

The Vine

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

A publication of Valley Falls Christian Church

April 2012

THE NECKLACE

The cheerful little girl with bouncy golden curls was almost five. Waiting with her mother at the checkout stand, she saw them, a circle of glistening white pearls in a pink foil box. "Oh mommy please, mommy. Can I have them? Please, mommy, please?" Quickly the mother checked the back of the little foil box and then looked back into the pleading blue eyes of her little girl's upturned face. "1.95. That's almost \$2.00. If you really want them, I'll think of some extra chores for you and in no time you can save enough money to buy them for yourself. Your birthday's only a week away and you might get another crisp dollar bill from grandma." As soon as Jenny got home, she emptied her penny bank and counted out 17 pennies. After dinner, she did more than her share of chores and she went to the neighbor and asked Mrs. McJames if she could pick dandelions for 10 cents. On her birthday, Grandma did give her another new dollar bill and at last she had enough money to buy the necklace. Jenny loved her pearls. They made her feel dressed up and grown up. She wore them everywhere, Sunday school, kindergarten, even to bed. The only time she took them off was when she went swimming or had a bubble bath. Mother said if they got wet, they might turn her neck green. Jenny had a very loving daddy and every night when she was ready for bed, he would stop what he was doing and come upstairs to read her a story. One night as he finished the story, he asked Jenny, "Do you love me?" "Oh yes, daddy. You know that I love you." "Then give me your pearls." "Oh, daddy, not my pearls. But you can have Princess, the white horse from my collection, the one with the pink tail.

Remember daddy? The one you gave me. She's my very favorite." "That's ok, Honey, Daddy loves you. Good night." And he brushed her cheek with a kiss. About a week later, after the story time, Jenny's daddy asked again, "Do you love me?" "Daddy, you know I love you." "Then give me your pearls." "Oh daddy, not my pearls. But you can have my baby doll. The brand new one I got for my birthday. She is beautiful and you can have the yellow blanket that matches her sleeper." "That's ok. Sleep well. God bless you, little one. Daddy loves you." And as always, he brushed her cheek with a gentle kiss. A few nights later when her daddy came in, Jenny was sitting on her bed with her legs crossed. As he came close, he noticed her chin was trembling and one silent tear rolled down her cheek. "What is it, Jenny? What's the matter?" Jenny didn't say anything but lifted her little hand up to her daddy and when she opened it, there was her little pearl necklace. With a little quiver, she finally said, "Here, daddy; this is for you." With tears gathering in his own eyes, Jenny's daddy reached out with one hand to take the dime store necklace, and with the other hand he reached into his pocket and pulled out a blue velvet case with a strand of genuine pearls and gave them to Jenny. He had them all the time. He was just waiting for her to give up the dime-store stuff so he could give her the genuine treasure. So it is, with our Heavenly Father. He is waiting for us to give up the cheap things in our lives so that He can give us beautiful treasures.

God will never take away something without giving you something better in its place.

Where is the body?

On May 2, 2011, a group of Navy SEALs descended on a compound in Pakistan and killed Osama Bin Laden, arguably the most wanted man in the world and the leader of the Muslim terrorist group Al-Qaeda.

According to reports, our government extracted the body and took it to Afghanistan. DNA testing and facial recognition technology were used to confirm Bin Laden's identity. The body was then taken aboard the aircraft carrier USS Carl Vinson, the body prepared according to Islamic customs, and a burial at sea was performed in the Arabian Sea. Somewhere... Out there. But where, no one really knows.

Why was Bin Laden's body handled in this manner? Officials stated two reasons. One, Islamic tradition states that bodies must be buried as quickly as possible after death and there was no time to negotiate with countries to find one that would allow him to be buried. Saudi Arabia supposedly refused to allow him to be buried in their nation. The second reason is that the United States did not want his burial site to become a shrine that would be a rallying point for terrorists worldwide.

Recently, that account has been called into question after emails were leaked that allegedly stated the body was sent back to the US and cremated. So where is the body?

Between contrasting stories, angry Muslims, conspiracy theorists and the plausible deniability of the governments in question, there is one thing that isn't being said. Not one person that I know of is saying Osama Bin Laden rose from the dead. Of course, the Muslim faith does not hinge upon whether Bin Laden lives or dies.

Around 2000 years ago, Jesus was captured at night by the Jewish authorities with the aid of the Romans, though he wasn't in hiding. He was brutally tortured, wrongly convicted in a kangaroo court and sentenced to die by crucifixion. His death was confirmed by experts (the soldiers) and assured as they thrust a spear into his side.

His body was taken by Joseph of Arimathea and placed in a tomb. This tomb was sealed and closely guarded by Roman soldiers because the Jewish authority feared the disciples would steal the body and claim Jesus had risen.

That Sunday morning, there was a great earthquake as an angel of the Lord descended upon the gravesite. His appearance was so awesome and bright that

the soldiers fainted with fear. He rolled the stone back from the tomb and sat on it. Not to let Jesus out, but to show the world that Jesus wasn't there. Where was the body?

One conspiracy theory was reported in the bible. The soldiers were bribed to say they fell asleep while they were guarding the tomb and the disciples snuck in and stole the body. Wow! The very thing they were trying to guard against.

However, compelling eyewitness testimony tells us that is not what happened. Jesus rose from the dead. He was seen by the women. He was seen by the apostles (minus Judas Iscariot). He walked with two men on the Emmaus Road. He was seen by over 500 people at one time (1 Cor 15). Also, Peter said in his sermon in Acts 2:32 "God has resurrected this Jesus. We are all witnesses to this"). This resurrection is why we celebrate Easter.

Why does the resurrection matter? What difference does it make? The resurrection fulfills Jesus' promise that he would rise. He kept his promise. Therefore, we have confidence that he will keep all of his promises. The promise of the Holy Spirit. The promise that he is preparing a place for us. The promise that we will have eternal life by the very power that resurrected Jesus. The resurrection gives hope to the believer. Without the resurrection, we have no hope and are to be pitied more than the rest.

This hope is illustrated by Gary Habermas in Lee Strobel's book *The Case for Christ*. Habermas was dealing with the death of his wife Debbie. He said, "The resurrection says that if Jesus was raised two thousand years ago, there is an answer to Debbie's death in 1995...Losing my wife was the most painful experience I've ever had to face, but if the resurrection could get me through that, it can get me through anything. It was good for 30 A.D., it's good for 1995, it's good for 1998, and it's good beyond that."

Habermas looked at me (Strobel). "That's not some sermon," he said quietly. "I believe it with all my heart. If there is a resurrection, there's a heaven. If Jesus was raised, Debbie was raised. And I will be someday, too. Then I'll see them both."

Have hope. Christ is risen!! Someday our bodies will be like his body and we will be with him. We know where the body is!

Mike

Recipe Swap

GERMAN CHOCOLATE UPSIDE DOWN CAKE

1 German Chocolate Cake Mix
Ingredients listed on cake mix
1 c. chopped walnuts or pecans
1 ½ c. coconut
2 sticks (1 cup) butter
8 oz. pkg. cream cheese
1 lb. powdered sugar (3 ½ cups)

Grease a 9x13 inch cake pan. Sprinkle nuts and coconut on bottom of pan. Mix cake according to package instructions. Pour over nuts and coconut. Melt butter; stir in cream cheese and powdered sugar. Pour over cake. Swirl in slightly. Bake 35-45 minutes at 350*.

Ronda Turner made this for the carry in dinner in February. She said it got moister and better the next day.

PRAYER REQUESTS

OUR SOLDIERS: Luke Cummings, Ryan Meyers, Jacob Mitchell, Brandon Miller, Greg Morales, Ryan Kirby, Zach, Josh Lackey, Dan Cook, Rick Huertz, Steve Heinen, Ammin Spencer, Gates Kobuszewski, Leslie Bolz, Steve Grove, Carl Herring, Austin Everhart
June Dedeke needs prayers.
Amy Cummings will be having surgery on April 20th.
June Huston has Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever
Sue Moore has cancer
Steve O'Trimble needs prayers
Lorel Freeman is fighting liver and pancreas cancer
Becky Arnold needs continued prayer
Clinton Thomas needs continued prayer that his shoulder heals from his surgery

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.

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

RECYCLING: We have a recycling box beside the copier in the office.

COLLECTING FOR ALPHA: Alpha Christian Children's Home can use Campbell soup UPC labels and lids, Best Choice UPC labels and General Mills Box Top Symbols coupons (Box Tops for Education.) We will have a box in the hallway outside the nursery under the mailboxes.

SISTERS OF STRENGTH (S.O.S.)-
(Mission Statement: We are a lifeline to glorify God through service to the church and community and to build personal relationships with our Christian Sisters.)
We will be having our regular meeting on April 14th at 9:00 AM.

Birthdays and Anniversaries

4- Betty Smith
6- Joan Phillips
7- Andrew Turner
9- KatyRae Branam
10- Jordan Welborn
11- Debbie Gerstner
Jody (Turner) Munson
22- Erin Thomas
Tyler Dedeke
26- Brenda Billings
29- Stan Farr
Danny Gomez
30- Steve Carson

(Names in CAPS in Mission Field)

Serving in APRIL

Congregational Prayer:

Dennis Turner

Scripture Readers:

1-Tichenors- Luke 19:30-40

8-Arnolds- Luke 24:1-8

15-Thomas- Gen. 14:18-20

22-Rachel Arnold- 2 Cor. 5:1-10

29-Groves- Luke 11:1-4

Nursery:

1-Debbie Gerstner/Sarah Hollis

8-Laura Reich/Curtis Mitchell

15-Rachel Arnold/Jarret Mitchell

22-Glee Hosler/Grace Arnold

29-Karie Turner/Grace Arnold

Greeters/Ushers:

1-Tichenors

8-Arnolds

15-Thomas

22-Kirbys

29-Groves

Lord's Supper Preparation:

1-Tichenors

8-Arnolds

15-Thomas

22-Kirbys

29-Groves

Communion Table:

1-Stan, Jay

Steve Carson, Austin Kirby

8- Jay, Stan

Dennis Tichenor, Curtis Mitchell

15- Stan, Jay

Ray Mitchell, Andy Arnold

22- Jay, Stan

David Grove, Cylus Tichenor

29-Stan, Jay

Steve Carson, Jarret Mitchell

Musicians

Worship Leader: Mike Kirby

Organ: Leah Brown

Drums: Grace Arnold

Piano: Donetta Farr

Guitar: Mike Kirby,

Mandolin: Erin Thomas

Vocals: Rachel Arnold, Anna Kirby

Church Offerings

Feb. 26-\$1221.00

Mar. 4-\$1771.43

Mar. 11-\$902.00

Mar. 18-\$2346.00

Our expenses average \$1500 a week.

Valley Falls Christian Church has a website!!

www.valleyfallsc.org

MEN'S BREAKFAST: There will be no men's breakfast in April.

SWEET ENCOURAGEMENT: 58th Annual Women's Conference at Ozark, April 27-28, 2012. Linda Mirante and Dinelle Frankland will be speakers.

OUTREACH MINISTRY HELPING OTHER PEOPLE EVERYWHERE (H.O.P.E.)

A BIG THANK YOU goes out to everyone who helped with the "Touch of Class" elegant dinner. The guests (55) really enjoyed themselves. We received many compliments on the food, waiters and atmosphere. The piano music by Matt Miller made the evening elegant. God has blessed him with a wonderful talent. The guests brought school supplies and with monetary donations still coming in almost \$2000.00 has been raised. All the praise and glory go to God for this fund raiser for the school supply project.

THANK YOU: The church received a thank you from Caring Pregnancy Options for our donations.

We also received a thank you from Linnwood Place for the flowers. (2 of the arrangements from the Elegant Dinner were taken up there)

RESURRECTION SUNDAY SERVICES: There will be a time change this year. We will have our Sunrise Service at 8:00 AM. Breakfast will be at 8:30 AM. Our worship service will be at 10:00 AM. There will be no Sunday School on Easter Sunday.

GRADUATES BANQUET: The graduates carry in dinner will be on May 20th right after church. Everyone bring one or two dishes and honor our graduates. If you know of someone graduating please let Rhonda Mitchell know. The only one we know of so far is Grace Arnold.

2012		April				2012	
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
1  Palm Sunday 5:00 PM Youth Group	2	3 6:15 PM Worship Practice 7:00 PM Bible Study 8:00 PM Elders	4	5	6  Good Friday	7  8:00 AM Men's Breakfast	
8  8:00 AM Sunrise Service 8:30 AM Breakfast 10:00 AM Church	9	10	11 6:15 PM Worship Practice 7:00 PM Bible Study	12	13	14  SOS 9:00 AM	
15 10:00 AM Pocket Change for Progress 5:00 PM Youth Group	16	17	18 6:15 PM Worship Practice 7:00 PM Bible Study 8:00 PM Elders	19	20	21 Work day at Mission Lake Camp 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM	
22	23	24 6:15 PM Worship Practice 7:00 PM Bible Study	25	26	27	28	
29 Kiamichis 5:00 PM Youth Group	30						

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

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

CAMP NEWS

There will be a work day at Camp on Saturday April 21st from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM.

Preregistration for camp is on May 6th.

