

ARTICLE FOR COUNTRY GAZETTE

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*To be continued...*

Those were words I hated to come to when I was a child reading my latest *Jack and Jill* magazine. They usually came just when I was totally engrossed in the story and something extremely interesting and important was about to happen. *To be continued* meant that I would have to wait a month to find out what came next.

We have just celebrated Easter—but Easter isn't over in a day. In fact, for the disciples Easter was just the start. It was after the resurrection that they totally immersed themselves in serving Jesus' larger purposes of working for the coming of the Kingdom of God. Jesus kept appearing to them and disappearing, with words to the effect that it was all *to be continued*.

It has continued for more than 2000 years, unfolding week by week in the worship and work of people of faith. It is old, yet it is new. Something extremely interesting and important is always about to happen. Don't tune out. Don't forget. Look to people like Ashley Smith, whose calm compassionate words to a murderer saved her life and changed his soul when he took her as hostage for seven hours, after killing four people that day. She told him how much God loved him. She helped him feel that God had a purpose for his life. She cooked pancakes for him. She served him with the love of Christ. She did this because it was deeply ingrained in her soul.

I hope none of us have anything as terrible and dramatic as that happen to us. Yet there are opportunities everyday to extend the love of Christ to others by words of kindness, actions of caring and faithfulness to God. Everything we do matters. We are all important in the eyes of God. Church is an exciting place to be because each person demonstrates faithfulness uniquely. There are always surprises and challenges. It is the way we were created to be. When I walk out the door on Sunday after church, I am already wondering what God is going to do with us in the coming week. I can hardly wait to see what comes next.

Easter isn't over in a day. It is *to be continued* in your life and mine as we walk the talk of resurrection life with our Lord. It is God's love unfolding in our lives day by day, week by week, year after year.