

What Amazes Me About Easter

One of the most amazing parts of the Easter story for me, is that early on that first Easter morning, a man who was dead, (and everybody knew was dead because they saw his blood come pouring from his side when the soldier pierced his heart) came out of the tomb alive, but the world chose not to believe it, even when they knew it was true. The guards stationed at the tomb witnessed the appearance of angels, saw the empty tomb, but kept quiet because they were paid hush money. Okay, that doesn't really surprise me, money trumps the truth for many people. That is nothing new. But the Chief Priests, who were Israel's religious leaders, knew that Jesus had risen. They heard the testimony of the guards. They soon would be dealing with the radically transformed and emboldened disciples who came out of hiding and were now fearlessly preaching Jesus' resurrection. If the Chief Priests could have proven that Jesus was still dead by producing a dead body, they most certainly would have done so. But these religious leaders, now in cahoots with the elders, chose to believe a lie, chose to live in deception and denial, and chose to promote a distorted religion, rather than acknowledge the truth and admit that they had been wrong about Jesus.



Early on that first Easter morning, the greatest news story ever to appear on the earth, the indescribable good news that death has been defeated, that death does not have the final word, passed by the world, and the world didn't even notice. The world didn't see it. The world didn't want to see it! The world wanted to continue to have the power of death at its disposal.

On that first Easter Morning, at a cemetery just outside the city walls of Jerusalem, the strangest thing happened. A man who was dead and buried, became alive and went through solid stone as if it wasn't even there, slipped by the Roman guards, guards who don't miss anything, who had been stationed at his tomb, and they didn't even see Him going. All evidence now points to a new reality, resurrection from the dead has just entered the world. And this resurrected body has powers nobody had ever imagined before. It seems like there is something of a new order, or a new creation that has broken into the world. But the world refused to believe it! When

BIRTHDAYS

Sam Graber	4/6
Dave (Patty) Yoder	4/10
Jim Wyse	4/12
Bill Johnson	4/14
Dorothy Miller	4/15
Marge Miller	4/15
Shari Graber	4/16
Lavera Hooley	4/17
Bryce Rheinheimer	4/24
Enos Miller	4/30
Jim Schrock	5/3
Patty (Dave) Yoder	5/4
Leah Schwartz	5/7

First Mennonite Church
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*Our mission is to extend grace,
 build peace, and share love
 within & beyond our faith
 community*

*Worship Service
 Sunday 9:00 am*

Office Hours

*Pastor Phil
 Tuesday 9:30a—1:30p
 Thursday 1:00p—6:00p*

*Business Office
 Monday and Tuesday
 8:00a—5:00p
 and Fridays by chance*

*The church office is closed on
 Wednesdays*

On the Journey (continued)

confronted with the truth, the reigning powers, both political and religious, denied it, they didn't want to give up their power or their illusions that they were in control of the world.

When Jesus rose from the dead, He appeared only to believers. They were in shock, and they didn't understand what was going on at first, but they dared to believe it, and trust that God was somehow in control of things. They were the only ones who had the audacity to believe the truth of the resurrection when it confronted them, and they were the only ones who were rewarded with seeing the Risen Lord, and catch a glimpse of a New Creation.

To my way of thinking, I would have thought Jesus would have wanted to appear to those who crucified Him to prove that He was right. But Jesus didn't. He came to witness to the truth, to establish His Kingdom, and to give believers a glimpse of a New Creation. Those who chose not to believe when faced with the truth, would have chosen to continue in their unbelief, even if Jesus had appeared to them, and Jesus knew that.

The narrative of this world, since the day Satan entered in the garden to deceive Eve and Adam, has been to ignore the Word of God, to disbelieve the truth, and to choose to live in deception and distortion. And that has not changed. Jesus frequently used the phrase, "I tell you the truth" because He always spoke the truth.

Now, here is something else that amazes me. The church in western culture today, and heir of the good news of resurrection, finds itself too often drifting along with the world, flirting with the narrative of this world, and often embracing the popular agenda and the ways of the world, rather than clinging tenaciously to the cross, and to the one who came out of the tomb alive on Easter Morning.

Written by Phil Yoder

Worship

Focus Statement: Every Christian knows that prayer is important in the life of the church. Many people in our church family have testified to the support they have felt from our church praying for them in times of crisis and need. It is one thing to offer physical and material support to those in need, it is another to plead their case before the throne of God. Both are important, and both are acts of Christian love.

In the book of Acts, there are numerous examples of the church praying and of the miracles that

happened when they prayed. Not only did God hear their prayers, but God responded in

ways that nobody could have predicted. Of course, God hears and answers private, individual prayers too. Jesus encouraged individuals to pray. But there is also a special power in corporate prayer, when the church binds their hearts together in prayer.

Background Statement: Acts 1-2

Sermon Title:
When A Church Prays
Text:
Acts 12:1-17



Outreach

FMC Sewing April Meeting will be on the 8th and we will resume our POT LUCK LUNCH, plan on joining us!

For our project of the month, we are asking you to bake cookies, place 6 in a ziplock bag and place it in the church freezer. These will be taken to our shut in's by Pastor Phil or our visiting team as things are starting to slowly open up!

Praise God!!

I want to **thank everyone for the birthday wishes** I received last week. Your kind words and thoughtfulness were such an unexpected, delightful surprise! (ahem: thank you, I think, Linda Y.) May God continue to bless you all. Thanks again. With much love and many blessings, Bernie<><=



Thank you all for your generosity with your gifts to help out with reliable transportation. Please know that you are not only touching my life and that of my son, but the lives of the people that I serve who will also benefit from this. It was a difficult decision to ask for help, but I quickly found that I had no way to do this on my own in the current market. I am indeed humbled by your response. Be Blessed! ~ Betty Lou

Community Life



“Operation ♥” Project

This week consider praying for and / or reaching out to your church family, but especially remember

A Person who is Unable to Get Out

Paul Haarer has moved!

His new address is

Paul W Haarer

1300 Greencroft Drive # 63

Goshen IN 46526

Phone remains the same

I spoke with his daughter Rebecca, and Paul IS able to receive visitors, but it's limited to only 2 at a time. You'll enter through Evergreen, off of 15th, not the main entrance. You will be asked to sign in and mask up.

If you would be willing to take a meal to Jim & Arlene Schrock, please call Jim at 574-370-5795 to arrange a time.



The one who blesses others is abundantly blessed: those who help others are helped. Proverbs 11:25 MSG

An Interesting Bit of History

Last week I told you we had an unique incidence where our 5 longest members all joined within 2 years of each other—with two of them on the same day, twice! Have you figured out who they are yet? Mary Weaver joined with a group on 2/12/50, Ruby Bontreger and Carolyn Miller were added as part of a rather large baptismal group on 4/27/51 (very soon to be 70 years!), and Dorothy Miller and Gordon Kauffman were admitted by baptism on 7/13/52. It was great to see the some of them here, worshipping in person with us this past Easter Sunday!

70 years!

SUNDAY WORSHIP - 9:00 AM

(You must pre-request a printed bulletin & Please DO NOT sign the attendance sheets)

Call to Worship
Worship Songs
Congregational Sharing and Prayer
Sermon
Song
Sending Words
Sending Prayer
Dismissal

You can now join in the live stream of Sunday sermons by clicking onto You Tube, then typing in FMC INDIANA in the search box. We begin at 9:00 AM on Sunday mornings, but the livestream may not be fully available until 11 AM.

Do I Know You??



A few months ago I put out a feeler email about possibly having a section every so often featuring people in the congregation. I got a great deal of LETS DO IT response, but no one sent in their story!

We all have something interesting about our backgrounds, hobbies, interests, and just stories in general. For instance, did you notice the heavy metal spikes at the red-draped cross a couple of weeks ago? Someone in our church forged those, and I bet there's someone reading this that doesn't have a clue who! There are many people who have been here for most of their lives, while others are just recently coming in. The established member's stories are probably not known by the new people, and vice versa! Don't underestimate yourself, I think we all have an interesting story to tell, let me publish yours!! You can write it, or just get me some facts and I'll put something together!

Administration

Stewardship Report for April 4, 2021:

Money Given to Budget
\$ 4,845.00
Amount Needed Weekly for Budget
\$ 5,417.78

Year-to-date Money Given to Budget
\$ 154,167.47
Amount Needed Year-to-Date for Budget
\$ 167,891.13