



THE BEACONLIGHT



Newsletter of the First Baptist Church of Fitchburg

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Dear Congregation,

The celebration of Resurrection Day is once again nearly upon us, and as we reflect on the One who makes all things new, I am reminded of the regenerative faith we are called to have here in the shadow of the cross. Perhaps Calvinists and Arminian thinkers are both right in that regeneration may in fact both precede our faith in God by His divine will and follow it through the divine work of His Spirit. One thing is for sure, Christian faith requires us to choose Jesus, who first chose to suffer and die for us.

During Jesus' trial before a Roman court, the crowd that had amassed was asked by the governor, "*Which of the two do you want me to release to you? ... 'Barabbas,' they answered*". Then Pilate's questioned the crowd, "*What then shall I do with Jesus who is called Christ?*" (*Matthew 27:21-22*).

The crowd chose to free Barabbas and crucify Christ. Even having been given a second chance, they chose the sinner rather than the "One who knew no sin" (2 Corinthians 5:21). Pilate appeased the crowd and most know the rest of that account, but the point that I hope goes acknowledged is that these two real men are also symbolic and that there was a deliberate decision made by those who were there to destroy, rather than uphold all that was truly Good in the world.

Each of us make this decision every day. Do we unleash sin in our lives, the cause of Christ's suffering on the cross, or do we choose Jesus? Do we choose to freely partake of His goodness and walk in His ways, sharing His love with others, or do we restrict His will and follow our own sinful desires?

Which of the two will you release in this season? I pray that we each choose Jesus. May we always choose the One who has chosen "us in Him before the foundation of the world to be holy and blameless in His presence" (Ephesians 1:4), which is where each of us are destined to one day stand.

Let us stand up for Jesus and proclaim Hallelujah! God be praised!

Regards,

Pastor Meredith