

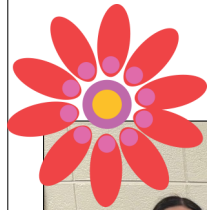
# WMU News & Views

By Gail Josey, WMU Director

WMU was honored to have eight teens join us at our meeting in March and help us complete the gift baskets for the Security Team.

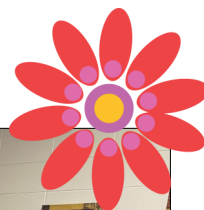
Our group wanted to say thanks and show appreciation to our Security Team for not only watching out for us but also welcoming church members with a smile and opening the door. They are faithful in all kinds of weather and will transport those who would like a golf cart ride to and from their car.

A sincere thanks also goes to our HPBC family for the outstanding response to the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for North American missions. The goal was \$25,000 and we collected over \$32,000. We are excited to have a part in sharing God's redemption story.



Celebrating life in Christ, Gail

Teens: Lydia Smith, Elizabeth Melton, Gracie Beasley, Rylee Triplett, Lexi Hutchins, Clara Richland, Eve Woods, Lexi Sutherland



WMU members: Janice Beasley, Chris O'Neal, Karen Wise, and Frances Nixon



HIGHLAND PARK BAPTIST CHURCH

# HERALD

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## Abiding in Christ - John 15:1-7

by Dr. Darrell Tate, Senior Pastor

The Lord Jesus is given many different titles throughout the scripture. For example, Jesus is called The Light of the World, The Door, The Bread of Life and The Chief Shepherd. However, in John 15, Jesus is exclusively referred to as The True Vine. In the Old Testament, God's vine was the nation of Israel. God used Israel to communicate His message and accomplish His purpose in the world. God, as the Vinedresser, trimmed, pruned, cultivated and watched over the vine. However, in spite of all of His work, there were times Israel degenerated and bore no fruit. God did enable Israel to bear miserably. Therefore, wall of protection and enemies. The country foreign nations and forfeited its privilege blessing. No longer through a covenantal Fruit and blessing tion with Jesus Christ.

I believe Jesus, ure of a vine for a of all the lowliness of a humility. Secondly, it union between the Thirdly, it is symbolic branches belong entirely to the vine. If the branches are to live and bear fruit they must depend entirely on the vine for nourishment, support and strength. Every believer (branch) is connected to Christ (The Vine) and draws spiritual nourishment. Abiding in Christ (The Vine) produces spiritual fruit resulting in the abundant life.



everything possible to fruit, yet Israel failed God took away Israel's left it vulnerable to its was trampled down by laid waste. Israel had as the vine of God's does blessing come relationship with Israel. come through a connec- Jesus is the True Vine. in John 15, chose the fig- number of reasons. First vine demonstrates His pictures a close and vital vine and the branches. of belonging because

If the branches are to live and bear fruit they must depend entirely on the vine for nourishment, support and strength. Every believer (branch) is connected to Christ (The Vine) and draws spiritual nourishment. Abiding in Christ (The Vine) produces spiritual fruit resulting in the abundant life.

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After a vine is planted, the vinedresser prunes the fruitless branches that take away sap from the fruit bearing branches. The vinedresser also continually trims shoots from the fruit-bearing branches so that all the sap is concentrated on fruit bearing. The branches represent believers, because only believers can produce genuine fruit. It is interesting that the pruning process doesn't occur just once; it is a continual process that results in a greater production of fruit. Jesus said His followers were like mature branches that bore fruit, but needed pruning. There is no such thing as a fruitless Christian! Genuine faith is connection with the True Vine and connection with the True Vine results in fruit bearing!

Abiding in Christ is the continual maturing process of living in a daily love relationship with Jesus Christ. The great missionary and founder of China Inland Mission, Hudson Taylor, knew something about abiding in Christ. Having spent fifty-one years as a missionary to China, experiencing the loss of his wife and three children, Taylor once said, "The branch of the vine does not worry, and toil, and rush here to seek for sunshine, and there to find rain. No; it rests in union and communion with the vine; and at the right time, and in the right way, is the right fruit found on it. Let us so abide in the Lord Jesus." The result of abiding in Christ is that the believer moves from bearing fruit in verse 2, to bearing more fruit in verse 2, to bearing much fruit in verse 5. It is the process of spiritual maturation and discipleship that accompanies abiding in Christ. If the branch does not have the life of the vine flowing through it, no fruit will be borne. There are people who, like Judas, appear by human perception to be united with Christ, but have never really been saved. They may attend church, know all the right answers, and go through religious motions; but God will remove them and they will be burned. Others, like the eleven, are genuinely connected to the vine and able to bear fruit. Abiding in Christ is the heartbeat of true Christianity!

**Are you in the Vine? - Have you been saved?**

**Are you abiding in the Vine? – Are you allowing the life of Christ to dwell in your heart?**

**Are you bearing fruit? - Is the work of Christ evident in your daily life?**

**Abiding in Christ is key to experiencing the abundant life.**

God Bless,  
Pastor Darrell

## Flowers in the Compost

By Rev. Jim Richland, Associate Pastor

*Although he did not remove the high places, Asa's heart was fully committed to the Lord all his life. He brought into the Temple of the Lord the silver and gold and the articles that he and his father had dedicated.*

### 1 Kings 15:14-15

Spring is upon us and I love it! The weather feels great and I'm able to get back into my garden. One of the things I've tried to be better at recently is maintaining and using a compost pile for my garden. Essentially, this entails throwing all our chicken waste, kitchen scraps, and any other biodegradable stuff into a big pile in our backyard. It's absolutely wonderful for our garden, but is a big smelly mess! However, as gross as this collection is, I often find beautiful flowers and other things growing in it. This reminds me that even though there are plenty of smelly areas our lives, God can still grow some wonderful things out it!

Take king Asa for example. Most of the kings in the northern kingdom of Israel were completely ungodly. However, in the midst of these godless kings, Asa stands out as one who strived to follow the Lord. However, even though Asa stands out as a bright spot among the kings of Israel and is said to have done "what is right in the eyes of the Lord," he also failed to completely do away with the idolatry that was such an abomination.

This mixture of both good and bad can sometimes shock or confuse us, but it is actually the common feature of how God works through sinful people in this sinful world. Through the compost and waste, God often brings out things that are beautiful and that give Him glory. This was true of Asa and is certainly true of you and me. So let me offer two points of application on this insight: First, allow this truth to keep you humble because of the "mess" in your life as well as confident that God can work through you, despite your imperfections. Secondly, remember that even though there are people in your life whose lives, attitudes, choices, and so on stink; God can and often does use even those people to do something good in the world. So as we enter Spring, let us pause to marvel at the flowers in the compost.

In Christ,  
Pastor Jim

## April Birthdays

- 1 **Jared Hiatt**  
**Eric Riggs**  
**Morgan Roberson**
- 2 **Klara Cox**
- 3 **Jacob Bowers**  
**Courtney Gilley**  
**Aubrey Roberson**  
**Alisha Shupe**
- 5 **Larry Brannock**  
**Liza Gullion**  
**William Hall**  
**Sonnie Hardy**  
**Jonathan Love**
- 6 **Jaden Brinkley**
- 7 **Patricia Combs**
- 8 **Robert Allen**  
**Kelly McCraw**
- 9 **Ashley Bowers**  
**Jordan Dehart**  
**Leon Whitaker**
- 10 **Kate Endriga**  
**Jessica Tilley**  
**Rita Tucker**
- 11 **Joseph Crouse**
- 12 **Gabriel Eason**  
**Jennifer Nichols**  
**Blair Seaver**  
**Marion Seaver**  
**Kent Whitaker**
- 13 **Teresa Branch**  
**Jon Carpenter**  
**Philgene Montgomery**
- 15 **Logan Simpson**
- 16 **MaryLou Donnelly**  
**Rev. Bob Josey**  
**Israel Petree**
- 17 **Ron Beamer**  
**Jodi Brinkley**  
**Joey Bumgardner**
- 18 **Cathy Hamby**  
**Keely Hodges**  
**Marty Johnson**
- 19 **Lisa Belcher**  
**Louis Giuffre**
- 20 **Kaebry Broyles**
- 21 **Joy Parsons**  
**Eric Willey**
- 22 **Dr. John Crane**  
**Mildred Gillespie**
- 24 **Cody Atkins**  
**April Sumner**
- 25 **Drew Goins**  
**Monroe Johnson**  
**Suzanne Vernon**  
**Jasper Wilson**
- 27 **Jennifer Wall**  
**Molly Willey**
- 28 **Stan Brinkley**
- 29 **Hannah Hall**  
**Chris O'Neal**  
**Phil Parsons**  
**Noah Whitehead**
- 30 **Buffy Fussell**

## After Easter

By David O'Neal, Deacon Chairman

It's hard to imagine how Jesus' followers felt after the resurrection. To some it may have been a sense of abandonment, loss of purpose, fear, hopelessness, confusion and doubt.

Then things began to happen. The gospels give a clear explanation of the events as they unfold. Matthew records that early on the Sunday morning after the crucifixion, Mary Magdalene and the other women went to the tomb to take spices to anoint His body. When they arrived, they found the stone rolled away. They went inside to find an empty tomb. The scriptures say as they stood inside wondering, two men appeared beside them. Their garments gleamed like lightning. The men said, "Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is risen!" They went on to say that Jesus had told them that He would be turned over to sinners, crucified, and on the third day be raised again. Then the women remembered His words.

Of course, they rushed to tell the disciples. The disciples did not believe, so Peter rushed to the tomb. As he observed the tomb and the wrapping from His body, the scripture says he went away wondering what had happened. Of course, the guards knew what happened, but they were instructed to lie about Jesus' resurrection.

Christ appeared to them on the road to Emmaus, and they were made not to recognize Him. He appeared to them at the evening meal, and their eyes were opened, they saw Him and He vanished.

Jesus appeared to them again as they were behind closed doors for fear of the Jewish leaders. Jesus showed them His hands and side. As recorded in John, Jesus gave them instructions: He said, "Peace be unto you; as my Father hath sent me, even so I send you. And when He had said this, He breathed on them, and saith unto them, 'Receive you the Holy Ghost: whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained.'"

Jesus appeared to the disciples again when Thomas was with them. Thomas had said that he must see the nail scarred hands and pierced side to believe. Many other events occurred to confirm the resurrection. The disciples were filled with the Holy Spirit when Christ met with them; and then at Pentecost, the Holy Spirit came upon the believers. The excitement and the revelation that took place was wonderful. Jesus left us the Holy Comforter. Sin and death have been conquered!

As the Easter season concludes, my prayer is that we realize the celebration doesn't end here, but is just the beginning! May we continue to follow the Great Commission. May the excitement of Pentecost be felt within our hearts and reflected in our actions. God has given His all, so that we can have it all.



God Bless,  
David