

Jesus respond; he's alive, isn't he? If he doesn't respond, you're telling me he's as good as dead!

Jesus is alive and well. So grab that very first thought, idea, impression, smell, picture, name and if it isn't clear talk with Jesus about it.

After all that's how conversations go; back and forth. They're dynamic, because it is between two living people, sharing their thoughts and ideas. And Jesus is seeking to share with you from the heart, his heart. Your relationship with him is very personal; and his desire is for you to experience the reality of his presence. So why wouldn't you get a thought, a prompt, a knock at the door when you ask the 'Living One'?

I remember reading the true story of a guy who was an electrician. Before he

went to work he'd talk with Jesus about his day; being open to what he received. When he got to work he'd put in his van the various electrical pieces that was placed in his mind that he'd need that day. His boss eventually asked why he seemed to get more work done than the others; why he didn't have to keep coming back to the depo to get part. I'm sure that was an interesting conversation.

Jesus is alive and his passion is for you is to experience the reality of his loving presence in your life. Isn't it great that the COVID-19 virus has given us so much time to be on our own; time to stop and talk with Jesus, being open to his voice.

That reminds me of Jesus saying; "my sheep recognize my voice and come to me." (Jn 10:1-11)

Today I'm celebrating that Jesus is

alive and speaking into my life, into our lives, so that we can enjoy experiencing his presence, so we can share life with him in his great adventure.

I invite you to hit pause and share with Jesus what is on your heart right now.

I invite you to hit pause and ask Jesus to share with you what's no his heart right now. Grab that very first thought, idea, impression, picture, word, names, sense, feeling, smell. Why not jot it down, and talk with Jesus about it.

Ask Jesus what he's up to, and listen. Ask Jesus how you can join him in his great adventure of life, and listen. Ask Jesus, and listen. He's alive and well, grab his reply and go for it.

12 April 2020

JESUS IS ALIVE: EXPERIENCE HIS PRESENCE

Easter Sunday

I'd like to begin by sharing one of my favourite phrases from the Easter story. The woman have come to the tomb, the grave yard, to anoint Jesus dead body. What they find is an empty tomb, and an angel. I love what the angel says to them. I invite you to look it up – Luke 24 verse 5.

The angel asks the women; "Why are you looking among the dead for someone who is alive?" Good question. Would you look for life among the dead? Of course not!

So why do we do it?

I've done it. I've sought to find life in other people's praise. But as soon as you get it, it's gone, it's fleeting. Those words aren't alive.

I'm sure people have looked to their jobs to give them a sense of worth, of purpose, but that too is lifeless. Here one day, gone the next,

as many have experienced in recent days with this virus. Many are now left wondering who they are, what next, how will they get through the next days, weeks, months.

What they looked to for security has been taken away. What now? You'll never find life in something! You'll never find life in something, that isn't alive! You'll never find life among the dead.

I invite you to reflect on this thought. Can you find life among the dead? How's that working for you?

Today; Easter Sunday, we are celebrating that Jesus is alive. The tomb is empty, for Jesus is alive. I invite you to look up some of Jesus words as recorded in the Gospel of John.

Please pause and look up John 11:24.

Here Jesus declares to Martha; "I am

the resurrection and the life. Anyone (that certainly includes you and me) who believes in me will never ever die. Do you believe this...?"

What a promise, finding life with the 'Living One'. Not looking among the dead. Dead traditions and ideas, no matter how good they are, they don't have life. Jesus is a living, breathing person, who is alive today, inviting you to trust him, today. Do you believe this?

I invite you to look up another reading from John. Please pause and look up John 14:6.

This reading is where Jesus is preparing his disciples for his crucifixion. He's pointing them beyond the grave, because that's not where his story ends. Who wants their story to end at the grave?

That would mean your life comes to nothing; a dead end!

Christ Church Lutheran

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



Jesus' disciples multiplying disciples

What did Jesus say to Thomas; "I am the way, the truth and the life." (Jn. 14:6) These are not the words of a dead man, otherwise they'd just be a good idea. These are the words of Jesus, the one death couldn't hold, the one hate, bitterness, envy, greed, disappointment, betrayal could not shape. These are living words for they are spoken by the 'Living One'; Jesus.

I believe without a shadow of doubt that Jesus is alive. I also believe there are millions, no over a billion people alive right now in China, or India if you prefer. All these people are alive. I'm sure we'd all agree with that.

BUT; how much influence do they have on my life, right now, today? How much influence do they have on you, your daily choices, your sense of worth, your purpose for life, your identity? Take a few moments to reflect on that thought. These people are alive, but they have no personal

influence on your life. Is that how you see Jesus? I invite you to reflect on that thought and jot down what comes to your mind. The impressions you get as you take the time to reflect.

A few years ago it really struck me; in a service I said; 'Jesus is alive'. The congregation heartily responded; 'He's

Why do you look for the living among the dead?

alive indeed!' Then this thought came crashing into my brain; 'he's as good as dead, if he doesn't shape what I do'.

It came crashing in that at times I treat Jesus like those billions of people who have no personal influence on how I live, what I value, what morals I hold, why I live and what I do. If Jesus is alive but has no influence in my life, he's as good as dead! If he's not personally involved in my life, is it then just a good idea. No matter how good an idea is, it isn't alive.

About the same time someone said to me; I know Jesus was crucified for me and rose again, but what's he done lately? How would you have answered that question? I invite you to stop and reflect on how you would have responded. If Jesus has done nothing lately, what is the importance of him being alive?

If Jesus isn't to be some irrelevant person in my life, I need to be able to experience his presence.

Actually that's what I'm after; experiencing Jesus presence, today, right now. How do we experience Jesus presence? Not just reflecting on his teachings, but how do we experience the living, breathing, very much alive person?

Take a few moments and jot down your thoughts. How do we, how do you, experience Jesus' living presence, now?

I think we can all thank God that he hasn't simply left us with an idea and a few good

teachings. We have a living breathing person to share life with. A word that sums that up for me is 'relationship'.

Jesus has invited you into a relationship with him; an intimate relationship of love and affection, in a conversational atmosphere, where we live out his supernatural love quite naturally because he's there loving us. That's not an idea, that's a reality we get to live in and enjoy daily.

Ideas and good teachings don't have the capacity to love you; but a living, breathing person, certainly can. And Jesus is what? Jesus is alive; a living, breathing person, who loves you, and invites you into his loving presence; so you can experience his love personally.

As these thoughts were developing in my life so was my appreciation of prayer. For many years I'd simply used prayer like a to-do list. I'd have a monologue with Jesus; 'Jesus could you make it rain, bring my friend to

faith, help me be more courageous, and a few extra dollars would be great'.

Sadly I'd be praying almost as if Jesus wasn't alive, for a conversation isn't a monologue. What do you need for a conversation? Take a few moments to jot down what it takes to have a conversation with another person.

Jesus bursts out of the grave, the victor.

I love reading through John's gospel, especially chapters 13 to 17. In there I find Jesus inviting me to pray. Jesus says ask me and I'll be there. In John 14:16 Jesus says; "I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate (that's another way of referring to the Holy Spirit; God in person with you)."

In chapter 15 Jesus says; "I chose you. I appointed you to go and produce lasting fruit, so that the Father will give you whatever you ask

for, using my name. This is my command: Love each other." (Jn. 15:16,17) Please note that 'name' means to use Jesus' power and authority. Jesus is able to exert power and authority because he's alive.

Time and time again Jesus invites us to ask; so that we might be sharing life with him; joining him in his great adventure of life; being life givers.

With asking comes receiving; and in relationship, in a conversation receiving means listening.

I've found to listen, I've got to stop talking, and focus on the one speaking. Stop and listen.

At the end of these 'Take Away Church' clips we've finished with a time of prayer where I've asked you to first share with Jesus what is on your heart.

Then stop, invite Jesus to speak and listen. Grab the first thought that comes to your mind; that's Jesus response. Why wouldn't