

# Current

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*Equipping the church to reach the world  
for the glory of God through Christ*

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# RESURRECTION

**Looking Back: Ladies' Oasis  
Worship Night, February 11**



***What We Are Learning Now***

**RESURRECTION**

***Pastor Bob***

*"And the third day he rose again.' What are we to make of this? One thing is certain: if Jesus were God and nothing else, his immortality means nothing to us; if he was man and no more, his death is no more important than yours or mine. But if he really was both God and man, then when the man Jesus died, God died too; and when the God Jesus rose from the dead, man rose too, because they were one and the same person . . . There is the essential doctrine, of which the whole elaborate structure of Christian faith and morals is only the logical consequence. Now we may call that doctrine exhilarating, or we may call it devastating; we may call it revelation, or we may call it rubbish; but if we call it dull, then words have no meaning at all." Dorothy Sayers*

I think believers in Christ should call it exhilarating! That's how the early church responded. When the reality of Christ's sacrifice and resurrection dawned on them, and when the Holy Spirit came upon them, they were never the same. That's why Acts was written: resurrection changes everything. The activity of the early church, because the fact that Jesus was God and man and that He died and rose again is exhilarating. Exhilarating enough for us to commit anew to the joy and privilege of reaching others for Christ. I'm discovering again that the more you think and pray about evangelism, the more see your neighbors, friends, relatives, even strangers in a new light. It's becoming impossible to see them as mere mortals or just nice people next door. They have eternal souls, and eternal decisions are weighing in the balance. God has placed us in our neighborhoods and spheres of influence as ambassadors for Him. We know Christ. We know the joy of serving Him. We know true exhilaration. We know the joy of worship and fellowship and learning about the Creator. As believers in Christ, will you join us in praying? Praying for 5 or 6 or 10 friends that you can invite to our Easter service? Begin praying now. Begin to take a little more time mowing your lawn and chatting with the neighbor's children, and with him/her-and pray. Join with your church family in the wonderful privilege of being used by God to reach a lost world desperately in need of the Savior.

# If You Expect Fruit Without a Tree, You're Nuts

*Kevin DeYoung*

We equate love with indifference to sin when the Bible's logic is exactly the opposite. The cross is the fullest expression of God's love not because it shows God's indifference to sin, but because it shows God's holy hatred toward sin and his willingness to pay for it himself. That's love.

At the end of Acts 7, we see Stephen praying for the angry mob stoning him to death. He says with his dying breath, "Lord, do not hold this sin against them." Surely this is love: Stephen wanted them to receive a mercy they did not show him. He had done nothing wrong. Stephen was not deserving of death. Their actions were a profound instance of criminal injustice. And yet in a final gasp, on his knees, he cries out on their behalf, "Lord have mercy."

How did he do that? How could Stephen love like that? How do we love like that? Pray like that? Forgive like that? Lots of people in the world want to love and forgive. We like those virtues in our culture. But few people are interested in the principles which make these virtues possible. People want to love like Stephen without bothering to understand or embrace the mile of theology that made his love possible. They don't want to see the Jesus he saw, or believe in the vindication he knew was

coming, or entrust their offense to the God of justice who will one day make all things right.

In the world, they want to be good people. But they don't realize they have to be God people first. I hope you aren't going to church just to become a better you or just for the morality your kids might pick up. That's not how Christianity works. Becoming a Christian is not simply about self-improvement. It's about a hundred particular truths that teach our minds and touch our hearts—truths about God and Christ and sin and salvation. And yes, later, and only in connection with all the rest, is it about being a good person. When you embrace the biblical worldview of Father, Son and Holy Spirit; creation, fall, redemption, and consummation; redemption accomplished and applied—when your heart thrills to all of that, then you'll bear fruit. But don't expect to ever look like Stephen if you grasp for the fruit without the tree.





*On the Frontlines*

## **Dale & Suzann Beverly**

*Serving with Africa Inland Mission*

*@ River Bend Ranch in Kansas*



1. PRAISE that we were able to start our new Sunday School class this last week! There were 30 adults and 15 kids that came from 4 different African countries! Everyone was really excited and we had really good fellowship as well as a meaningful time of prayer for each other. We look forward to the weeks ahead as we settle on a good schedule for the time together.
2. PRAY as Dale hopes to restart the breakfast/prayer time with African students at WSU. School just started and this first week back on campus was good. Dale found two Kenyan students to visit with and then pray with. Continue to pray as he reaches out to encourage these students to get into the Word.
3. PRAISE for good health with all our traveling and visitation. Dale has had the chance to get out and attend basketball games of some of the boys of "our" families. We have also had a couple of the families out for special days on the farm! We are always excited to see how the Lord will use us!
4. Please continue to PRAY for son, Aaron, who continues to struggle with many issues.

**Keep connected:** [dale-suz.beverly@aimint.net](mailto:dale-suz.beverly@aimint.net)

# Christmas: the Seed of the Easter Story

*Laura Baxter*

What do Easter and Christmas have in common? A lot, actually.

*Angels and Marys.* The Angel Gabriel announced to Mary that she was going to have a baby (Luke 2:26-38). Approximately 33 years later, two angels told two Marys (among other women) that Jesus had been raised from the dead (Luke 24:1-10).

*Myrrh.* Wise men from the East brought myrrh as a gift to Jesus (Matthew 2:9-11). Prior to his crucifixion, Jesus was offered wine mixed with myrrh as a painkiller (Mark 15:23). Again, the women brought spices, probably including myrrh, to anoint Jesus' dead body (Mark 16:1).

*Herods.* King Herod the Great tried to kill Jesus when he was born (Matthew 2:16). His son, King Herod Antipas, mocked Jesus before his death (Luke 23:6-12).

*"God With Us."* According to the Prophet Isaiah, a virgin would have a baby called "Emmanuel," which means "God With Us" (Matthew 1:23). After his resurrection, when Jesus ascended into heaven, he continued this promise, "I will be with you always" (Matthew 28:20).

Just from these simple examples, we see the Christmas Story holds the seeds of the Easter Story. Christ's suffering, death, resurrection and ascension were foreshadowed at his birth (and prophesied hundreds of years before that). Easter was not an afterthought; it was not a surprise. Jesus lived his entire life with a purpose and a goal in mind.

When some Pharisees told Jesus that Herod wanted to kill him, Jesus replied, "Go tell that fox, 'I will drive out demons and heal people today and tomorrow, and on the third day I will reach my goal.' In any case, I must keep going today and tomorrow and the next day—for surely no prophet can die outside Jerusalem!" (Luke 13: 32-33). Jesus knew a terrible death awaited him, but he kept going, he kept healing, he reached his goal.

What was Jesus' goal? To be crushed by God, to pour out his life as a guilt offering, to bear the punishment for our sins (Isaiah 53:10-12). And then, after his suffering was over – as Isaiah prophesied -- Jesus saw the light of life and was satisfied (Isaiah 53:11).

Jesus has been exalted to the highest place, all authority in heaven and on earth has been given to him, and he is with us always.

Christmas and Easter are not random punctuations on the holiday calendar. Down to the smallest details, they are intertwined links in a grand narrative. From the birth story springs the resurrection story. And from the resurrection story springs the new birth of God's people: "Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. . ." (1 Peter 1:3).



# Missionary UPDATE

*Mike and Kathy Fisher, with EastWest Ministries International*



We had a good week at the marriage conference for our Group 8 men and their wives, concluding with their graduation ceremony. Each of the 27 men received a new Bible and a Children's Bible Storybook that has been recently published in Burmese, gifts provided by a contributor. A recurring request from the men is "more Bibles please!"

Kathy started a new women's group in Mandalay. One of the women is a pastor in a village near Bagan, a favorite tourist site of thousands of Buddhist pagodas. Her father was a Hindu and her mother was a Buddhist. Both found Christ and are now helping her in the church. She was eager to receive more training.

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## Coming Attractions...

### "LOST 'N FOUND" FAMILY NIGHT

TACC Family, want to see Jesus' parables from a new angle? Come to a fun evening of games, discussion, and fellowship for all ages, as we explore the parables of the lost sheep and the lost coin. Mac 'n cheese dinner, salad, and brownies. Sunday, March 3, 5-7pm, in Room 207.

***Come one,  
come all!***

### TABLE TALK: DOORPOSTS DESSERT & COFFEE

Monday, March 11, 6:30-8pm  
~Challenging and affirming your faith by engraving God's word on your heart and displaying it on your doorposts.

~Based on Deuteronomy 6:6-9

# Resurrection NONSENSE

*Ingrid Chung*

The words sounded to them like nonsense.  
Well—of course.  
What babble could be believed  
from the mouths of these addled women?  
What did such female folk know of the Lord  
What words could they speak of the Word  
that cohered  
and congealed  
into a meaningful, life-giving sentence?

But what is true  
is what seems so radical,  
yet is truly the root  
of all true faith.  
The radical, insane women  
speak the most radical truth of them all,  
the crux of our faith—  
the curse of the cross  
broken by the resurrection.

The women's words are  
no babble.  
Indeed, the Babel curse is  
triumphed over  
as words now bring life  
and reconciliation, not  
condemnation.

Bending into the tomb  
a shaft of light pierces  
Peter's brain.  
Perhaps  
new life is here.

## Going on in March...

**Sunday, March 3:** Easter Evangelism Series Kick-Off: 5-7pm Lost 'N Found Family Night  
**Friday, March 8-Sunday, March 10:** College Winter Retreat  
**Monday, March 4:** 6:30-8pm, TableTalk Doorposts Dessert & Coffee  
**Friday, March 15-Saturday, March 16:** 30 Hour Famine for Youth  
**Friday, March 15-Sunday, March 17:** Elder Retreat  
**Friday, March 28:** 7pm Good Friday Service  
**Sunday, March 31, Easter Sunday:** 9am Pancake Breakfast & 10:30am Worship Service

# Taft Avenue

COMMUNITY CHURCH

An Evangelical Free Church

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Office open M-Th, 9am-12pm, 12:30-5pm

[www.taftavenue.org](http://www.taftavenue.org)

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Easter  
**PANCAKE**  
Breakfast @9:00am

**WORSHIP**  
Service @10:30am