

The Vine

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

A publication of Valley Falls Christian Church

December 2015

PICTURE OF PEACE

An artist was commissioned by a wealthy man to paint something that would depict peace. After a great deal of thought, the artist painted a beautiful country scene. There were green fields with cows standing in them, birds were flying in the blue sky and a lovely little village lay in a distant valley. The artist gave the picture to the man, but there was a look of disappointment on his face. The man said to the artist, "This isn't a picture of true peace. It isn't right. Go back and try again."

The artist went back to his studio, thought for several hours about peace, then went to his canvas and began to paint. When he was finished, there on the canvas was a beautiful picture of a mother, holding a sleeping baby in her arms, smiling lovingly at the child. He thought, surely, this is true peace, and hurried to give the picture to the wealthy man. But again, the wealthy man refused the painting and asked the painter to try again.

The artist returned again to his studio. He was discouraged, he was tired and he was disappointed. Anger swelled inside him, he felt the rejection of this wealthy man. Again, he thought, he even prayed for inspiration to paint a picture of true peace. Then, all of a sudden an idea came, he rushed to the canvas and began to paint as he had never painted before. When he finished, he hurried to the wealthy man.

He gave the painting to the man. He studied it carefully for several minutes. The artist held his breath. Then the wealthy man said, "Now this is a picture of true peace." He accepted the painting, paid the artist and everyone was happy.

And what was this picture of true peace?? The picture showed a stormy sea pounding against a cliff. The artist had captured the fury of the wind as it whipped black rain clouds which were laced with streaks of lightning. The sea was roaring in turmoil, waves churning, the dark sky filled with the power of the furious thunderstorm.

And in the middle of the picture, under a cliff, the artist had painted a small bird, safe and dry in her nest snuggled safely in the rocks. The bird was at peace midst the storm that raged about her.



The Word of the Month: Peace

*“Do not think that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I have not come to bring peace, but a sword. **Matthew 10:34***

What? Whoa, whoa! Did Jesus really say that? Surely he was misquoted by some overzealous first century journalist that had Pharisaical leanings!

Nope, sources say one of his close allies, a former tax collector named Matthew, confirms the story.

Won't this hurt Jesus' chances of being elected Messiah? He's running on a platform of being the Prince of Peace, and then tells us he didn't come to bring peace?

It is a good thing Jesus didn't 'run' for the office of Savior. He just is the Savior. Oh, he might have been elected at the beginning of his ministry, when he was healing and feeding people and casting out demons. The people wanted to make him king by force.

Then he started the hard teaching about the kingdom of God. The first will be last. The greatest in the kingdom must be a servant to all. How we must consume Jesus or we have no part in him. That he must suffer and die and be raised on the third day. And if they persecuted Jesus, the master, then those who follow must expect persecution as well.

Part of that persecution may even come from your own family or friends. Following Jesus can bring division with those who aren't believers or aren't serious about their faith.

Those campaign promises couldn't get you elected dog catcher, let alone the Savior of the world.

So where is the peace? Does Jesus bring peace or not?

The peace Jesus offers isn't the kind of peace the world is looking for. The world is looking to live in peace with each other, in the natural realm. That is a noble cause and should be sought after. However, our differing interpretations about what peace is (lack of war, everyone gets along, leave me alone and I will leave you alone, everyone shares everything) along with our sin nature makes it impossible.

Look at a few verses about Jesus and peace.

Isaiah 9:6 (ESV) *For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.*

When the angels announced the birth of Jesus to the shepherds, they said, “*Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!*”

Did you catch that? Not merely peace on earth. Peace among those who please God!

The peace Jesus offers is peace with God. We can't achieve that peace on our own. We MUST have Jesus!

In our sinfulness, no one is at peace with God. **Colossians 1:21 (NIV)** *Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behavior.*

We were enemies with God. We didn't have peace with God; we were at war with God because of our sin!

Jesus didn't bring peace by coming to the earth and defeating every enemy of God. He brought us peace with God by his very life and death. **Isaiah 53:5** *But he was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us **peace**, and with his wounds we are healed.*

Jesus lived the perfect life that we could never live. He became the perfect sacrifice to pay the debt of our sin. Fully God and fully man taking upon himself the punishment for the sins of all mankind so that those who receive him as Lord and Savior will have peace with God.

This peace we receive from God is to rule our hearts (Col 3:15). It transcends anything we can understand (Phil 4:7). It is not a worldly peace.

John 14:27 *Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.*

This world is full of danger. People are afraid. Politicians may pledge to keep us safe or bring us peace, but they can't promise true and lasting peace. Only Jesus can do that.

(continued on the back page)

Recipe Swap TURTLE COOKIES

2 cups, minus 2 T. cake flour (reg)
1 2/3 cups bread flour
1 ¼ tsp. baking soda
1 ½ tsp. baking powder
1 ½ tsp. kosher salt
2 ½ sticks butter
1 ¼ cups brown sugar
1 cup, plus 2 T. sugar
2 large eggs
2 tsp. vanilla
2 cups dark chocolate chips
1 cup caramel bits
1 cup chopped pecans

Mix all together and chill 36 hours. Make into golf ball sized balls, bake at 350* for 18-20 minutes. You can make them a little smaller, just bake them for about 12 minutes.

Donetta Farr

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

Brandon Farwell (Wayne and Christy's son in law) was injured at work. Prayers for him to get better and get hired full time.

Victims and families in Paris

Kim Frecks- continued healing

Christian Heisler, friend of Matts- surgery

Joan Lemke- pancreatic surgery

Dave Eaton

Darlene House

Nik Branam

Those who lost loved ones this year and those who will be traveling over Thanksgiving.

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.valleyfallscc.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.

Birthdays and Anniversaries

- 1 Shirley Harris
- 3 Matthew Boyce
- 4 Allison Thomas
- 5 Elijah Phillips
- 8 Rachel (Arnold) Detring
- 11 Kacie Welborn
- 13 Misty Eaton
- 14 Chuck Toy
- 15 Mike & Gina Kirby (1984)
- 16 Bob & Linda Beightel (1963)
- 18 Janese (Farr) Temm
Jeff Starkey
Bud & Norma Bryant (1960)
Ray & Rhonda Mitchell (1982)
- 20 Sarah Haybarker
- 21 Dan & Janet Strang
- 24 Marty Gatzmeyer
Ty Gatzmeyer
- 26 CHARLES WATKINS
- 28 Sean & Jennifer Guffey
Chad Spencer
- 29 Morgan Diane Jean Turner
- 30 Jacob & Kari Mitchell (2005)
- 31 Grayson Haag

(Names in CAPS in Mission Field)

Serving in DECEMBER

Congregational Prayer:

Clint Thomas

Scripture Readers:

6- Caroline Starkey-Romans 12:3-8
13- Shelly Gatzmeyer-Luke 1:26-38
20- Jo Tichenor- Luke 2:8-14
27- Christy Arnold- Matthew 3:13-17

Nursery:

6- Debbie Gerstner/Libby
13- Laura Reich/Jackson
20- Glee Hosler/Caitlyn
27- Cheyenne/Caitlyn

Greeters/Ushers:

6- Starkey
13- Durand
20-Tichenor
27-Arnold

Lord's Supper Preparation:

6- Starkey
13- Durand
20-Tichenor
27-Arnold

Communion Table:

6-Stan, Jay
Dennis Tichenor, Curt Gatzmeyer
13- Jay, Stan
Steve Carson, Ray Mitchell
20- Stan, Jay
Dennis Turner, Wayne Arnold
27- Jay, Stan
David Grove, Steve Carson

Musicians

Worship Leader: Mike Kirby
Organ: Leah Brown
Piano: Donetta Farr
Guitar: Mike Kirby, Clint Thomas
Mandolin: Erin Thomas

Church Offerings

Oct.25-\$1362

Nov.1-\$1764

Nov.8-\$2653

Nov.15-\$1617

Nov.22-\$1494

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 December.

LADIES CHRISTMAS PARTY: this will be on Sunday Dec. 6th at 2:00 PM. It is at Nancy Gatzmeyers house. Nancy and Shelly are hosting.

CHRISTMAS PROGRAM: The Christmas Program will be on Sunday Dec. 20th at 10:00 AM.

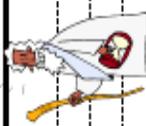
FOOD BOXES: We will do the food boxes after church on Dec. 6th. We need wrapped shoe boxes, and food items to put in them. Suggested items: fruit, homebaked goodies, individually wrapped, pudding, jello, teas, crackers, applesauce, cocoa etc. We will need some help delivering boxes.

CAROLING: Christmas caroling will be on Dec. 6th at 6:00 PM. Dress appropriately. Bring a snack for afterward.

ALL CHURCH CHRISTMAS PARTY: Game night at church on Dec.12th at 6:00 PM. Bring games and favorite snacks

CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE: The Christmas eve service will be on Dec. 24th at 7:00 PM.

SHOW ME CHRISTIAN YOUTH HOME: There will be a group going to Show Me on Dec. 16th. If you would be available to go I'm sure they can use the help.

2015		DECEMBER					2015	
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	
		1	2	3	4	5	Concession stand at Woods sale	
6 11:30 food boxes 2:00 PM Service at Midland Ladies Christmas Party at 2:00 PM 6:00 PM Caroling	7	8	9	10	11	12  6:00 PM family game night		
13	14	15 Mission trip to Show Me Christian Youth Home	16	17	18	19		
20 5:00 PM Youth Group 10:00 AM Christmas Program 5:00 PM Youth Group	21	22	23	 24 7:00 PM Christmas Eve Service	 25	26		
27	28	29	30	 31 New Years Eve				

Valley Falls
Christian Church
511 Oak Street
Valley Falls, KS 66088

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

(Peace continued)

He said “do not be afraid.” He knew after the cross, he would rise again on the third day. He knew he would see his apostles again. He knew he would send the Holy Spirit to be our counselor, comforter and guide. He knew he would one day return – this time to destroy the enemy and set up a kingdom of peace.

He knew he was going to prepare a place for us. A place where sin is no more. A place where war does not exist. A place where the wolf and the lamb can lie together. No pain, no tears, no mourning. A place of joy and a place of peace that never ends.

This Christmas, when you think of the Christ child lying in a manger, think of the man he grew up to be. Think of the cross. Think of the resurrection.

God gave us the gift of eternal life through the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

We must place faith in Jesus to receive that gift – the gift of an eternal life of peace with God.
Jesus truly is the Prince of Peace

Mike

(All scriptures from the ESV Bible unless otherwise noted.)

Thank You!

Mike and Gina would like to once again extend a huge thank you to everyone for the generous gifts for pastor appreciation month. We appreciate all the kind thoughts and comments and covet your prayers as we gear up for 2016. We truly value our relationship with the body at VFCC!