



“The Grapevine”

May 2021

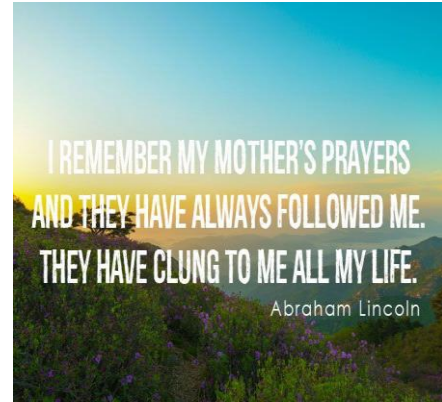
Church Calendar

Communion Sunday/ Deacons Offering
Sunday, May 2

Mother’s Day/ Guest Preacher
Sunday, May 9

Zephyr Point Family Camp Deposits Due
May 15

Memorial Day – Office Closed
Monday, May 31



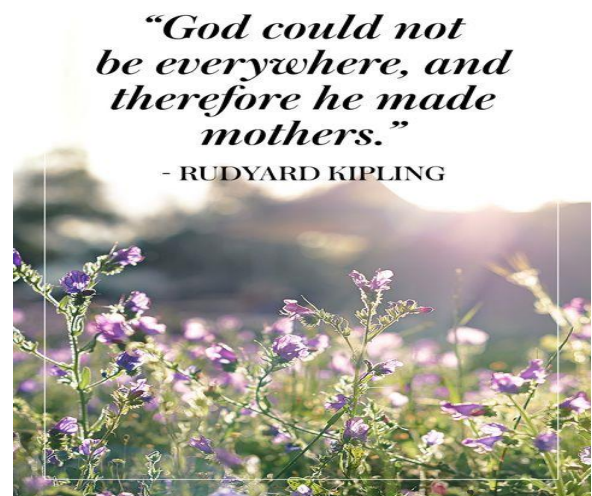
*Sunday, May 9 is Mother’s Day!
I would like to wish all the amazing
Mothers and Grandmothers of our
congregation a blessed day!*

HAPPY BIRTHDAY:

- 1- Daniel Burnett
- 7- Gracelynn Estridge
- 9- Mitra Juarez
- 10- Helen Dubie
- 13- Jill Bailey
- 15- Sandi Clarke
Alex Pineda
- 16- Mike McLellan
Brandon Keith
- 25- David Rusch
- 28- Nathaniel Brandes

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY:

- 1- George & Kathleen Buffleben
- 18- Doug & Shelley Abel
- 22- Harold & Cathie Reich
- 27- Manuel & Mitra Juarez



“PD’s Pickings”

Easter Sunday was April 4th. But Easter is not a single day of the year. For one thing, on our liturgical calendars Easter is a season taking us up to Pentecost Sunday. But more importantly, it has remained Easter ever since the very first one: Christ is still risen. Christ will never be “un-risen.” It will never not be Easter. It is in this knowledge that we approach Pentecost, the birthday of the church—the day we were all given the Holy Spirit and sent out. We the church exist to proclaim this perpetual Easter message: that in Christ alone there is hope, because Christ has risen, never to die again.

We who belong to the family of God are thus “Easter People.” But what does that mean, exactly? It means that we live in and proclaim the hope of the resurrection in word and deed.

We are created to be people of life, not death

We are created to be people characterized by hope, not resignation or despair.

We are created to be people of grace and humility, not arrogance and judgmentalism.

The culture we live in today is in many ways a culture of death: quick to judge, to express it, and even to retaliate against anyone who disagrees with us. Unfortunately, the American church has sometimes been complicit in or even implicated in promoting this climate. But if we’re living as an Easter people, such a criticism will not even be believable about us. An Easter people still knows who the hope of the world is. An Easter people knows God still loves the world—every person, and so cannot fathom treating any one of them with less than the highest respect and grace.

So how do we overcome this climate of death that tempts us so often, and once again bring resurrection life to our communities?

I am becoming more and more convinced that part of that answer, though certainly not all of it, is learning to not take ourselves so seriously. We won’t be defensive if we realize we have nothing to defend. And we don’t, because no matter what assails us, whether we live or die, win the lottery or go bankrupt, are loved or hated, right or wrong, we are always safe and loved in God’s hands. How seriously we take ourselves will determine whether we *respond* in love or *react* in fear, whether it’s a person, circumstance, or issue. This can even extend to our “need” to “defend” God—which is really more about defending our ideas about God. In order to love neighbor with abandon, we must abandon self-protection and surrender our fears.

When we can do this, we can hear others, and they will more likely hear us. God can do a lot of healing within us. When we can get our egos out of the way, we can better live out the resurrection life we already share, drawing many to God so they can experience that same healing. We become conduits of resurrection life to others—even despite our warts.

May you know the power and newness of resurrection life in yourself, and may others know it through you, as your never-ending Easter becomes your ongoing Pentecost.

Shalom,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Pastor Doug". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a long, sweeping underline.