



Thank you to all who came and helped, ate, or just joined in the fun and celebration of Jesus' life and the gift of hope.

Thank you also to:

- Tuesday Scanlon for being our wonderful Bunny
- Mary LaPlante for the lovely, delicious breakfast
- DiAnne Atkin, Sam Goforth & Prudence Scanlon for helping in the kitchen
- Sandy Kohler & Kelley Zimmermann for the organization and productions of the Bunny photos.



What's Coming Up... What's Going On?

Dr. Bill Tenny-Brittian

After the Lone Ranger rode into town and saved the day, he'd often tip his hat to the town's people that he'd rescued, then he'd leap onto Silver, his trusted horse who always reared as a salute to his master's deeds, and with a "High-ho Silver, away!" the masked man would race out of sight. But the camera always stayed on the crowd as one would look at another in amazement and ask, "Who was that masked man?!"

In a lot of ways, that's the similar kind of response we see in the Gospels as people encountered the risen Jesus. "Who was that man?"

Even those of us raised in the church often wonder about the risen Jesus. We've all heard the stories, but they don't always make a lot of sense. A dead guy comes back to life. Those who turned their backs on him completely were reinstated to positions of authority. And he seemed to expect that a mere handful of his followers would find a way to literally change the world.

Who was that man?

Throughout the month of April, we'll be having a "conversation" about the risen Jesus and his encounters with his wayward followers. I hope each Sunday's message, what I've begun calling The Conversation, will serve as a conversation starter at your Sunday lunch gatherings and further on during the week.

What's Coming Up ... What's Going On

Most of those reading this month's *Pilot* will likely be doing so *after* the Easter rush – but just in case you're a spring early bird, don't forget that April 1 is both Easter *and* April Fool's Day. I've often wondered if the origins of April Fool's Day might not have been an attempt to deride the early Christians who were thought to be fools for believing in Jesus' resurrection. In any event, I'll be sharing some reasons why it makes sense to believe, even today.

During April, we'll be focusing on two initiatives. First, you'll begin to notice some of the changes in the Fellowship Hall as we get ready for the Praise Worship Service relocation. We had hoped to have the equipment installed by Easter, but obviously we weren't able to get that done. Our next target is to have the equipment installed and ready to go by the end of April. If we meet that deadline, we'll be launching with a grand opening in May.

Second, plans for securing and remodeling the Children's Wing are well underway and I expect we'll see some of those plans being implemented in April. Coupled with that, you should begin seeing a flurry of information about our upcoming Spring Fling Children and Family event scheduled for May 5.

Why's and Wherefore's

You may be wondering why we're "suddenly" investing so much time, talent, treasure, energy, and resources on these two areas. I thought I'd offer a couple of observations.

First, some of this may seem "sudden" to a few of you, but the generalities of these plans have been in the works since before I was even called as your senior minister here back in July 2016. Some of you reading this may remember the leadership seminar I lead back in April 2016 prior to my call here. During that event I shared that there are only two ministries that effectively grow sustainable churches:

(1) Worship that attracts and retains young adults; and (2) Children's ministries that attract and retain the young adult's children. With that information, and a good bit more, the Raytown Christian Church extended an invitation for me to lead the congregation into a sustainable future. Ever since then, your leadership team has been working toward preparing the congregation for the necessary transitions that are necessary to attain the vision of a sustainable church.

An Emphasis on Spiritual Development

To that end, the first step was to firm up our spiritual practices in our leadership and in the church. In today's busy world, most young adults only consider attending church because they have a spiritual itch that needs to be scratched or an emptiness deep in their soul that needs to be healed. They no longer initially come to church for socializing or fellowship. They come to be spiritually touched, nurtured, and trained. For them, faith isn't about attending church, singing in the choir, attending Sunday school, and serving on a committee or the board. They're looking for a religion that touches every part of their life: their soul, their relationships, their vocation, as well as their Sunday mornings. By putting such a strong emphasis on discipleship over the past twenty-one months, we have been further establishing and extending the Raytown Christian spiritual culture so that these young adults can hardly miss the reality of our Christ-focused intentions.

The Adoption of the Vision

However, we were not idle during those months on the other critical fronts. In early 2017 the board appointed the Vision Task Force and together we developed a five-year strategic plan designed to bring sustainable growth to the Raytown Christian Church. That plan, along with the church's identified mission and values were adopted by the Board in August and the first steps to the implementation of the vision began moving forward. The vision emphasized reaching young adult families in the Raytown community and each of our staff members and ministry teams have been working on implementing the vision in their particular areas.

The Funding of the Vision

Back in August when the Board adopted the vision, there were conversations about how the necessary transitions would be funded. A team was put together to work on that issue and before the end of the year, the concept and generalities of that plan was approved by the Board. A Leadership Team and a Vision Oversight Team were created to oversee the progress of the vision and to ensure funds were disbursed in accordance to the strategic plan. With that, the green light was given to begin to implement the first phase of the vision.

Implementing the Vision

There are two primary prongs of the Raytown Christian Church's vision. The first is to develop deep spiritual foundation. As I mentioned earlier, this has been one of my key emphases since the moment I set foot on our campus. The second prong of the vision is the implementation of the Abundant Living Ministry, a ministry driven by our congregation's core belief that God created every person to achieve a full, meaningful, successful, and abundant life. We're just getting started with this ministry and will not begin to fully implement it until 2019.

The first phase of the vision was the launch of the Directions Discipleship Course. We launched that in September 2017 with twenty-two of our leaders being trained in an intensive four-day seminar led by the Lee's Summit Abundant Life Church. Many of you reading this have already engaged in the course and hopefully there will come a day when every member of the church has taken the course ... and led someone else through it!

The second phase of the vision implementation included creating a worship service that will be attractive to young adults and to develop a matching children's ministry. After much research and counting of the costs, the pros, and the cons, it was decided that relocating the Praise Worship Service to the Fellowship Hall would provide the optimum opportunity to reach younger adult families who were not involved in the church or the faith.

The necessary remodeling of the current worship space could have been quite extensive and even then would not create the level of informality necessary for today's young adult worshippers. Although, again, this may seem like it was a quick decision, the Praise Worship Team and the Leadership Team have been considering the options for months.

In addition, the vision's second phase includes the securing and remodeling of the Children's Wing so that it not only attracts, but retains children (and is Parent Approved!). Although we will implement some of these changes in the next few months, some of the remodeling cannot be accomplished until the educational wing's roof is repaired. This is a priority item ... few parents today will leave their children in a nursery or a children's education wing that has buckets to catch the dirty, dripping rain water in the nursery's infant area, in the hallways, and even on the steps leading to the children's wing. In addition, 35 percent of our families are single-parent families and they won't leave their children in an unsecured facility where a non-custodial parent has easy access. Until these deficits are dealt with, it is futile to believe our children's program will see much growth – even with an outstanding staff and quality programming.

Final Observation

A young family stopped by a quaint country church. The building and the church yard was attractive and well kept, so they expected to find a warm and inviting congregation within the doors. It was no surprise, then, when they were well greeted by the church members who welcomed them as they stepped through the doors. The congregation was mostly older and the young family was by far the youngest in the church. There was a flurry of quiet conversations by a few of the older women and one left the sanctuary while one of the dear grandmothers stepped up to the mother, who was holding her baby, and asked, "Would you like to leave your child in the nursery?" The mother asked to see the nursery and she was led down a musty hallway and stopped by an open door. There, in the room, was the woman who had slipped out earlier. She was doing a quick dusting and tidying of the room. The

mother looked around and forced a smile. "Thank you for the offer, but I think I'll keep Caitlin with me for the service."

I had the opportunity to speak to the young family briefly after the service. They had enjoyed the worship and the people, but they shared, "We're still looking for a home church," which is code for "Thank you, but we're not likely coming back."

Afterwards, the pastor and a few of the church leaders, including the dear grandmother, was speaking with me over lunch. As I shared my conversation with the couple, the grandmother sighed and said, "We have a number of guests with children who visit, but they almost never come back. If they would just stay, we'd have a thriving children's ministry."

She didn't know it, but she nailed the problem. Today's visiting parents aren't going to invest in a church's future in order to help build a program. They expect the ministry to be built and staffed and ready to go when they arrive. It's just too easy to find another church that offers what they're looking for. I explained that if that congregation wanted to retain their visitors, *they* would have to make an investment in the church's future. They would need to have a staffed, secure, safe, and sanitary nursery and children's ministry if they expected guests to return. And if they expected the children to return, the children's ministry would have to have some sizzle that wowed the children ... because a parent will bring a child once, but the child will decide whether or not they ever return. Unfortunately, or fortunately as the case may be, that's the reality we have to face in today's culture.

If we're going to have a sustainable future, we will have to make an investment in our own future. We can't wait "until we have the growth" before we invest, because if we don't invest, we will not experience the growth. Either we invest or no one will invest. Perhaps that's a sad reality, but it's nonetheless the reality.

I continue to be amazed at how well-prepared the Raytown Christian Church is for faithful and sustainable growth. We have further to go, but if together we embrace the congregation's mission, reflect the church's values, and invest in implementing the vision, the harvest will come.



RCC Kids

Ben King, Director

Join us for a fun filled family afternoon for children of all ages **May 5th from 2:00PM to 4:00PM** for a **Family Carnival** here at the church (rain or shine). We are looking forward to games, face-painting, popcorn, and cake walk. If you would like to assist with this event by running a booth, please talk to Ben. **We are in need of 2-liter bottles of soda and Little Debbie snacks for this event.** They can be dropped off at Ben's office any time. We look forward to seeing you there!

Over the next month on Sunday mornings from 10:30 to 11:30 the kids will be doing a study on the Life of Moses. The study includes some great kid friendly music, crafts and activities to teach the kids that God looks out for us and has a long-term plan for our lives. On Wednesday Nights from 6:00 to 7:00 the kids will be continuing their study about prayer and memorizing the Lord's Prayer along with a lot of other fun activities.

It takes many volunteers to make Sunday mornings and Wednesday nights flow in the children's department. I want to thank the many volunteers who serve in both the nursery and the children's ministry. Your hard work and dedication to training up children is greatly appreciated. If you are looking for a place to serve in the church and God is calling you to serve in the children's department, please talk to me and we will see how we can plug you in.



Inspirations Youth

Kim Lawhead, Director

The Inspirations meet every Wednesday from 6:00 – 7:30 PM. We spent March looking at Jesus' Journey to the Cross. We discussed what following Christ during this time must have felt like and how we can still get discouraged or confused as Christians with where Jesus is leading. During April, we look forward to preparing for the summer mission trip and going roller skating. We will discuss how you can pick yourself up, dust yourself off and keep moving forward even if life doesn't go as "promised." What exactly did Jesus promise anyway? (Come and discover this alongside us on Wednesday evenings!)





Message from the Moderator

Jeff Steele

Hello everyone! Spring is officially upon us and with it comes new life and growth! We can see that in the trees and flowers that are starting to bud. We experience and recognize it in our own new life as we celebrate the resurrection of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ! And even in the life of our church, we are experiencing renewal and growth.

In his Pilot article this month, Dr. Bill covers several new things that are happening. Directions Discipleship continues as those who went through the inaugural course in late 2017/early 2018, are now taking their own ‘disciples’ through the course, in turn preparing them to take others through this transformational course. We’re making preparations to move the Praise Service into the Fellowship Hall in order to create a more informal environment and atmosphere that will be attractive to new young families. We’re taking steps to remodel and make secure the Children’s Education wing so that new families will find our facilities inviting, safe and secure for their precious little ones.

We also recently hosted our first Abundant Living Seminar on March 15. This event was a prelude to our Abundant Living Ministry which will be a key focus for us in 2019 and beyond. As a community of faith, we are called to help those in our community to a more abundant life by sharing with them the resources we have in our congregation, by providing training, guidance, encouragement, resources and a spiritual foundation to help young adults achieve success in their hearts, in their careers, in their families and in their community. This ministry will serve as our primary outreach tool for reaching and discipling young adults and we will align all other ministries around this outreach to maximize its effect on participants and the church.

There are many other activities being planned over the next several months and the need for volunteers is great. Each of us has time and talents to contribute to the work of building God’s kingdom. I encourage you to reach out to me, Dr. Bill, or any of the department chairpersons (Carol Frevert – Outreach; JoAnn Hudson – Spiritual Growth/Discipleship; Larry Frevert – Administrative Support) if you have questions about how you might get involved in the exciting ministries here at RCC! We are all part of the body of Christ, and there is much to accomplish!

In closing, I ask you to be in prayer for the leadership of this church and for those in our community whom God desires for us to reach.

It’s good to be in ministry together!



Outreach

Carol Frevert, Chair

Completed Outreach Events – March

Food Pantry Totals for February

Families: 72
Adults: 93
Children: 61
Seniors: 51
Total Served: 195

Micah Ministry Service Night

We took a dedicated group of 5 to serve at Micah Ministry on Monday, March 5. We also delivered all of the plentiful donations from RCC to their clothing and supply closet.

Our next service night will be Monday, May 7th. Watch for the sign-up sheet at the Information Center if you are interested in going with us to serve.



Raytown Community Egg-stravaganza – March 31st

Thank you to everyone who contributed the individually wrapped candies and plastic Easter eggs for this wonderful community egg hunt.

The Raytown community sponsored this egg hunt on the green space in the center of Raytown on March 31st. RCC had a booth at the event and we handed out information sheets about Enhancing Education, Raytown Summer Lunch Ministry, and RCC postcards with chocolate crosses attached. Special thanks to all the volunteers who helped with this community outreach effort at our booth.

Upcoming Outreach Events – April

Raytown Schools Community Resource Day

Raytown Christian Church Outreach Ministry will be participating in the Raytown Quality Schools 4th Annual Community Connections Resource Day, April 14th, 11am – 2pm. Outreach Ministry team members will be providing information about Raytown Summer Lunch Ministry, Enhancing Education, and postcards about RCC. We will also be providing a healthy snack of “cuties” to all of the children attending

Are You Interested in Learning How to Handle a Basic Medical Emergency until EMT or Paramedics Arrive?

Carol Frevert, RN, BSN, is a certified First Aid and CPR instructor with the American Red Cross. She is offering to teach CPR classes to any RCC attenders who are interested.

Classes would provide the following skills and information pertaining to **adults** only:

- how to check an injured/ill person who is conscious or unconscious
- how to check for breathing
- how to give "hands-only" CPR

- how to care for someone who is choked
- how to use a defibrillator

Classes would be provided at no cost and would take approximately 2 hours. (Those who attend classes can purchase review booklets and CPR breathing shields if interested.) This class will **not** cover skills and information applicable to children and infants.

If you are interested in taking a class, please look for the CPR class sign-up sheet at the information center.



The Searchers Sunday School Class would like to thank Carol Frevert (& Larry, too!) for offering them the opportunity to learn CPR & the AED Machine. Both are such important skills to have and the class appreciates the time and knowledge she shared with them.



**GETTING STARTED LUNCH
SUNDAY, APRIL 15 – NOON**

Come learn more about RCC!

Who are we?
Where are we going?

Reservations:
office@raytowncc.org



Spring Ring

Sunday, April 29th - 7pm



6108 Blue Ridge Blvd
Raytown, MO 64133

April 2018

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 Happy Easter! 	2 Office Closed in observance of Easter 6:00pm AA 7:00pm Alanon Scouts & Cub Pack	3	4 1:00pm Food Pantry See recurring activities	5 8:00am Men's Breakfast 9:00am Sword of Joy Networking Event 7:00pm Elders Meeting	6	7
8 See recurring activities	9 6:00pm AA 7:00pm Alanon Scouts & Cub Pack	10 5:00pm Staff Meeting	11 10:00am CWF 1:00pm Food Pantry See recurring activities	12 10:00am Four Seasons	13	14
15 See recurring activities Noon – Getting Started Class	16 6:00pm AA 7:00pm Alanon Scouts & Cub Pack	17	18 1:00pm Food Pantry See recurring activities	19	20	21
22 See recurring activities	23 6:00pm AA 6:30pm Stephen Ministry 7:00pm Alanon Scouts & Cub Pack	24	25 1:00pm Food Pantry See recurring activities	26 10:00 Four Seasons 7:00 General Board	27	28
29 See recurring activities 7:00pm Spring Ring	30 6:00pm AA 7:00pm Alanon Scouts & Cub Pack	Recurring Activities: Wednesdays: 5:00pm – Junior Choir/5:30pm – Supper Served, Primary Choir/6:00pm – RCC Kids, Youth Bible Study, Prayer Summit, One Desire Practice, Sanctuary Choir Sundays: 9:00am – Classic Worship, Sermon Study/10:30am – Children's Sunday School, Adult Sunday School, Praise Worship/2:30pm Inspiration Ringers/5:30pm – Chalice Bronze				