

The Vine

I am the vine; you are the branches...John 15:5

A publication of Valley Falls Christian Church April 2017

BITS AND PIECES

Whatever your cross, whatever your pain, There will always be sunshine, after the rain.

The brightest future will always be based on a forgotten past; you can't go forward in life until you let go of your past failures and heartaches.

The happiest of people don't necessarily have the best of everything; they just make the most of everything that comes along their way.

Do not always try to fix and advise. Just be present and listen.

The purpose of life is to discover your gift. The meaning of life is giving your gift away.

You can't help someone get up a hill without getting closer to the top yourself.

If you don't like the way you're feeling, change the way you're thinking.

May you never forget what is worth remembering, or remember what is best forgotten.

When I stand before God at the end of my life, I would hope that I would not have a single bit of talent left but could say I used everything you gave me.

It's not the absence or the presence of problems that determines our peace of mind; it's the absence or presence of God.

The greatest discovery of any generation is that a human being can alter his life by altering his attitude.

Perhaps you may stumble... perhaps even fall. But God's always there to help you through it all.

You must be the change you wish to see in the world.

Service to others is the rent you pay for your room here on earth.

Live Simply. Love Generously. Care Deeply. Speak Kindly. Leave the rest to God.

I Don't Have to Understand Everything

I wish I did understand everything. I wish I had the answer. I wish I could tell a young Christian couple why they are unable to conceive when there are thousands of abortions every year in the United States. Oh, I can speculate as to what God might have in mind. I wish I could tell them, without a doubt, exactly why they had to go through this.

I wish I could tell the widow why her husband suddenly died. I don't want to be able to give them the medical diagnosis - that is for the doctors. I wish I could tell her what God was thinking and has planned when He allowed it to happen.

I wish I could tell the distraught parents why their children strayed from the Jesus even though they did their best to raise them in the "fear and admonition of the Lord."

I can blame our sin nature, the curse, original sin, the enemy of our souls (Satan), and all the pat answers as to why this world is the way it is, but that doesn't tell anyone, "Why me? Why now?"

Part of being human is wanting to know there is a purpose behind our suffering. If we must endure, we want it to mean something, to be for a good cause.

Imagine how long Joseph wondered. His brothers turned on him. They wanted to kill him, but sold him into slavery instead.

So the teenaged Joseph was carried into a strange land with a strange people while his brothers told Jacob he had died. No one would even try to find him.

He found success as Potiphar's servant. He excelled to the point that Potiphar put him in charge of everything in his household. Then Potiphar's wife falsely accused him of attempted rape and Joseph was thrown in an Egyptian prison. Imagine how he felt. He was trying to do the right thing. Trying to follow God by acting with honor and decency toward his master's wife. Why would God allow this to happen.

Joseph continued to serve God faithfully, and while in prison he became so trusted that he was put in charge of the rest of the prisoners. He met two men who had served Pharaoh, but had 'gotten on his bad side.' He interpreted dreams for them and asked the cupbearer if he would speak to Pharaoh on his behalf when he was restored to service.

Though he promised, the cupbearer forgot and Joseph languished in prison for two more years. Why, God?

Ah, but when Pharaoh had dreams that needed an interpretation, the cupbearer remembered. Joseph was successful and was eventually put second in charge of all Egypt behind only Pharaoh himself. Joseph still must have wondered why God allowed him to be separated from his Father, mother and brothers. Surely he missed home! It was then, many years later, that Joseph's brothers came to Egypt for food. Thinking Joseph dead (though Joseph lived and looked like an Egyptian) they didn't even recognize him when they had to beg him for food for their families.

When the brothers finally learned this was their brother they sold into slavery, they were afraid, but Joseph reassured them. *As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good, to bring it about that many people should be kept alive, as they are today.*

(Genesis 50:20)

David was anointed to be king of Israel, but then Saul tried to kill him. Daniel was a faithful Jewish boy taken into exile by the Babylonians. He served a foreign king the rest of his life without being unfaithful to God, yet when he was set up and accused of breaking the king's edict, he was thrown into a lion's den.

Why would God let that happen? If you faithfully serve Christ, why would he let those kinds of things happen to you?

After years of loneliness, mistreatment, suffering and separation, Joseph finally got the answer for his question of 'why?' God rescued David and Daniel. But we may never find out our 'why' this side of heaven.

When we don't know the answer, we must fall back on what we do know. That is where we must walk by faith and not by sight. Pastor and evangelist Greg Laurie says this about the specific reasons we suffer. "I don't know. I just can't answer that. But I know this: God loves you. God is wiser than you. And 'all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose.'" (Romans 8:28)

Twelve men and many other disciples followed the man they thought was the Messiah, God's anointed one. He spoke as no one had ever spoken before. He did many miracles. He healed diseases and cast out demons. Yet one of the twelve betrayed him. His own people, with the help of the Roman government, crucified him.

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Recipe Swap

STRAWBERRY ICEBOX CAKE

3 ½ c. whipped cream, divided
1 3.4 oz pkg. cheesecake pudding
2 c. milk
12 graham crackers
2 ½ c. fresh sliced strawberries

Optional toppings: graham cracker crumbs, chopped nuts, drizzle of chocolate, powdered sugar for dusting

In a large bowl, make the pudding according to package directions. Allow 5 minutes to thicken. Once thickened, fold in 3 cups of whipped cream. Spread a thin layer of the cream mixture in an 8x8 pan to coat the bottom. Place 3 graham crackers across the center of the pan and then break up 1 or 2 more crackers as needed to fill the space. Spread half of the cream mixture on top. Place a single layer of strawberries. Top with another layer of graham crackers, breaking them as needed to make them fit. Spread the remaining cream mixture over top. Add another layer of strawberries. Top with the final layer of graham crackers. Spread the reserved ½ cup of whipped cream over evenly. Place the last layer of berries over top. Put whatever optional topping you like on it. Refrigerate for at least 4 hours or overnight.

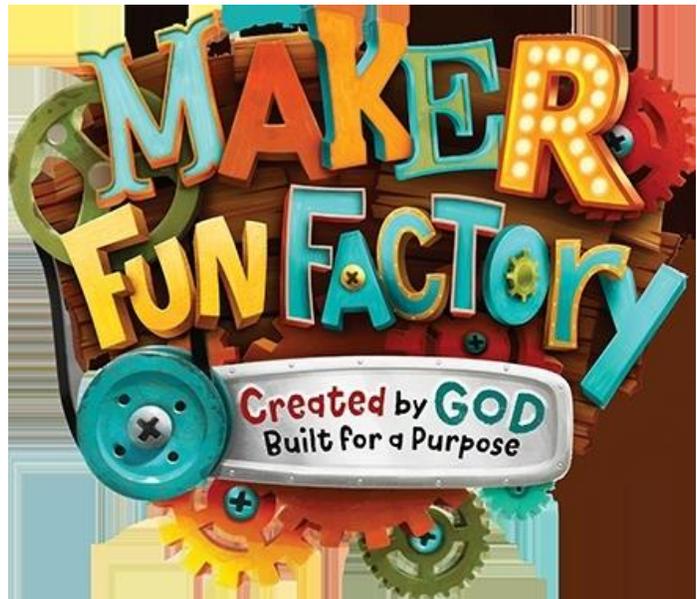
PRAYER REQUESTS

OUR SOLDIERS: Curtis Mitchell, Brandon Miller, Nic Byrd, Luke Cummings, Greg Morales, Ryan Kirby, Zach Stiffler, Josh Lackey, Dan Cook, Rick Heuertz, Steve Heinen, Ammin Spencer, Gates Kobuszewski, Leslie Bolz, Austin Everhart, Noe Garza, Brandon Hammons, Ruth Churchill, Jason Cherry, Aaron Cook, Jacob Mitchell, Matthew Branam

POCKET CHANGE FOR PROGRESS: This will be a special offering every 3rd Sunday during church. The money will be split between Mission Lake Camp and the School Supply Giveaway Fund

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

Save the Date! With summer vacations and activities being planned please include Vacation Bible School on your calendars for July 17-21. We will have a planning meeting on April 30 immediately following church.



MISSION LAKE CAMP NEWS

Here are some important dates for Mission Lake Camp and Valley Falls Christian Church.

Camp Work Day: April 22nd

Church Registration Day: May 7th

Registration Earlybird Deadline: May 13th

Spit and Polish Day: June 3rd

Mowing Dates: Dates that our church is responsible for mowing at the camp. June 3rd

Kitchen Help Dates: TBD

Camp Dates:

June 4-9: Jr. High Camp- grades 6-8

June 11-16: Sr. High Camp-grades 9-12

June 18-22: Junior Camp- grades 3-5

June 24: Day Camp- grades 1-2

July 8-9: Princess Camp Girls grades 7-12

July 9-14: Deeper Life Camp- grades 7-12

www.missionlakeecc.com

Serving in APRIL

Congregational Prayer:

Clint Thomas

Scripture Readers:

2- Spencer- John 13:12-17

9- Christy Arnold- John 15:18-25

16- Thomas- John 20:1-10

23- Joan Phillips- John 21:15-19

30- Nancy Gatzemeyer- Rom. 1:1-7

Nursery:

2-Debbie Gerstner/Caitlyn

9-Laura Reich/Libby

16- Nancy Gatzemeyer/Jackson

23-Cheyenne Cook/Aleyna

30-Glee/Caitlyn

Greeters/Ushers:

2-Spencer

9-Arnold

16-Thomas

23-Phillips

30-K&N Gatzemeyer

Lord's Supper Preparation:

2-Spencer

9-Arnold

16-Thomas

23-Phillips

30-K&N Gatzemeyer

Communion Table:

2-Stan, Jay

Wayne Arnold, Jake Mitchell

9- Jay, Stan

David Grove, Lance Turner

16- Stan, Jay

Ray Mitchell, Kyle Reich

23- Jay, Stan

Wayne Arnold, Andy Arnold

30-Stan, Jay

David Grove, Curt Gatzemeyer

Musicians

Worship Leader: Mike Kirby

Organ: Leah Brown

Piano: Donetta Farr

Guitar: Mike Kirby, Clint Thomas

Mandolin: Erin Thomas

Church Offerings

Feb. 26-\$1524.00

Mar. 5-\$2956.00

Mar. 12-\$1410.00

Mar. 19-\$

Our expenses average \$1500 a week.

MEN'S BREAKFAST: There will be men's breakfast on April 8th. David Grove will be cooking.

CAMP WORK DAY: There will be a work day at Mission Lake Christian Camp on April 22nd. Anyone who can go help please do so. This is a very important part of our children's lives so please help get the camp ready for them.

COPIES OF THE SERMONS ARE AVAILABLE ON CD UPON REQUEST: If you would like a copy please see Mike. You can also listen to them online at www.valleyfallsc.org

EASTER SONRISE SERVICE: The service will be at 8:00 AM followed by breakfast at 8:30 AM. See Stan if you would like to help with the breakfast.

CHILI COOK OFF: The church will have a chili cook off on Saturday April 1st from 5-7 PM. Proceeds will go to the school supply drive.

Birthdays and Anniversaries

4 Betty Smith

6 Joan Phillips

7 Andrew Turner

9 KatyRae Branam

10 Jordan Welborn

11 Debbie Gerstner

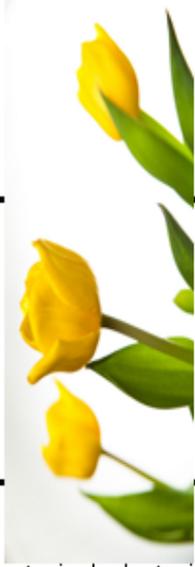
19 Martha Gilleece

22 Erin Thomas

Gary Meyer

26 Brenda Billings

29 Stan Farr

2017		April					2017	
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SATURDAY	
							1	
2	3	4	5	6	7	 8:00 AM Men's Breakfast	8	
2:00 PM Service at Midland			6:15 PM Worship Practice 7:00 PM Bible Study 8:00 PM Elders			10:00 AM SOS		
9	10	11	12	13	 Good Friday		15	
 Palm Sunday			6:15 PM Worship Practice 7:00 PM Bible Study					
5:00 PM Youth Group								
16	17	18	19	20	21	22		
 10:00 AM Pocket Change for Progress			6:15 PM Worship Practice 7:00 PM Bible Study 8:00 PM Elders			Work day at Mission Lake Camp		
23	24	25	26	27	28	29		
5:00 PM Youth Group VBS meeting 30 5:00 PM Youth Group			6:15 PM Worship Practice 7:00 PM Bible Study					

Valley Falls Christian Church

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On the web: www.valleyfallsc.org
Find us on Facebook!

Mike Kirby, Pastor

You are welcome to join us!

Sunday Service times:

Bible Study (all ages) – 9:00 AM
Worship – 10:00 AM
Youth Group – 5:00 PM

Midweek Bible Study:

Wednesday 7:00 PM

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Though Jesus warned them many times, I am sure the apostles and women who followed Jesus wondered, ‘why God?’ Why would you let your Son be crucified? What good could come out of this?

That was Friday. On Sunday, the very first Resurrection Sunday, the risen Jesus could have uttered the same words as Joseph to the very ones who nailed him to that old rugged cross. *As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good, to bring it about that many people should be kept alive, as they are today.*

That is what Easter is all about. Jesus died a horrific death to pay for our sins. He rose from the dead to defeat death and offer eternal life to all who choose to believe in Him as their Lord and Savior. And to all who suffer in this world, He offers a world to come where suffering, sin and death are banished forever.

We can't see the end from the beginning, so let us put our trust in the One who does. Though He allows suffering, He is always with us through it. Though our lives seem so out of control, He is always in control. Though He will often allow us to go through circumstances that we can't handle, He will always be able to handle it for us. When our life seems to be at its worst, He knows what is best.

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Our God who loves us enough to give His one and only Son to die our death will one day make all things new for us.

*The Spirit of the Sovereign LORD is on me, because the LORD has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners, to proclaim the year of the LORD's favor and the day of vengeance of our God, to comfort all who mourn, and provide for those who grieve in Zion-- to bestow on them a crown of beauty instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, and a garment of praise instead of a spirit of despair. They will be called oaks of righteousness, a planting of the LORD for the display of his splendor. **Isaiah 61:1-3 (NIV)***

This Resurrection season, as always, rejoice in our Lord who loves you, died for you, rose for you, and is always with you.

Mike

(All scripture selections are from the ESV unless otherwise noted.)