



April 2009 Pastor Randy Richards
Sunday School 9:45 ~ Worship Service 11:00

A Note From Our Pastor:

Easter is upon us and is filled as always with decorated and colored eggs, bunnies, candy, and all of the other things that this joyful day brings to mind. But, what is Easter really about? I wonder how many people we come in contact with each day really do not know what Easter is all about. Sure they may realize it's a day that Christians celebrate, but do they really know what Easter is all about?

Easter is all about a four letter word - and Christians are full of it. Or at least we're supposed to be full of it. The four letter word is LIFE. Because of Easter we now can claim new life, abundant life, redeemed life, and resurrected life! Easter teaches us that the purpose of life is not death. The purpose of **life** is **life** and one that is victorious over death forever. The Celebration of Easter is very important for the Church because it is a time to rejoice over all that is good, all that is true, and all that is beautiful. In fact, I believe that celebrating Easter is the greatest public witness the church can declare to the world. Why? Because it is the reality of Easter that makes everything else that we do possible. If it was not for the **Life** that Easter brings, then life would not be really worth living.

Remember Jesus' final words on the cross? "It is finished." When the soldiers taking Jesus' body down from the cross pierced him with the spear, "forthwith came there out blood and water" (John 19:34). According to medical scholars, that rush of fluids revealed what was the actual and final cause of death for Jesus - a busted aorta. Jesus died of a broken heart. The breaking of Jesus' heart was what "finished" Jesus' sacrifice. On Easter morning the good news is that this great sacrifice was not the end of Jesus' mission. Out of Jesus' broken heart there emerged a new heart, a resurrected heart, an unbreakable, and unstoppable heart. As I have heard and read, "Out of the Last Adam's pierced side, a new Eve was conceived, the bride of Christ, the church, whose life revolves around salvation by his precious blood and the water of baptism." On Easter "It is finished" is able to mean for the Saved, "Now it begins."

My prayer is that each of you will be able to experience the abundant and joyful life that Easter and Jesus brings. Just like the women who were worried about the huge stone that was covering the tomb of Jesus, sometimes we are faced with great "stones" which sometimes worry or distract us. However, may we be astounded, as those women were when they got to the tomb and found the stone had already been rolled away. Little did they know at first that Jesus had already rolled the stone away. We need to remember especially in today's world of problems that Jesus is still in the "stone moving" business. He'll move those stones and set you free. He still moves stones in order to change our story, so let's give him all the glory and celebrate Easter everyday of our lives here on Earth. Happy Easter and remember to be full of LIFE!

In Christ's Love, Randy