

Greetings in the name of our Risen Savior! I pray this finds all of you in good spirits even if the physical form is not cooperating. April was a great month for me it was Easter and my Birthday, doesn't get much better than that.

For those of you who have been following us on our journey of finishing up our home in Dunbar to get it ready to sell.... Good News! It is on the market and ready for its new owners. I have been praying for them and sending blessings their way for several years now.

For all who have been asking it has been slow going for John since his accident in December. Healing is a process and takes time, usually way longer than we would like. Thank you for all of the prayers. I thought I would take this opportunity to just "catch up" to thank you for everything you have done for us, the prayers lifted up, the cards sent, the phone calls and messages. It means a lot to be part of a "family" and the body of Christ is definitely that! I don't know how I could possibly live a single day without the close relationship I have with God. And I don't know how I could survive without the wonderful men and women that he has surrounded me with all of these years.

When people say I don't need God, or I believe in God but I don't need to go to church, it breaks my heart. Who do they have for support, and spiritual guidance when things in life become difficult and go south? What network of compassion and care do they receive? Usually not much if any.

Right now in our country suicide rate is on the rise and increasing daily. Why? People have no hope. They do not know the Jesus we know. They feel like they are alone and isolated when everything goes wrong. And they have relied on their own strength to the point that there is none left.

So when I hear people say "I don't NEED to go to church to believe in God". I smile and nod, but I don't leave it there. I usually follow up with no you don't, but you are the one missing out on the wonderful gift that God has given us that can only be found as a connected part of the body of believers. Jesus knew this he said where 2 or 3 are gathered I am there in the midst of them. (A little secret: He is there even if it is one) however I have always counted it as 3, Me, myself and I. And he also said that two are better than one.

Think of a very difficult or heavy task you had to do? Did you have help? Was it easier with someone sharing the load? And that can be emotional or spiritual as well as a physical burden. In fact, some tasks are virtually impossible to do alone. It requires more help.

In April our churches had the blessing of witnessing 6 of our youth accept Christ and 5 were either baptized or reaffirmed their baptism. They chose to do it together including having all 5 in the baptismal tub so that they could witness each other's special moment. I have enjoyed so much watching this group grow close and support each other.

That is the perfect example of how the body of Christ should be. There together with each other, to learn, help, heal, be accountable and grow with.

How are you doing on that? Are you back in church, engaged? Or are you self-isolated grumbling about being alone with no help? School is coming to a close, summer is around the corner, people will be busy and gone. What will you be doing to stay connected to the Body of Christ? What will you do to strengthen your relationship with God? Hopefully your summer is filled with the fellowship of congregants as well as some time with the Savior himself...

Shalom,

Pastor Penny