



From the Pastor's Desk

With the arrival of this April's *The Beacon*, Easter will be just a few days away. So as I begin this month's article, let me start with a question. When one looks to Easter what thoughts come to mind? Are they the thoughts of new clothes, family gatherings or perhaps from the young it is hunting for Easter eggs and a visit from the Easter Bunny. But hopefully our thoughts as Christians go deeper and take on a theological slant. So are they the thoughts of an empty tomb? Are they thoughts of Jesus still hanging on the cross? Or perhaps some aspect of His ministry, such as feeding the 5000 or walking on the water. Or do you dwell on one of the post-Easter morning appearances since the grave is empty?

One of the most dramatic appearances of Jesus to His disciples is found in the Gospel According to Luke (Luke 24:15-35). It is Jesus' appearance to two of the disciples on Easter Sunday evening on the road to Emmaus.

The two disciples have left Jerusalem and are returning home to their village of Emmaus. They are down trodden. Perhaps a thought or a hundred thoughts are racing through their minds of what had happened over those last few days as they walk in silence.

John A.T. Robinson wrote these words about that event: "Jesus was someone they had known and loved and lost. They had shared with Him a depth of living they had not guessed before. All their hopes for a better life were centered in Him, and lost with Him – buried and sealed in the tomb. It was all over. They had been quickened by the vision of what life could be, but now they must face a life as it was. Back to reality!"

"And then it happened. It came to them – rather, as they could only describe it, He came to them. The life they had known and shared was not buried with Him but alive in them. Jesus was not a dead memory; but a living presence." (Link, Mark, *The Seventh Trumpet*, 1978, pg.184)

My friends, this is the reality of Easter. Jesus is not a dead memory but a living presence. So I invite you to come and experience the Living Presence with family and neighbors at one of our Holy Week Services.

Palm Sunday, April 5, 2009
Worship Services 8:15 and 10:45 AM
Presentation of the Cantata: "Covenant of Grace"

Holy Thursday, April 9, 2009
Service of the Passion and Communion
7:00 PM

Easter Sunday, April 12, 2009
Worship Service 8:30 and 11:00 AM
Sermon: "Reactions to the Resurrection"

It is my hope that you will come and join us. We ask you to invite family and friends to any or all of these services. Again, please note the early start time for the Cantata. And as we celebrate our first Easter together, may we share in the joy of the resurrection for "Behold, He is Alive."

Grace and Peace,

Pastor Rich