



A WORD FROM OUR PASTOR

Written by Rev. Chris Pennington

With Easter having just passed but still being in the season, I thought it was only fitting to look at the story behind a famous hymn that speaks of the wonderful truth that Easter shares to the world. That truth of course is that our Savior lives. Though it was foretold over sever hundred years before that this would come to pass from the prophet Isaiah, the glorious truth that our savior rose from the grave has brought shock and wonder for over 2000 years.

The famous hymn's opening line truly brings to light what all believers in Jesus Christ have said and continue to declare:

I serve a risen Savior, He's in the world today;
I know that He is living whatever men may say;
I see His hand of mercy, I hear His voice of cheer, And just the time I need Him,
He's always near.

The story behind this song also brings joy to my heart because just as the song it is a testament of a believer trying to share that wonderful truth. In 1933, Alfred Ackley, a musician and preacher, wrote the famous hymn "He Lives." At the time, Ackley was challenged by a young student who was confused as to why Christians worshipped someone who had died centuries earlier. In response, Ackley is quoted as saying, "He lives! I tell you, He is not dead but lives here and now! Jesus Christ is more alive today than ever before. I can prove it by my own experience, as well as the testimony of countless thousands." Fueled by the student's questions, Ackley wrote these popular lyrics. His refrain is joyous, reminding us all that Jesus rose from the dead as promised and remains alive today in the heart of every believer.

Refrain: He lives, He lives, Christ Jesus lives today!
He walks with me and talks with me Along life's narrow way.
He lives, He lives, Salvation to impart!
You ask me how I know He lives? He lives within my heart.

What a wonderful song and even more wonderful truth? It is truly what the Gospel is all about, the hope that we should tell the world about, "He Lives." Let us pray that this very hope brings us strength and guidance as we live out his grace and truth so that the world may see Jesus Christ in us. "We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life." Romans 6:4

Easter Blessings, Pastor Chris

The purpose of Richardson Park United Methodist Church is to help people experience the amazing love of God and develop a vital relationship with Jesus Christ.