

FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH NEWSLETTER

Volume 3, Issue 04 April, 2018 928-535-9575 2750 Mogollon Drive, Overgaard, AZ 85933

www.faithlutheranovergaard.org

WORSHIP SERVICES – 10:30 am Sunday – Solid Bible-Based Preaching & Teaching



“A Better Place”

In 2005, a television show premiered called “Ghost Whisperer”. It was a popular show and ran for five seasons. The premise of the show was that a woman had the ability to see, communicate with, and help the spirits of the dead who had not yet “crossed over into the light”. The idea was that they had some unfinished business that needed to be concluded before they “crossed over”.

About the same time there was another show called “Crossing Over with John Edward”. John Edward is a man who claims to be tuned in to the spirit world and helps the spirits of the dead (those who have “crossed over”) to communicate with the living. His show was also very popular.

There is an old adage, “Only two things in life are certain; Death and Taxes.” Our fascination with what happens after death is rooted in that very certainty of death. In the same way that most people have an innate sense of right and wrong (called conscience, which may vary from person to person depending on their own level of selfishness), most people also have an innate sense of the immortality of the soul . . . that death is not really the end for people. If not, they at least have the *desire* for it.

So we ask, “Where do you go when you die?” Most people say, “You go to a better place” or “You cross over into the light” or “You go to heaven”. Some say, “You come back here to work out what you didn’t get right last time.”

Then there are the nay-sayers who say, “It’s all just a bunch fantastical hooey. Nobody really knows what happens after death . . . because NOBODY DEAD AND BURIED HAS EVER COME BACK FROM THE DEAD TO TELL US ABOUT IT!”

The nay-sayers would seem to have a point. They would question all of the first groups as to upon what their beliefs about the “better place” are based. And the most honest answer many (if not most) could give is, “because that’s what I want to happen.”

If I believe that there is something else after physical death in this world, then I certainly want the next experience to be at least as good if not *better* than my time here has been. I would also like to think that I would see those I loved in the “next life”.

So that settles it. If I get to make up the rules, everybody who dies goes on to the “better place” . . . or at least those who are “good enough”.

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Women's Ministry

Open to ALL women who attend Faith Lutheran Church!

From March 19 meeting

- The McDermott visit is April 10
- Rummage sale (June 1&2) discussed
- Dessert auction after July Potluck

From the President:

Just My



Nomination Committee members are George Corsi, Pastor Wirtz, Kristy Preecs, Kristine Grams, and Bobbi Goode.

The kitchen expansion project has started and we apologize for any inconvenience.

CHURCH COUNCIL UPDATE



- Discussed and updated kitchen remodel progress.
- Discussed election ballots.
- Assisted Listening system will be replaced with one more functional.
- Discussed upcoming Congregational Meeting and election of officers.
- Next mtg: April 24 at 9am



Birthdays

Apr 7

Barbara Lawson

Anniversaries

Apr 2

Don & Jenny Grothberg

Apr 12

John & Linda Chackerian

MONTHLY MEETINGS & EVENTS



Tue April 3 - Church Cleaning – 9 am

Tue Apr 10 – Missionary Potluck

Mon Apr 16 - Elder Board – 9 am
- Women’s Ministry – 1:30 pm

Sat Apr 21 – Men’s Morning Mingle 9am

Sun Apr 22 – Church Potluck

Tue Apr 24 – Council Meeting – 9am

Sun Apr 29 – Congregational Meeting &
Election of Officers – 11:30am



Practice Tuesdays - 4:30 PM

BIBLE STUDY

Sundays – 9 am

“Timothy & Titus” continues:

Thursdays - 9 am

Psalms study-continues



SUNDAY SCHOOL

Bible Lesson
for Kids



Sundays – 9 am

*Sermons and Bible Studies can be
listened to on the website.*

www.faithlutheranovergaard.org

Pastor Wirtz Office Hours

Mondays - 10am - 4pm In the Office*

Tuesdays - 10am - 12pm In the Office

Wednesdays - Visitation Day

Thursdays - 10am - 12 pm In the Office

Call for appointment -

928-535-9575 or 323-717-4390

revnwirtz@yahoo.com,

or just drop in, or call anytime

PLEASE



during service.

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That is why almost every culture and religion on earth believes in a Heaven, Valhalla, Happy Hunting Grounds, Land beyond the Sea, Mictlan, Gan Eden, Fields of Aaru, Celestial Kingdom, Paradise, Vaikuntha, or Elysium to name a few. That there are so many names and descriptions of the “better place” is problematic. It is also indicative of the variety of cultures and religions from whence they came and man’s tendency to want to make up his own rules and create his own version of the “better place.” If “a better place” *does* exist, it *can’t* be defined by the mortals who will inherit it; it *must* be defined by the One who created both the mortals *and* the “better place.”

Now we return to the problem of the nay-sayers. There are as many descriptions of a Creator, or “God” as there are religions and cultures. Which one (if any) has the objective truth? I repeat the claim of the nay-sayers, “NOBODY DEAD AND BURIED HAS EVER COME BACK FROM THE DEAD TO TELL US ABOUT ‘THE BETTER PLACE’, LET ALONE IT’S ‘GOD’”.

Well, that’s not exactly accurate. There is one religion that can historically present One who *has* returned from the grave. This last week, the largest religion in the world celebrated the Resurrection of Jesus the Christ. That Jesus of Nazareth was an actual historical reality is beyond question. The historical evidence for his existence is overwhelming compared the evidence of other accepted historical figures of the time. Primary, secondary, and tertiary evidence that He was put to death, and then raised to life again after three days is also in more than ample supply for honest historians. No other religion or culture has anything like this which is as well supported by actual history.

That being the case, someone *has* returned from the dead. He did so *not* to tell us about what he saw in “heaven”, but rather to prove to us that everything He said about Heaven and the Kingdom of God *before* He was put to death was *true!* He first knew about Heaven and the Kingdom of God, not because He had died and then returned to enlighten us; He first knew about Heaven and the Kingdom of God because that is where He originally come from.

“No one has ascended into heaven except he who descended from heaven, the Son of Man.” (Jesus’ words about Himself from John 3:13)

The heart of Jesus’ message is actually quite different from all of the other “wishful human thinking” on the subject of the Kingdom of God and of heaven. While virtually every other religion and culture (including modern popular American culture) insists that all people who die go to a “better place” (or if not “all”, then at least “most – because most are basically good”), the message from Jesus (and all of his prophets before him, and all of his apostles after him) is that NO ONE is “good enough” to enter into Heaven on their own merit. NO ONE *can* follow the rules necessary to enter into Heaven. It is impossible.

Hence Jesus has provided another and gracious way, and so calls EVERYONE to turn away from their sinful nature, bidding all to come to Him that He might purify them and give them *His* righteousness and the benefit of the forgiveness of our sins which He paid for with His death (in the place of *our* death). We learn from Jesus’ Word that the *only ones* to go to Heaven after death will be those who have not rejected the free gift He offers from the cross; the gift that He proved to be true when He broke the chains of death forever at His resurrection on that first Easter Sunday. Christians rejoice on Easter Sunday because it is the anniversary of the day when God proved there *is* eternal life after death, and that, as Christians, Christ *will* raise them up even as He rose . . . just as He promised.

“He is not here, but has risen. Remember how he told you, while he was still in Galilee, that the Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men and be crucified and on the third day rise.” (Luke 24:6-7)

“If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also.” (John 14:2-3)