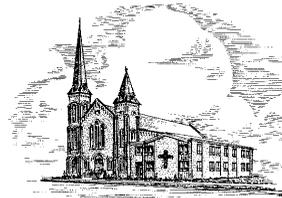


Easter Word Search



- | | | | |
|-----------------|-------|--------------|--|
| Angel | Holy | Messiah | Savior |
| Cross | Hope | Resurrection | Third Day |
| Crown of Thorns | Jesus | Risen |  |
| Easter | King | Sacrifice | |
| Empty Tomb | Love | Salvation | |
| Good Friday | Mary | Sunday | |

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Steeple Breezes

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VOLUME 220 APRIL 2018 NO. 4

Greetings,

In Isaiah 11:6, there is a promise that there shall be peace. The leopard shall lie down with the baby goat, the calf with the lion. This promise was given to Judah at a time when everything around them seemed to be falling apart. The idea of peace was a pipe dream, something to be longed for, but probably unrealistic.

In some ways, we, in this country, are in a similar situation. There is theft, murder, adultery all around. It seems that these things are almost glorified in movies, television, and video games. In the news, we hear of the possibility of war. A trade war is bad enough, but there is also talk of physical war. When will peace come? When will we find the peace that the nation, the world longs for?

At the beginning of this communication, I only referred to a portion of verse 6 in the 11th chapter of Isaiah. The end of the verse is “and a little child shall lead them” (NRSV). On Saturday, March 24, 2018, we saw one possible fulfillment of that promise. Hundreds of thousands of people marched, demanding that legislators take action to limit the availability of weapons. They were not demanding the removal of all guns, just the regulation of who could buy those guns and the removal of the most dangerous types of weapons, weapons developed only for the purpose of killing people. And ... it was young people who were leading.

The question is whether or not legislators will listen to their voices. My guess is – my fear is – they will not listen. There are a variety of excuses that will be used to stuff cotton in their ears. They will first try and discredit the requests, claiming that the young people are mere puppets of someone else. They will refuse to listen, claiming

-continued on page 2

that the demands are unrealistic, impossible dreams.

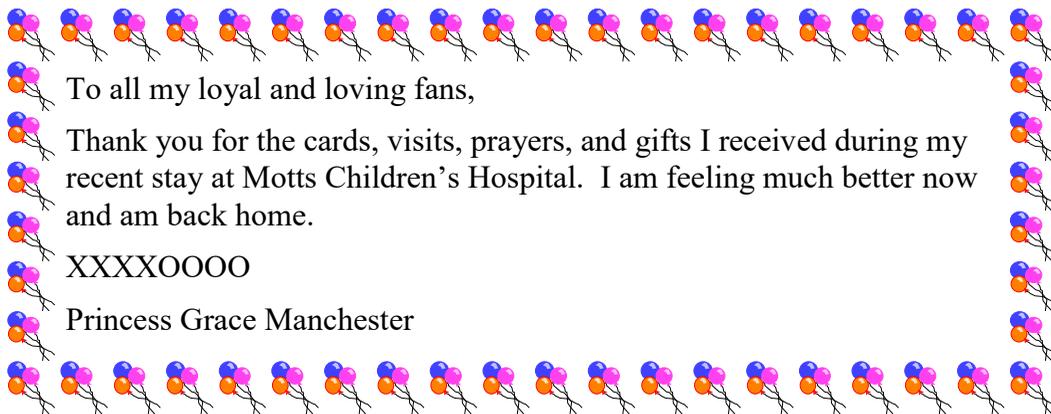
The idea that the youth are not really saying these things, that they are being manipulated, ignores that it is our youth who are being slaughtered by those guns. If slaughter is too strong a word, what else would you call the killing of 17 people in six minutes. If the youth are being manipulated, then our country is doomed because the next generation is too dumb to see that they are being manipulated. I don't think they are that foolish. They are speaking out of a real concern for their own safety and the safety of everyone in this country.

The second reason for legislators to stop their ears so they don't hear the pleading of youth is that they claim the task is impossible. That is always something that is claimed by those who want to keep things the same as they are. That is because change is complicated, messy. It requires perseverance, patience with false starts, and a determination to see things through to the end.

We, who are followers of Jesus the Christ, should be the first to say the impossible is actually possible. We have just celebrated Easter. What is more impossible than a murdered man raising from the grave?

I urge you to support the young people in their protests. They will make mistakes, all of us do. But they are hope. I urge you to let legislators on both the state and national level know that we are behind the young people. This is not about political parties, this is about the survival of the nation. If legislators are not willing to take action, then it is time to replace them.

Peace,
Pastor Ross



To all my loyal and loving fans,
Thank you for the cards, visits, prayers, and gifts I received during my recent stay at Motts Children's Hospital. I am feeling much better now and am back home.
XXXXOOOO
Princess Grace Manchester

Ultimately, the service and music were what was most important. Each service featured great music by the Mike Lee band and was followed by youth speaker Bryan Jones. Overall, the teenagers learned many biblical messages and left Springhill Camp on Sunday with a renewed faith.

LIVING THE SPIRIT OF EASTER

The Easter season—beginning on Easter Sunday and continuing for 50 days—is an opportunity for us to cultivate a spirit that defines who we are as Christians. So what does living the spirit of the Easter season mean in practical terms? Here are three concrete suggestions: live with joy, live without fear, and live with new eyes.

Joy is a deep-down gladness that cannot be taken away, even in the midst of sorrow. The Passion and Resurrection of Jesus teach us that suffering is transformed through faith in the Risen Christ. With this faith, we are able to hold on to an enduring sense of joy, even in the midst of the sadness we experience from the loss of a loved one, a failure to achieve an important goal, or a setback during recovery from an illness.

The Resurrection teaches us that God can overcome anything, even death. When the Risen Christ appears to the women at the tomb and later to His disciples, His first words are “Do not be afraid!” (Mt 28:5,10) These words speak to our hearts, helping us cope with the fear from the loss of a job, a serious illness, or a crumbling relationship. Our faith allows us to trust that God can overcome our most serious problems.

Easter means to live with a sense of newness. Just as the return of spring lifts our spirits and makes us feel like the whole world is new, the Resurrection of Jesus makes “all things new.” (Rev. 21:5) The Easter spirit is a spirit of renewal that enables us to show up at work with a positive attitude, to renew relationships that have been taken for granted, and to express appreciation and affection to those closest to us. It means to see the world through new eyes—God's eyes.

We can use these 50 days to cultivate an Easter spirit that enables us to be truly Christian: embracing joy, living without fear, and seeing the world again—as if for the first time.

YOUTH GROUP NEWS

Over the past month, the First Baptist Church youth were busy with three major events. In February, they planned and performed a youth church service, and then organized a scavenger hunt fundraiser. In early March, they attended a Winter Weekend Camp at Springhill.

The **Scavenger Hunt** was a huge success! With 13 youth members and four adults (Drivers: Scott Dodge, Melissa and Scott Hiller, and Troy White), the group was divided into three teams. Each team was permitted two hours to collect as many nonperishable food and personal care products as possible. After time had expired, they returned to the church to tally up their points. Youth leader, Ron Woodruff had pizza dinner waiting for them upon their return, and they finished off the night by rehearsing for the youth service.

Overall, the youth collected over 400 items! After separating everything, ten bags of personal care products were donated to the church's Personal Care Ministry, and 12 bags of nonperishable food were donated to the Jackson Interfaith Shelter. In addition, a few items were given to support a Jackson High food drive.

Ten teenagers delivered the **Youth Service** with the assistance of a young and talented Olivia Jones. All who attended enjoyed the message. With the direction of their amazing leader, Dick Dodge, the group planned and organized a great message about the Lord's Prayer. With Dick's leadership and message to read "loud and slow," the teenagers were prepared to deliver their message. Even though they were limited on time to prepare, Dick knew their experience and maturity would shine, and it did.

During the **Winter Weekend** trip (March 9-11), 12 teenagers and five adults had an amazing time at Springhill Camp in Evart, Michigan. Adult chaperones, Logan Dodge, Troy White, Ron Woodruff, Dorean Johnson, and Vicki Topa, volunteered to help transport and supervise the youth group during the entire weekend. The youth enjoyed bonding time while enjoying fun, games, and worship. During their experiences, the group enjoyed horseback riding, sledding, paintball, basketball, zip-lines, swimming, broomball, and many other games. To top it off, First Baptist youth won this year's dodgeball tournament (Rumor: Ron is still trying to recover). Nonetheless, they are champions!

Words cannot express how we feel for the prayers, visits, and monies that were bestowed on us by our loving church family. When families go through events in life, we don't always think about those who care about us at the time because we are usually dealing with the crisis at hand. But then, the phone calls and visits start, and we find out that not only is our church praying for us, but churches in North Carolina, Florida, Illinois and whomever reads postings on Facebook are, too. One can only say WOW, what an awesome God we serve! All of you are a true blessing to us.

With Love,

Nadine & Brian Manchester

EXECUTIVE BOARD HIGHLIGHTS

March 18, 2018

- Worship Committee recommendations:
 1. Installation of three video screens in sanctuary.
 2. Installation of multi-media system in Fellowship Hall.
 3. Develop worship service team.
 4. Review job description and salary of music director/organist.
 5. Employ additional personnel with contemporary music interests and technology knowledge.
 6. Worship Committee members would assist in creating job description, salary recommendation, and search for additional music personnel.
- Job description of Pastor recommended.
- Youth scavenger hunt netted 10 bags of items for the personal care ministry and 12 bags of items for the Interfaith Shelter.
- The Spiritual Life team and the congregation need to be more cognizant of needs for fellowship funds.
- Next meeting: April 15.

