

Jesus has so many more chapters to write of life lived together with Vernon in Father's loving embrace. I'm looking forward to being part of that story.

I risk everything on Jesus. Today I'm risking Vernon's life on Jesus. What or who do you risk your life on? What's the basis of your risk?

I risk everything on Jesus, taking him at his word, believing he'll come through because he always has. Jesus has the power and authority to raise me to new life. Jesus has given

his life that we live today and our future in a relationship of love and affection, in a conversational atmosphere, where grow and mature in living out Father's supernatural love, quit naturally.

I love the tastes of the banquet I get that Jesus is throwing. When I get tastes of the opposite; being unloved, unwanted, fearful, regretful, hopeless. I've had more than enough. I'm risking that Jesus

will do what he says, as he always has. I'm looking forward to sitting down to that feast with Vernon, introducing him to my Dad, getting to know my grand-dad.

Jesus, bring on the happy hour. You're all invited.

10 September 2020

**VERNON KEVIN GRAETZ**

24 January 1939—4 September 2020



When talking about today I was asked not to use phrases like; 'Vernon has passed'. I was asked to say; 'Vernon died'. That said to me; don't sugar coat things, rather say it as it is.

So I'm not going to sugar coat today but seek to say it as it is; warts and all. The fact is that Vernon, a loved husband, father, grand-father, and friend has died. That intimate relationship of love has been broken.

We remember Vernon, but a memory isn't a person; as treasured as those memories are. It's not Vernon.

Death can be such a harsh reality.

Is this all there is, or could there be more? I don't want to sugar

coat things giving false hope. But I just can't bring myself to believe Vernon has come to nothing.

Is that the judgement we place on Vernon; he came to nothing, or at best a fading memory. Is that what death is, simply the extinction of a person?

Today I read words from the prophet Isaiah, where he gave the picture of a feast. 'A delicious banquet with clear, well-aged wine and choice meat.'

I find this an appealing image. I'm sure Vernon would have loved the image of 'happy hour' with Jesus; feasting and drinking.

Is this me sugar coating the reality of death?

It would be if I didn't have something to base my hope on. I base my hope on the person Jesus, who like Vernon was born, and who like Vernon died.

But that's not the end of the story. Just like today isn't the end of the story. To say this is the end of the story would be in a sense sugar coating reality.

Jesus was raised to life, and is throwing that party, at his place, with an open invitation. Jesus resurrection was documented by those who saw him, talked with him, experienced the reality of his presence. It wasn't a memory or the result of too much bubbly.

One thing death does is bring us to a point

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**Christ Church Lutheran**

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



Jesus' disciples multiplying disciples

of trust, a point of risk. Do I risk believing Jesus and his offer of life, or do I risk believing death's the end and Vernon is just a fading memory, or something else, just no longer that wonderful body and soul person, Vernon.

Life is a risk. We have to trust in someone or something out of our control. And I've discovered people don't like being out of control.

This pesky little virus we have around now has thrown all our best made plans out the window; we're not in control, the virus seems to pop up where ever it wants. And we don't like being out of control.

But death puts us squarely in a position where we lose total control. Vernon isn't controlling anything, he's dead. It's out of our control, otherwise those who love

Vernon would have breathed life into him by now and we wouldn't be here but his place having happy hour. But we are here. We don't control the situation.

Like it or not we have to risk trusting someone or something other than ourselves.

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### Don't Sugar Coat it. Life is a Risk

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I choose to risk trusting my life in Jesus hands. I figure if Jesus made the choice to be born my brother, live life as I know it, choose to be crucified so that I might know his Father's love for me. If Jesus was willing to risk it all for me, I'm tempted to risk trusting him.

But trusting Jesus would be a total waste of time if he was dead; wouldn't it.

Jesus isn't dead, he took the risk of placing his life in his Father's hands, and on the third day his Father raised him to life. Death doesn't hold Jesus. Jesus didn't come to a dead end.

Jesus came into his Father's loving embrace.

One of my all-time favourite words from Jesus is this; "I (that's Jesus) have loved you even

as the Father (that's God the Father) has loved me. Remain (in other words live there). Remain in my love." (John 15:9)

This passage blows my mind; what love doe God the Father and God the Son share, live in daily?

Our reading from Paul's letter to the community of faith in Corinth expressed this love. Vernon and Cecily got to enjoy a little taste of this in their married life. This

amazing relationship of love and affection that Father and Son live in is extended to me, to you, to us through the Son, Jesus.

I'd be sugar coating things, telling nursery rhymes if it wasn't for the fact that Jesus was born, did live in Israel, willingly was crucified rather than deny his love for you, and on the third day Father raised him to new life.

This was documented by those who knew him; walked and talked with him daily. Documented at the risk of death. I think all of Jesus 12 apostles except John, were executed for declaring their trust in Jesus. Life is a risk.

But like Vernon, their story hasn't come to an end. There is so much more to write, to discover, to enjoy.

Vernon hasn't come to a dead end. He hasn't come to nothing. Vernon is now in his heavenly Father's loving embrace. In Jesus, Vernon will be raised to new life, to join Jesus in his celebration of new life.

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### I know Vernon is one Vernon will be raised to new life in Jesus

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of God the Father's children, for at Vernon's baptism his heavenly Father declared him to be his son, who he loves, the delight of his life.

I'm not making that up, for when we are baptised into Jesus, everything that Father said at Jesus' baptism he says over us. Father embraced Vernon in that wonderful relationship of love and affection, which

Jesus gave his life to make a reality.

The reality in which Vernon exists. And when Jesus returns to judge the world, I know what he's going to say about Vernon, for the whole world to hear. I love reminding myself of this truth; Jesus will declare to all people that

Vernon is Father's loved child, who he is proud of, who he delights in.

As a good Dad he might also have a few quite words with Vernon about one or two other things!

I don't want to sugar coat things distorting the truth. So yes Vernon is dead, and totally powerless to do anything about it, and so are we. But today is a long, long, long way short of being the last word on Vernon's life. His best is yet to come; I don't know if I'm excited or worried!