



The Valley Voice

VALLEY CHRISTIAN CHURCH
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EASTER GREETINGS FROM YOUR CHURCH STAFF

Easter is a day associated with exclamation marks! We sing, "Christ the Lord is Risen Today!" We share at the morning worship service, "He is Risen!" Exclamation marks are full of joy, victory and hope!

All of us on your church staff wish you an Easter day full of exclamation marks!!! A day to celebrate that God's love is the strongest force in the world! God loves each one of us, no matter what! We are never alone, for God is always with us! God gives us the strength we need to confront whatever comes our way! And because of Easter, death has no power over us!

With all these exclamation marks and blessings from God, we hope that all of you will have a happy and glorious Easter!

God Bless You, Edd, Marilyn, Mary Ellen, Margaret and Beth

SERMONS FOR APRIL AND MAY

In the gospel of John there are seven "I am" statements shared by Jesus. Each statement is a metaphor to describe how Jesus gives life to those who believe in His name.

During the next two months, I will focus my sermons on these "I am" statements of Jesus.

- Sunday, April 19th "I am the Resurrection and the Life"
- Sunday, April 26th "I am the Gate of the Sheep"
- Sunday, May 3rd "I am the Good Shepherd"
- Sunday, May 10th "I am the True Vine"
- Sunday, May 17th "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life"
- Sunday, May 24th "I am the Bread of Life"
- Sunday, May 31st "I am the Light of the World"

GOOD FRIDAY PRAYER

Our original plan was to have a 24 hour prayer vigil on Good Friday, April 10, The Coronavirus cancelled our prayer plan.

Now on Good Friday our Elders will be praying in their homes. Tradition says that Jesus was on the cross for six hours on a Friday from 9:00am until 3:00pm.

Therefore, our six Elders will be in prayer in this period when Christs suffered on the cross.

The Elders' prayer schedule on Friday, April 10th is as follows:

- 9:00am – 10:00 am – Eve Harman
- 10:00am – 11:00am – Ginny Guindon
- 11:00am – 12:00noon – Sarah Draper
- 12:00noon – 1:00pm – Katelyn Clark

1:00pm – 2:00pm – Carolyn Nunnelly

2:00pm – 3:00pm – Sara Simon

Our Elders will be praying for all of the concerns associated with the Coronavirus.

They will also be praying for themselves, their families, our church family, the sick, the poor, the sorrowing and for the world.

All of us are encouraged to join the Elders and pray in our homes anytime during the day or night on Friday, April 10th. Celebrate moments of prayer with Almighty God.

NEW WAYS OF SHARING THE WORD

Edd will share a weekly meditation and prayer video on You-Tube. Sunday's is <https://youtu.be/gJ222WG3tX0>. We will also be sending you the link in an email, you may just click on it. Alternatively, you may type in the url address just as you see it. The video will not be available until after the Easter teleconference worship service.

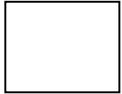
Beginning on Easter Sunday, April 12th at 10:30am, we will begin to teleconference our worship services. Those who are interested will be able to have the phone in one hand and the bulletin in the other. Together we will be able to share by phone and the printed order of worship to praise Almighty God. Please dial in between 10:20am and 10:30am and announce yourself when you join. This will allow Edd to know who all is on before the service begins at 10:30am. Use the following information to join:

Dial 1 (701) 802-5083

When prompted for an Access Code, enter: 719117#

You will then be prompted to announce yourself. If you join after 10:30am, please do not announce yourself, since worship may have begun.

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THE LENTEN CROSSES

Our goal during Lent was to have a brown bag lunch on Fridays followed by a worship service focused on the different symbols of the cross. But the Coronavirus changed everything.

Therefore, the following words describe the different meanings of the crosses that we were unable to consider during Lent.



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.



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.

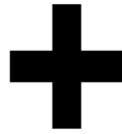
Tradition tells us that Andrew preached in Greece, where he rebuked those who worshiped idols, an act which led to his crucifixion and death. He was crucified on a cross in the shape of an X. This type of cross was used at his own request, since he did not feel worthy to die on the same type of cross as Christ. While slowly dying upon the cross, it is said that he continued to preach to those around him.



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.

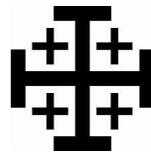
The Anchor cross is sign of hope in Jesus Christ. The hope symbolized by the Anchor cross probably relates directly to Hebrews 6:19, "We have this hope, a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul."



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.



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.



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.

EASTER SPECIAL OFFERING

The Easter Special Offering is April 12th. Funds from these donations support the general ministries of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) including Disciples Home Missions, Division of Overseas Ministries/Global Ministries, Disciples Women and many more. Your contributions can be mailed to Valley with the designation, "Easter Special Offering."

Thank you for your generosity! Cindy Neville