

APRIL 8 - APRIL 14, 2020

FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH - - TYLER, TX WWW.FCCTYLER.ORG

JOYS & CONCERNS

JOYS: We had 1340 views of our worship service on Facebook and YouTube this past Sunday! We thank you for not only joining us, but sharing with friends too!

PRAYERS FOR OUR CHURCH

FAMILY: Eva Denson, Jennifer Diotallevi, Charlotte Halbert, James Hardage, Bob Hunt, Ray Hunt, Joey Francis, Aliece Keithly, Michael Lewis, Harold Liverett, and Bev Wood

PRAYERS FOR FRIENDS & FAMILY: Joanne Barr (Grimaldo), Ruby Camp (Kimball), Norman Copas (Copas, and Rozann Hassell (Grant)

PRAYERS & THANKS TO OUR HEALTHCARE WORKERS & FAMILIES: Amy Fox, Joey Braly, Leslie Neal, and Dr. Chris Hable (send us your additions—immediate family)

FOLLOW UP CONGREGATIONAL MEETING, APRIL 22 @7PM

On Wednesday, April 8, FCC held it's first ever online Board and Congregational meetings. The urgent subject was FCC's application for a SBA loan under the "Cares Act." We acted quickly to give Board Chair, Tom DeWitt authority (before any deadline) to apply for this forgivable government loan to help cover salaries, mortgage interest, and utilities for a period of 8 weeks. The proposal vote passed in both meetings.

We apologize, realizing that many of you non email congregants were not involved. We will be hosting an online follow up Congregational meeting on Wed. April 22 at 7 p.m. You are all invited to call in to join the meeting (or work out some other arrangements to join in electronically).

To call in on that date and at that time, call 408-418-9388. You will be asked to enter a meeting number/access code...that number is 297 196 328.

Thank you all for your participation and understanding in these extraordinary times.

EASTER SUNDAY

We're planning 2 online worship services at 9:30am as usual. We will also offer a **DRIVE-IN COMMUNION**. **Bring your own Communion** and drive to campus anytime between 11am and Noon on Easter Sunday (April 12). **Please enter only on the Loop side** (as traffic will flow will clockwise around the main building). You will be directed to the covered entry, where our ministers will greet you in your car and **offer a blessing as you partake of Communion** (~60 seconds). All this in accordance with safe practices and social distancing. Please do not get out of your car!

We realize this is a lot of effort for a short holy moment, but we want very much to be near you and to offer a special blessing on Easter Sunday. Note, that if everyone comes at once, we may have wait times in excess of 30 minutes. We will add no more cars after Noon, but we will stay in place until the last carload is blessed!

We are expecting coverage from KLTU, so we want to hold to strict standards of social distancing, etc.

ONLINE PROGRAMMING

We dearly miss you coming through our doors, and we can't wait to be together, in person, again! Until then, join us on Facebook and YouTube for the following:

- 1) **Children's Church with Mrs. Vicki:** Now available for all ages! Aired after Sunday worship services around 10:40am.
- 2) **Monday Musings:** Aired live Mondays from 9-10am, featuring Rev. Ginger Brandt from her back porch.
- 3) **Church Check-in:** Look for a live video usually Thurs. at 11am (next check in aired Tue., April 14)-- sometimes with one or both Rev. Ginger Brandt and Dr. Chris Pulliam
- 4) **"Connection Class":** We'll have daily prompts on Facebook (mailed by request). Plus, expect snippets of daily life posted weekly from your staff and ministers, tailored to children, teens and adults.
- 5) **Growing Season Blog:** Close out the Lenten season by checking out our **Blog:** fcctyler.org/growingseason. We've dipped into some of the "big words" of church and suggested a few spiritual practices.

“Complete Confidence”
Scripture Mark 5:22-24, 35-42
April, 12, 2020
Dr. Chris Pulliam

Well, it's Easter Sunday. What's on your mind? “I can't believe I'm sitting on my couch listening to the Easter sermon!” “Oh, how I wish I were there in that sanctuary... the smell of the lilies, the friends all around, and the sound of the music filling the space.” “If I have to stay inside one more day, I'm going to scream!” I get it...really I do. I can't believe I'm preaching to an empty sanctuary on Easter Sunday!

More importantly though, what was on Jesus' mind. Hmm. I could speculate...and most Sundays I wouldn't hesitate to...but I have some insight that I think is worth considering.

I'm still plodding along with my personal Bible Study in the gospel of Mark. Small snippets of scripture read multiple times to see what jumps out. Last week, Mark 5, the story of Jairus' daughter jumped off the page at me. See if this does anything for you.

SLIDE: READ Mark 5:22-24, 25-42

Jairus is a leader in the synagogue (interesting...most synagogue leaders were against Jesus...I guess when one is desperate, one will believe anything!).

Oh, he was desperate alright. His little girl was very sick...dying. How desperate was he? Desperate enough to seek Jesus out in the midst of a crowd and beg him to come.

As a man who has been married for nearly 30 years, I'm going to make an observation.

Later in the story when Jesus shows up at Jairus' house, he walks right in where the little girl is...and momma says nothing. Is that because Mark doesn't think a woman's words are important enough to record here? ... because she completely trusts her husband's judgments? I'm guessing that is because momma put Jairus up to going after Jesus in the first place. Otherwise, she would have stopped Jesus, the stranger, at the door. J

As Jesus and the crowd walk towards Jairus' house, Jairus' neighbors come and report that the girl has died. A collective punch in the gut that started moments earlier when Jairus looked up to see them coming.

Jesus won't be turned back. Upon arrival, people everywhere...weeping and wailing.

I hope you never have to experience such a scene. I remember going to the home of a family whose son had just died. There were people everywhere. It was awful. Nothing to say, nothing to do. No way to shine this up and make it feel good.

I can only imagine what the crowd gathered there would have done and said had someone come in saying what Jesus said to the people at Jairus' house.

SLIDE: Jesus said, “Why do you make a commotion and weep? The child is not dead but sleeping.” (Mark 5:39)

Oh my friends, this is such thin ice. Can you imagine? Some would be saying, “What an idiot!” Others... “You're not helping us here. This is hard enough without you coming in here and making a mockery of it.”

But you see, that's just it, Jesus wasn't making a mockery of anything. Jesus had complete confidence that he could heal the girl and bring her back to life. He doesn't have to go in and check her condition, he just pronounces life.

SLIDE: (pic of movie promo) In my favorite movie of all time, "The Princess Bride," there's a classic scene that I'm guessing 10% of my audience can quote nearly word for word.

It's the scene with Billy Crystal, who plays, "Miracle Max." The sidekicks take their fallen hero "Wesley" to Miracle Max in the hopes he can bring Wesley back to life. "True Love" is on the line...it's very serious!

For a minute or two Miracle Max pokes and prods and after his initial evaluation of the dead man, Miracle Max declares that Wesley is only "mostly dead"...and "mostly dead" is what? Anyone? "Slightly alive!"

When Jesus rolls into the village where Jairus lives, he sees people out in the streets weeping and carrying on...because Jairus' precious daughter has died. Jesus is anything but insensitive! He knows it would be a hurtful gaff to make light of the situation...if he's wrong, but he knows he's right. He has complete confidence in that he can heal the girl and bring her back to life. He doesn't have to see her, check her pulse, he doesn't even have to walk in the room...He knows his power; who he is, what he is about to do.

Does that do anything for you? It's Easter Sunday!

Jesus enters the room with Mom/Dad, and the 3 disciples. As I pointed out earlier, no words from the mother are recorded.

Jesus takes her by the hand, says something in Aramaic...and she gets up! It says, those in the room were overcome with amazement! I'll say!

What's your next move? If you're in the room, what's your next move? Hug the little girl, right! She, of course, is clueless, but mom and dad would probably nearly squeeze her to death!

And then there's Jesus, really amazing, kinda freaky, say "thank you," stand in awe...fall at his feet not sure who this guy is?

Who cares...first things first...our daughter is alive!

Don't you just know death was a strong reality in that world? Don't you just know death was never far from their minds? Because death happened all around them all the time. And there was little they could do about it!

Similarly, the past few weeks, death hasn't been far from our minds either, has it? Strange, isn't it? Fear...real, palpable fear not even in the back of our minds...closer than that. Right up here in the front of our minds. Death! (At least the fear of death)... all around us.

Yet, in the story, here's life overcoming death. Thru Jesus, life is overcoming death! No one has ever seen that before? It's not natural...except on Easter Sunday! Somebody shout Amen, Somebody shout Hallelujah. Somebody shout "Praise be to God!"

Because, at least up until Jesus' time, death always won. There is a beginning and an end. As King Solomon wrote in Ecclesiastes,

SLIDE: "There is a time for everything...a time to be born and a time to die" (Ecclesiastes 3)

Outside of faith, death always wins. What are the two absolutes in life? Death and taxes. J But this preacher is talking about death overcome with life...and taxes aren't due till July! "Somebody shout "Hallelujah!"

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Here Jesus is saying...yes, "There is a time for everything...a time to be born and a time to die."

...and there is a time to be raised to new life! He's saying, "Here's a new set of rules... death doesn't always win!" (How about that for a game changer!).

In Christ Jesus, life always wins, hope always wins, joy...peace, Love always wins! And this goes against everything they have known up until then.

In Jesus' day, death and illness ruled the day. Kings/Soldiers thought nothing of taking life. People had few rights...few remedies for the ills that beset them. There was only death.

Into that world, Jesus comes proclaiming life. "Why do you make a commotion and weep? The child is not dead but sleeping." (Mark 5:39)

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Well, it's Easter Sunday? What's on your minds? More importantly, what's on Jesus' mind?

I think Jesus has complete confidence in God, God's will, the coming of God's Kingdom, and in his (Jesus') role in it. Jesus is thinking to himself, "I'm going to Jerusalem to set in motion the biggest transformation in history."

Transformation from a world where death always wins, to a Kingdom where life always wins. From a world of death to a Kingdom of life. Big difference...game changer. It must be Easter Sunday!

Yep, Jesus came to Jerusalem, died on the cross, was placed in a tomb and on the 3rd day he rose from the dead. The stone was pushed back and the tomb was empty. "He is Risen!"

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SLIDE: BOTTOM LINE: Jesus had complete confidence that he could overcome death with life.

Thru the power of God, Jesus overcame death with life...not "he might." Not "he probably will", not even "I hope this works out"...done!

SLIDE: WHAT TO DO: If you believe Jesus is the Christ, and have accepted him as Lord and Savior...then you have overcome death with life!

We too can have "complete confidence" in him...that thanks to him and his life and death and resurrection...death has been overcome with life.

And in these days of uncertainty and unrest...don't just hold on to that thought loosely (two fingers)...but hold on for dear life...and that's exactly what you'll have.

One more thought...the very last verse of the Jairus' story, Jesus tells them not to say anything about this...(right!)...because his time had not yet come.

Well, it's Easter Sunday...and on Easter Resurrection Sunday...his time has come! So you and I can tell the whole world. He is risen...and that in him, "life always wins!"