

POSTSCRIPT TO EASTER
April 30, 2017 Matthew 26: 30-35 & 26: 56 –Volunteer Appreciation Sunday
The Church of the Covenant

Why would anyone volunteer to serve the church anyway? Family first, Job first, other activities first –busy, busy, busy --why would anyone want to serve the Lord in our overly busy lives? On this Volunteer Appreciation Sunday it is the question we should be asking...Jesus promises His disciples before He is crucified: *“But after I am raised up I will go before you to Galilee.” (Matthew 26: 32)* This promise is confirmed by the angel at the Garden Tomb on Easter when it declares: *“Go quickly and tell his disciples that (Jesus) has risen from the dead, and behold, he is going before you to Galilee; there you will see him.” (Matthew 26: 7)* So POST-Easter, after Jesus is resurrected from the dead and rises in the power of God, where do we find Jesus? Where do we see Jesus our Lord? Well, we see Him in Galilee. We experience His presence when we are obedient to seek Him where He has told us we will find Him, and we will find Him when we seek Him with all of our heart. It is the *Postscript to Easter...*

So where is Galilee? I know, I know, it is a literal place in Israel in the Holy Land. But here I think Jesus is referring metaphorically to a *spiritual* place, rather than a literal one. But you may trust me, the original disciples hustled their bustle and quickly and rapidly ran to the literal Galilee right after they heard that Jesus was raised from the dead. No one said, “I am sorry my family comes first, my job comes first, my entertainments, my vacation, my golf game, my kid’s soccer match, my hobbies take precedence over seeking the risen Savior.” Nope. They dropped whatever they were doing and raced to Galilee to see the Lord, who was dead but is alive forevermore. Let me define “Galilee” as that place where the risen Jesus is. Galilee is where we see Jesus alive and experience Him in all His fulness. Galilee is experiencing Jesus personally and the full power of His resurrection. Disciple, that is the place we should be running post-Easter. Jesus goes before us. Jesus promises us we will see Him in Galilee. Jesus reminds us: “Where I am there shall my servant be also.” (John 12: 26) Figure out where Jesus is and run to Galilee. Don’t sit passively waiting for Him to show up. Go where HE IS and there you will find Him. Go where HE IS and there you will experience the new power of the resurrection in our lives. Postscript to Easter.

So where is Galilee? Say, you volunteer to be an usher. And you think, “I can pass out bulletins every now and then.” But it brings you to church every Sunday for a month. And who do you meet in church? Jesus promises: “Wherever two or more are gathered in my name, there I am in the midst of them.” You go to pass out bulletins and you encounter the risen Christ in worship. Or say, you volunteer to serve as a sound operator or computer person for the Covenant Center and you find yourself more and more at the church. I say to some people, “I might as well bring in a cot for you to set up here in the sound booth.” “I should print up some business cards for you, you’re at the church so much.” They are hearing much more than just the sound; they are hearing the voice of Jesus. “My sheep hear my voice”, says Jesus, “*And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall anyone snatch them out of my hand.*” (John 10: 27-28) They come to help and instead hear the voice of their risen Savior. Or say, you serve as an office volunteer, and some volunteers have developed a full time ministry; they are on the phone continuously contacting shut ins and people in need. They started as an office volunteer just answering the phone and now they use the phone for the glory of the Lord and in the process they encounter, not just any person on the other end of the line, they encounter Jesus. Or say, you volunteer to sing in the Covenant Choir or the Praise Team, and all week you are humming the tunes and repeating the words you sang on Sunday. And you discover it isn’t about the music; it’s about the person to whom you are singing the music. And you feel the pleasure of God, and as you show up more and more to sing, Jesus shows up more and more in your life. You meet Him in the practice room. You meet Him in the choir loft. You meet Him in the praises. Twice blessed, you are. For you have seen Jesus our Lord. Or perhaps you are a volunteer who helps with Friends of Jesus. And more and more

each week, in those wonderful saints who come from ARC, in their childlike trust and faith in God, as you see them love and praise the Lord and understand the deepest mysteries of life that so many other people miss, you become passionate and committed and your whole life revolves around a group of people that most of the world has forgotten. And you wouldn't miss it for the world. A part of your heart is missing when you're not there. Why is that? Because its Galilee. Its where you experience the risen Christ each week.

Two days after Easter I left for a Mission Trip to the New Testament Mission in Lacroix, Haiti. What was I thinking? How was I going to prepare to go away during the busiest week of my life, Holy Week and Easter? But I arrived. And I remember being swarmed by the preschool children, and them just wanting to see me and be with me, and saying Bon Jour, "Good morning!", and them laughing and smiling and pushing just to touch the "blanc", the funny looking white guy. And I was sitting there, looking into their little eyes. And I was shocked to discover that it was Jesus staring back at me. After Easter, I had rushed to go to Galilee, and there I encountered the risen Christ. "I will go before you to Galilee." And this year, for me, my Galilee was an out of the way spot in rural, desperate Haiti, where the Lord had gone before me, and I encountered Him in all His fulness, and in all His Holy Spirit, resurrection POWER...

"I have seen the Lord!"

I want to challenge you to live in the overflowing POWER of the Holy Spirit, in the power of Jesus' resurrection this year. I want to tell you the truth. You are afraid that you don't have enough time. You are too busy with everything else in life. You are afraid it won't work in your already too busy schedule. "I can't fit anything else in my calendar". You are afraid that if you care and if you show up in Galilee that Jesus might just claim your whole life. Of course, HE WILL. Of course, HE WILL. That's the whole point. But here's the bargain. Here's the deal. When you go to Galilee and you find Jesus the Lord HE will give you Holy Spirit Resurrection Power for your life. You will be able to do far more than you ever thought possible. There will be abundant time in your schedule, because HE will make it. You will have every resource you need, because HE will provide it. Your life will be passionate and on fire for HIM. You will come alive in the power of His resurrection. Your life will be full of HIS presence. His resurrection POWER will do the miraculous in and through you. Trust me, you've never lived your life out of the overflow, out of the power of the resurrection, out of a victorious power escaped at Easter. You've only ever lived your life in the natural, the way everyone else does, the way the world does. "I have come that they might have life, and have it abundantly", promises Jesus (John 10:10). You are still trying to live your life according to your calendar. Go to Galilee and discover new-found power for daily living that will amaze and astound you by its abundance. That's why we go to Galilee...

Most active disciples in a Presbyterian Church say, I don't want to be recognized; I don't want to be thanked; I don't want your stinking coffee mug or key chain to try to thank me. That's not the point of today. The point is to say to the rest of us, the ones who have come to Easter Sunday, but not yet run to Galilee, the point is to say to the rest of us –if you go to Galilee, and if you step forward in new ways, and if you take some risks and trust the Lord, and if you volunteer and deepen your discipleship, then, then, then, the Lord will provide overflowing resurrection power for your lives, and you will live powerful, active, engaged, passionate, totally alive lives for HIM. A life come alive through the resurrection of Jesus today. Why would anyone volunteer to serve the church anyway? To go to Galilee. To see Jesus my Lord. To have an abundant, overflowing, passionate life of particular power and effectiveness. To come alive. That's why. It is the Postscript to Easter. Amen and Amen.

By: The Reverend Dr. Stuart D. Broberg, The Church of the Covenant, Washington, Pennsylvania
IF THIS HAS BLESSED YOU, PLEASE PASS IT ALONG TO A FRIEND!