



April 13, 2022
A Note from Pastor April

Dear Friends,

This morning, I watched my 12-year-old son get on his bike to ride to school for the first time on his own.

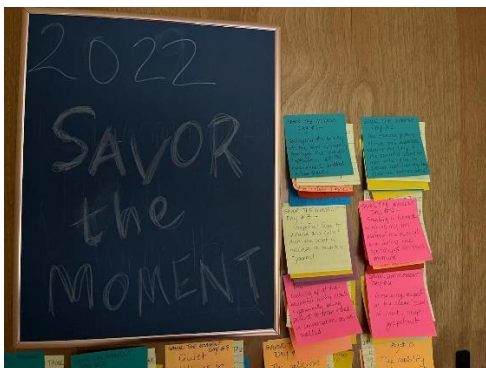
We went over the route several times. We talked about safety measures around the busy intersections. We made sure his helmet and tires were ready to go.



As I watched him riding away, I had so many feelings. Fear, sadness, and discomfort were definitely there... but so were pride, joy, and a sense of celebration.

I stood in the driveway for a few moments after he had rounded the corner, trying to show up to this moment that was new... attuned to both my gratitude and the lump in my throat.

During this Season of Lent, I've been working to be more attentive to the present moment. I've been trying to show up to the things right in front of me and experience them for what they are.



Moments of savoring the smell of fresh coffee or delighting in the feel of sunlight on my face are easy to show up to.

Staying present in the more complicated parts of life is, well... more complicated.

This past month, God made it impossible for me to avoid some very painful conversations with people I love. Nothing inside of me wanted to show up in these moments. Everything in me wanted to run back home and hide under the covers.

Yet, when I showed up with my full self, there was pain and there were tears, but there was also healing and joy. Something new and beautiful and deeper was born not only in those relationships but also inside of me.

As we've been journeying through the Old Testament this year, it has helped me to understand more fully the stories that would have been alive in the minds of Jesus and his disciples during that very first Holy Week.

It was the festival of the **Passover**, a time to look to the past stories of a God who had rescued the Hebrew people from the hands of their oppressors. **This was a week about liberation and freedom.**

Moses was at the center of the stories, standing up to Pharaoh and leading the people across the Red Sea and toward the Promised Land.

Jesus clearly knew these stories and festival traditions well.

He made arrangements for a place to celebrate the Passover feast with his disciples. As they gathered around the table for the meal, honoring the stories of the past, Jesus begins to do something new. He takes the same ordinary elements on the table and turns the attention from the past to the present.

In those moments, he wants his disciples to show up to the way these familiar stories were taking on new life and new purpose in the moment they were in.

Take and eat... this is my body broken for you.

Take and drink... this is my blood poured out for you for the forgiveness of sins.

Something new is about to transpire. It won't look like it looked when Moses came and led the people out.

This will be a NEW COVENANT. It will live in your very bodies. It will lead you to new life from the inside out.

And it will be for ALL PEOPLE.

Do this every time you gather around the table so that you can remember. So that you can stay present. So that you can fully participate in the work that God is going to be doing in each of you... and in me.

RIGHT HERE. RIGHT NOW.

God's extraordinary Great Story is always moving forward, not backwards.



The Spirit is leading us into places that are both connected to the past and charting a new future. Along the way, some of the ways of the past will need to be acknowledged and left behind. Sometimes we will come face to face with our worst fears and with the reality of suffering that we would rather avoid.

New life invites us to show up to the moment we are in, no matter how familiar or challenging or complicated it may seem to do so.

This, says Jesus, this is the path that will lead you to life.

The way, the truth, and the life.

For the first time since 2019, we will be able to gather in person to worship, sing, reflect, and pray during this Holy Week. We will be able to sit around tables on Thursday evening in our Warehouse 839 space for the first time in two years. We'll have space on Good Friday in the sanctuary to name the losses we have held over these last two years. We will have a sanctuary filled with Easter flowers on Sunday morning, honoring and remembering our loved ones, celebrating new life.

When we gather, some of the stories and patterns will be familiar. Yet, much of what will be happening will be NEW. We aren't the same people that we were two years ago. Our community has grown, changed, and shifted. There will be new faces and familiar ones.

We'll probably have a mixture of emotions as we gather. We might be a bit nostalgic about the way it "used to feel." Whatever comes up for you is OK.

What might happen if we show up to these moments in community with a willingness to meet the present moment with openness and expectation?

What if we acknowledge the feelings we might have of discomfort, sadness, or joy?

What if this Holy Week doesn't need to be like those in the past, but can be a part of what God is doing in the NOW?

God's extraordinary Great Story is always moving forward, not backwards.

I'm grateful that we get to move forward together as a community.

Blessings,

Pastor April



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The logo features a stylized 'i' icon composed of colorful geometric shapes (triangles and squares) in shades of green, yellow, orange, and blue. The text is in a bold, sans-serif font.