

Good Shepherd Lutheran Church

April 2024

Dear Members of Good Shepherd Lutheran,

Walter was an elderly gentleman who lived into his 80's and was an active member and elder of a congregation I once served. One morning, I heard a rumor that he had died. I hadn't heard that, and so I called out to his farmhouse. Walter himself answered, "Hello?" I said, Walter, someone said you died. Is that true?" He said, "What!" We went on to have a good chuckle, and he went on to say that he was "alive and still kicking."



A true story is told about a Muslim girl who converted to Christianity and then died at a young age. At her funeral, her mother asked the missionary, "What did you do to my daughter?" The startled missionary wasn't quite sure how to answer, and so he replied, "I did nothing." The mom answered, "Oh yes, you did. She died with a smile on her face. Our people do not die like that."

By definition, Christians live and die with a calmness and a peace and a strength that the world has no way of giving. They think, speak, act, and react differently than people who have not received the Easter Gospel and taken their stand on it. They don't really fit in. Their attitudes and their bucket lists and their priorities aren't normal, the way the world defines normal. They say things like, "I'm but a stranger here, heaven is my home." And "For me to live is Christ and to die is gain." And "I desire to depart and be with Christ, which is far better."

We may not all die with a smile on our faces, as that young gal in our opening story did, but we do approach death with a confidence that the New Testament accounts of our Lord's resurrection are true. Our faith is based not just on the opinions of good and decent people. It's based on hundreds of eyewitness testimonies of historical fact. In this sanctuary, we know that the fact that Jesus is alive and well changes everything.

That Jesus rose from the grave proves beyond a reasonable doubt that He was and is who He said he was - Lord of Lords and King of Kings. It proves that all of the written Scriptures are true. It proves that the Father has accepted the sacrifice of His Son as full and complete payment for the sins of the world. It proves that in the courtroom of our God we have been declared not guilty. It proves that funeral homes and caskets



and urns and cemeteries don't get the final word. It proves that our mansions in heaven have been prepared and are on reserve. Christ is risen. He is risen indeed!

Together in Christ,

Pastor Larry J. Griffin

Easter Sermon Series: "Jesus at Work"

- **April 7 - Jesus Persuading**
- **April 14 - Jesus Preparing**
- **April 21 - Jesus Shepherding**
- **April 28 - Jesus Abiding**
- **May 5 - Jesus Choosing**
- **May 12 - (Mother's Day) - Jesus Praying**
- **May 19 - (Pentecost) - Jesus Sending**