

Ministry of Presence:

Luke 24:33 - 43

³³ They got up and returned at once to Jerusalem. There they found the Eleven and those with them, assembled together ³⁴ and saying, "It is true! The Lord has risen and has appeared to Simon." ³⁵ Then the two told what had happened on the way, and how Jesus was recognized by them when he broke the bread.

³⁶ While they were still talking about this, Jesus himself stood among them and said to them, "Peace be with you."

³⁷ They were startled and frightened, thinking they saw a ghost. ³⁸ He said to them, "Why are you troubled, and why do doubts rise in your minds? ³⁹ Look at my hands and my feet. It is I myself! Touch me and see; a ghost does not have flesh and bones, as you see I have."

⁴⁰ When he had said this, he showed them his hands and feet. ⁴¹ And while they still did not believe it because of joy and amazement, he asked them, "Do you have anything here to eat?" ⁴² They gave him a piece of broiled fish, ⁴³ and he took it and ate it in their presence.

What would the world have been if Jesus did not make his presence known to his disciples after his resurrection? His presence completely changed the disciples lives; each one gave their life traveling the world teaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

When we practice the ministry of presence, we are serving Jesus Christ. I define 'ministry of presence' as simply being present in the lives of other persons. Sitting in the Church pew on Sunday is being present in the lives of other worshipers. Our greeting ministry is an example; when you arrive early on Sunday and stay until the last worshiper has left; welcoming, talking and meeting others. Our prayer chain and Wednesday nite prayer group are examples; intentionally securing the names of persons in need and praying for their blessing.

Visiting by phone, and many types of social media such as text, email, sharing pictures and video are all ways to be present in another person's life, giving encouragement, listening intently to their words. We are called to lower our defensiveness and personal agendas, replacing them with empathy and expressions of love.

When I have experienced medical crisis, faced uncertain career situations I have asked the Elders for administration. Their ministry of presence and prayers have always brought me an inner peace and strength to face whatever lay before me.

The Highlands Church has a deep commitment to the ministry of presence. As a congregation we are at our best when there is a dedicated core who make it their mission to be there, making their primary ministry the ministry of presence.

This is most important during Covid shut in as persons can become lonely and depressed. Focus on prayer in preparation to reach out to have insight as to their needs. We will be blessed by Jesus when practicing the Ministry of Presence.

Lehi german