

The Fairview Disciple



The Mission of the Fairview United Methodist Church is to enhance the spiritual growth of its members and the community by providing sound and meaningful experiences through worship, education, outreach, personal involvement in the ministry of the church, and the general nurturing of the congregation in keeping with the example and teaching of our Lord, Jesus Christ.

Fairview United Methodist Church

May 2009

A few years ago I came across a curious news item that has stuck with me ever since. The brief article reported the birth of fraternal twins Timothy and Celeste Keys—Timothy on October 15 and Celeste on January 18! The article concluded, “Doctors believe this gap between twins is unprecedented.” After enduring a twelve-month pregnancy, their mother probably wished that the precedent could have been established by someone else. Happy Mother’s Day, Mrs. Keys.

This oddity comes to mind as I reflect on the miracle of Easter. Because the resurrection of Christ is the foundational event of Christianity, the church observes Easter not on one day only, but for a season of seven weeks plus a day. The Great Fifty Days focus on the accounts in the closing chapters of the Gospels and the opening chapters of Acts wherein the risen Christ enlivened and empowered his followers to manifest and embody the kingdom of God—the “new creation,” the scriptures call it—by proclaiming the gospel and performing miracles. These accounts make it plain that the apostles were able to do all this not by their own ability but by the Spirit of Christ dwelling within them. “It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me,” Paul declared to the Galatians (2:20).

THE PASTOR’S POUND

*“An ounce of
common sense is
worth a pound
of clergy.”*

— John Adams

For Paul and all the apostles, Jesus is more than an example in whose memory they did good works; they resolutely affirmed that only by his *living* presence were they able to do what they did.

One of the stranger titles for Jesus is “firstborn of the dead” (Colossians 1:18; Revelation 1:5). All who were once dead in sin are now, by virtue of the resurrection, alive in Christ: “Because I live, you shall live also” (John 14:19). Christ is, in a sense, our older brother.

You who are the eldest child in your family probably were told by your parents, “While we’re away, you’re in charge.” You were given authority—but with it came great responsibility. So did Christ bear the awful responsibility for our sin, and so does he, as the firstborn, possess the authority of the Father.

Jim Nelson, one of my seminary professors, told us in Theology class, “Adam was sinless, and innocent. Jesus was sinless, and guilty.” For years I had a hard time understanding that, but I suspect you eldest children understand it completely. If things got out of hand at home, whom did your parents hold responsible? Not the younger ones, but you!

Lord Jesus Christ, who has preceded us in death and defeated its power, abide with us and guide us through all the ways we must go that, under your authority and by your Spirit living within us, we may live abundantly in joyful service to the least of your, and our, brothers and sisters. Amen.