

Easter Flowers

Help us celebrate the joy of Christ’s Resurrection with flowers for the Sanctuary and Chapel. Flowers are from Homestead Growers. They may be purchased in memory of and/or in honor of loved ones.

Deadline March 17th  
Make checks payable to EP Church.



Easter Lily (5-7 blooms):	\$10.00__Qty	Easter Lily (10+ blooms):	\$16.75__Qty
Azaleas (indoor):	Pink \$15.75__Qty	White	\$15.75__Qty
Hydrangea (7 inch pot):	Pink \$15.50__Qty	White	\$15.50__Qty
		Blue	\$15.50__Qty

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

☐ In honor of    ☐ In memory of    ☐ Check enclosed: Church Env. # \_\_\_\_\_

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EPistle

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The Center of Christianityby Pastor Bruce O’Neil

Easter is the center of the Christian faith; and because of that, the world pays attention to Christianity around this time of year. This Easter, invariably people will try to distill the great metaphysical truths and teachings of Christianity to larger than normal crowds in churches all over the world. Many will draw out the great truths of the Easter Story.

These great principles and truths are often summed up like this: “Hope springs eternal,” “Today is the first day of the rest of your life,” “The sun will come out tomorrow.” These pithy sayings are a sad commentary on our culture’s interpretation of the resurrection of Jesus. In a few weeks, it will be Easter again and our church will fill its pews with all our regular members and attenders, along with a whole lot of people we only see once or twice a year. Therefore, in preparation for Easter I want to write to you about what Easter means and what it meant to the first people who believed in it. First, in order to even understand the meaning of Easter you have to believe it really happened. Because if it didn’t happen, the Apostle Paul is saying here, all of this is a lie and waste of our time. Easter without the resurrection is worthless. Friends, everything hangs on whether or not the resurrection of Jesus Christ ever happened. Notice how the Apostle Paul began to describe things in the fifteenth chapter of his first letter to the Corinthians. He writes: *For I delivered to you as of first importance what I*

*also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures, and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. Then he appeared to more than five hundred brothers at one time* (I Corinthians 15:3-4).

What is he saying here? Paul is saying, “Listen, this is not something I made up.” He uses a technical word here. He said “it is something that I received.” He is saying that what I delivered to you is common; it is undisputed among all the people who at that time claimed to be part of the movement, “the Way.” “What I delivered to you was received.” It is common and it is of first importance. He died. He rose again. And . . . we saw Him. This is beyond dispute.

This letter, I Corinthians, was written around A.D. 54. It is about 20 years after the time that Jesus was on the earth. It is a public letter. Paul is going public here and he is making a very bold claim. He is basically saying: “Listen, we saw Christ die and we saw Him resurrected.” He is staking the whole movement of Christianity on this claim; the dead Jesus is now alive. Paul is making this declaration right here on paper to people who would have known the veracity of the claim. By the time Paul writes this letter, there were still hundreds of people liv-

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Leading Others to Followby Tom Beall

Jesus final instruction to His disciples, just before He was taken up into heaven, was to “..go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.” (Matthew 28:19, 20) We are called not just to “become” disciples but to “make” disciples as well. It would be a lot easier if all we had to do to please God and fulfill our obligation to Him was to go to church, Sunday school, Bible study, and have my devotions each day. But He calls us to “make” disciples. It seems a rather daunting task to make disciples – a task I feel inadequately equipped to do. I

don’t know how to begin. But if God calls us to make disciples, He also shows us how to do it and walks with us through the process.

In the Gospels Jesus shows us how He taught and sent out His own disciples. A quick glance through Matthew gives us some insight into the process of disciple making. In chapter 4:18-21 He *calls* them to follow Him. He *teaches* them truths about Himself and how to live in chapters 5-7. In chapters 8-9 our Lord takes them with Him as he *demonstrates* His love by healing and doing miracles. The

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ing who can attest to what Paul is saying here, who saw Jesus alive after they saw him die. Paul challenges his skeptics and the skeptics of Christianity then to go and ask these eyewitnesses. He is asking them not to take his word for it alone, but to investigate it for themselves. Paul was willing to stake everything publicly. Friends, that in itself is remarkable. It is remarkable because people will die for a lost cause, but very few people will die for what they know to be a lie, certainly not more than 500 people. If the 500 people who claimed to have seen the risen Christ but knew it was really a conspiracy to keep the movement alive, certainly one or two or a few dozen would have told the truth in the face of their own deaths. Here you have the Apostle Paul saying, “We stake it all on the fact that it happened; you can depend on it. I double dog dare you to check it out for yourself.” There are well intentioned people who say, “Well, you know that the story is a beautiful story of sacrifice, and I think this is a wonderful way to live even if it is not true.” Paul will not let you patronize him that way. In I Corinthisan 15:19 Paul will go on to write: *If in this life **only** we have hoped in Christ, we are of all people most to be pitied.* Please don’t give Christians your pity. Without the resurrection Christians are pathetic. Without the resurrection of Jesus Christ, we are idiots. If we are building our lives on something that is not true, we are idiots. You see, to get Easter, to taste what this is all about, you must look at the claims and see if they are true. Did it happen? If it didn’t happen, then why fol-

low a dead man’s teaching? His death does not make the teaching false, except that he taught that three days after he died he would raise again. Therefore, if the resurrection did not happen, what teaching of his could be trusted? But what if he did rise from the dead as he promised? Then are we not empowered to believe and trust all his teaching?

This Easter let’s examine the claims of Christianity, particularly the claim of the resurrection. And if we discover that Jesus did in fact rise from the dead as he promised he would, what other teachings of Jesus should we take serious? The First Century Christians believed it and their proclamation of this good news, “Christ is risen,” turned their world upside-down. The gospel always turns the world upside-down because if he is alive after 2000 years, then it is all true, all of it.

And let’s encourage our unbelieving friends to examine the claims of Christianity for themselves. Don’t take our word for it. Examine the evidence with an open mind and see if it is reasonable and the only plausible explanation for the growth of Christianity. Admit that if this central truth of the resurrection of Jesus is not true, not plausible, then Christianity is a poor way to live, it is a pathetic way to live. But if it is true, this claim changes everything. It is worth pursuing because it is a life changer, either way. I think Paul could encourage skeptics to examine these claims for themselves because he was not worried that they will find out it is all a lie, but because he was confident they would understand that is all true.

Spring Is In The Air

by Dee Chafant

Just to give you an update of what happened with our Angel Tree Ministry this past year, we actually delivered more gifts to Angels this year than we ever have done. Although we were given 60 names, when we finished, we served 71 Angels. Many contacts were made and I received a number of “thank you’s” both verbally and also written. Three inmates sent written notes giving thanks. I would like to share parts of some of the three letters I received: “I just wanted to say how happy and thankful I am. The church gave the “love of my life”, my daughter, a Christmas prize when I could not. That was one of the most nicest things I have got in a long time.” “You all are truly the body of Christ. May God Bless you and keep you.” “I’m currently away right now so it means a lot to me that someone cares. Thank you. I definitely look forward to visiting your church when I come home in the middle of 2014.”

Angel Tree Ministry does make a difference. In most cases, we may never know how much. However, to 71 Angels, Mom or Dad remembered them and perhaps Christ entered their lives. Many thanks to all who made calls, gave donations, shopped, wrapped gifts, delivered gifts, and/or prayed for this ministry. God is good.

EGGSstraordinaire

Annapolis EP will be hosting our second annual Easter EGGsstraordinaire on Saturday, March 30. This is a community outreach event and completely free to those attending. We had a wonderful time last year with an amazing crowd and beautiful weather. During 3 different egg hunts, children collected over 5000 eggs. Visitors were given an Easter tract in their registration bag, the gospel was presented before each egg hunt and the drama team shared the gospel in each of their presentations throughout the day. This year, once again, the day will open at 10:00AM and close at 2:00PM. There will be games, prizes, pony rides, bunny buckets ride, food, music, drama and more! We are in the planning stages now and looking for many volunteers to run games, greet visitors, hide eggs, walk ponies, grill hot dogs, and more. Contact Nancy Thompson at [n\\_thompson@comcast.net](mailto:n_thompson@comcast.net) or Linda Cate @ [lcate@epannapolis.org](mailto:lcate@epannapolis.org). Please join us in praying that God will be glorified and that His kingdom would grow here in Annapolis.



Mission Trip to Romania - July 11-24  
VBS - Medical Clinics Family Conference

Things Needed for the VBS: markers, crayons, scissors, stickers, glue sticks  
Medical Clinic: pain relievers, Tylenol, Aspirin, Motrin, vitamins (children's and adult), Calcium, Iron, Antibiotic creams, Arthritis creams, Bengay, etc., Benadryl, hydrocortisone cream, A&D ointment, cough drops, Tums, Pepcid, Zantac, Tagamet, imodium, lomotil, and phenergan.

Two years ago we were looking at the meager pile of medicine that we had received thus far to take, it looked grim, so Ruthie suggested that we thank GOD for the medicines we did have and rely on Him for the rest. Needless to say, we had an abundance. There will be a box in the Church Office for donations and are greatly appreciated. *And my God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory.* Philippians 4-19

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disciples are sent out in chapter 10 to do the very things Jesus has just taught and demonstrated to them – healing and driving out evil spirits. They return to experience more teaching from Jesus and to experience how He handles opposition from the religious community. Jesus shows them how to teach the world in chapter 13 by using parables (putting truth in the context of where the audience lives). After more time walking with and learning from Jesus, He quizzes them in chapter 16 to see what they have learned – “Who do you say I am?” He immediately begins to unfold His plan of salvation to them by telling them of His impending death. He shows them His glory at the transfiguration in chapter 17 and the triumphal entry in chapter 21. In Gethsemane Jesus takes Peter, James and John to pray with Him during the darkest hour of His life. Jesus appears to the disciples after His resurrection and He sends them out to make disciples. Finally in Acts 1 the Lord equips His disciples with the Holy Spirit and empowers them to be His witnesses.

Jesus calls us, teaches us, demonstrates His truth and love to us, sends us to tell others what the Lord has done for us, shows us how to teach, quizzes us and continually walks with us as we grow in our own faith, shows us His glory, brings us to prayer, equips us for the work He gives us to do, and empowers us with His spirit.

Notice that after Jesus had driven the demons out of the demon-possessed man and into the pigs, He told the man to “Go home to your family and tell them how much the Lord has done for you, and how he has had mercy on you.” He didn’t tell him to go to seminary and become a Biblical scholar before you go, but simply tell them what the Lord has done for you. We make disciples by walking with each other and sharing “what the Lord has done for us” so far in our lives.

The definition of a disciple is a “follower” of Christ. Now go show someone else (make them a disciple) “what the Lord has done for you”. Then show them again tomorrow and the next day. Making disciples is a process of sharing with others what He is doing in your life and what He is teaching you.