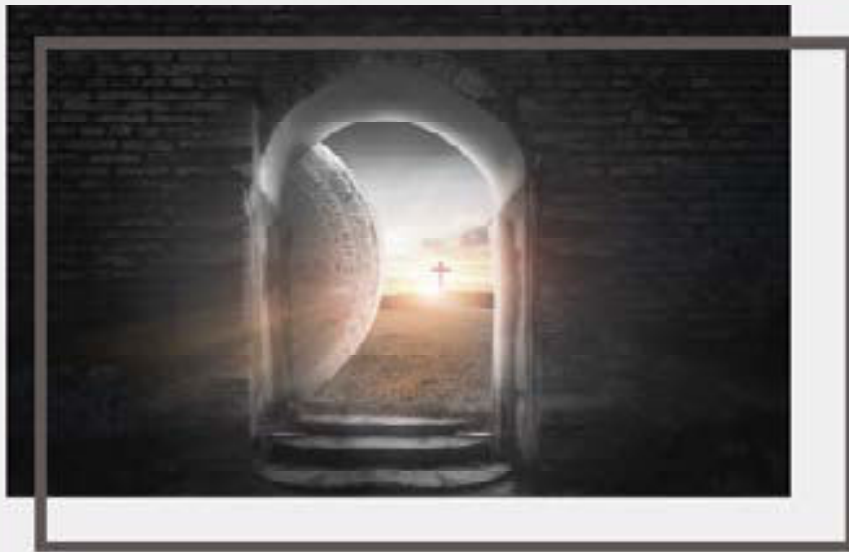


CONNECTIONS

||||| LAKWOOD BAPTIST CHURCH APRIL 2023 VOL XIII: ISSUE 4 LBCPC.org

H A P P Y
E A S T E R



"MAY HIS RESURRECTION BE A LIGHT FOR ALL OF US"

A Message from Andrew Spires

LEAD PASTOR



Have you ever truly considered the story of the repentant thief on the cross? To refresh your memory, here is *Luke 23:33-43*; 33 *"When they came to the place called the Skull, they crucified him there, along with the criminals—one on his right, the other on his left. 34 Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing." And they divided up his clothes by casting lots. 35 The people stood watching, and the rulers even sneered at him. They said, "He saved others; let him save himself if he is God's Messiah, the Chosen One." 36 The soldiers also came up and mocked him. They offered him wine vinegar 37 and said, "If you are the king of the Jews, save yourself." 38 There was a written notice above him, which read: THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS. 39 One of the criminals who hung there hurled insults at him: "Aren't you the Messiah? Save yourself and us!" 40 But the other criminal rebuked him. "Don't you fear God," he said, "since you are under the same sentence? 41 We are punished justly, for we are getting what our deeds deserve. But this man has done nothing wrong." 42 Then he said, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom" 43 Jesus answered him, "Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise."*

Does the thief on the cross fit your overall theology? I want you to consider the following; this man was not baptized, never partook in the Lord's Supper, never went through any biblical training, never wore church clothes, never even attended church, never gave an offering, never sang a worship song or hymn, never served

his fellow man, never went on missions, never told anyone else about Jesus, and never had the chance to manifest any fruit of the Spirit. Yet, Jesus Himself, said this man was redeemed solely and mercifully by his faith in the Savior. Jesus promised that as soon as this man took his last pain-filled breath on this earth, he was immediately translated to heaven. In fact, the only outward proof of belief and salvation was the repentant thief's rebuke of the other thief's jeers and accusations expressed toward Jesus. His simple rebuke and question to the other thief is so strong; "Don't you fear God?"

This man's faith might have been immature, his faith was simplistic at best, but according to Christ, his faith was saving faith. We are often quick to judge other people's faith and the fruit they produce. We must be careful not to add works to faith and remember that the first person we are called to judge is ourselves. *Matthew 7:1-5* reminds us: "Do not judge, or you too will be judged. 2 For in the same way you judge others, you will be judged, and with the measure you use, it will be measured to you. 3 "Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother's eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye? 4 How can you say to your brother, 'Let me take the speck out of your eye,' when all the time there is a plank in your own eye? 5 You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye." Also, *1 Corinthians 11:31* says; "But if we were

(Drew's Article Cont.)

more discerning with regard to ourselves, we would not come under such judgment." Before we ever judge someone else's faith, let us make sure that we are not hypocritical ourselves.

This nameless thief, who died next to his Savior, stands as the ultimate example of the grace, mercy, and forgiveness of God. When God opened his eyes to his own sinful condition note his self-examination while speaking to the other thief; "We are punished justly, for we are getting what our deeds deserve. But this man (Jesus) has done nothing wrong." His last moments recorded in the bible were reflections on his own sinful condition and the purity of the Savior. We don't know the rest of the story, had the man heard of Jesus before? Had he heard Jesus' teaching? Had he witnessed

Christ's miracles? We will never know. However, his dying plea; "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom." is a cry for mercy and salvation that was gladly received and honored by the Sovereign Lord. The same salvation by grace alone through faith alone is still available to each one of us today.

Even in the last earthly moments of Jesus' life, Christ was rescuing a lost sinner, and changing him into a saint.

Whether you've belonged to Christ for fifty years or just a few days, stop right now and thank Him anew for His mercy and grace.

Celebrate His atoning sacrifice, His goodness, and His imputed righteousness given to us.

Christ is risen, He is risen indeed!

Tea Time Testimony

with

Kimberly Klaus

Bring the ladies in your life...young and old...

to hear her story of the

Kindness and Mystery of God

as a Missionary from Myanmar,

a Mom

a Medical Professional and

a Cancer Survivor

Saturday April 22 at 11:00 a.m.

RSVP @ LBCPC.org/ladies-ministry

or the sign up sheet near the Church kitchen

or by calling the Church Office at 334.298.6433

Your attire is entirely your choice!

Sponsored by Lakewood's Women's Ministry

Easter Sunday 4/9

Worship @ 9 & 11am

Bible Fellowship @ 10am

We will be partaking of the Lord's Supper

Sister 2 Sister

Monday 4/10 @ 6pm

Home of Onezima Everitt

Senior Game Night

4/14 @ 5:30pm

Subs & Potato Salad

Jane Ellen Gaines Baptist Women

Thursday 4/20 @ 6:30pm

Home of Jill Clark

Choir Festival

Thursday 4/27 @ 10:30am

A Message from **David Stephens**

CHILDREN'S PASTOR



It is springtime and we have new growth happening all around us. In my front yard, I have a weather tree. It will not show any growth if there is going to be another cold front coming through. When it does begin to show new growth, we know the season is truly changing. I find this to be a remarkable example of the creativity of God.

As we look at springtime and we come into this Passion season let's not neglect the simple joys of life. Let's see the beauty that is all around us, and call it out for what it is; God at work in His creation and within you and me. During this season let's turn down the "volume" of anxiety and depression that is in our story, but it is not "HIS" story. Let's remember to lift our gaze to heaven. Let's stop bending our necks downward to stare at our phones and lift up our heads to truly see the wonder of God. I personally love architecture and visiting/touring old buildings especially churches. I marvel at how these ancient engineers built such marvelous structures that forced a person to elevate their gaze to the heavens. We are his church, let's remember to raise our gaze away from the "screens" of our world and see Jesus during our celebration of Passion week. We are the church. We are the hope of the world. We ALL must spend our life building the church of Jesus Christ. This is what matters; this is why Jesus died on Good Friday giving you and me the opportunity for a restored relationship with him. We have way more power than the enemy wants us to know we have. The gates of hell don't stand a chance against His Church. Let's not be naïve about what is confronting His church. There is a frontal attack to eliminate the Gospel, an attack to undermine the word of God, to water down Jesus, and eliminate the virgin birth, life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. The proclamation of the Gospel must be our priority. This is where we humbly must stand. I remember the moment that my eyes were opened and I gave my life to Jesus. We must give it all to Him. I know I'm

saved because today I am a 42-year-old man who loves Jesus with all that I am, and I'm doing everything that I can for the Gospel to be known within me, my family, my community, and the world. I stand in operational power of the Gospel in all things. I'm being saved today. I say "no" to the master of shame. I'm being saved from the tyranny of guilt. This is something that I say to myself regularly. What has saved me sustains me. I will praise Him on the mountains and in the valleys. We the church will help people in the valley and build people on the mountain tops. We will love families that God places in our space giving our best, fulling knowing God takes our humble offering of worship and turns it into something incredible. We the Church must be a vehicle where God can show off. I am a church member, and I will spend my life building up His church. When I look around at our surrounding culture; does it look bad? Yes, but we live by faith not by sight. We have to practice looking to the King on His throne versus the headlines. God is not confused. The empty tomb is real. God's sovereignty is real. Power over sin is real. My expectation is that God will come through, most likely not on my time table, but he will come through. We have to practice looking up, and when we look up together we can do great things together.

Calendar:

- April 2 Spring Festival from 12PM – 2PM*
- Lunch on the front lawn for a love offering
 - Silent Auction (art produced by our kids and members alongside local donations)
 - Egg Hunts time staggered for all kids
 - Games and activities

Plan to attend and fellowship with our community and church family. All proceeds support children's summer camp activities

Lakewood Happenings

April 2023

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
						8:00am Work Day Meet in F/H 1
Palm Sunday 9:00am Bible Fellowship 10:30am Worship Spring Fest 2	10:30am Amen Choir 6:00pm GriefShare Class 3	6:15pm Alleluia Choir 4	10:30am VK/WMU 5	7:00pm Young Adult Bible Study 6	Good Friday Office Closed 7	8
Easter (Regular Schedule) Lord's Supper 9	10:30am Amen Choir 6:00pm Sister2 Sister 10	6:15pm Alleluia Choir 11	7:00pm Finance Team Meets 12	7:00pm Young Adult Bible Study 13	5:30pm Senior Game Night Subs & Potato Salad 14	15
1st service time @ 8:45 6:00pm Members Meeting 16	10:30am Amen Choir 17	6:15pm Alleluia Choir 18	19	7:00pm Young Adult Bible Study 20	21	11:00am Tea Time Testimony in F/H 22
1st service @ 8:45 23	10:30am Amen Choir 24	6:15pm Alleluia Choir 25	26	10:30am Choir Festival 6:30pm JEG/BW Home of Jill Clark 27	28	11:00am S/YA Feed the Homeless 29
1st service @ 8:45 30						

February Giving

	BUDGET	CTB	MISSIONS	OTHER	TOTAL
2/5	\$20,763.00	\$130.00	\$1,080.00	\$2,467.65	\$24,440.65
2/12	\$20,238.64	-	\$4,032.00	\$1,597.00	\$25,440.65
2/19	\$23,582.54	-	\$535.00	\$438.00	\$24,555.54
2/26	\$11,273.10	-	\$1,555.00	\$1,085.00	\$13,913.10

ONGOING ACTIVITIES:

SUNDAY	
9:00am	Contemporary Worship
10:00am	Bible Fellowship
11:00am	Blended Worship
WEDNESDAY	
6:00pm	Bible Study
6:00pm	AWANA
6:30pm	Youth Worship

A Message from Israel Jane

INTERIM STUDENT & YOUNG ADULT PASTOR

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Greetings from the youth department,
I love the old Hymn "The Love Of God",
especially the lyrics that say...

Could we with ink the ocean fill,
And were the skies of parchment made;
Were every stalk on earth a quill,
And every man a scribe by trade;
To write the love of God above
Would drain the ocean dry;
Nor could the scroll contain the whole,
Though stretched from sky to sky.

When I think of those words, I think of the importance of the Word of God. In today's culture, God's word carries little importance. Some people believe the Bible is outdated and doesn't apply to our lives today. Even many who proclaim to be Christians rarely pick up the Bible, choosing to listen to the "wisdom" of the media and celebrities. Because of these influences, we often don't give the Bible the proper place in our lives.

It's important to remember that despite what we see or hear in the world...

1. God's word is truth.

Every word of God is flawless; he is a shield to those who take refuge in him. – Proverbs 30:5 (NIV)

It really is the inspired word of God.

The grass withers and the flowers fall, but the word of our God endures forever." – Isaiah 40:8 (NIV)

2. God's Word can be trusted.

Because the Bible is truth, we can trust what it says. It has been proven to be accurate time and time again.

The teaching of your word gives light, so even the simple can understand. – Psalm 119:130 (NLT)

3. *God's Word gives us the answers to life's questions.*

God gives us direction through His word, in Psalms it says, *105 Your word is a lamp for my feet, a light on my path. Psalm 119:105 (NIV)*

No matter the question, God's word should be where we start. Any question or thought we have should be filtered through the truth found in God's word. If a thought doesn't line up, we should replace what we think is right, or what culture says is right, with what the Bible says.

God's word is special, determine to make reading God's word an important habit in your life today.



IN MEMORY OF:

Jim Ormond

For General Fund

**from: Randy & Jane Weaver
Jason & Cindy Scarborough
Mr. & Mrs. JD Whitehead
Will & Kerry Hall**

For Amen Choir

from: Rex & Sandy Carter

For Children's Ministry

**from: Sue Melton
Margie Jackson**

**For Merge Kids Summer Camp
from: Mr. & Mrs. Fred Van Horn
Mr. & Mrs. Bill McCarley**

**For Samaritan's Purse
from: Gail Brantley**

**For Bereavement
from: Clara Jean Watson
McCraine/Whitehead
Bible Fellowship Class**

Oleuse Cannon

**For General Fund
from: Mr. & Mrs. JD Whitehead**

Susan Hoffman

**For Loaf
from: Sylvia Huggins**

**TIME
CHANGE**

FOR 1ST SERVICE

8:45AM

BEGINS 4/16

**WELCOME
NEW MEMBERS**

**Chris & Melissa Orr
Chichi & Floyd Peak
Bradley & Haley Cross
Zack & Haylee Garland**

MINISTERIAL STAFF

***Andrew Spires*
LEAD PASTOR
ANDREW@LBCPC.ORG**

***Charles Keown*
WORSHIP & SENIOR
ADULT PASTOR
CHARLES@LBCPC.ORG**

***Israel Jane - Interim*
INTERIM STUDENT &
YOUNG ADULT PASTOR
ISRAELDJANE@GMAIL.COM**

***David Stephens*
CHILDREN'S PASTOR
DAVID@LBCPC.ORG**

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***Carol Breault*
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CARE ASSISTANT
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***Linda Keown*
WORSHIP & MEDIA
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HOURS: M-TH 8:30AM-4:30PM
FRI 8:30AM-12PM**