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Worship Times:

- 9:00am Traditional Worship
- 10:00am Sunday School
- 11:00am Contemporary Worship

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Inspiration Point

Resurrection Sunday!

Matthew 28:1 – 10, 16 – 20: Now after the Sabbath, as the first day of the week began to dawn, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to see the tomb. And behold, there was a great earthquake; for an Angel of the Lord descended from Heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat on it. His countenance was like lightning, and his clothing as white as snow. And the guards shook for fear of him, and became like dead men, But the angel answered and said to the women, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. He is not here; for He has risen, as He said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay. And go quickly and tell His disciples that He is risen from the dead, and indeed He is going before you into Galilee; there you will see Him. Behold, I have told you." So they went out quickly from the tomb with fear and great joy, and ran to bring His disciples word. And as they went to tell His disciples, behold, Jesus met them, saying, "Rejoice!**" So they came and held Him by the feet and worshiped Him. Then Jesus said to them, "**Do not be afraid. Go and tell My brethren to go to Galilee, and there they will see Me.**" Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, to the mountain which Jesus appointed for them. When they saw Him, they worshiped Him; but some doubted. And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "**All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.**" Amen!**

(Continued on next page)

Back in 1976, My Squadron and I had orders to go to the Mediterranean Sea for a six month tour. When I learned of this, I prayed that God would make a way for me to go to Israel while I was there. I was already a committed and Spirit filled believer at that time. I got very involved with the Senior Chaplain and the Protestant Church on board, and organized and led prayer groups in many places during the cruise. In about September that year, I received a call from the Senior Chaplain, asking if I would be interested in a trip to Israel. It seemed that the USS South Carolina, a ship with our task force, was going to Israel for a Port Visit and they had 20 of their men on leave to the States, so they could take 20 of our men with them. Because there were only this limited number of berths the Chaplain was very selective of who he chose. I was very excited to go, but needed my Squadron Commanding Officer's approval. He agreed that I could go and had me a set of no cost government orders cut assigning me to the crew of the South Carolina for that period of time. It was a once in a lifetime experience, and I learned and grew Spiritually as a result! Maybe the highlight of the trip was a visit to the Garden Tomb! We went to the tomb as a part of a tour group, and a member of my prayer group was there with me. It was a beautiful site, and for us a very Spiritually loaded time. After the group had exited the tomb, we remained behind and worshiped the Lord! The Spirit of the Lord was very powerful, and we wept as we worshiped! As we did so, the still quiet voice of the Lord spoke in my heart, saying, "Why seek the living among the dead? He is not here, for He has risen!"

As we stood there in that empty tomb, we could see with our own eyes that the Lord was not there, He was risen indeed! All the other leaders of great religious movements were still laying in their tombs. But through his resurrection, Jesus gave us hope! There is life after this old body quits functioning! That is not when we are finished and just turn to dust, no, that is when we go to heaven and join our Lord and Savior to celebrate our victory for all eternity! That is when we receive our personal resurrection to join Him and that great Hoard of Christian believers to celebrate forever! Amen!!!

Brother Phil





MAKING FIRST THINGS FIRST

Dr. Gerald Bell is the co-author of the best-selling *The Carolina Way* with legendary basketball coach Dean Smith. He's also the founder of the Bell Leadership Institute.

Several years ago, Dr. Bell surveyed 4000 retired business executives, with an average age of seventy, asking one key question: If you could live your life over again, what would you do differently?

The number one answer:

I should have taken charge of my life and set my goals earlier.

The other top answers included:

- *Taken better care of my health.*
- *Managed money better.*
- *Spent more time with family.*
- *Spent more time on personal development.*

Few of us are at the beginning of our career; some of us have already rounded third. But it's not too late to make your life about the things that matter most.

Anyone who's willing can take charge of their life today, even if there's not much as time left on the clock as one would like.

Anyone who's willing can take charge of their health today, even if it's more of an uphill climb than it once was.

Anyone who's willing can begin making themselves available to their closest friends and family today, even if the relationship has faced hurdles in the past.

And so on.

For those still in the early stages of their career, these five values are certainly good guidelines to follow.

For those who are in the later stages of the journey, they're *still* good to go by. It's never too late to make first things first.

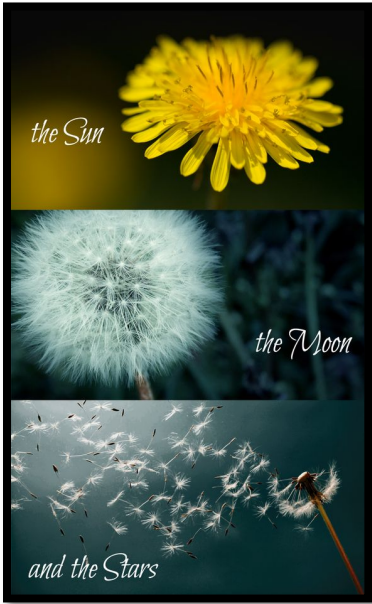
But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.
(Matthew 6:33)

Christ above all,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Byron Abell". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.



Welcome April!!!



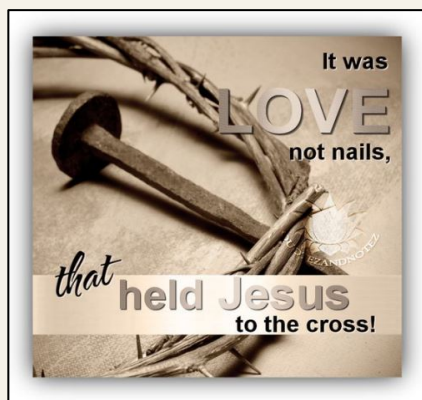
Happy Easter to Our Church Family!!!



The volunteers with Pleasant News want to wish you a beautiful and blessed Easter!

On April 4th we will celebrate Easter Sunday! On this glorious day, through His resurrection, Jesus defeated sin and death and made our home in heaven with him a real possibility! As you think about this awesome gift, we hope that you can grasp the height, width, depth, and breadth of God's love for you! And, that you will receive this gift of love in the way it was given to you...with wide-open arms!

Happy Easter to our Pleasant Grove Family!!!



Easter Sunday at The Grove!!!



As you may well remember, we weren't able to worship in person to celebrate Easter together as a church family last year. And most of us would probably say that we missed this beautiful day in the life of our church immensely! Well, this year we are pleased to invite our church family and community to join us as we worship together on Easter Sunday, April 4th, 2021!!! Please join us for any and all of our observances and let's celebrate our Risen Lord with a renewed sense of wonder, awe, and gratitude for the indescribable gift that was given to us on this most holy day of Resurrection!!!

7:00 AM Easter Sunrise Service at the Scout Hut
7:45 AM Biscuit Breakfast in the Family Life Center
9:00 AM Sunday School / Small Groups
10:00 AM Easter Worship in the Sanctuary



United Methodist Women News



The UMW of Pleasant Grove have resumed meeting after Co-vid 19 began a downward spiral. Circle #3 met in person and Circle #6 met via-zoom on Tuesday, March 9 with good attendance for both. These meetings were to discuss plans for the remainder of the year, make pledge payments, which the local, district, conference, and national organizations depend on to keep missions in action, to get cards sent to church family members that need to be remembered, and to get an update on Metro District news. Jeannie Upton represented Pleasant Grove by participating (via zoom) in the district mission study in February. As part of the study UMW members were asked to bring food items to our meetings for a local food pantry and to send a “love “donation to be used for mission institutions in our conference. Our UMW responded to both.

On April 13, at 2 P.M. both circles have been asked to meet together to observe the UMW program “A Call to Prayer and Self-Denial.” This is the only UMW program that asks for a special offering, so members need to come prepared to participate. One hundred percent of this special offering goes to the mission specified.

The Metro District Prayer Breakfast will be held on Saturday, April 24, at Williamson’s Chapel in Mooresville. Rev. Jan Brittain is the scheduled speaker. Reservations are required but the reservation deadline has not been publicized yet. The meeting could possibly be held virtually. More information should be coming, and members will be notified.

If you are not a member of the UMW and would consider joining you would be most welcome. Meetings are the second Tuesday of each month-Circle #3 meets in the afternoon and Circle #6 in the evening. You will certainly grow in the life of missions and gain friendships through your associations with church family.



Did You Know???

...that when we use the term “Good Friday” to reference the Friday before Easter, we aren’t really calling it “good” at all? Many of us have probably pondered the fact that we refer to this day, the day on which Jesus was crucified, as a good day. To get a better understanding of this terminology let’s do a little word study. Our name for the Friday before Easter, “Good Friday,” is more than likely related to the English and Dutch, which is probably an alteration of the Germanic word, “Goddess,” meaning “God’s” or “Holy.” The term does not mean “good.” English and Dutch are the only two languages that use this term. The day is called “Holy Friday” in nearly all other languages around the world.

We can better understand it by thinking about the word “goodbye,” which came about over time as an alteration of “God be with ye.” English speakers are no more saying that “it’s good to see you go” when they say goodbye than they are calling the day of Jesus’ crucifixion “good” when they call that day Good Friday. Holy? Yes. Good? Not so much!

Good Friday, or Holy Friday, as most of the world calls it, proclaims God’s purpose of loving and redeeming the world even in the face of human rejection and cruelty through the crucifixion of our Lord, Jesus Christ. It is a day that is holy and makes us holy because of God’s act of drawing the world to Himself in Christ.

While we are at it, let’s learn a little about a few more important words in our faith tradition. The Thursday before Easter is called Maundy Thursday or Holy Thursday. The word “Maundy” comes from the Latin word “mandatum” or commandment... as in the “new commandment” Jesus gives to His disciples in John 13.

“Easter” in many languages comes from the Hebrew word Pasch, or Passover, signifying the Passover of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ from death to life. In French it’s Paques; in Spanish it’s Pascua; in Italian it’s Pasqua; and in Swahili it’s Psaka. In English, the word “Easter” comes from Eostre (Ostern in German), which refers to an older spring festival celebrating renewal and new life.

As we observe Good Friday this month, maybe we might want to think about it as Holy Friday to better grasp the significance and meaning of this momentous day in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. It seems to be a very dark day... a day that shows us the lengths to which God will go...to lead us all to light and life eternal!!!

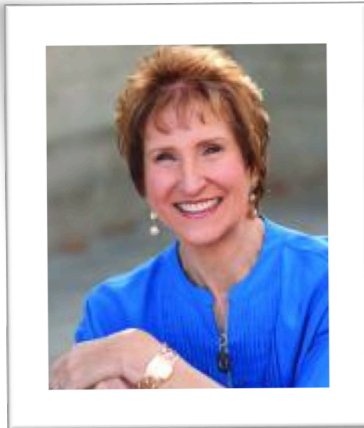
(The content of this article was originally produced by Ask the UMC, a ministry of United Methodist Communications, and appeared on the website of the United Methodist Church.)



A metal abstract crucifix hangs outside of the chapel at Sarum College in Salisbury, England. This photo is by Kathleen Barry of United Methodist Communications.

Recommended Reading

Recommended Reading



A writer with which many of you are already familiar authors this month's reading selection. Francine Rivers is responsible for bringing Redeeming Love to us... a bestselling book that is beloved by many. She has authored quite a few other Christian Fiction selections and we are recommending one of those titles to you this month. The *Library Journal* has stated that Leota's Garden is "an emotionally compelling story about the devastation secrets can unleash on a family and the power of grace to bring second chances."

Leota's garden was, at one time, a place of beauty where flowers bloomed, and hope was alive. The garden was her refuge from the deep wounds that had taken root in her heart, wounds from a devastating war. It was her sanctuary. It was the place where she prayed to a loving God and prayed for her children who couldn't understand her silent sacrifices. Now, at the age of eighty-four, Leota Reinhardt is alone, and her garden is in shambles. Her efforts to reconcile with her adult children have not yielded the resolution she has desired, and her only consolation is being able to speak with her loving Father...the God Who never leaves us alone.

But as is the case so many times, God brings change through unlikely means: one is a college student who has an agenda all his own and the other is a granddaughter Leota had never hoped to know. The question is, can the devastation brought about by keeping painful family secrets be repaired before Leota runs out of time?

Leota's Garden uses the image of the garden as a metaphor for the natural cycles of life that we all experience. A garden can bloom and flourish, the novel suggests, by getting our hands a little dirty doing the hard work of love. Through her gift of writing, Francine Rivers leads us as readers to ponder the value of life and truth in a way that only she can do. Leota's Garden reminds us, once again, that God indeed does work in mysterious ways!

We hope that you will read and enjoy Leota's Garden. It is one of those books that can not only entertain us but can also have us search our own hearts and lives to see evidence of God at work in our own families, our own situations, and our own circumstances. For a fresh perspective on God's love, grace, and mercy, spend some time with Leota's Garden. You won't be disappointed!



The Recipe Box



With Easter coming early in April we thought that we would give you a cooking suggestion that could serve as an alternative to the traditional Easter ham. Or, as things begin to ease up in the community health situation, you may be looking for a new dish to serve to a gathering of friends and family on an ordinary Tuesday evening! Either way, we think you are really going to enjoy this recipe for pork loin with vegetables. Whether you decide to prepare the pork loin only, or you opt to include the vegetables for a complete meal, you won't be disappointed with the flavors and tenderness that you will take to your table. Don't be intimidated by the lengthy list of ingredients or the steps involved in the recipe. It really is quite easy, and it is totally worth your time and effort. Give this one a try! You just may have a new recipe in your own recipe box!

Tender and Juicy Pork Loin Roast

For the Pork Loin:

3-pound pork loin
1 T. olive oil

For the Spice Rub:

1 t. paprika
1 t. garlic powder
½ t. onion powder
½ t. dried thyme
½ t. dried rosemary
Salt and pepper to taste

For the Honey Garlic Glaze:

4 cloves garlic, minced
¼ c. honey
3 T. soy sauce
1 T. Dijon mustard
1 T. olive oil

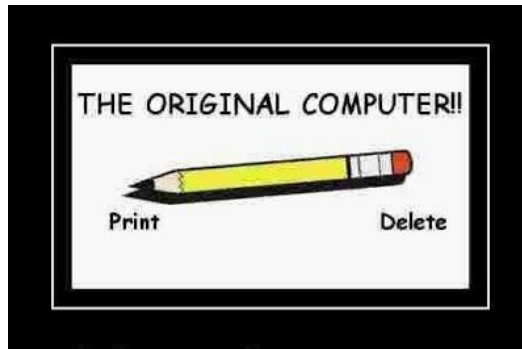
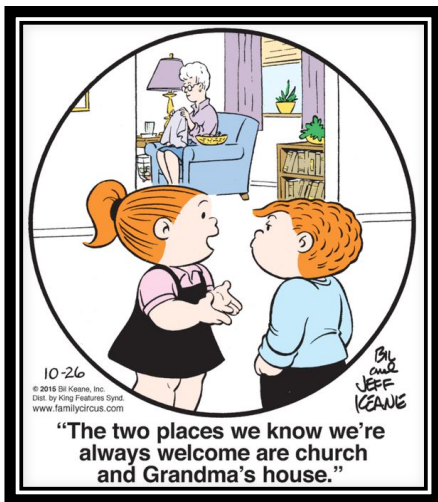
For the Vegetables:

1 T. olive oil
1 pound brussels sprouts, cut in half
1 pound butternut squash, peeled, seeds cleaned out, and cut into 1 inch cubes (You can buy this pre-cut!)



Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Line a rimmed baking sheet with foil and set aside. Pat dry pork loin with paper towels. In a small mixing bowl combine paprika, garlic powder, onion powder, thyme, rosemary, salt, and pepper. Lightly spray pork loin with cooking spray. This will make it easier for the spice mix to stick to the meat. Rub the spice mix all over the pork loin. Heat olive oil over medium heat and sear the pork loin until browned on all sides; about 3-5 minutes per side. Transfer the pork loin to prepared baking sheet, fat side up. Set aside. In a bowl, combine garlic, honey, soy sauce, mustard, and oil. Whisk until well-combined. If too thick, add a bit more oil or soy sauce. Reserve 2 tablespoons of this sauce for the vegetables. (If you aren't doing the vegetables then you can just use all of this glaze on the pork.) Brush the glaze over the pork loin. Roast for 25 minutes. In the meantime, toss the vegetables with a tablespoon of olive oil and the reserved 2 tablespoons of glaze. Pull the pork roast out of the oven and add the vegetables all around it in one layer. Tent a piece of foil over the pork so the top doesn't burn, but the inside continues to cook. Put back in the oven and continue to cook for 25-30 more minutes, or until the internal temperature of the pork reaches 145 degrees. Stir vegetables half-way through cooking. Remove baking sheet from the oven and loosely cover the meat and veggies with foil. Let rest for ten minutes. Cut the pork in slices and serve with veggies. Enjoy!!!

"Just For Giggles"



“The Following Gifts Have Been Made In Memory Or In Honor Of”

IN MEMORY

Brian Lynch

Ted and Betty Rector

A.G. Brown

Steve and Maria McClure

Willie Williams

Peggy Pace – Family Life Center

Bill Watts

Peggy Pace – Family Life Center

Virginia Pennington

Peggy Pace – Family Life Center

Mike Tyson

Don and Jane Adams – Cemetery Fund

Ray and Trena McClure – Family Life Center

Tody Brown – Family Life Center

Roy and Margaret Parker – Family Life Center

Brenda Watkins – Family Life Center

Steve and Karen Dellinger – Family Life Center

Laura Gilleland – Family Life Center

Terry Kelly – Cemetery Fund

Terry Kelly – Family Life Center

Rickey and Lynda Elliott – Cemetery Fund

Amy McGee – Family Life Center

Anonymous – Family Life Center

Steve and Maria McClure – Family Life Center

Ron and Anna Robinson – Family Life Center

Anonymous – Family Life Center

Disciples Sunday School Class – Family Life Center

IN HONOR

Church Staff (Byron, Colin, Kay and Lindsay)

Peggy Pace – Family Life Center

Scripture of the Month



Hey there friends!

It's Colin again, bringing you a short piece of Scripture to think of during this most holy month of April. As we all know, this month is the time in which we celebrate Easter, the time of Christ Jesus' death and resurrection. So, I wanted to bring to our attention a verse that would help us to solemnly consider this Easter season with great weight. This month the passage is brought to us from the New Testament in Philippians:

Philippians 3:10:

“I want to know Christ—yes, to know the power of his resurrection and participation in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death.”

Here Paul is reflecting on how he wants to cast away all his earthly desires and struggles so that he can walk alongside Christ more closely. In this verse though, the way he wants to be closer to Christ is somewhat gruesome, isn't it? He wants to participate in the sufferings of Christ “like him in his death.” We spend a lot of time thinking about the death of Christ and how horrible His suffering was around this time of year but how often do we yearn to suffer alongside Him? Yet that is what Paul is encouraging us to do here, to consciously choose to understand the pain and death that Christ experienced. Not so we can be miserable and sad but rather so we can see how we want to be more like Christ. It was through the death of Christ that we have the freedom to live in eternity with God. It was through this pain that we can be filled with joy and attain heavenly perfection in the afterlife. So, we should spend time coming alongside Christ so that we can move past our former selves. The sinful, sad, inadequate people we were born as should die on the cross as Jesus did so we can be resurrected and be more like Jesus.

While Easter is a time of solemn remembrance, let's not forget that it's also a time to come to know Christ more personally. We come to understand the sufferings of Christ and hopefully in the process become a little more like Him. So, I want to encourage us all to find time this precious month of April to become more like Jesus. Not just while we celebrate Easter, but throughout our entire lives! With that, I leave you all and look forward to speaking more with you next month!

In humble service,
Colin

After School Additions



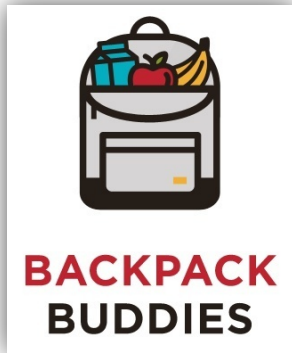
As hard as it is to believe, we are closing in on the end of the school year and will begin to transition into our Summer Camp program! This school year has been a challenge, at the very least, but we have remained open and available for our families who have continued to work, either at home or at the jobsite. We feel that we have provided a very valuable service to our working families and are proud of the fact that the church has continued to support us and allowed for this ministry!

We hope that everyone is continuing in good health and safety and that we are all beginning to round the bend on this trying time for our world, our nation, our state, and our community. We look forward to having a full complement of students in the next school year and being able to operate in the manner in which we are accustomed...including field trips, educational visits from outside sources, and HUGS!!! Lots and lots of HUGS!



During March, we had a celebration of St. Patrick's Day, complete with green punch and green cake. YUMMY! We are now getting ready to celebrate Easter together! We have already painted paper Easter eggs and will do more crafts that point to the joys that Easter and Spring bring to us. We will also focus on the true meaning of this holy time as we remember the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ!!!

Please keep our program in mind as you talk with folks who may be looking for a summer program or after school care for next school year. We are a fun group with lots of smiles and laughs. And we infuse everything we do with the love of God for His children. We have room for more friends and would love to have your friends join us! Just contact the Preschool/After School Care office at 704.393.7895 for more information!



Backpack Buddies

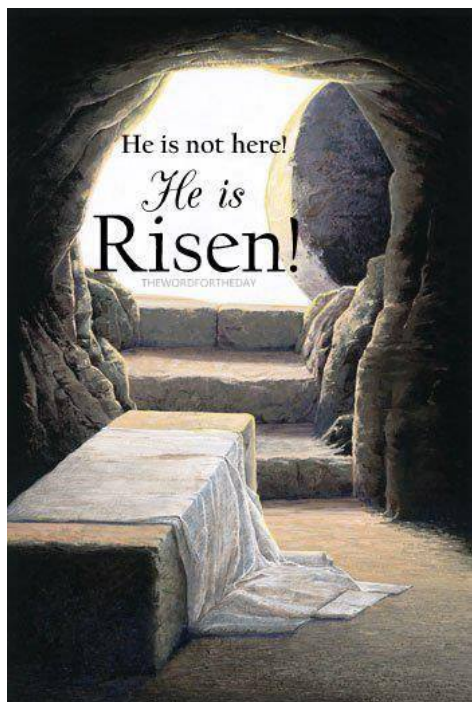
This has been a challenging year for Backpack Buddies, to say the least! But we have persevered and are now seeing the finish line for this school year. Thanks to the faithful and consistent support of our own church family, as well as that of our brothers and sisters at Pleasant Grove Presbyterian, we are well-stocked with the items we use for the remainder of the year. Instead of donating the food items that you normally bring in, would you please consider making a financial gift to Backpack Buddies? This monetary support will accomplish a couple of different things in ministry. First of all, we hope to give our nine Backpack families a grocery store gift card at the close of the school year. This will help them as they transition from school to summer break. Also, your financial gift will help our ministry to position itself for a strong start with the 2021-2022 school year. As always, we appreciate the support that you show to this helping ministry year after year. With God's help we will continue to serve those in need right here in our own community.



What Do You Say When Asked???

How do I know God and His will for my life?

I believe the Bible is the inspired Word of God that guides my beliefs and actions. God reveals himself and his grand plan to us. Our role is to listen and believe. Throughout the Bible the writers warned readers that they should not add or take away from God's Word. God has given and preserved his Word for us so we can rely on it to guide our lives into all truth and according to God's good plan. Therefore, Christians revere the Bible and affirm its right to command our beliefs and actions.



He Chose to Be One of Us...

“God did what the law could not do. He sent His own Son in a body like the bodies we sinners have. And in that body God declared an end to sin’s control over us by giving his Son as a sacrifice for our sins”.

(Romans 8: 3 NLT)

The crown of thorns could have been made – and should have been worn – by every one of us. But it was not, thanks to the greatest gift of all.

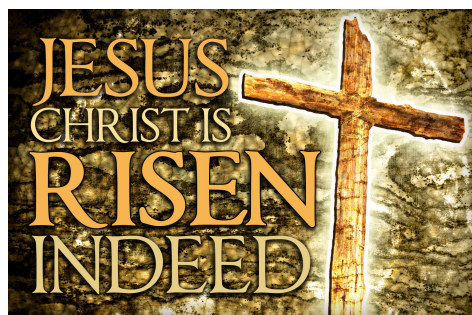
Why did God give us this gift? “For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life”.

(John 3: 16)



When you were stuck in your old sin-dead life, you were incapable of responding to God. God brought you alive – right along with Christ! Think of it all! All sins forgiven, the slate wiped clean, that old arrest warrant canceled and nailed to Christ’s cross.

(Colossians 2: 13-14 MSG)

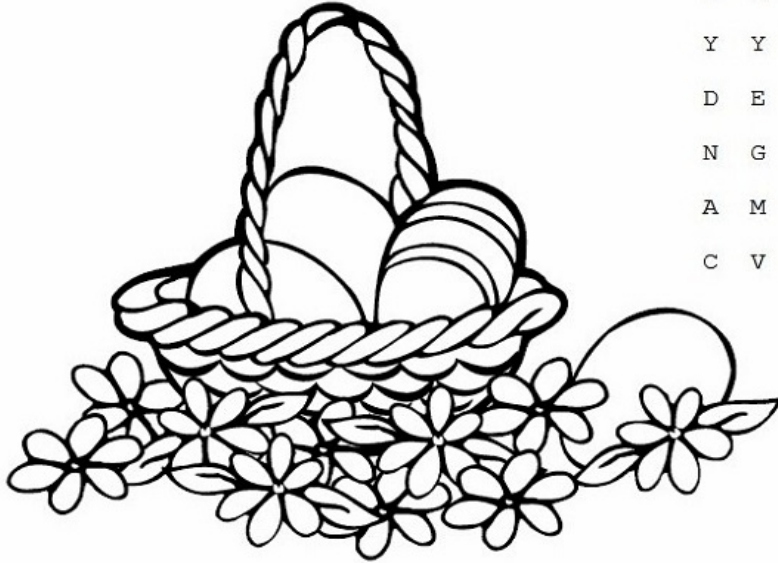


[God] made peace with everything in heaven and on earth by means of Christ’s blood on the cross. This includes you who were once far away from God. You were his enemies, separated from him..... Don’t drift away from the assurance you received when you heard the Good News”. *(Colossians 1:20-23 NLT)*

Scripture and Commentary taken form –
He Chose The Nails by Max Licado

Easter

WORD SEARCH



H O P Y Y N N U B Z C
Y E F F E T D H A R M
B V Z I A H J G O H Y
M Y C P S N I S G U K
A P D L T I S I Y H T
L K W A E R K V C J E
Y Y U F R M J R E J K
D E L B I B U S L W S
N G T M K H U Y J Q A
A M L Y C S M H F S B
C V Q P P Q N E G G S

BASKET	CROSS
BIBLE	EASTER
BUNNY	EGGS
CANDY	JESUS
CHURCH	LAMB