

might rise on the third day, alive. So he has the power to give us life; death is not the end. Not by a long shot.

Hear is Jesus promise, in his own words; "I am the Good Shepherd... The thief's purpose is to steal and kill and destroy. My purpose is to give them a rich and satisfying life" (John 10:10).

So today Jesus invites you to trust him. To trust that Val is safe in his care, and that in him there is the hope of reunion when he returns.

Today Jesus invites you to trust that Val is better off because now she is experiencing her heavenly Father's love and he holds her tenderly in his care.

Today Val invites you to trust Jesus, taking him at his word, for she'd love to be reunited with you when Jesus returns. Today Val invites you to trust Jesus, taking him at his word, that today you might experience his peace, his hope, his love and enjoy the life he seeks to give.

I find comfort know that Val is better off today; because she has been drawn closer to Jesus though death. Death doesn't rob her of life, it doesn't destroy her or steal her away from us. No, in Jesus, I find hope, I

find peace, I know there is so much more life to come.

Jesus invitation to you today is; trust me. Trust me with Val. Trust me with your heart. Today, let me embrace you in my affectionate love so that you know the hope I offer.

I'm trusting Jesus with Val.

29 November 2017

Valerie Joan Harrington

14 May 1938—22 November 2017



When I first heard that Val had died, someone commented; 'She's better off'. That got me thinking, because I hear lots of what I would call wishful thinking when it comes to death.

I've noticed we don't even like to use the word; dead. We say; 'they've passed away'. It sounds softer, but there is nothing soft about death. On it's own it is a harsh reality.

How do we know that Val is better off? Is it just wishful thinking, or do we have a very real hope to place our trust in. Thank God, in Jesus, we do have a very real hope, a very real person to place our trust in.

Jesus has been born our brother so that

we have that wonderful hope of being adopted as God's children. So at Val's baptism a wonderful thing happened; God adopted Val, he became her Father, who loved her, who was proud of her – his precious child. And nothing has changed, for this is where Val wanted to be, living life with her loving heavenly Dad.

In Jesus, that's not wishful thinking, for Jesus has been born our brother. Jesus has been crucified so that we might be forgiven and living in an intimate, personal, conversational, affectionate, loving relationship with God, now our Dad. In Jesus we have hope, for in Jesus we have a promise based on his commitment to us.

Is Jesus committed to us? Is Jesus committed to Val? His willingness to die on the cross declares to the universe a resounding 'YES!'

So Val definitely is better off, but not because she has died, but because Jesus always keeps his promises. And in Jesus Val's future is bright. His promise is to return and raise her to new life, with him, in Father's loving presence, so that together with all Father's children they might join in the celebration of life together.

For me, the only thing that takes away the harshness of death is that it doesn't have the final word. In Jesus, death doesn't win, for Jesus will have the final

Christ Church Lutheran

Worship Times - 9.00am & 10.45am
Pastor: Tim 0427326553



Jesus' disciples multiplying disciples

word. And his final word on Val will be a declaration of life; she will be raised to new life, with all that robed this life of it's amazing fullness gone for good.

Val isn't better off because she is no longer suffering or finding life difficult. Val is better off because the one she trusted with her life always keeps his word. Jesus will return. Jesus will raise Val to new life, a glorious new life. Jesus will raise Val so that Father can declare to the whole world that Val is his loved child in whom he delights.

Outside of Jesus, it's all just wishful thinking at best. Val might have slidden into a worse kind of suffering; trapped in death, seeing life but unable to grasp it. Trapped with the regrets of life with no avenue to make changes, just left wishing she could do

thinks different, but unable to change. That sounds like a hellish existence to me.

Thank God that isn't where Val is; for she placed her life in Jesus' hands. Val took Jesus at his word, trusting his love and forgiveness, so that we now can

Jesus comes to save

have real hope and not wishful thinking.

I love the words of Jesus recorded in the Gospel of John: 'Don't let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God, and trust also in me. There is more than enough room in my Father's home.' Jesus invites us to trust in him, to trust that his Father's heart has enough room for each of us. It does.

I love that reading because it finishes

with a personal word from Jesus; 'I am the way, the truth, and the life.' I don't have wishful thoughts, I have a person who is committed to saving me. Committed to me having life lived to the full. That's why it isn't wishful thinking; Jesus, the very real person, is alive and able to do what he promises.

Jesus has the power and authority to do what he says.

The grave didn't

have the ability to hold him; Jesus rose on that third day. And he is alive and well today.

Ultimately life is all about; who can you trust.

The whole message we get from God is, trust me. Even when it doesn't make sense, in Jesus, God calls us to trust him. To trust him with our lives.

And life doesn't always make sense,

but I don't trust my ability to reason more than I trust Jesus' personal word, his personal promise to me. I know Jesus doesn't lie. I also know that my reasoning at times has been wrong.

That's when I thank Jesus for his wonderful gift of repentance. In Jesus I'm not trapped in my mistakes, but he gives me the opportunity to admit my wrong and then in his strength he seeks to lead me into life. Repentance is a beautiful act, for I certainly don't want to end up the sum total of my mistakes because I refuse to let go of them. There's plenty in life I'd do differently given a second chance.

Guess what, in Jesus, you are offered a second chance.

So we have those beautiful words from God's prophet Isaiah; 'Don't be afraid'. Why not? 'For I am with you'. Jesus is with us and Jesus defines who I am, not my mistakes. Jesus defines who Val is, not death.

So we have that wonderful promise in

I need a saviour

Isaiah; "I will strengthen you and help you. I will hold you up with my victorious right hand." Thank God, my life is dependent on his power and authority and not my ability to always make the right choices and be declared successful by the fickle crowd.

I have God's promise in Jesus; that's his victorious right hand. I have God's promise in Jesus to trust in; and Jesus' life shows he has the power and

the authority to do what he says.

Jesus doesn't make empty promises. That the realm of the devil; he'll promise you everything, but he can't deliver. That's why he's a liar, he can't deliver, he just leaves you regretting, or always wanting more but never

getting enough.

He leaves you trapped in unfulfilled desires and the need to be loved but

never sure, never sure what love really is.

Thank God we can always be full of joy in the Lord, in Jesus (Phil. 4:4-7). He is always faithful. Jesus always does what he promises. Jesus has the power and authority to do what he says; that's the message of the cross. Jesus gave his life on the cross so that he would have the right to declare you forgiven. Jesus gave his life on the cross so that he