

**Family & Friends..... April 5, 2023**

“Soldiers of Christ, Arise,” is a hymn written by Charles Wesley in 1749. The hymn was written in turbulent times, with some of the same problems we face today. It may be hard to believe, but true. Wesley encourages Christians to heed the call of the Spirit, persevere in the work of fending off darkness, and live in the hope that Christ will come to take the conquerors home. Christians are in spiritual battle that requires the strength of God’s Spirit, the inspiration of God’s Word, and the accountability of God’s people. A good soldier is committed to the cause of Christ and wise to the devil, stands for Christian virtues, and guards the truths of the faith, and prays at all times in the Spirit. Easter Sunday will be this Sunday, April 9th. We need to remember the suffering that Christ suffered for us on the cross and obey the gospel, confess our sins, and live the Christian life so that our sins will be forgiven and we can spend eternal life with our Lord. The Shepherd has promised to be with us every day of our earthly existence and when life is over, we will be closer to him than ever. To God Be the Glory!

*Teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age. (Matthew 28:20)*

Always blessed with our visitors: Penny Huskey (Hindsville), DeEtta Davis (Fayetteville), Sharilu Brown and Dwane & Tammy Hawkins (Centerton), Anna England and Joe & Kristina Costello (Bentonville), Taylor & Rhett Moore and Joyce Parks (BV).

Those on our prayer list: Our deepest and heartfelt sympathies go to Carolyn Lacey in the loss of her husband, Mike, who we will all miss. Please keep Carolyn and her daughter, Laurel, and family in your prayers. Please keep Don Cope’s sister, Glenda Jones, in your prayers. She has been diagnosed with terminal lung cancer. Judith Carmical is suffering from complications from Covid. Doug Klingman and Jacob Haskins are each recovering from surgeries. Continue to remember Jim Branstetter, Susan Duffy, Mike Hale, the Caselman family, and our missionaries.

Children’s home list: Olive oil, crackers, green beans, Spam, and trash bags. Food pantry needs: Cereal, mac & cheese, peanut butter, jelly, and canned fruit.

God’s Spirit lives in His people in order to work through them. Love you, stay safe.

*Karen*

**Bella Vista Church of Christ**

Highway 71 and County Road 40  
989 NW McNelly Road  
Bentonville, AR 72712

**Return Service Requested**

**ELDERS**

Tracy Bowman.....479-899-3089  
Don Butcher.....636-548-0458  
Dallas Dobbs.....479-640-49439  
Perry Johnson.....913-707-8379  
Ray Reiss.....903-908-0203

**DEACONS**

Mark Bagwell John Bowman Chris Johnson Josh Porter Joe Hott Mike Spencer  
Randall Hunt Terry Roberts Aaron Sloan Tyler White Mike Martin Jerry Snyder

**MINISTERS**

Jeff Grisham.....479-531-9135  
Parker Willis.....615-587-3208  
Cory Spruiell.....501-941-4525  
Javier & Helmer Rosero.....Bogota, Colombia

|                              |          |
|------------------------------|----------|
| <b>LORD'S DAY</b>            | 8:15 AM  |
| Early Worship                | 9:30 AM  |
| Bible Class (Livestreamed)   | 10:30 AM |
| Worship (Livestreamed)       |          |
| <b>WEDNESDAY</b>             | 9:45 AM  |
| Ladies' Class                | 7:00 PM  |
| Bible Classes (Livestreamed) |          |

**Phone: 479/273-2434**

[www.bellavistachurchofchrist.com](http://www.bellavistachurchofchrist.com)

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**Bella Vista**

**Breathtaking Beauty**

There are things that we encounter that are of such magnitude that they take our breath away. These things, once we see them, hold our attention to the point that it is almost impossible to look away. Some images may have come to mind as we read the preceding sentences. Maybe it was the memory of a particular view from a trail we have hiked. Maybe it is remembering time spent at the edge of the ocean listening to and watching the waves crash against the shore. Perhaps the first time we saw our significant other, or one of our children or grandchildren. Breathtaking. When we think of these things that take our breath, it is most often things that are positive in some way, but that may not always be the case.

Imagine being a traveler in first-century Palestine. You and your family, and possibly your extended family are making your way to the city for a very important religious festival. You walk along and are excited to arrive. You talk about the things that you will most likely encounter during this time. You think of all the people you hope to see, people you maybe haven't seen since the last one of these gatherings. As you near the city, you encounter a large crowd of people that are just outside the city gate. It seems odd, but there must be something big happening. As you get closer, you hear shouts, maybe even some mocking laughter, along with screams of pain. Then you see it. Roman crosses are standing there, all occupied by those who have been condemned to die. The sight takes your breath away.

Crucifixion was one of, if not the worst way to die. It was designed to prolong death while inflicting the maximum amount of pain. Death by crucifixion could take as short as a matter of hours or as long as a few days. It was a sign of what happens if you dared to rebel against the Roman Empire. It was a shameful death, as the victim of it was stretched out, exposed, attached to that instrument of death

**MEMBER**



by nails driven through the hands and feet. As a person living under the rule of the Roman Empire, just the sight of a cross would bring images of immense suffering to mind. It was something that was not spoken of in polite society. It is something so grotesque that it takes our breath away just to think about it.

Yet, the cross, this instrument of death is attractive to us. It has become an object with which we decorate our church buildings, is present in various ways in our homes, and serves as jewelry that we proudly wear. How could this shift take place? Could it be that because of Jesus we see something incredible in the cross?

In writing to the church in Corinth, Paul makes the following statement. *“For Jews demand signs and Greeks seek wisdom, but we preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and folly to Gentiles, but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.”* (1 Corinthians 1:22-24)

In the cross we see more, far more, than just an instrument of death. We see the desire that God has to be with us. Our sin has separated us from God and on our own, there is nothing we can do to close that gap. We were without any resource to remedy the problem. *“But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved—and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.”* (Ephesians 2:4-7)

We see how far God will go in order to be with us. At the cross we see God pull out all the stops. He is willing to give and give in order to be with us. Paul words it this way: *“What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things?”* (Romans 8:31-32)

In the cross we see the love of God on full display. Jesus willingly went to the cross. He willingly subjected himself to the pain, the humiliation, the mockery all for our benefit. He didn't deserve it. The innocent suffers for the guilty. And what motivated him to do this was the great love he has for us. It's no wonder that the cross is something that continues to take our breath away.

-JEFF GRISHAM

## He Endured the Cross

*...Fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. - Hebrews 12:2, LSB*

I find it difficult to focus for very long upon the excruciating experience of Jesus on the Cross. Mel Gibson's *The Passion of the Christ* was eye-opening, but also heart-wrenching. If we have any love at all for Jesus, we are pained to consider the brutal experience of the events leading up to and including his crucifixion on that dark day. I do think it is a dangerous thing, however, to avoid the image of the cross altogether. We should not find ourselves in such empathy that we shift immediately to the resurrection.

We should stay with the cross for a time. As we consider the seven sayings of Jesus on the cross we are exposed to the thoughts of the dying Savior. The immense pain, both physically and spiritually, of Jesus on the cross did not remove him from his mission nor his heart for humanity. The suffering of the Messiah is a reminder of the great price that was paid so that we could be freed from the eternal consequences of our sin.

*Who Himself bore our sins in His body on the tree, so that having died to sin, we might live to righteousness; by His wounds you were healed. - 1 Peter 2:24, LSB*

The beautiful old hymn *Rock of Ages* was written by Augustus Toplady. He died in 1779 at the age of 38 of consumption. As he neared the end of his earthly life, he said, "My prayers are now all converted into praise." This can only be true because of the cross.

*Nothing in my hand I bring, Simply to Thy cross I cling,  
Naked, come to Thee for dress: Helpless, look to Thee for grace:*

*Foul, I to the fountain fly; Wash me, Savior, or I die.*

In a more contemporary hymn, we sing, "Thank you for the cross, Lord." Yes, this instrument of death was experienced by Jesus so that we could find release from death. Thank you, Jesus, for enduring the cross.

-JOHN DOBBS  
Forsythe Church of Christ  
Monroe, Louisiana



### SUNDAY SERVANTS: 4/9/23

#### First Service

Welcome, Prayer & Scripture ..... Billy Helms Song Leader ..... Tyler White  
Greeters.... Jack Johnson, David Saunders, Gary McCool Communion Scripture & Prayer..... Mark Tucker  
Closing Prayer..... Josh Metheny  
Nursery Workers ..... Patsy McCool, Karen Oliveira

#### Second Service

Welcome, Prayer & Scripture..... Danny Cannon Song Leader ..... Lee McCain  
Greeters ..... Jack Johnson, Eric Gibson, Zach Ballard Communion Scripture & Prayer..... Kirk Franklin  
Closing Prayer..... Perry Johnson  
Nursery Workers..... Vicki Lunsford, Addie Bockholt Van Driver ..... Mark/Wilma Bagwell

#### April Worship Coordinators

Worship Coordinator ..... Mike Lunsford Streaming Coordinator ..... Aaron Bagwell  
Audio Coordinator ..... Homer Makinson Video Coordinator ..... Marquis Elliott