



Greetings From The Grove

Kallam Grove Christian Church
An Evangelical Covenant Church

April, 2018



Easter Sunday Schedule

- Easter Sunday, Sunrise Service at 7:15am with breakfast to follow;
- Easter Sunday, in lieu of Sunday School, Quarterly Conference will be held promptly at 10:00am (we do not expect this to be a very long meeting);
- Easter Sunday, Worship Service at 11:00am with communion.

Everyone needs to bring flowers to decorate the cross Sunday!

Youth Auction April 21st!

Remember your trash may be someone else's treasure!

KG Prayer Wall

Our prayer wall has been without any prayer requests since September 2017 even though we continue to receive vocal prayer requests during Sunday morning worship. I don't know why our members don't use the Prayer Wall to make their prayer requests known. The wall allows members to notify those of us with computer access of their requests as soon as they know about them - they need not wait until Sunday. Perhaps the reservation is either members have forgotten about the existence of the Prayer Wall or they didn't want to make the requests more public than our church bulletin.

Regardless of the reason, I have moved the prayer wall on the web site; it is now found on the members-only page. (I didn't like seeing the empty Prayer Wall on a page open to any visitor; it just didn't speak well of Kallam Grove). The move required that all menus (the main "Connecting In Community" drop-down menu as well as the sidebar menu) had to be changed so that the only point of entrance to the prayer wall is through the password protected members-only page.

We will need to advertise this change and remind members of the benefits of having access to it through the week. For those members who do not have computer access, we can resume printing out the prayer list and leaving it on the stand along with the Sunday bulletin for members to take home to help them recall prayer needs during the week. If this does help increase the use of the Wall, we can take the page down completely.

Here is a link to the member-only page: <http://kallamgrovechurch.org/connecting-in-community/kg-members/kg-prayer-wall/>

If you haven't visited the members-only page in a while, you'll be required to enter the password (pswr = goldhill). John



FROM THE MIND OF THE PASTOR
April 2018



I AM EXCITED FOR EASTER

For most people Christmas is the best day of the year. I love Christmas. I love time to be with family, I love good food, I love presents, I love time off, I love cold weather! It is a good day to love. Beyond the associations with the season it is a time to celebrate God's deep love for us. At Christmas we remember that unto us a child was born.

Christmas is not the only great holiday on which we celebrate God's deep love for us, though; at Easter we are confronted again with the depth of God's love for us. But why is it that we don't make a bigger deal about Easter? Does it not deserve the same celebration?

I suppose one reason that Christmas so completely eclipses Easter is the way the secular world has embraced the practice of giving and receiving gifts at Christmas. For better or worse, there are many reasons for the season at Christmas (friends, family, world peace, etc.). Easter doesn't have the backing of the retail world the way Christmas does. It also isn't celebrated outside the church the way Christmas is, much to the disappointment of the Easter Bunny, I'm sure.

I think another reason is that Christmas is easier to grasp. As if the mystery of the incarnation could be comprehended, it is at least not very scary. The baby Jesus is cute and helpless and it is comforting to think that God has goodwill towards mankind. But Easter is something altogether different. Easter defies all categories. If Christmas is in some way unifying, Easter is divisive. The message of joy and peace at Christmas is tolerable to everyone, but the message of Easter takes it too far for most. There is something about resurrection that brings out the all cynicism and anger in people like nothing else.

No, Easter does not get its fair due. Even in the evangelical church I think we altogether miss it most of the time. I wonder how many Easter sermons this year will be about the ultimate price Jesus paid on Calvary? Of course Jesus' death is indescribably important for us, but that is for Good Friday, not Easter. On the day we should rejoice in God's abundance and joyful triumph we get caught feeling penitent and looking at our feet! To live out Good Friday on Easter is to pass up the biggest party the universe has ever known for a funeral! Easter is about one thing and one thing only. In the words of saint Peter, "God has raised this Jesus to life, and we are witnesses of it all" (Acts 2:32)!!!!

Easter is not a metaphor about the regeneration we see in spring. It is not about the sprouting of new plants after winter or the cycle of life. Easter stands 100% opposed to the cycles of nature. Easter is something new and shocking in God's plans for the governing of creation. Up until Easter, life was simple. You lived and then you died. Even the Psalmist cried out, "What is gained if I am silenced, if I go down to the pit? Will the dust praise you? Will it proclaim your faithfulness?" (Psalm 30:9). Sure as the day, we were born to die. But Easter changes all that. Jesus, who was obedient to God - who followed God's will all the way to death on a cross - has defeated death. Jesus' self-sacrifice was noble. But the Father's response - breaking all the rules of the universe - taking Jesus' cold, dead body and restoring it, transforming it, changes everything we know about the way the world works. Newton's, Einstein's, quantum physics all shrivel up and seem like a child's drawing beside Easter.

We are very excited to announce that our 2018 Festival of Tables has set the date for September the 22nd. This year's theme is "Where in the World". We are delighted to have motivational speaker, Mrs. Kim Knight, return as our guest speaker. For ladies wishing to hostess a table, the sign up sheet is now in the vestibule. Those wishing to attend may sign up as well. Hostess information packets will be handed out following worship service May 27th.

From the Mind... I love Christmas, but I might love Easter even more. If at Christmas we meet God's kindness, which makes us feel good, then at Easter we meet God's true power and will, and it should scare our pants off.

The Bible is full of advice and honestly, most of it stinks. If you care for the poor and the defenseless, you are stupid. You are betting on losers and you will reap your reward. You will have lost your money to lost causes. If you pray for your enemy instead of destroying your enemy, then they will destroy you. Again, you are stupid. If you expose any weakness, your competitors will exploit it. If you do anything but relentlessly pursue your own interests and wealth, you will be crushed. We moralize the Bible's teachings. We try and find ways to show why it is better to give than receive, but really it isn't true. We are animals and the law of the jungle governs us as much as it does the critters on the savannah; eat or be eaten. Anything else is foolishness.

BUT now, because of Easter, God has made foolish the wisdom of the world. When God raised Jesus from the dead, God showed all of creation that the foolishness of God is wiser than the wisdom of humans and the "weakness" Jesus displayed is stronger than human strength (1 Cor. 1:20,25).

Why does Easter matter? We could write a long book about it, but basically it is this: we can now live the life God has called us to free of the old consequences. The Old and New Testaments - the Law, the prophets, and Jesus - all scream at us that God wants us to live a life of service and humility. Before Easter the wages of such a life were death, loss, being taken advantage of. But now God has taken away the one thing that could harm us - death. Now we can be generous, be humble, be peaceful and the powers that be can crush us into a billion pieces and it is no barrier, because God can put them all back together and breath in new breath.

Easter should be disorienting. We want to be practical people and serve God at the same time. The norm is to hear what God wants from us on Sunday and then figure out how to compromise enough to keep our status and still be able to look at ourselves in the mirror Monday through Saturday. We cannot be practical and serve God well at the same time and, because of Easter, we don't have to try.

Paul's prayer for the Ephesians has always been one of my favorites. It is good for anytime of the year, but it is especially good for Easter. I pray this Eastertide that God will send his Holy Spirit to open the eyes of your heart to know the hope to which you have been called, the inheritance that awaits all the saints, and the incomparably great power God has for us who believe - the very same power God used Easter morning so long ago.

PUTTING MY CARDS ON THE TABLE

Jesus' resurrection began a chain of events that really did change the world. After Easter we read that Jesus continued to appear to his friends and students over forty days. He taught them about God's plan for this creation. Then he went back to be in the Father's presence with the promise of return. And in the meantime, Jesus sent the Holy Spirit to be present with his people. The Church was born and the Church was given the right to become a force like this world has never seen. The Church was given the power to live as God's children.

We read about this in the Bible, but sometimes we forget that we are still the Church. Years of abuse and confusion have made us skeptical about the Church's ability to do anything but hurt people and cause trouble. This is unfortunate, because we should be no different than Peter and Paul.

Part of my job, I think, is to dream and cast a vision for the church. I cannot be the church, but I can hope for you. This is my dream: that Kallam Grove would become, not just a Good Friday church, but a true Easter church. A church that not only knows its sin and need for a savior, but a people transformed by resurrection. A place that God uses to heal brokenness and begin new life. Anyone can be broken; rich people, poor people, crazy people, lonely people, abused people, abusive people. I want Kallam Grove to become a place where life flows out of every crack in the building. There are a thousand ways to do this, but it needs to begin with a desire from you all too. Do you want to get stuck on Good Friday? Or do you want to live in the light of Easter morning? Programs will not grow our church and may or may not grow God's kingdom. But a burning desire to follow God in the work of restoring a broken world will.

Easter is life. I will be returning to this question about what we want to be often over the next year. Kallam Grove has an amazing potential I think. Let's see what happens if we can hand it over to the God who raised Jesus from the dead.

PERSONAL

Briefly, Mary and I want to say thank you to everyone for gifts and food and encouragement following Clive's arrival. He is doing well and I think Eve is finally adjusting too. I said this before Clive was born and I'll repeat it now - please let me know what your needs are so I can meet them. As time gets tighter I will be more apt to loose things between the cracks. Please, please, please, let me know what you need. nputnam@northpark.edu. 336-847-6929.

Penny had a wonderful email from Lee Johnston. He wished everyone a Happy Easter, and shared his address.

My most current mailing address for anyone that wants it.

PFC Johnston, Lee F.
CMR 309 Box 47
APO AP 96275

Once again we thank John Horne for the beautiful mast for the newsletter! Notice the purple draping over the church and the shadow of the cross on the lawn! It took him about two hours! How does he do this?

A brief description of what I did to the photo I started with. First I scaled it down to a usable size then removed the gray driveway and replaced it with the grass like out front. I then used an Artistic image effect that converts the image to appear to have been a watercolor sketch. I then adjusted the colors manually to look brighter, slightly darker, and to my liking.

Need a gift? Festival of Tables cookbooks are available for sale. \$15 each product, 4 for \$50. Great for Mother's Day, graduation, wedding showers etc. Over 680 recipes from ladies representing 35 different churches.



6 He is not here; he has risen! Remember how he told you, while he was still with you in Galilee: 7 'The Son of Man must be delivered over to the hands of sinners, be crucified and on the third day be raised again.'

Luke 24:6-7


EASTER

