

WMU News & Views

By Gail Josey, WMU Director

Photo at WMU Ladies High Tea: Gail Josey, Elizabeth Liupaeter, Wanda Dobbins, Angela Shinault, Vicki Caldwell, Janice Beasley, Becky Surratt, Kelsey Mathis, Helen Crane, and Michele Juno.



Conrad Hilton said "Enthusiasm is a vital element toward the individual success of every man or woman". Well, there was plenty of enthusiasm and cooperation among the WMU ladies and the 100 participants of the Ladies High Tea on April 20. The food was delicious, especially the specially prepared tea prepared by Wanda Dobbins. The program by Jackie Pegram was enjoyed by all. After the program all the ladies were invited to take their creamer and fill it with flowers to take home. Each one also took home a delicious cookie in the shape of a tea cup. Many thanks to Kelsey Mathis for organizing the entire event and the WMU ladies for preparing the food, serving, and cleaning up.

The WMU Council of Surry Baptist Association had their Annual Dinner Meeting at Calvary Baptist Church. Each church was invited to decorate a table and Becky Surratt prepared a very attractive table for us. The guest speaker was, Lee Ashburn, the Director of the Legacy Center. Our WMU took baby items to donate to the center.

**"To all mothers whether you are past, present, or soon to be moms
May your day be filled with love, joy, and laughter."**

Happy Mother's Day!
Gail



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The Mystery of Suffering

by Dr. Darrell Tate, Senior Pastor



A few years ago George Barna conducted a national survey where people were asked to respond to the following question. "If you could ask God one thing, what would it be?" In fact, before you continue reading the remainder of this article, stop right now and ask yourself that same question. "If you could ask God one thing, what would it be?" Perhaps, like me you may ask, "Why did the Tarheel's fall in defeat to a buzzer-beater in the National Championship?" Perhaps your question would be much more serious. Why did my marriage fall apart? Why did my child rebel? Why did I lose my job? Why did my spouse die just as we were ready to retire?

All of those questions are certainly valid and are part of the bigger question that was ranked as number one. The number one response to Barna's question was: "Why is there suffering in the world?" That's a good question. In Numbers 11:11, Moses asked God, "Why have you brought this trouble upon me?" Something about the human constitution demands answers. In fact, when Jesus hung dying on the cross of Calvary, He asked His Father, "Why have you forsaken me?"

Most people who have given up believing in God do so, not because of some philosophical argument, but because their hearts were broken by something that happened to them or to someone they loved. One man writes, "If God is God, He is not good. If God is good, He is not God. Take the even, take the odd." That's the whole case against God in a nutshell. If God is all-powerful, and could have stopped this suffering but didn't, then He isn't good. If He is good and wants to stop this suffering, it must mean that He lacks the power to do so. Either way (people say), I don't want to believe in a God like that. So they choose not to believe.

Many of the world's religions address human suffering. According to the first two Noble Truths of Buddhism, all of life is suffering and suffering is caused by attachments to worldly things. This attachment, which can take the form of greed, hatred, and ignorance in this life and past lives, can, unless mitigated, return as more suffering (karma). Suffering is not necessarily punishment from a divine being, but rather something that must be transcended by not clinging to material objects or relationships.

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Hinduism views suffering as punishment for misdeeds committed in this lifetime or past lives. Even a seemingly innocent person who has not eradicated bad karma from past lives through charitable deeds is susceptible to such payback. Hindus believe victims will be reincarnated and may be happier in their next life.

One of the world's largest religions, Islam, meaning "submission" seeks to answer the why question. Many Muslims understand suffering as a way of submitting to the will of Allah. Some suffering is the work of Satan, and is allowed by Allah as a test of humility and faith. Many Muslims believe suffering and adversity strengthen one's faith, as pain often leads to repentance and prayer and good deeds.

In Judaism, it is often believed that suffering is caused by a weakness in one's devotion to God. Generally, it is believed that God gave humans free will to feel pleasure and pain, and His purpose in allowing deep suffering of the innocent must be good even if mysterious.

Though suffering isn't good, God can use it to accomplish good. For instance, God uses suffering to draw people toward Christ. C.S. Lewis says: "God whispers to us in our pleasures, speaks in our conscience, but shouts in our pains; it is His megaphone to rouse a deaf world." Secondly, God uses suffering to sharpen our character and help us become more like Christ. Helen Keller said, "Character cannot be developed in ease and quiet. Only through experience of trial and suffering can the soul be strengthened, ambition inspired, and success achieved."

God's ultimate answer to suffering isn't an explanation; it's the incarnation. Suffering is a personal problem; it demands a personal response. God is not distant and aloof. He entered into our world and into our pain. As one philosopher said, "Jesus is there, sitting beside us in the lowest places of our lives."

- ◆ Are you broken? He was broken, like bread, for us.
- ◆ Are you despised? He was despised and rejected of men.
- ◆ Do you cry out that you can't take any more? He was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief.
- ◆ Did someone betray you? He was sold out.
- ◆ Are your most tender relationships broken? He loved and was rejected.
- ◆ Did people turn from you? They hid their faces from Him as if He were a leper.

Suffering is real and suffering is painful. However, the scripture affirms that God is a Father to the orphaned and a Husband to the widow; He is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit. God loves you and so do I.

Pastor Darrell

Graduate Recognition Sunday May 19, 2024

Sunday, May 19th we will be recognizing all of our high school and college graduates during the 11:00 worship service. Please email the following information regarding you or your child's graduation no later than Sunday, May 12th, to our church office at highlandparkfamily@gmail.com :

- Graduate's first, middle and last names.
- Names of parents, siblings and grandparents who will also be attending.
- Name of the school/college the student is graduating from.
- Name of the college/university the student will be attending.
- Field of study or degree the student will pursue.
- Type of college/university degree received (if applicable).

NOTE TO GRADUATES: Please bring your cap and gown to wear during the ceremony and meet in the foyer of the sanctuary at 10:45 am to prepare to march in. Pastor Zach will be there to assist you.

Congratulations Grads!



- 2 **Gracie Beasley**
Sonia Bonds
Sam Steinbruegge
- 3 **Adleigh Gilley**
Laura Spurlin
Estelle Terry
- 4 **Kathy Allen**
Wray Elliott
Maddison Holder
- 5 **Lisa Easter**
Harrison Parks
- 7 **Adrian Hunsucker**
Kathy Simpson (Doug)
- 8 **Sandra Johnson**
Kayla Nixon
Noah Weddle
- 9 **Mike Beasley**
- 11 **Drew Belton**
Jameson Lawson
Sarah Simihtsi
- 12 **Brittany Hawks**
Glenda Weddle
- 13 **George Gullion**
- 14 **Dorothy Hales**
Margaret Hauser
- 15 **Madison Atkins**
Steve Fussell
Allie Sutphin
Frances Utt
- 17 **Corbin Mills**
Craig Smith
Kay Surratt
- 18 **Cayden Hill**
Christeen Knight
Graham Pruitt
Mallory Hudson (Love)
Zoey Roberson
Caleb Spurlin
Lillian Surratt
- 20 **Roger Frechette**
Bonnie Fulk
Colton Nixon
Macy Smith Swartz
- 22 **Bart Pharr**
- 23 **Rev. D. M. Dalton**
Madison Easter (Wall)
Clara Mull
- 24 **Cambell Hiatt**
- 26 **Jennifer Hawks**
Corey Spurlin
- 27 **Barbara Floyd**
Judy Lambe
Cody Spurlin
Colin Tate
Sue Wilson
- 28 **Tammy Blizzard**
Austin Wise
- 29 **Johnny Dalton**
John Juno
Alicia Spurlin
- 31 **Kayson Toney**

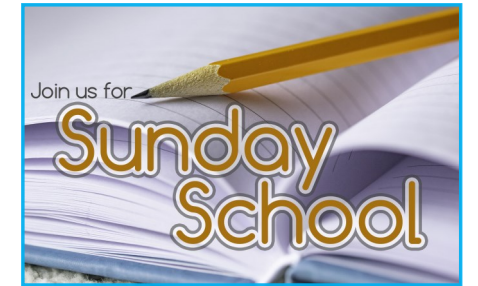
Sunday School News

By Dean Combs, Sunday School Director

Hello Highland Park Family,

The Lord continues to bless our church and our Sunday School classes with great attendance.

Date	This Year	Last Year
4/7/24	335	283
4/14/24	354	249
4/21/24	326	270
4/28/24	365	280
Total	1380	1082



For the month of April, we had a 27.5% increase. Remember, our **Sunday School Promotion Day is Sunday, June 9th!** Please continue to invite people to church and Sunday School to hear God's word and grow in Christ.

Your Brother in Christ,
Dean



VBS IS COMING UP JUNE 2-6 - Get ready to board an epic cruise from Genesis to Revelation during our Vacation Bible School! Our theme this year is *The Great Jungle Journey!* Classes for 0-8th grade and two options for adults. Register online today!

