



Voice

A PUBLICATION OF VALLEY CHRISTIAN CHURCH
(Disciples of Christ) Birmingham, Alabama



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February 21 2023

VOLUME 74, NUMBER 4

A Word from Your Pastor

During the season of Lent we acknowledge the power of our Lord in the last day of His life. We see the power of His words. One day the chief priests and the pharisees sent officers to arrest Jesus but they came back empty handed and could only say, "No man ever spoke like this man!" There was power in His anger as He cleanses the Temple of money-changes and sellers of pigeons, saying, "My house shall be called a house of prayer for the nations. But you have made it into a den of thieves." There was power in His suffering. He endured the cross, because He knew the joy the Father had set before Him. He could take a moment of torture and charge it with the power of His love. These examples of His power comes down to the fact that this is no fragile Christ we have. He may seem fragile to us at times because we give Him such a small fragile place in our lives. But our lack of daring faith in Him does not diminish His triumphant power. If the Christ we know is weak and fragile, then He is not the real Christ. The real Christ is powerful, strong and triumphant. His truth and power were let loose in the world by His resurrection from the dead and nothing can stop Him.



There is nothing fragile about the Lord Jesus Christ. If we still think of Him as a pale Galilean, as paintings often presented Him, then let us paint some new pictures of our Lord to show what He is really like. He puts His power into our lives so we can go out in the world and proclaim Him Lord of all! Our challenge is to trust and obey, to find a task for the kingdom that we can do and then do it. Jesus came to bring good news to people, to bring good news to the weary, the discouraged and the suffering. Let us make sure our lives are like a swift mountain stream through which His grace, power and love can flow. Therefore, during this holy season of Lent, let us go into Birmingham and proclaim Him Lord. This is what we have been commissioned to do. For He said, "You shall receive power, you shall be my witnesses!" Praise Be to the Lord! God Bless You, Edd

Ash Wednesday Worship

The season of Lent begins on Ash Wednesday. The name of Ash Wednesday is the result of a tradition in which the Pastor burns the palm leaves which have remained from the previous year's Palm Sunday and after blessing the ashes, uses them to mark a cross on the foreheads of the worshippers. As the Pastor makes the mark he shares the words, "Remember, that you are dust, and to dust you shall return." (Genesis 3:19) We will worship in humility on Ash Wednesday, which is Wednesday, February 22 at 12:00 noon in the Sanctuary. The worship service will include a meditation on the body of Jesus, His face, His eyes, His hands, His feet and His voice. We will also sing some Lenten hymns. Following the meditation the worshippers will walk forward to receive the mark of the cross on their foreheads and holy communion. Invite a friend this Wednesday, February 22 at 12:00noon in the sanctuary.

Dates of Interest:

- Feb 20 - Presidents Day
- Feb 22 - Ash Wednesday Worship at Valley
- Feb 26 - First Sunday in Lent
- Feb 26 - Week of Compassion Offering
- Mar 1 - Brown Bag Luncheon and Program
- Mar 4 - Valley Work Day
- Mar 5 - Holy Week Devotionals Due
- Mar 5 - Second Sunday in Lent

Life in the Valley

Prayers, Joys and Concerns

- Food Pantry Sunday is March 5th and we are accepting canned or dried peas and beans. You can bring them any Sunday.
- Thank you Edd Spencer for doing your Valentine Magic Show for the AAA group. It was funny and great!
- Thank you so much to Jean Thrasher and Phillip Treadway and their helpers for the wonderful spaghetti luncheon with salad fixings, bread and dessert.
- Thank you so much to Carolyn Nunnely and her helpers for the Mardi Gras party for New Horizons inviting them to all our Lenten worship services and activities.
- Edd and Mary Pat Spencer's granddaughter, Ty Cason, has just been named the #1 Freshman in the United States for the 1600m track race. Wow! There is a sweet note from Ty on the bulletin board that says, "Hi, I was invited to Boston for the New Balance Nationals to compete in the 1600, which I am the # 1 U.S. record holder as a freshman. Also, I am running two relays with my teammates. I'm asking for support in any donation to make this trip be possible. Thank you, Ty Cason"

Men's Retreat

The Regional Disciples Men's Retreat will be on March 17-18, 2023 at the Alabama 4H Conference Center in Columbiana, Alabama. The theme is "Reflecting Jesus in our Lives" and the leader is Dave Alexander

Holy Baptism

Anyone who would like to reaffirm their baptism or be baptized for the first time should contact Edd. A Pastor's class will be available to discuss the meaning of baptism for participants. Baptism will be in the morning service on Easter Sunday, April 9.

Devotional Booklets

This year we will have two types of devotional booklets for the Easter season. We have purchased Lenten Devotional Booklets entitled "Water and Spirit" which begin on Ash Wednesday, February 22, 2023. Our own booklet, written by members and friends of Valley, will be a Holy Week Devotional Booklet for the days of Holy Week beginning Sunday, April 2, 2023. Both types of booklets will be available at the church for pickup on the Sunday before the first scheduled devotional. You are welcome to one of each type.

March AAA Event

AAA has a very interesting trip lined up for March. Mark your calendars for March 22, 2023. We will be going to Calera to NOAA, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration for a meeting with the director, John de Block for a tour of the facilities. NOAA was founded by Richard Nixon and is under the Commerce Department and is a uniformed and saluted agency. NOAA is a federal agency that is focused on the conditions of and exploring of the

oceans and conditions of the atmosphere. Not only do they track hurricanes, but also map Sea Turtles following their ancient migration routes and how they survive. We will leave the church at 10:00am for a tour at 11:00am then we will have lunch at Betolone's, an old world Italian Restaurant at 12:30. Please call Marilyn and let her know if you are going and if you are driving or want to ride the van. The van is 1st come availability. Peggi Zinser

Please
Join
Us



As we celebrate The Easter Season

Ash Wednesday Service

February 22nd

12:00pm in the Sanctuary

Lent Brown Bag Lunch and Programs

"Sounds of the Passion"

March 1st, 8th, 15th, and 29th

11:30am in the Parlor

Maundy Thursday Service

April 6th

7:00pm in the Sanctuary

Good Friday Service

"Walk to Calvary"

April 7th

12:00pm on the Walking Trail

Easter Service

April 9th

10:30am

in the Sanctuary



Week of Compassion

We are still receiving donations for Week of Compassion. Please remember that because of WOC "God's mercies RISE UP ANEW each day.

February AAA Event

The seniors and guests at Valley Christian were entertained on Valentine's day by the magic of Mr. Piece of Cake, a magic man who volunteers his talents at Children's Hospital - P.S., he is also the Minister here at Valley. We were amazed at the tricks that we were not able to figure out. He chose volunteers from the audience for several of the magic tricks, one of the seniors was made into a princess, one wore a silly hat, one was doused with water to make flowers grow on his head and we all had fun until one had her finger bitten by a silly alligator, after sticking her finger in the alligator's mouth. After the show we were treated to a wonderful spaghetti lunch provided by the fellowship department. Jean Thrasher and her crew, decorated the tables and cooked the meal. We all had a wonderful February AAA

event thanks to Mr. Piece of Cake and the fellowship committee.



Sermons on Different Crosses

When I was your Interim Minister in April of 2020, my goal was to preach on the different crosses of the Passion on Jesus. But COVID changed all that and we were not able to worship together in the Sanctuary. Therefore, this Lenten season I want to preach on the different crosses of Jesus. A description of each cross is listed below along with the sermon date for each cross. - Edd

Sunday, February 26th
The Celtic Cross



The Celtic Cross is unique by the manner in which a circle is combined with a traditional Roman Cross. The circle symbolizes eternity; this cross reminds us of the eternal effect of our salvation secured through the death of Christ on the cross. Since a circle is without beginning or ending, it also symbolizes continuity and completeness with God – The creator and sustainer of a world without end. The blessing of the Celtic Cross is on the top of our sanctuary.

Sunday, March 5th
St. Andrew's Cross



The cross of Saint Andrew is the symbol for martyrdom and humility. It consists of crossed beams which are diagonally placed in the shape of an X. The cross of St. Andrew is found on the national flags of Great Britain and Scotland as well as the state flag of Alabama. The symbol of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) is a red chalice bearing the X shaped cross of St. Andrew. Andrew was the first apostle to join Jesus and has the special distinction of being the first to bring his own brother, Simon Peter, to Jesus. Tradition tells us that Andrew preached in Greece, where he rebuked those who worshiped idols, an act which led to his crucifixion and death. He was crucified on a cross in the shape of an X. This type of cross was used at his own request, since he did not feel worthy to die on the same type of cross as Christ. While slowly dying upon the cross, it is said that he continued to preach to those around him.

Sunday March 12th
The Anchor Cross



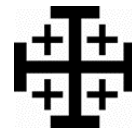
The Anchor cross was used in the early church in disguise form so that its true significance would not be discovered by the enemies of the Christians. The disguise was effective because of the similarity of the arm of the cross to the bar of an anchor. The Anchor cross is sign of hope in Jesus Christ. The hope symbolized by the Anchor cross probably relates directly to Hebrews 6:19, "We have this hope, a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul."

Sunday, March 19th
The Greek Cross



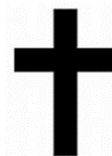
The Greek cross is characterized by having four arms of equal length, possibly reflecting the Greek love of symmetry in artistic forms. This cross is a sign of healing and mercy and is the symbol of the Red Cross. As an international sign of mercy and care for the sick and needy, the Greek cross appears on hospitals and ambulances throughout the world. We have all noticed it on the hospital ships Mercy and Comfort that are helping with the Coronavirus. The cross is most fitting because during His ministry, Jesus spent much time with the sick and needy.

Sunday March 26th
The Jerusalem Cross



This cross is composed of four old testament Tau crosses with their bases joined at the center. Prior to the coming of the plague of the angel of death in Egypt, the Israelites made a mark in the form of a "T" called a Tau cross upon the doorposts of their houses. This mark was made with blood of a sacrificed lamb and the angel of death "passed over" every house marked with the cross of blood. The four small Greek crosses symbolize the four gospels which have displaced the mosaic law depicted by the Tau cross. We are reminded that we have passed from the "Law of Moses" to the "Love of God" revealed through the death of Christ on the cross.

Sunday, April 2nd
The Roman Cross



The Roman cross is formed by two cross beams of unequal length, with a portion of the vertical beam extending above the intersection of the two beams. The Roman cross is the most commonly used form of the cross and the most recognized symbol of Christianity. While the cross is the symbol of Jesus' death and suffering, the empty cross also represents the resurrection, the triumph over death.

Extinguishing the Lenten Candles

During the Advent season we light a candle every Sunday in Advent looking forward to the Light of the World being born in Bethlehem and now during Lent we will extinguish a candle every Sunday symbolizing the darkness of death for Jesus. Our elders who will be extinguishing the candles are: Stewart Draper, Judy Sellers, Sara Simon, Sarah Draper, Carolyn Nunnally and Ed Guindon.