

A P R I L 2 0 2 4

# The Suburban Connection

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# HAPPY EASTER

*Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die."*

*John 11:25-26*

## Save the Date!

Food Pantry

**April 2<sup>nd</sup> & 16<sup>th</sup>**

1:30 pm – 3:00 pm

Men's Breakfast &  
Bible Study

**April 6<sup>th</sup> & 20<sup>th</sup>**

8:00 am  
Fellowship Hall

Senior Ministry Mtg.

**April 18<sup>th</sup>**

11:00 am  
Fellowship Hall

Secret Church

**April 19<sup>th</sup>**

7:00 pm in  
Fellowship Hall

# The Son Must Rise

## What Made Easter Inevitable

By David Mathis

**“They have taken the Lord out of the tomb . . .”** These words from a breathless Mary Magdalene were the first breaking of the news that Sunday morning. **“. . . and we do not know where they have laid him” (John 20:2).**

Just as Mary herself had run to inform Peter and “the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved,” they then ran together to check for themselves. That Jesus’s body was gone, they now believed. But somehow, even with Jesus’s words to them, on multiple occasions, about his coming death and resurrection (Mark 8:31; 9:31; 10:33-34), they, like Mary, “did not understand” (Mark 9:32).

On this world-changing Sunday morning, Jesus’s closest disciples first assumed his body had been **taken** and **laid** elsewhere. “As Yet they did not understand the Scripture, that he **must rise** from the dead” (John 20:9). **Must rise.** In Jesus’s mind, and in the courts of heaven, and in the pages of holy Scripture, the suffering and **subsequent resurrection** of the Messiah were not just possibilities or likelihoods. These were not **options**. They were **musts**. Jesus had said it before, and later that day he would explain it again – that it was **necessary**, that it **must** have happened this way.

O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! Was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer these things and enter into his glory? (Luke 24: 25-26)

Everything written about me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled. . . . that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead. (Luke 24:44 - 46)

But when Peter and John first looked into the empty tomb, that **necessity** had not yet struck them. Fresh off the devastating grief of the previous two days – doubtless the two worst days of their lives – they still were coming to terms with his death, and assumed with Mary that he was still dead and “they” - some undefined group – had moved the body. Having seen the empty tomb, John reports, “the disciples went back to their homes” (John 20:10).

Only Mary stayed behind, and soon found Jesus alive. Then, with his commission, she “went and announced to the disciples, ‘I have seen the Lord’” (John 20:18).

### Christ Must Rise

However slow his disciples had been to understand the **necessity** of his suffering and rising, they soon became convinced – not just that he **did rise** (that was indisputable) but that **he had to rise**. It was necessary. It **must** have happened this way.

Just fifty days later, when Pentecost came, Peter would preach this in public – not just the resurrection but its necessity. At the height of his sermon, Peter declares about his Lord – “this Jesus,” who was “crucified and killed by the hands of lawless men” – “God raised him up, loosing the pangs of death, because it **was not possible** for him to be held by it” (Acts 2:23-24). Death could not hold him, restrain him, keep him. It was not possible. Christ, the Son, **had to rise**.

Why, we might ask on this Resurrection Sunday, was it **necessary**? Why did Jesus **have to** rise? Acts 2, together with other New Testament texts, give us at least five reasons why the Son **had to** rise again.

### 1.To Make Good on God’s Word

First, the word of the living God was at stake. Through his prophets, God had long promised to send his people a climactically Anointed One, the Messiah, heir to David’s throne and rallying hope of Israel. And essential to that Messianic promise was an eternal reign (2Samuel 7:13, 16). No only would David’s line continue one generation after another, but one great heir was coming who would reign without end (Psalm 45:6-7; 102:25-26; 110:1-4).

Even in his own lifetime, David himself had spoken of God not abandoning his soul to Sheol – and not letting his “holy one see corruption” (Psalm 16:10), which Christians, including Peter, came to see as one of many old-covenant anticipations of the coming Messiah’s resurrection. Which is how Peter argues in that first Spirit-anointed sermon (Acts 2:29-32).

God’s anointed king would fulfill the promise of God’s word. Jesus was, and is, that Christ. Therefore, it was impossible for him to be kept from that eternal reign. Not even the last enemy could keep him from it. Strong as the power of death may seem, it was, and is, no match for the omnipotent God working for his Messiah.

*“Easter” continued inside*

# Saturday Morning Men's Breakfast & Bible Study

## 2 Samuel 7,8, & 9

**The Saturday Morning Men's Prayer Breakfast and Bible Study continues to meet on the first and third Saturdays of each month. In April that will be on April 6<sup>th</sup> and the 20<sup>th</sup>.** The study continues in the **Book of 2 Samuel** with its usual chapter by chapter, verse by verse, word by word, comprehensive examination of Scripture.

The study of **Chapter 7** which was introduced last month, features the rise of David over a united Israel and his desire to build "a house for the LORD" for "the Ark of God dwells 'in a tent'" (7:2). It noted that the prophet Nathan advised him that God would raise up an offspring "who shall come from your body. . . (he) shall build a house for my name" (7:2-13).

As for David, God made a covenant with him, "your house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before me. Your throne shall be established forever" (7:16).

On April 6<sup>th</sup>, in **Chapter 7: 18-29**, the study will center on David's "Prayer of Gratitude" in which is seen examples of the faith, love and repentance which led to him being termed, "a man after God's own heart" (I Samuel 13:14). In that prayer David expresses his humbleness before God: "Who am I, O Lord God and what is my house, that you have brought me thus far?" (7:18).

**Chapter 8** will discuss the fruits of God's promises and power in the form of David's conquests over the Syrians of Damascus, Moab, Edom, Ammon, Amalek and Zobah, in addition to his previous victory of Philistia. As a result of David's military successes, the kingdom of Israel was consolidated, and his influence grew. He established garrisons, dedicated spoils and tributes to the LORD and made servants of captives.

"So David reigned over all Israel. And David administered justice and equity to all his people" (8:15) with the aid of appointed officials to carry out the various responsibilities.

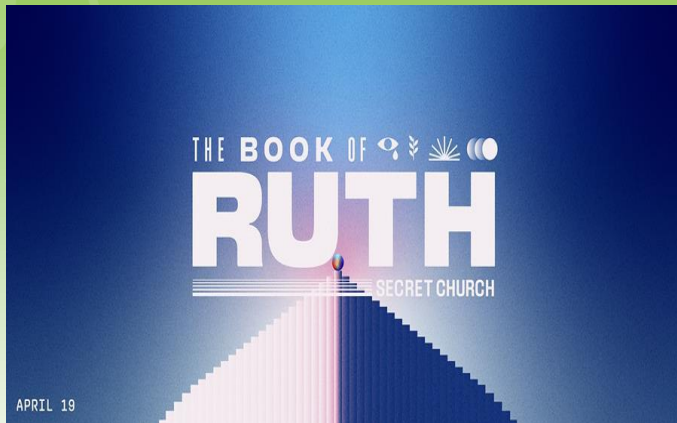
**Chapter 9** will describe the kindness which David provided for Jonathan's son, Mephibosheth (introduced in 4:4), Ziba, Saul's servant, and others of Saul's household. Mephibosheth always "ate at David's table, like one of the king's sons" (9:11) "and all who lived in Ziba's house became Mephibosheth's (and his young son's) servants" (9:12).

**The Men's Prayer Breakfast and Bible Study is an outstanding opportunity for the study of God's Word, prayer, and fellowship for men of all ages; church members and non-members.**

The breakfast and the Bible study are open to all men, and all are invited to enjoy a good, homemade breakfast of eggs (scramble and fried), sausage, corned beef hash, pancakes, waffles, biscuits, grits, sausage gravy, fruit, orange juice, and coffee. Come and enjoy good fellowship, and the Good News found in God's Word. It all begins at 8:00 AM and concludes around 9:30, or so.

**PLEASE JOIN US**

**MEN'S PRAYER  
BREAKFAST**



When: Friday, April 19, 2024  
 Time: 7:00 pm  
 Cost: \$10.00 (payable at event)  
 Please sign up in the foyer if you plan attending. You will be given a study guide/workbook the night of the session.

This year's theme: The Book of Ruth

Ruth is a story that reminds us that each of our lives – no matter how ordinary they may sometimes seem and no matter how difficult they may sometimes be – is indeed a part of a plan much larger than ourselves and much more thrilling than we could ever imagine.

Join us on April 19 for a one-night, intensive Bible study walking through the book of Ruth, learning about the persecuted church in North Korea, Cambodia, Indonesia and for the persecuted church around the world.

Taken from: [Radical.net/secret-church](http://Radical.net/secret-church)

## SCC Church Staff



Rev. C. Todd Haynes  
Senior Pastor



### **MISSION: WHY DO WE EXIST?**

To glorify God, by making disciples of Jesus Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit.

### **VISION: WHAT WILL THAT LOOK LIKE?**

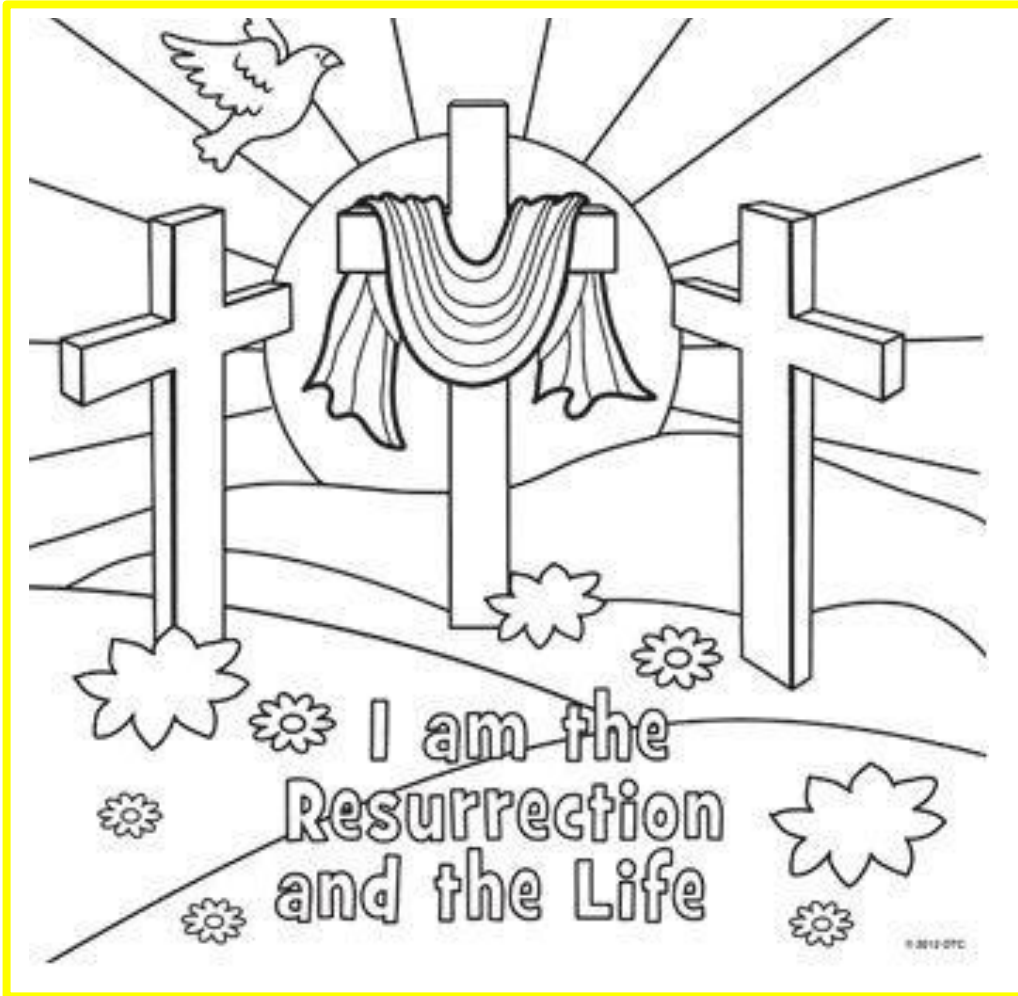
A growing faith in God  
 A growing love for God  
 A growing love for others

### **ACTION: HOW WILL THIS HAPPEN?**

Drawing near to God  
 Pursuing community  
 Reaching our world

Visit us on Facebook! Search for "Suburban Christian Church" on [www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com)

We want to hear from you! Contact us at [newsletter@sccvb.org](mailto:newsletter@sccvb.org)



### FROG JOKES FOR KIDS

ListCaboodle.com

 **What's a frog's favorite year?**  
A leap year.

**What do frogs drink in winter?**   
Hot croak-o.

 **What kind of pole is short and floppy?**  
A tadpole.

**What do stylish frogs wear?**   
Jumpsuits.









## Dot-to-Dot

"For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son." Follow the alphabet in order and draw a line from dot to dot. Complete the picture and color it.

John 3:16

## Jelly Bean Prayer

Church House Collection ©

	Red is for the blood He gave.		Black is for the sins we made.
	Green is for the grass He made.		White is for the grace He gave.
	Yellow is for the sun so bright.		Purple is for the hour of sorrow.
	Orange is for the edge of night.		Pink is for our new tomorrow.

# What's Happening In...

# Suburban Kids

## AWANA

Wow what a club year!! I can't begin to tell you how much FUN we have had this club year! It was a year that everything just naturally came together, it felt like everyone had a good time just being around each other and the kids really buckled down to learn their verses!!!

March was full of great times & activities too!! The kids learned a little more about some of Jesus' disciples by completing a matching game/word search and we had Dress Like A Mess

Night (which surprisingly didn't have the participation numbers like I thought it would - go figure). The point of dressing messy was that Jesus didn't tell his disciples "Come follow me" when they had their lives together or after they decided they were ready. He wants our hearts no matter their messy state because He knows the transformation it will get when we accept Him! Games that night were an absolute HIT (as you can see from the photos) because there was food involved! Ron does such a great job in creating his own games so that they go with the theme of the night. I am so THANKFUL for his willingness to help out in that capacity. The kids look forward to it every club night! We had a sea of green for St. Patrick's Day - it was so cute to see them all wearing green. They played a trivia game where all the answers were either a person, place or thing that was green or had the word green in it. They also played a quick game of Would You Rather with a St. Patrick's Day theme. We will end the month by doing an Escape Room using Jesus' parables. I am super excited about this night & will have photos to follow in the next newsletter.

Carol Brooks

### What's Ahead in April:

April 7: Photo Booth Night

April 14: Guess Who Night

April 21: Store Night

April 28: Final Awards Night and End of the Club Year

***We are now collecting toys for our final Store Night on April 21st! Our kids love Legos, stuffed animals, funky pens & pencils, outdoor toys, science themed toys & beach toys.***



## Sunday School

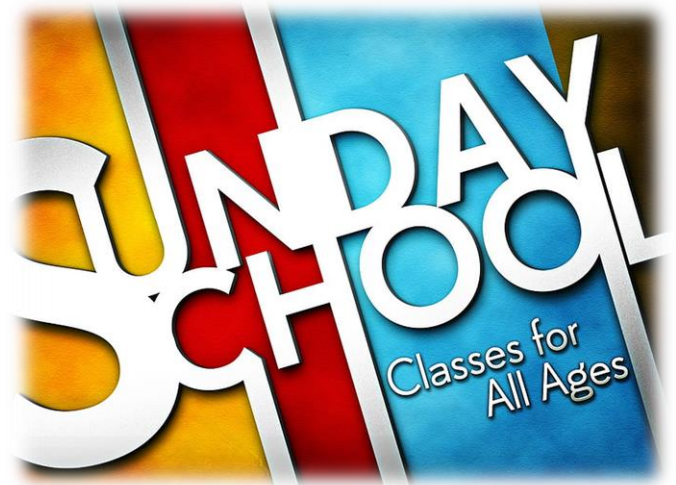
The Sunday school classes have been learning so much this past month. In Kathy and Chris' class the children learned about the paralyzed man who was lowered through the roof in order to be healed by Jesus. After the story the class took turns trying to reenact what happened. They lowered a Lego man down through the roof of a cardboard house. It was more difficult than they expected, but in the end, they were successful!

At our Sunday school teacher's meeting we had the chance to share encouraging things we see God doing. Here is how God has blessed us and encouraged us.

1. We see students who are running to class because they are so eager to see their teachers.
2. We see the older classes being willing to share their extra donuts with the younger kids.
3. We get excited when the children's lesson matches something that is shared by Pastor Todd during the service. Only the Holy Spirit could orchestrate that!
4. We rejoice when the children can recall the details of stories that were taught 2 and 3 weeks prior.
5. We are thrilled when the children share a Bible story with a friend.
6. We are moved when the children sing a Sunday school song in the car on the way home from church.

God is so wonderful! And He is at work in our Sunday school program!

Laura Tyler



## Operation Christmas Child

Thank you so much to all the workers who have been coming to the monthly workdays!! Without you, stuffing the shoebox gifts would be an impossible task. Our goal this year is over 1000 shoeboxes filled to the brim with toys, school supplies and health items for children around the world.

For our workdays, we will need zipper style baggies, sandwich, quart and snack sizes. We also use a lot of elastic cord to make beaded necklaces and bracelets. Also, flannel fabric is needed by those of us who are sewing at home.

We will begin our monthly collections in May with three suggestions each month to help fill the boxes. Meanwhile the basic items are already being collected: washcloths, toothbrushes, crayons, pencils, sharpeners, etc.. Feel free to call me with questions. Please continue to pray for every child this ministry touches with God's love. See you in church. Lynn Cooke



### Music Notes

Understanding the stories behind the hymns we love gives us a deeper appreciation of their beauty and power. When memorized, favorite hymns, like great passages from the Bible, become a vital spiritual force in our lives.

It is our calling, as Christians to praise the Lord with the singing of psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, for the Bible is full of music. I publish the hymn histories each week of one of the songs we'll be singing to give us all a glimpse into what inspiration caused the writers to pen our favorite songs. I hope you enjoy reading about them.

Thank you to all our singers, instrumentalists, and audio-visual team workers, and narrator for making our special Easter music so beautiful and meaningful. All of your dedication and talent is truly appreciated. I pray for each of you and thank God for you every day. Lynn Cooke



## Ambassador Youth Ministry – Ways to pray for Derrick and Chandra Sloan

I'm sure you have already been praying for Derrick (and Chandra) Sloan joining us in May to begin working as the Next Generation Pastor. I thought it would be great for our church family to pray together for some things that may not have come to your minds.

**\*Endurance** – God, YOU have set each of our races before us – we trust that YOU will set the pace, provide them the physical and spiritual nourishment, and give them the strength and endurance they need to make it all the way to the finish line. (Hebrews 12:1)

**\*Vision and Creativity** – God, YOU created the abundant world around us. Because YOU are omnipotent, give Derrick and Chandra the vision and creativity they need in leading our children.

**\*Good connection with students** – Youth ministers are specifically called in the discipling of young people. Give Derrick and Chandra the courage to reach out, the tools to connect, and give students the willingness to engage. (Matthew 28: 18-20)

**\*Wisdom** – In such confusing times, we often find ourselves without sound wisdom. But when we seek YOU for wisdom, YOU give generously. Plant Derrick and Chandra in your will and help them seek your way in every small and large decision. (James 1:5)

**\*Companionship of Christ** (not lonely) – Ministry can be a lonely calling. God, plant Derrick and Chandra safely in our Suburban family to be rooted and built up in YOU. (Colossians 2:7) Help us as a church family to welcome them as YOU have welcomed us, for the glory of God. (Romans 15:7)

**\*Support and encouragement** – We pray that the relationship between Pastor Todd and Derrick will continue to grow and be strengthened as they encourage one another. (Proverbs 27:17)

**\*Good relationships with parents** – We pray that YOU will unite parents and Derrick in the common goal to see their students come to know your love more deeply. We also pray that parents would take advantage of Derrick (and Chandra) for guidance and wisdom by calling, emailing, and reaching out.

**\*Being effective teachers** – YOU have promised us that your Word does not return void, but will accomplish what YOU desire and achieve the purpose for which YOU sent it. Be with Derrick as he studies your Word and as he stands before the youth as our servant. (Isaiah 55:11)

**\*See fruit from their labor** – Give Derrick a powerful sense of the work YOU are doing in and through him and his wife, as they share the abundant Word of Life to the teenagers. (I John 1:1; Philippians 2:16)

**\*Ability to see where the need is and how to fil it** – That YOU would give Derrick the eyes to see the greatest need and to respond accordingly with strength and love.

**\*Specifically for Chandra** – Help her to love and support Derrick as he begins this new journey and that you would help her as they transition to a new place. Help her to grow in her own relationship with YOU. As she creates a safe place for her and Derrick to love one another and serve others, help us to be supportive, understanding, and loving. (Proverbs 31)

God, we are trusting in your sovereignty and guidance for it ALL.



# Suburban Kids Children's Church

## April Children's Church Schedule



Date	Teachers	Service Helper
4/7/24	Lois Ritger	Samara Saucedo
4/14/24	Bill & Susan Cofer	TBA
4/21/24	Andrew & Sammy Saucedo	Donovan Saucedo
4/28/24	Jeff & Susan Haynes	Elena Tyler

## The "Biggest Story" continues . . .

During the month of March, we explored and heard the stories from Chapters 18 - 27 in the book of *Genesis*. We reviewed that *GOD* loves good people but hates evil. There was a city called Sodom and it was full of very evil people. *GOD* was very unhappy! *GOD* shared with Abraham his plan to pass judgement on the city and destroy it. *GOD* promises good for his people and promises to punish his enemies. Abraham's nephew, Lot and his family lived in that city. To spare Lot and his family, Abraham asked *GOD* if 50 good people were found in the city, would he not destroy it? *GOD* agreed. Abraham knew how much evil was in the city, so he kept decreasing the number of good people to 45, then 40, then 20 and then 10 and *GOD* agreed. It turns out, they could not find 10 good and righteous people in the city of Sodom. There was only 1 and that was Lot. *GOD* sent 2 angels and told Lot and his family to run for their lives, they could leave the city, but they could not look back. Lot gathered his family and as they were escaping, Lot's wife looked back and immediately became a pillar of salt. *GOD* passed his judgement on her.

Continuing, we learned more about Abraham and Sarah, and the son *GOD* had promised them. During this lesson Sarah delivers the promised son and he was given the name Issac, which means "he laughs", much like Sarah did when she overheard *GOD* tell Abraham, she would bear a son. As time passed, Issac grew and one day *GOD* told Abraham to take Issac and offer him as a sacrifice up on the mountain. How could this be, *GOD* had promised him this son. So, with heavy heart, Abraham, began the trip up the mountain as *GOD* had instructed him. As they climbed the mountain, Issac was carrying the wood for the fire and he began asking his father, where was the sacrifice and Abraham's response was *GOD* will provide. When they reached the mountain, Abraham tied Issac up and prepared to sacrifice him. As Abraham raised the knife, *GOD* shouted, "don't do it, I can see/know you love and trust me". (Gen 22:12) As Abraham freed Issac from the bonds, they noticed a ram caught in the bushes. *GOD* did provide the sacrifice! Issac's story and Jesus's story have similarities, Issac carried wooden sticks up the mountain, Jesus carried a wooden cross up the hill of Golgotha. Issac was to be the sacrifice, but *GOD* provided a ram (a male lamb). *GOD*'s plan for Jesus didn't go the same for him as Issac. Jesus **became** the lamb that was sacrificed for the world. Through Jesus's death on the cross we can receive forgiveness for our sins. Behold the Lamb!

As the population of the world grew the family tree expanded and it became very twisted. Issac married a woman name Rebekah, and they had twin sons named Esau & Jacob. The boys were very different, Esau was a skilled hunter, but Jacob was a very quiet man who stayed near the tents and enjoyed tricking people. Jacob with the assistance of his mother Rebekah, tricked Esau over some food, into giving him his birthright. This was twisted but *GOD* makes even the most twisted family tree grow into something beautiful. Stay with us as we go further into the book of *Genesis* and share how *GOD* always keeps his promises!

Lois Ritger

# Nursery Ministry

## April Nursery Schedule

Date	Sunday School 9:00 – 10:00 am	Worship Service 10:15 am	Helper
4/7/24	Melissa Tucker Betty Owens	Stacie Raymer Barbara Skarupa	Nyssa Rakes
4/14/24	Melissa Tucker Betty Owens	Jeff Herring	Stephanie Roby
4/21/24	Melissa Tucker	Nancy Herbst Chris Bulaski	Elena Tyler
4/28/24	Melissa Tucker	Laura Tyler	Samara Saucedo



Thanks for all of our wonderful volunteers! We could still use two volunteers for those months when we have 5 Sundays! Please contact Stacie Raymer ([sraymer@odu.edu](mailto:sraymer@odu.edu); 757-589-5731). Young teenage helpers are also welcome to help.

*“And now little children, abide in Him...” (1 John 2:28)*



## Food Pantry

He is Risen! April showers bring May flowers. The rain comes and awakens the beauty of the earth. Occasionally the rain seems to interrupt some plan we made, even so, we all rejoice as the earth springs into color.

The same might be true to the families that come to the food pantry. They might be experiencing a little bumpy weather right now. Our volunteers carefully assembled bags of ham, buttery rolls, vegetables, and a sweet surprise for them to share with their loved ones. And we always pray that they feel the abundance of hope that Jesus provides and hope our small gifts brighten their day.

So, the next time you sit down for a meal, whisper a little prayer for the volunteers that gave their time, the donors that gave from their abundance, the families that are cared for and the Spirit of God that binds us all together.

Gratefully,  
Gloria, Helen, Marsha, DeeDee, Lorene, and Amie  
The Food Pantry Team



*Easter continued . . .*

## 2. To Vindicate His Sinless Life

Jesus's life was without sin. He was utterly innocent, and **rising again** vindicated his perfect human life. Death and Satan had no claim on him because Jesus had no "record of debt that stood against [him] with its legal demands" (Colossians 2:14). With respect to Jesus, Satan and his minions never had been armed; they had not hooks in him because he had no sin or guilt. Rather, in dying, Jesus **gave himself**, nailing to the cross our record of debt, because of our trespasses, and disarming the demons **against us** (Colossians 2:13, 15).

Luke sounds the note of Christ's innocence again and again – three times in the mouth of Pilate, then again by the thief crucified next to him, and finally by the centurion who saw him breathe his last (Luke 23:4; 14-15; 22; 41, 47). Jesus's innocence – that he did "nothing deserving death," before man **and before God** – would be, as Paul celebrates, "vindicated by the Spirit" in Christ's resurrection (1 Timothy 3:16).

## 3. To Confirm the Work of His Death

The resurrection also confirmed that Jesus's death on the cross **worked**. It counted. It was effective. His dying declaration, "It is finished" (John 19:30), was shown to be true by his resurrection. Had he stayed dead, what confidence would we have that his sacrifice **worked**, that it was sufficient for us and all who believe? What firm hope would we have that he indeed was not only innocent of his own sin but that his death could **count** for us, in our place?

Paul writes in Romans 4:25 that Jesus "was delivered up" to death "for our trespasses **and raised for our justification**." The resurrection shows that his work was effective – not only in covering our sins with his death, but in rising to be our righteousness – our justification – before the holy God. Which leads to another distinct but inseparable reason.

## 4. To Give Us Access to His Work

Not only did our sins require a reckoning – by Christ, outside of us – but we also needed to have **access** to his work, to have it applied to us. **Potential** salvation is not enough. We need **actual** rescue, which comes through the instrument called **faith** which unites us to a resurrected, living Lord.

However sufficient his self-sacrifice might have been to cover our sins, we have no access to that rescue if he is not alive that we might be united to him. But he is alive. As he says, "I am the first and the last, and **the living one**. I died, **and behold I am alive forevermore**, and I have the keys of Death and Hades" (Revelation 1:17-18). There is no great salvation for us if we are not **united by faith to a living Lord** to have the benefits of his work applied to us.

## 5. To Be Our Living Lord and Treasure

One final must or necessity is the final necessity: Jesus is alive to know and enjoy forever.

There is no final good news if our Treasure and Pearl of Great Price is dead. Even if our sins could be paid for, righteousness provided and applied to us, and heaven secured, but Jesus were still dead, there would be no great salvation in the end – not if our Savior and Groom is dead. At the very center of the Easter triumph is not what he saves us **from**, but what he saved us **to** – better, who he saves us to: himself.

Our restless souls will not find eternal, and ever-increasing, rest and joy in a Christ-less new earth, no matter how stunning. Streets of gold, reunions with loved ones, and sinless living may thrill us at first – but they will not ultimately satisfy, not for eternity, not on their own. We were made for Jesus. He is at the center of true life now, and he will be forever. If there is no living Christ, there is no final satisfying eternity. But he is alive indeed – to know and enjoy forever.



## Looking to Jesus in the Gospel of Matthew by Chris Tyler

*"Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, **looking to Jesus**, the founder and perfecter of our faith..."*

Looking to Jesus as we run. That's our calling as Christians. If we take our eyes off Jesus, we'll sink. If you don't believe me, ask Peter (Matthew 14:30). This is why our careful study of the book of Matthew is so critical. Nowhere else do we **see** Jesus more clearly than in the Gospels. His humility. His mercy. His justice. His goodness. His power. His beauty.

From His lowly birth to His miracles and teaching. All the way to His outstretched arms at a place called Golgotha. And the empty tomb. This is how God wrote about His love for you. You have an open invitation to join the Discovery Sunday School Class as we read, discuss, and marvel at what Paul called *"the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God."*

We're just starting Matthew 3, but don't be afraid to join us mid-stream. Reading the first couple chapters will take you less than 15 minutes. Here...I'll quickly catch you up. Then you can join us next week.

- Lesson 1 – The Genealogy teaches us to trust the faithfulness of God. If God can fulfill His promise through thousands of years...if His good purpose for His children is inevitable (even through our failings), shouldn't that change the way we live? Will we let it?
- Lesson 2 – We looked at the character and obedience of Joseph. A merciful man intent on doing the right thing rather than making a show of self-righteousness. Like Joseph, we're called to sacrifice our earthly plans for our Father's heavenly purpose.
- Lesson 3 – With the angelic appearance to Joseph, Matthew rounds out his presentation of the humanity, mission, and divinity of Jesus. Son of David. Salvation. God with us. If we believe that God is with us, it will have a deep, meaningful impact on our daily lives. We will be people of courage, conviction, hope, and joy.
- Lesson 4 – We considered the response of Herod, Jerusalem, and the scribes to the news from the Wise Men that the Messiah had been born. They loved the world they had without Jesus. They saw Him as either a threat to their sense of control...or they were indifferent. As Christians, we are called to let go of our kingdom and seek His. Only under the reign of Christ can we receive joy, hope and peace.
- Lesson 5 – The Wise Men showed us that worshiping Jesus means eagerly and joyfully ascribing authority and worth to Him with sacrificial gifts.
- Lesson 6 – We followed Joseph, Mary, and Jesus in their flight to Egypt away from murderous Herod whose anxiety spiraled into anger, violence, and suffering. *"Sin when it is fully grown brings forth death."* We also saw through Matthew's inspired use of prophecy how Jesus lived out the experience of Israel (only in perfect obedience).
- Lesson 7 – With the family's return to Nazareth, we learned through God's direction to Joseph and his obedience that we are to wait upon the Lord and yet still obey His command to "rise and go" to where and to whom He has called us. Even when we are afraid. Because we have a Good Shepherd who comforts and guides us even in the valley of the shadow.
- Lesson 8 – John the Baptist prepares the way for Christ's public ministry with a message of repentance. The kingdom (the very *King*) of heaven is at hand. True repentance bears good fruit that pleases our God and refreshes others.

**YOU ARE INVITED** to join The Discovery Class as they continue their study of the Book of Matthew. We begin at 9:00 on Sunday mornings!

## Mark your calendars:



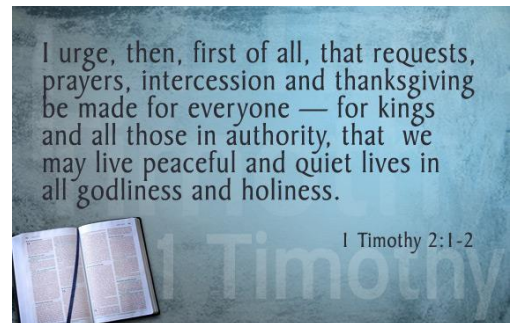
Partner with Crisis Pregnancy Center of Tidewater in providing support for families in our community facing unplanned pregnancies.

Simply go to:

<http://walkforlife.cpcfriends.org/suburbanchristianchurch> to sign up or donate to help CPC save more lives, spare more tears, and spread the Gospel here in South Hampton Roads. The walk dates are April 13, 20, and 27, 2024 at various locations in the area.

## Seniors Ministry Update

At our March meeting, Joe Gewerth spoke to us of his many years in government service. In the 1990's, he answered to Chief of Naval Operations, this was the first mention of NCIS. He was sent to investigate the Iowa explosions and to other places. In 1992, NCIS got its own director and entered crime and counterintelligence. In 1972, it became a civilian operation. Joe became Commander in the year of 2000. He was sent to Chicago to check for divisive activities in the Black Panthers. He later was sent to Guam and Okinawa for civilian domestic violence.



The Bible emphasizes the importance of a good government in 1 Timothy 2:2. The first importance is prayer for kings and all in high positions, which will enable Christians to have "a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way." The importance of Joe's work can't be overstated.

At our meeting in April, Jay Smith will be our guest speaker. Chicken salad on croissants will be served for lunch. Please bring a side dish or dessert to share.

Larry Thomas

## Belong Women's Ministry

We have a great opportunity to join other sisters in Christ at Kempsville Baptist Church for the Equip Women's Conference. In addition to our main sessions, we have the opportunity to attend several "breakout sessions" on various topics: Holiness: Our Reflection Matters, The Power of Prayer in Your Marriage, Being Prepared for the Unexpected, A life Fully Surrendered to God through Prayer, Loving Like Jesus in a Cancel Culture, and Navigating the Ministry Wife Life at Every Stage of Parenting (for pastor's wives). There is something for everyone!



If you would like to go, we have extended the deadline for signing up to April 10<sup>th</sup>. Please sign up in the foyer near the church office. The event is free, and lunch will be provided. wh

