

1. Get Acquainted: Icebreaker

“We want to be great at friendship. Our desire is to be a blessing to everyone we meet. The Gospel frees us to do the hard work of loving well.” From Trinity’s Community Group Meeting Agenda and Summary

I was struck during worship today that I don’t know what my neighbors’ expectations are about death and it seems that if I am going to love them well I would know their answer to that question and many others.

- What do you personally expect about death?
- What are some ideas you could send me about how to engage my neighbors, now and after the virus protocols are gone, in ways that would help me find out their “personal expectations about death”?

2. Worship: Afraid of What? (Poem by E.H. Hamilton)

<https://www.webtruth.org/poems/afraid-of-what-poem-by-e-h-hamilton/>

E.H. Hamilton, a Presbyterian missionary to China, wrote the poem below to reflect upon and commemorate the martyrdom of his fellow missionary J.W. Vinson (1880-1931). In October 1931, as Vinson visited some believers 18 miles from his mission station, the area was overwhelmed by a group of 600 bandits. Vinson was taken hostage along with around 150 others. Offered freedom if he would write a letter to the commanding officer of government troops telling them to withdraw, Vinson declined “unless all the hostages are released”. The bandit chief refused and Vinson was shot and killed. His decapitated body was later found by Edward Currie, and he was buried in the small missionary cemetery in Haichow. As his captors prepared to execute Vinson, waving a gun in his face they asked him, “Are you afraid?”. A girl who witnessed the event later testified that Vinson replied, “No. If you shoot, I go straight to heaven.” This incident inspired E.H. Hamilton to write his poem.

Read, enjoy, and worship.

Afraid? Of what?
To feel the spirit’s glad release?
To pass from pain to perfect peace,
The strife and strain of life to cease?
Afraid? Of that?

Afraid? Of what?
Afraid to see the Savior’s face,
To hear His welcome, and to trace,
The glory gleam from wounds of grace,
Afraid? Of that?

Afraid? Of what?
A flash – a crash – a pierced heart;
Brief darkness – Light – O Heaven’s art!
A wound of His a counterpart!
Afraid? Of that?

Afraid? Of what?
To enter into Heaven’s rest,
And yet to serve the Master blessed?
From service good to service best?
Afraid? Of that?

Afraid? Of what?
To do by death what life could not –
Baptized with blood a stony plot,
Till souls shall blossom from that spot?
Afraid? Of that?

3. Kingdom Centered Prayer:

YOU CAN PRAY WITH US ...

1. Worship the LORD for His all-surpassing power! Praise and adore Him, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit that He is mightier than our sin, death, and hell.
2. How have you lived perplexed and afraid because of death's power? Confess your helplessness to Jesus, asking Him to save you and forgive you – working power out of weakness, life out of death.
3. Give thanks to Jesus for how He has proven His power and trustworthiness. Thank Him for opening up access to God by His death, and for opening up eternity by His resurrection!
4. Who do you know that is shaken by the real power of death? Pray for them, asking the Lord to make Himself known to them in His resurrection power – and that He would give them hope as only He can.
5. Ask the Holy Spirit to bear in you the fruit of joy, especially in light of Jesus' resurrection! Pray for such a confidence in His power and trustworthiness that you would joyfully bear witness to others *of His story*.

4. Sermon Reflection: The Resurrection of Jesus, Sermon Tim Rice

Luke 24:1-12 (ESV). ¹ But on the first day of the week, at early dawn, they went to the tomb, taking the spices they had prepared. ² And they found the stone rolled away from the tomb, ³ but when they went in they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus. ⁴ While they were perplexed about this, behold, two men stood by them in dazzling apparel. ⁵ And as they were frightened and bowed their faces to the ground, the men said to them, "Why do you seek the living among the dead? ⁶ He is not here, but has risen. Remember how he told you, while he was still in Galilee, ⁷ that the Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men and be crucified and on the third day rise." ⁸ And they remembered his words, ⁹ and returning from the tomb they told all these things to the eleven and to all the rest. ¹⁰ Now it was Mary Magdalene and Joanna and Mary the mother of James and the other women with them who told these things to the apostles, ¹¹ but these words seemed to them an idle tale, and they did not believe them. ¹² But Peter rose and ran to the tomb; stooping and looking in, he saw the linen cloths by themselves; and he went home marveling at what had happened.

The Problem of Death – Plagues both our bodies and our souls

Women at the Tomb –

- What is the status quo they expected?
- What is the dissonance? What is the "not quite right" of the situation?
 - How have you experienced that in your life?
 - How are you experiencing that right now, the dissonance of the status quo?
- Tim told a story that some children WWII being in concentration camps so long that they learned the language of their captures and forgot the language of their homeland.
 - How has that happened to you? How have you learned the language of Satan and death?

- How has God, Holy Spirit, Jesus and Heavenly Father been “re-learning” you the language of Heaven and death a step on the pathway?
- Heights perplex me! They stop me in my tracks. The fear of falling possesses my mind and thoughts. The words of fear and threat become bold to me and the solace of Jesus, His Cross and Heaven seem silly. I am truly perplexed, stopped in my tracks. Now the strange thing is I do not have a walking around knowledge of this phobia and then bang at NC lookout there it is or on a ski lift I am out of nowhere undone, paralyzed, freaking out. This fear is a gift to me during this virus upheaval to bless me with a way to incarnate with all my friends who are shocked by their viral fears and had no idea it was coming.
 - How has God stopped you in your tracks during this precious time of reflection and threat?
 - Death is the great leveler!
 - How is God leveling you, our friends and this community?

Jesus’ Promise of Victory – His Power and Trustworthiness

- The radiant rock rollers, Jesus’ body guards, ask, “Why are looking for the living among the dead? And then say, “Don’t you remember”.
 - Jesus’ prediction of his trial, death and resurrection make him trustworthy for the disciples.
 - What are your favorite predictions or promises of Jesus?
 - What are the ones you still don’t believe?
 - How have you found Jesus to be trustworthy in His predictions, unctio’n’s and promises?
 - In your family, business, health, dreams
- How does the resurrection of Jesus prove to you his power?
 - Would you believe if they had actually been able to use their spices on his dead body?

Our Proclamation of Hope

- Are your fears conquered by Jesus or are you doing it with lectures and scolding?
- Are you filled with joy and delight in the finished work of his saving or are you exhausted in your work of saving you and your neighbor?

Jesus goes for a 7 mile walk after meeting with Mary of Magdala for a brief visit at the tomb that morning. He goes on a walk cuz his work is done! It is Holy Spirit time now. Reminds me when I was to wash the dishes and my brother Ted was supposed to dry and put them away. Well, after I washed them I was done so I went for a walk.

- How are you sinning by believing it is your job to do Holy Spirit’s work after you work is finished?

Jesus said it is best I leave so HS can come to convict of sin, righteousness and judgement.

- Who are you trying to convince of sin, righteousness and judgement?
- How would it be different if you did your job, love God with all your heart and love your neighbor and leave all the convicting to Holy Spirit? How would your life be different?

5. Mission: Following the Resurrected Jesus

Tim did a great job at the end of his sermon describing faith, repentance and faith through the responses of the woman coming to the tomb with one set of emotions and chore in mind and leaving with a completely new set of chores and the emotions to match.

Faith and Repentance Pathway

- Burdened with a task
 - Come to do the task
 - Realize you got it all wrong
 - Leave to do a new task
- Delighted with new realities and tasks

Which of songs from our Easter Service reminds and energizes you to your new mission?

<https://open.spotify.com/playlist/0cq1zEJYpuQjof4C600mbs>