

“Fear Not—Water for the Thirsty”

Please join us Sunday for Worship and Praise and Holy Communion

Sunday, March 5 at 5:30 pm

10311 NE Hwy 99, Vancouver, WA

(Park in the back behind North Creek Church)

Preparing for the Crucifixion

What are we doing in these weeks leading up to Easter? What's up with this theme of “Fear Not”? Isn't this thing called “Lent” a contraption made up by the institutional church? It doesn't appear in the Bible. So, what's the big deal?

Here's the point.

We don't live in a safe world any more. For a long time we were pretty lucky and we didn't live in a land where there was war. Or where most children died before they were 5 years old. Or where we spent 18 hours a day doing back breaking work just to stay alive.

Most of us have good jobs, decent clothes, a nice place to live. We have free time left over after work, and people we care about to share it with.

But for the vast majority of human history, that hasn't been true. And for a pretty big percentage of human beings alive today, that's still not true. And worse still, we can see the misery of humanity growing among us in our large cities, with tents and trash and needles and human waste piling up on the streets.

We can see those who, like the ones who video violence and post it online, egg on the anger and division and hatred. Their faces are filled with a hunger for attention—and fear that the violence will fall on them. If we're honest, we know that we're afraid, too. Now what?

Let me tell you a story. I heard about an AP class who arrived one day to find the usual rows of desks arranged in a circle. Their teacher—friendly if demanding—suddenly threatened these

smart, accomplished students with failure and rejection if they so much as moved or spoke. Then, from the glass fish bowl on a desk in the center of their circle he scooped up a goldfish and placed it, flopping, on the desk surface. Without a word he left the room and shut the door.

The students sat, paralyzed with fear and uncertainty as the fish flopped in agony. Each glanced around—risk everything? For a gold fish they could replace with a dollar? Time slowly ticked by—one minute, then two. Finally one young woman uttered a curse, stood, scooped up the goldfish and placed it in the water where it jerked, and moved, then swam as it recovered.

The door flew open and the teacher strode into the room. His face was fierce as he looked at them and said, “Every single one of you will face this terrible choice at some point in your life: will you choose to do what's right? Or will you freeze with fear, afraid of failure and ridicule? Today you froze with fear. Today all but one of you chose to stand by and let a living being die in agony. What will you do next time?”

God is never a BYSTANDER. God has always shown up to redeem and restore His children. From instructions for the ark to a burning bush for Moses, God gives power to those who stand with him. JESUS is NOT a BYSTANDER. He was God come to us as one of us. And He chose to be crucified rather than STAND BY and let us live and die with no hope, no salvation.

Look at the world around you. These weeks called Lent are a gift—a season given to you from God. A gift of time you can use to ask yourself, “what am I afraid of? what holds me back from taking the love of Jesus Christ to those who suffer?”

Remember—God longs to give you the power to conquer fear and move forward in His love. What will you do with the power given only to you?

thoughts from the silence from Pastor Vivian

This week - Embracing “Fear Not!”

Isaiah 41:17/John 4:1-30

“Water for the Thirsty”
Jesus brings Living Water
to the woman at the well.

Then receive strength through
Holy Communion

