking to see him; arguments with the legalistic leaders of the day.

After the resurrection, they spent forty precious days with Jesus, being prepared for the next step in God’s plan: to share all they had witnessed with the known world.

Twelve had been chosen to be apostles. They almost slept through the trial, they denied knowing Jesus, they ran away, they refused to believe the report of the women regarding the empty tomb. They had no seminary training, probably couldn’t read or write, and were Galileans: one step above the hated Samaritans.

These were the twelve that Jesus called, and they were part of the group that hung out with him during those forty days before his ascension. They spent that precious time learning about the kingdom of God. The big question: “Will you restore the kingdom to Israel soon?”

Instead, Jesus commissions them to “witness” to the known world. “Share what you personally saw and heard. Invite those you meet to change their minds about who Jesus is.”

What have you witnessed? What have you seen and experienced in Christ? How do the Biblical stories touch you and remind you about those experiences? How are you connected to the people we meet in the Acts of the Apostles?

So far God has been at work bringing redemption to the world. On the Day of Pentecost Peter will help us understand how the Jewish scriptures points to the ultimate redeemer of humanity. Each of the apostles will share what they witnessed and believe to be true. The power, given to them at Pentecost, will enable them to heal in the name of Jesus of Nazareth.

And a church will be born. It will be diverse, with people from all over the

known world eating and praying together. They will understand that their call is to continue being a witness to all that God has done until that great and glorious day when Jesus will return. They will live in the confidence that God, in Christ, will be with them through this journey. They will experience kingdom moments.

What has God done? God has been at work since creation changing the world.

What has God done? God continues to be at work through the ultimate gift to the world: Jesus the Christ.

What has God done? Made you and me witnesses and sharers in God's kingdom, sending us out as he sent out the Apostles to share this good news with God's people.

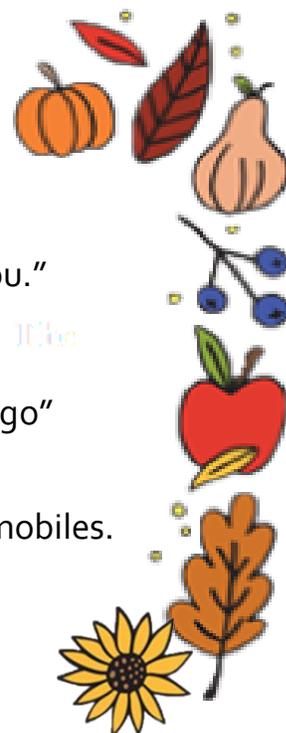
All glory and honor be to God.

Amen.

Aw-fall!

Share some laughs or groans with these autumn-themed jokes:

- What did the tree say to autumn? "Leaf me alone!"
- What did one autumn leaf say to another? "I'm falling for you."
- How do you fix a broken pumpkin? With a pumpkin patch.
- Why are trees very forgiving? Because in the fall they "let it go" and in the spring they "turn over a new leaf."
- How do leaves get from place to place? With autumn-mobiles.
- What's the ratio of a pumpkin's circumference to its diameter? Pumpkin pi.



Welcome Back! In Person Church Service, October 11, 2020



The Congregation



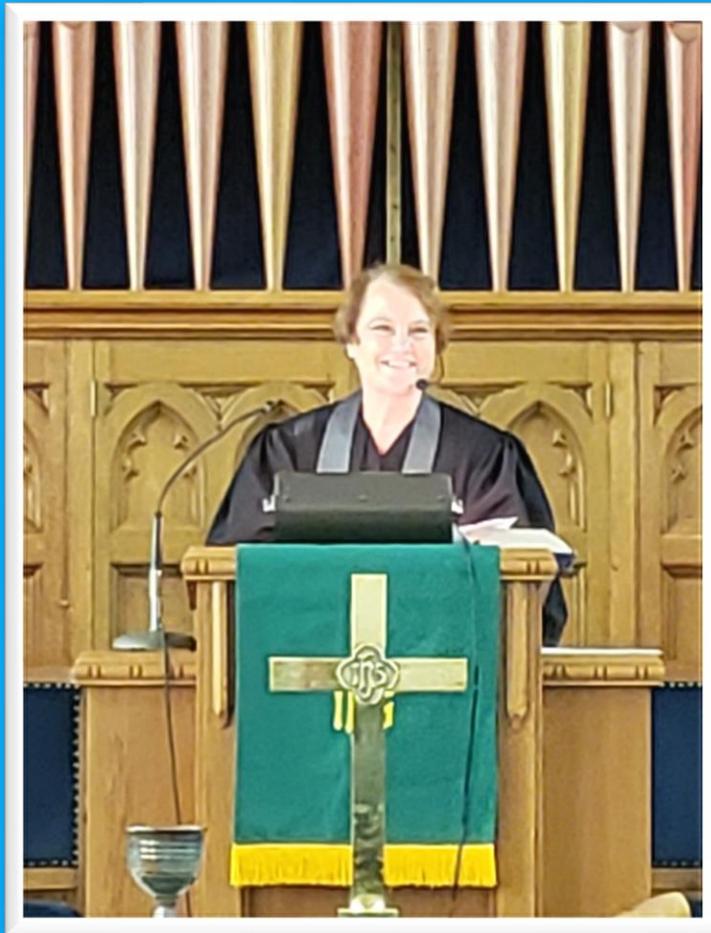
Mark and Eileen



Keith & Cheryl



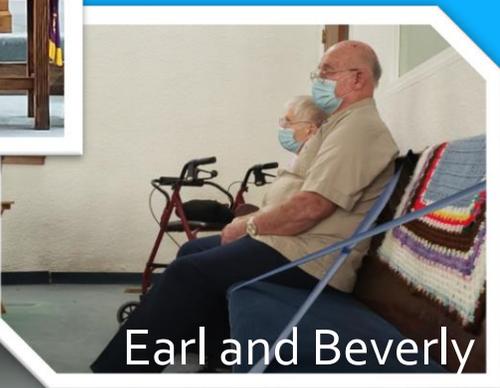
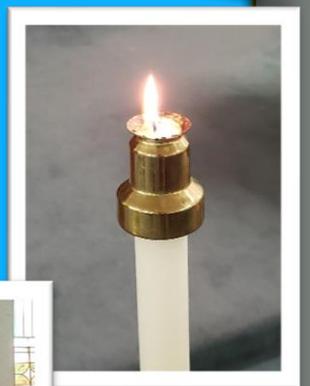
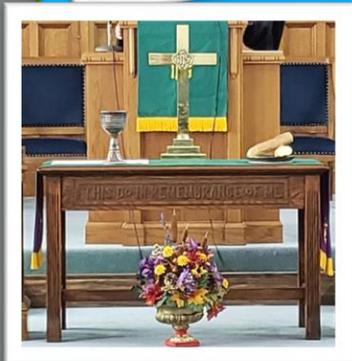
Pam



Pastor Sandra Bach



Dan



Earl and Beverly



Don and Ilane