



ALLELUIA!

Easter 1995

Dear Christian Friends:

The other day little three-year-old Willy Ford walked into our church sanctuary and noticed all the pews, carpet, pulpit, altar, organ, and lectern removed for renovation. When he returned to his mother in Criswell Hall he said, "Someone took my church away."

When I heard about the comment I was immediately reminded of what Mary Magdalene said when she found the empty tomb on the morning she had gone there to prepare spices and ointments. "They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him."

But, contrary to our first impressions, an empty sanctuary and an empty tomb are not necessarily bad news. Mary Magdalene soon found that the absent body really meant that Jesus was alive forever, and that he had risen from the dead! Now he would be present always and guide his people with his Spirit.

In the same way, we want to tell little Willy that the empty sanctuary does not mean the church has been taken away. The church is not where we see pews, pulpits, and carpets, but where we meet the Risen Christ. No wonder then that wonderful things happen in the church whenever "two or three are gathered in his name."

Like the tomb and the currently vacated sanctuary, life itself often looks and feels empty. That's not necessarily bad news if we know the risen Christ. An emptiness may actually point us to a reality greater than we had been seeking. Tears can be transformed into testimony like that of Mary Magdalene: "I have seen the Lord!"

We pray that each of you will experience the blessing of a magnificent Easter season.

Sincerely,



Ehrhardt I. Lang, Pastor

P.S. Enclosed is an envelope to provide you an opportunity for a special Easter offering in addition to your regular gifts. (This year we did not send the usual Lenten coin folders.) Please see the other side of this letter for our Holy Week schedule.