



“ I tell you the truth; today you will be with me in paradise!” (Luke 23:43)

HE is RISEN! HE is risen indeed!

Today I want to share with you two memorials that have affected us this past week. First is the wonderful colorful flower cross that was created for Easter morning. How gorgeous! A special thank you to Tina and Duane Gilson, Stephanie Eisele and all other volunteers who worked hard to get that cross looking as wonderful as it did!

The second memorial is a plaque that will be dedicated to the church in the little flower garden in front to the church in honor of Carol Scheer – my spouse who passed away on September 12, 2022. Using a portion of a memorial given in Carol’s name, the properties team was able to re-route more water to that specific spot so that we could purchase a better variety of flowers to plant there. Thank you to that team that helped make this possible! We will be holding a short dedication of this plaque on Sunday outside immediately following the Sunday worship service. Join us !

Ceremonies help people acknowledge the reality of death and encourage expressions of grief and gratitude. Small services offer an opportunity to come together to grieve in the presence of a caring community and to fully inhabit the experience of loss. As we celebrate the new life that comes through the cross many churches use the cross as a memorial and a celebration of this “New Life” and the HOPE that comes to us in the risen Christ.

Flowers are included in death rituals across the globe. Carol loved flowers... even though she had a hard time keeping them alive in our own yard, she always was willing to try again to enjoy any new ones that she might have purchased at her frequent visits to Home Depot. This is another reason why she shared with Spirit of Hope the tradition of placing flowers on the large cross as we have been doing now for several years. Nature supports the life of humans on earth. When we see thriving plants and flowers, we experience not only aesthetic beauty, but the beauty of life continuing. It's a sign of optimism, growth, strength and the cyclical experience of all that is organic.

Like humans, flowers are organic: they die, decompose and contribute to future life. Incorporating flowers into the memorial of a loved one who has recently passed is a reminder that life goes on, and that there is still beauty in a world affected by death. When I preside over grave site services, I often ask permission from the family to take some of the flowers that were brought to the grave site and hand each person a single flower to place on the casket as they are ready to depart. Laying flowers on a grave is a symbolic show of love for someone who has passed away. This way each person has an opportunity to participate in saying good bye.

I hope you have enjoyed the Cross flowers this past Easter Sunday and continue to enjoy the flowers that can be seen as you enter the church each week. He has risen! He is risen indeed! Alleluia !!

Peace be with you!

Pastor Tony Scheer