

Launching Friedens (Peace)'s Future

From sermon on April 26

Driving across the Great Plains on the way to Yellowstone we began to notice ordinary vehicles carrying long, thin, cylindrical tubes on their roofs, tubes as long as the vehicle and longer. Curious, we speculated as to their contents. The farther West we drove the more we saw. As we left the flatlands and rose into the Bighorns, they seemed to be converging on this mountain. Soon, we found ourselves in a traffic jam, as vehicles were stopping alongside the road, parking areas were filled. Eventually, we came to a large gathering at the highest overlook, yielding a panoramic vista surveying the plains thousands of feet below. Then, we discovered the mystery of the tubes.

An awkward looking contraption resembling an over-size, mechanical dragonfly, moving along just above the heads of the crowd suddenly disappeared downward. Then, we noticed a short runway that ended at the precipice. A man had just taken a running jump off the mountain under a hang glider!

Next thing we knew the hang glider came back into view, rising and circling, soaring, eventually reaching an altitude so great it seemed almost a pinpoint in the sky. We had stumbled upon a hang gliding competition, and knew that the tubes had carried the hang gliders' parts, awaiting assembly for this daring launch. The trick was to catch an updraft, to circle in it and soar. Then, at the right height the contestant would glide toward the plains, keeping his craft afloat for as long as possible, reaching the greatest possible distance from the point of launch.

Friedens Peace is preparing to launch its future. The secret of soaring, for the hang glider, was found in the updraft. The secret of soaring for Friedens (Peace) is likewise found in an "updraft" – an updraft of the Spirit. Beginning a new era of ministry, with a new Pastor, embracing the promise of a visionary program of ministry with a challenging budget to support the vision requires that we catch the "updraft" of the Spirit. Only then can we expect the "flight" of Friedens to soar. We cannot expect mere running legs to take us far, any more than the hang glider pilot could.

As we continue to move forward in this transition time, I want to challenge every member to consider how he/she might help launch Friedens' future. The community needs Friedens' witness to God's love. Friedens' members need Christ's ongoing blessing. In Him only can Friedens meet the challenges and opportunities. So, please continue to pray our transition prayer from Philippians 2: *Let this mind be in us/me, which was also in Christ Jesus....*

Then, continue offering your gifts of time, talent, and energy to help launch Friedens' future, and soar on the winds of the Spirit, who will sustain you.

Pastor Jerry