

The quarterly newsletter for:

VALLEY Women

FOLLOWING CHRIST TOGETHER

Our IDENTITY and our HOPE...

Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.

1 JOHN 4:11

BeLoved

Issue 11, SPRING 2023

UPCOMING EVENTS!

Table for FOUR
March 27th - April 1st
Various Times & Locations

Summer Book Study
Info coming soon!

Annual Kickoff
Monday, August 28th

Fall Retreat
September 22-24

Community and the Cross

By: Melissa Osterloo

"Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. But he was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his wounds we are healed." Isaiah 53:4-5

When you look at the cross, what do you see?

In the garden of Gethsemane, on the night he was betrayed, Jesus prayed for the cup of God's wrath to pass from him. Yet, in those same moments he was beginning to experience the weight of his pending judgement, Jesus, in mercy and compassion, deemed us *beloved*, even to death. In willing surrender, both to the will of God and his captors, the *King Above All Kings* left the garden as a prisoner, abandoned and utterly alone.

Before the sun rose, he was condemned to death by a middle-of-the-night council and denied three times by Peter, one of his closest disciples. Pilate, indifferent to justice, washed his hands. Jesus' earthly fate was sealed - crucifixion, a death so shameful and violent it was reserved for the most vile of offenders.

He was beaten beyond recognition, spit upon, stripped, and mocked. Thorns were twisted and thrust upon his brow, a crown only suitable for a suffering Savior.

On Golgotha's hill, Jesus bore his cross and with it, the penalty for our sin. In perfect obedience, he was forsaken by the Father, on our behalf.

The cross, through Jesus' act of substitutionary atonement, established a new kind of community; one that transforms as it loves and leads as it follows. Christ died for this community - the church, his bride. His *total condemnation* made a way for her to receive *total grace*. His *ultimate separation* from the Father made a way for her to experience *everlasting presence* with the Father. His wounds healed her. His death gave her life.

When we look at the cross, we see our Savior, Jesus Christ. And he, looking at us, sees a community worth dying for.

ANNOUNCEMENTS!

 **Nicole Dowdy**
Due April 2023

 **Amber Lentz**
Due May 2023

 **Abby Christopher**
Due June 2023

 **Marie Guyse**
Due August 2023

Elsie Rose Bisset

Born: 12/10/22
6lbs. 20z. 18.5"

long
Parents:
Emily &
Kerry



Parker Thomas Henderson

Born: 2/15/23
6lbs. 9oz.

20.75" long
Parents:
Ashley &
Nathan



HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO YOU!

MARCH

1st - Brooke Garipey
2nd - Rosemarie Bark
4th - Kathryn Holt
4th - Jessica White
7th - Michelle Richardson
13th - Sharon Wilson
23rd - Susan Thuss
29th - Kala Whitehall
30th - Kathy Guest



APRIL

2nd - Emma Ligon
3rd - Lee Munsey
5th - Cheryl Hawkins
7th - Rosa Lee Tabor
8th - Tanya Hardin
11th - Lauren Plott
12th - Nicole Kornegay
14th - Emily Adcock
15th - Lori Wright
22nd - Emily Bisset
27th - Susan Pope
28th - Natasha Hamill
28th - Sharon Smith
30th - Kerri Brown

MAY

1st - Michele Denton
1st - Anna Lee
4th - Katie Caldwell
5th - April Wade
8th - Laura Patterson
17th - Diane Lyles
19th - Dana Walker



Welcome to another issue of our *BeLoved* newsletter, written for Valley Women by Valley Women!

Kathy's CORNER

In this issue, we discuss the beautiful gift of community. We were not created to be alone! Yet, we often experience times of loneliness and isolation as we navigate life in our "now but not yet" world.

In those moments, we can place our trust in Christ, the One who endured the cross so that we may live in eternal community with Him. What a joy that will be!




Kathy Guest
Director of Women's Ministry

Until then, we wait with expectant hope, clinging to the cross of grace as we Follow Christ Together.

Gospel community is transformational. It is my desire for all Valley Women to experience the grace, support, and love offered to us by our Savior through His Word, His Spirit, and His People, the church!

We love to stay connected! Find us on social media or visit our website!

 Valley Presbyterian Women (Private Group)

 @valleypreswomen

<https://www.valleymadison.com/ministries/womens-ministry>



KAYLA JOHNSON

In September of 2020, we were living in Opelika, AL when the Lord blessed us with a new home in Auburn, fulfilling our desire to have our children in the same school district as Russel's job.

Thirteen months after moving to Auburn, the Lord would open up the opportunity for Russel to apply for a job with Madison City Schools, something he had desired for several years. I, however, was more hesitant. I didn't want to move again. I didn't want to leave the community we lived in or the friends I had gained in the last 12 years. I knew moving meant being significantly closer to my parents and grandparents, something I desired, but I still wasn't completely sure this was best for me.

I fought the Lord and cried in private, grieving the loss of my community and comfortable life. Our gracious Lord spoke quietly and gently to me saying, "Trust me."

In the process of telling others about our move, several people suggested we try Valley. The first time we walked through the door it was unlike any other church experience. We felt so welcomed and cared about. People came up to us saying they were glad we were there. After just a few Sundays, the family sitting behind us invited us for a play date. In the next 4 weeks I would have coffee with Tammy and Jen, attend Bunco, and really push myself by attending Table for Four. As I stretched my introverted self to "make friends," the Lord kept his promise to build a community for us. We had families reaching out to us and inviting us over. I no longer felt alone in this new town. I felt connected.

In a matter of weeks at Valley, the Lord showed me the true meaning of "church." This being the people who make up the church, not the organization itself. I had never been in a church that lived out its motto in such a passionate way. "Following Christ together" was not just a slogan on their webpage but a way of life for this body of believers.

Looking back, I felt alone for a short time but I had plenty to keep me busy and friends to keep me company from afar. Christ walked the road to Calvary alone, abandoned by his friends and eventually abandoned even by his Father. It is because of that sacrifice, I will never truly be alone. He called me to a deeper relationship with himself in those months of moving and adjusting to a new town. He called me to trust him and to put him before my friends. To rely on him and his promises, not the community I was grieving. To let him be the only friend I truly need. I'll never forget driving around this new town, crying to the Lord while feeling alone, and begging him to heal my broken heart. It is only because of his loss of both his heavenly community and earthly community that I could cry to him from my car and know that he could hear me and understand the pain I felt. I'm so thankful that he loved us enough to endure true loneliness and separation from God the Father so that we never have to be alone.

Find Kayla's full testimony posted in our FB group!

DWELL MEMORY VERSES

MARCH

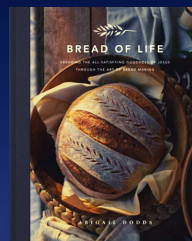
"Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says."
James 1:22

APRIL

"He is not here; he has risen, just as he said."
Matt. 28:6a

MAY

"Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms."
1 Peter 4:10



NOT YOUR AVERAGE ZUCCHINI BREAD
By: Abigail Dodds

- 3 eggs
- 1 cup (200 grams) sugar
- + 1 cup (200 grams) sugar
- 1 cup (240 grams) vegetable oil
- 1 teaspoon (5 grams) vanilla
- 1 teaspoon (4 grams) salt
- 2-3 cups (approx 300-350 grams) grated zucchini
- 1½ teaspoons (7 grams) baking soda
- ¼ teaspoon (1 or 2 grams) baking powder
- 1½ teaspoons (3 grams) cinnamon
- 3 cups (408 grams) flour
- 1 whole orange (peel and all) makes two loaves

Preheat the oven to 325 degrees. Cut the unpeeled orange into chunks. Process in a food processor with 1 cup of sugar until smooth.

Combine the orange mix with the rest of the ingredients and mix with a whisk or electric mixer. Fill greased loaf pans two-thirds full.

Bake for 55 minutes. Test to see if a toothpick comes out clean. Cool on racks, then remove from the pans. Enjoy!



Side By Side Spotlight: Bread of Life



Since last Fall, Kathy Guest's Side By Side group has been meeting once a month to go through Abigail Dodds' book, *Bread of Life: Savoring the All-Satisfying Goodness of Jesus Through the Art of Bread Making*.

Each month, they tackle a new bread making challenge, ranging in difficulty from easy to expert, all while feasting on the truth of scripture.



This unique community lives out the gospel by offering grace for failures in bread baking and in life, as well as rejoicing in each other's successes.

They offer practical help and guidance when questions arise, and challenge one another to try something new.

In short, they "knead" each other!

SWEET SMILES, DELICIOUS BREAD!



"We cheer on each other every time we bake. I love to celebrate your successful recipes and I feel so embraced on every attempt and step of the recipe when I bake...first time making bread here, so the "kneading" one another really fits!"
-Carla Farias

