

The Vine

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

A publication of Valley Falls Christian Church

January 2014

GET ON TRACK AND STAY THERE

A man bought a new hunting dog. Eager to see how he would perform, he took him out to track a bear. No sooner had they gotten into the woods than the dog picked up the trail. Suddenly he stopped, sniffed the ground, and headed in a new direction. He had caught the scent of a deer that had crossed the bear's path. A few moments later he halted again, this time smelling a raccoon that had crossed the path of the deer. Then a turkey, a rabbit, and so on, until finally the breathless hunter caught up with his dog, only to find him barking triumphantly down the hole of a field mouse.

One of the things for which Paul prayed was for his brethren in Colossae to be able to "approve the things that are excellent" (Phil. 1:10). He used a word here that was common among metallurgists. As they tested the quality of metal, they "approved" in the metal that which was genuine. It is used in this passage of testing that which is good or evil. That is not always easy. Easy or not, it is the thing responsible Christians must do.

Our faith gets involved in this. We should test the excellence of our personal faith. Peter informed his readers that "for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials" but also told them how beneficial such would be. He concluded, that "your faith, which is more precious than all the gold in the world, may be proved genuine and may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed" (1 Peter 1:6-7). The word "proved" here is the same as in Col. 1:10.

Often Christians start out with high resolve, putting the kingdom of God first in their lives, but their attention is soon diverted to things of lesser worth. One pursuit leads to another until they've strayed far from their original purpose. Let us do our best to put first things first. So, take the divine admonition and stay on track and let nothing cause you to deviate from the straight and narrow way.

"Let your eyes look straight ahead, fix your gaze directly before you" (Prov. 4:25).

"But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you" (Matt. 6:33).

The Sanctity of Human Life

I call heaven and earth to witness against you today, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and curse. Therefore choose life, that you and your offspring may live, loving the LORD your God, obeying his voice and holding fast to him, for he is your life... Deuteronomy 30:19-20a

If anything, the Christian should be passionate about life. We should not only be passionate for eternal life, but also for life on this earth. Life is a gift that God has given us. He gave us life at the beginning of creation. He gave us life when He gave us Jesus Christ. Jesus is the very embodiment of life.

Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth and the life..." John 14:6. In him (Jesus) was life, and the life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. John 1:4-5 I came that they may have life and have it abundantly. John 10:10

Anything that destroys innocent life is sin and darkness. We live in a dark world where people believe that the ability to kill a preborn child is a right. This present darkness declares that there comes a time when we are no longer a benefit to society because we are old or in some way handicapped, and therefore it would be 'a service' to this society to quietly choose to die. Many governments are moving toward an attitude that if we don't make that choice, the government will make it for us.

The Belgian Senate just approved a bill by a 50-17 vote to allow terminally ill children (no age restriction) to be euthanized. If it passes their House of Representatives, it will become law in Belgium. The Netherlands already allows children over the age of 12 to request euthanasia with the consent of their parents.

Some studies in Belgium show that up to 47% of assisted deaths are not being reported, 32% are being done without a request, and nurses are killing their patients even though the law restricts the procedure to doctors.

This is what a post-Christian society looks like. This is what a post-Christian America will look like if we let it get that far.

What can we do? We can do our part; we do whatever we can.

First, bring people to a knowledge of the Lord. When the heart is renewed, the mind should be renewed as well resulting in changed thinking about life.

You can get involved politically. Elect life affirming representatives from city council members all the way to the presidency. Local politics is where many government officials get their start. While life issues may not be legislated at the city level, the next step is state

and national government. Why give pro-death candidates a platform at any level?

Third, get involved with a local ministry with your time, talents and treasures. You will be able to do that this month. Since January 19th is Sanctity of Human Life Sunday, we will be collecting baby items for a local crisis pregnancy center. Caring Pregnancy Options (CPO) is the center we have collected for in the past. They are a faith-based, non-profit ministry to pregnant women in crisis pregnancies. They also continue to minister to the families after the child is born.

Anyone could also support CPO by volunteering their time or by personally making tax deductible, monetary donations. You can visit their website at cptopeka.org.

I pray that our church can really show a support for life by giving CPO a super great 'baby shower.' Please listen for announcements at church for more details.

Finally, let me leave you with the lyrics of a wonderful song that affirms life.

The Blessing

Let it be said of us;
While we walked among the living
Let it be said of us
By the ones we leave behind
Let it be said of us
That we lived to be a blessing for life

And let it be said of us
That we gave to reach the dying
Let it be said of us
By the fruit we leave behind
Let it be said of us
That our legacy is blessing for life

This day
You set life, You set death right before us
This day
Ev'ry blessing and curse is a choice now
And we will choose to be a blessing for life

(continued on the back page)

Recipe Swap

TEXICAN CHILI

8 bacon strips, diced
2-1/2 pounds beef stew meat, cut into
1/2 inch cubes
28 oz. can stewed tomatoes
14-1/2 oz. can stewed tomatoes
2 cans (8oz each) tomato sauce
16 oz. kidney beans, drained and
rinsed
2 c. sliced carrots
1 medium onion, chopped
1 c. chopped celery
1/2 c. chopped green pepper
1/4 c. minced fresh parsley
1 T. chili powder
1 tsp. salt, opt.
1/2 tsp. cumin
1/4 tsp. pepper

In a skillet, cook bacon until crisp.
Drain. Brown beef in drippings, drain.
Put all ingredients in a slow cooker.
Cook on low for 9-10 hours or until the
meat is tender, stirring occasionally.

PRAYER REQUESTS

OUR SOLDIERS: Jacob Mitchell,
Curtis Mitchell, Brandon Miller, Ryan
Myers, Luke Cummings, Greg
Morales, Ryan Kirby, Zach Stiffler,
Josh Lackey, Dan Cook, Rick Huertz,
Steve Heinen, Ammin Spencer, Gates
Kobuszewski, Leslie Bolz, Steve
Grove, Austin Everhart, Noe Garza,
Brandon Hammons



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 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 not be having our regular meeting in Jan.

Birthdays and Anniversaries

2-Don Carder
6-Reid Handke
7-Chelsea Meyer
10-Matt Branam
12-Leah Brown
13-Jackson Reich
19-Jarret Mitchell
24-Lindsay Starkey
29-Leah Martin
30-Wayne Arnold
31-Linda Durand
Peyton Taliaferro
Nik Branam

(Names in CAPS in Mission Field)

THANK YOU CARDS: The church received thank you cards from Wendell Sales, Jeanette Smith, Mary Huffman, Dodie Bolz, Irene Hurst, Don Carder, M/M Jerry Cowan, Bertha Hamm, John Duffield and a Christmas card from Christy Smith and Alex Dow

Serving in January

Congregational Prayer:

Stan Farr

Scripture Readers:

5- Carson- 1 John 1:1-4

12-Farr-1 John 1:5-2:2

19-Starkey-Psalm 82:1-4

26-Jarret Mitchell-1 John 2:3-6

Nursery:

5- Debbie Gerstner/Caitlyn Thomas

12- Laura Reich

19- Glee Hosler/Nik Branam

26- Nancy Gatzmeyer/Jarret Mitchell

Greeters/Ushers:

5- Carson

12- Farr

19- Starkey

26-Linda Durand

Lord's Supper Preparation:

5- Carson

12-Farr

19-Starkey

26-Linda Durand

Communion Table:

5-Stan, Jay

Clint Thomas, Jarret Mitchell

12- Jay, Stan

Ray Mitchell, Andy Arnold

19- Stan, Jay

Dennis Turner, Matt Branam

26- Jay, Stan

David Grove, Jarret Mitchell

Musicians

Worship Leader: Erin Thomas

Organ: Leah Brown

Piano: Donetta Farr

Guitar: Mike Kirby, Sarah Ochs

Mandolin: Erin Thomas

Church Offerings

Nov. 24-\$1449.84

Dec. 1-\$2353.13

Dec. 8-\$1129.03

Dec. 15-\$2518.50

Dec. 22-\$827.26

Our expenses average \$1500 a week.

MEN'S BREAKFAST: The men's breakfast will be on Jan. 11th at 8:00 AM. David Grove will be cooking.

MIDWINTER RETREAT: Midwinter retreat for grades 7-12 will be Jan. 18-20. Registration forms are in the foyer.








COMMUNITY SOUP SUPPER AND SERVICE: The Unity Service and soup supper is Jan. 19th at the Catholic Church. The soup supper is at 6:00 PM and the service is at 7:00 PM. The offering will go to the Community Christian Council and will mostly be used to help people with financial hardships in Valley Falls.

BABY SHOWER FOR CARING PREGNANCY

OPTION: We will be collecting new baby items throughout the month of January to give to Caring Pregnancy Options for Sanctity of Life month. Needs include: baby shampoo, baby lotion, baby wash, baby wipes, bottles, diapers: newborn to 4T, coats: newborn to 4T, Clothing sizes 18 mos- 4T, baby bedding but no cribs, pacifiers, new onesies, new baby toys, maternity clothes, socks: 18 mos-4T, shoes: newborn-toddler size 8, snowsuits: 12 mos-4T, sippy cups

THANK YOU: I wish to thank the church for the gift card I received as a thank you for doing the newsletter. I appreciate it very much. Thank you. Christy Arnold



2014		JANUARY				2014	
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
			1	2	3	4	
5 2:00 PM Service at Linnwood 5:00 PM Youth Group	6	7	8 6:15 PM Worship Practice 7:00 PM Bible Study 8:00 PM Board Meeting	9	10	11  8:00 AM Men's Breakfast	
12 5:00 PM Youth Group	13	14	15 6:15 PM Worship Practice 7:00 PM Bible Study 8:00 PM Elders	16	17	18  Mid-Winter Retreat thru Monday	
19 10:00 AM Pocket Change for Progress Sanctity of Life Sunday Community Soup Supper 6:00 PM	20  Martin Luther King Day	21	22 6:15 PM Worship Practice 7:00 PM Bible Study	23	24	25	
26 5:00 PM Youth Group	27	28	29 6:15 PM Worship Practice 7:00 PM Bible Study	30	31		

Valley Falls Christian Church

511 Oak Street
Valley Falls, KS 66088

Phone: 785-945-6757
Email: office@valleyfallsc.org
On the web: 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

(Sanctity of Life continued from page 2)

Let it be said of us
That our hearts belonged to Jesus
Let it be said of us
That we spoke the words of life
Let it be said of us
That our heritage is blessing for life

This day
You set life; You set death right before us
This day
Ev'ry blessing and curse is a choice now
And we will choose to be a blessing for life

'Cause blessings and curses are choices
Will we build up, tear down
The moment of truth is now

For Your kingdom; For our children
For the sake of ev'ry nation
For Your kingdom; For our children
For the sake of ev'ry nation
We will choose to be a blessing for life

CCLI Song # 4869823
John G. Waller | Troy Denning
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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Blessings from 2013

What a great year 2013 has been. We thank God for all the additions to VFCC this year. We want to recognize once more those who joined our fellowship in 2013.

Baptisms: Melissa Scrivner, Ben Trotter, Erin Trotter, Linda Trotter, Kevin Gatzemeyer, Matthew Branam, Nik Branam, Curtis Gatzemeyer.

Those who placed formal membership in this local church body: Shelly Gatzemeyer, Janet Kirk, Amanda Hughes, Tom and Shirley Harris.

We don't want to leave anyone out. If you began worshiping with us this year, thank you! We look forward to each person becoming more involved in Christ's church as we grow in Valley Falls and Jefferson County.

Thank You

Mike and Gina wish to thank everyone for the generous gift of love this Christmas. You are all very dear to us.