

Heidi's Tomato Salad

RecipeTime

4-5 medium tomatoes (garden fresh are best) halved, thinly sliced
 1/2 c. chopped sweet onion (or more, to taste)
 1-2 green onions, sliced
 Parsley, (fresh is best, but dried is okay) to taste
 1 tsp. fresh lemon juice
 1 T. good olive oil
 1/2 tsp. sugar, or to taste
 1/4-1/2 tsp. dill (fresh is best, but dried is okay), to taste
 Garlic salt, to taste
 Onion salt, to taste
 Opt. add a splash of Braggs liquid aminos for saltiness and flavor

Blend all together, taste, and adjust seasonings to your liking. Let steep for an hour or so to blend the flavors - will get juicy.
 Add anything you like from your garden to make it your own.

NOTE: This is a little like fresh pico de gallo, but my German family called it "Tomaten Salat".

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Much of Christianity celebrates Jesus' resurrection every spring. We sing wonderful songs about Jesus' victory over the grave. But this is a topic not just for a special focus one time a year. Jesus' resurrection reveals that God has broken the devil's power. This is the teaching that gives meaning to the end of the Great Controversy. For we will be able to live for eternity with God because of Jesus Christ - the Lamb who was slain and the Lion of Judah who has triumphed over death.

Let's continue to learn more about the resurrection. Let's share others this amazing life changing, most important truth from God's Word. When we introduce people to Jesus, let's not just take them to the cross. Let's take them to the tomb and declare, "He is not here. He is risen indeed!"

By: Michael Halfhill



A Walk In the Park

May 2021

This issue is dedicated to Laura Daw, our faithful newsletter editor for the past several years. She passed away in February and we will miss the care she put into each publication, keeping people informed about what's happened in the church community.

Laura was a writer, well before she took on the church newsletter. She graduated from Falls Memorial High School and went on to receive her bachelor's degree from the University of Phoenix. Laura used her skills as a Communication Specialist with United Health Care. In her free time, she authored four books. She also made time for family, reading, singing, cooking, knitting, swimming, traveling and ceramics.



What If Heaven Didn't Exist?

I remember being asked, "Would you be a Christian, if heaven didn't exist?" The first time the question was asked I struggled to find an answer. It wasn't long before I was asking groups of people the same question a "would you be a Christian if heaven didn't exist?"

I ask you today, in the light of Scripture, if heaven didn't exist would you still be a Christian? As I personally wrestled with this question, I came to the realization that heaven was never meant for human beings. That's why Jesus described in John chapter 14 that He had to go to prepare heaven for human beings. We also know from Revelation that heaven is only temporary housing so that God can recreate our true home earth. We did a good job of destroying the first creation of earth. We in our human wisdom destroyed it and the only way to remake it is by complete destruction by fire.

As I continued to journey with my question about heaven, I began to understand I was focusing on the wrong goal. Heaven shouldn't have been my goal. The kingdom of heaven isn't about a place. The kingdom is about a Who. The Who is about who is in control. The author of Genesis began, "In the beginning God create." The disciple-apostle John wrote, "In the being was the Word and the Word was with God and was God." The beginning was about a place or possession. The beginning was about God. The salvation of humanity, planned before the creation of the habitable earth, was about God. The kingdom of heaven was and remains today fully about the reuniting of humanity with the creator and now savior God.

I realize now that while the earth hasn't been made new, I can live in the Kingdom of Heaven when I chose to live in the presence of God – Emmanuel – God with us. While mansions or rooms and all that we have enjoyed imagining about heaven may be enjoyable, I know I missed the best part when my mind is wrapped up in the material side of heaven. God is what makes heaven worth waiting for, but I don't have to wait. God invites me daily to experience heaven. To be in God's presence is heaven.

Here are 5 ways I have found to bring me into the awareness of God presence.

1. Devotional reading of scripture. Read the passage and let God speak through what was written. I surrender control of my experience.
2. Silent time in prayer. I realized that I often spend more time talking at God and rarely give God time to speak.
3. Exercise with God. I listen to podcasts that form my spiritual growth while also physically helping my body maintain health.
4. Play inspiring Music. I will go into my music room and play along with songs that encourage me.
5. Volunteer somewhere in the Community. Serving in the community always brings the gospel to life for me.

By: Nate Elias

The Most Important Bible Teaching

This year we have been sharing a sermon series called "The Most Important Things." With the chaos of the world lately it felt appropriate to focus on the things in life and in the Bible that God feels are the most important.

This brought to my mind a head scratcher of a trivia question. What is the most important teaching in the Bible? Do you know? The Bible has so much to say about God, about salvation and about life. But what is the most important teaching? What is the #1 crucial belief to our faith?

There are certainly many candidates to choose from in God's Word. There's the teaching of creation - that God made our world and us. There's the Sabbath teaching of rest from our works and connection with God and fellow humans. But as important as those beliefs are, they are not the most important.

Maybe you would suggest our teaching about the end of times and the understanding of Bible prophecy are the most important teaching of the Bible. Certainly it was an understanding of God's plan as seen in Bible prophecy that first awoke a desire in me to learn more about God. And learning about how God will finish the story of the Great Controversy on this world helps us know how everything will end. But that's not the most important teaching of the Bible.

Perhaps the music group the Beatles got it right so many years ago when they sang, "All Ya Need is Love." Maybe love is the most important teaching of the Bible. Certainly love is the greatest ethic in the Bible. Love is how we should live our lives. Other-centered love is what God wants to give to all of us and should affect all our choices in life. And as the Bible declares in 1 John 4:8, "God is love." So we could definitely argue that love is the greatest teaching of the Bible. However other faiths and religions would argue that they also teach and encourage love even though they don't follow the Bible.

So what is the most important teaching of the Bible? The teaching that influences our love and reveals God's ultimate love? The Apostle Paul told us which teaching is the most important. Paul determined that without this teaching we have nothing and our faith is in vain. According to Paul, the most important teaching in the Bible is — the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

"But if there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ is not risen. And if Christ is not risen, then our preaching is empty and your faith is also empty." 1 Corinthians 15:13 - 14. Paul tells his readers that if Jesus Christ did not rise from the dead, then Christianity falls apart. He says without the resurrection our faith is empty. It is Christ's victory over death that reveals God's power of love to defeat sin. According to Paul the resurrection of Jesus Christ is the most important teaching for our faith.

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Olive Branch Ministry is an extension of God's goodwill towards our church members and guests of Piedmont Park and to our neighbors in the Lincoln Community.

Olive Branch Ministry's service is to provide and place food items into the Piedmont Food Cupboard located in the Coat Room off of the main lobby as well as to provide donations to the Lincoln Little Free Pantry network.

Olive Branch Ministry is supported solely by monetary and/or item donations. If you wish to help by giving a monetary donation please put your cash or check in a tithe envelope marked Piedmont Food Cupboard or Little Free Pantries.

Piedmont Food Cupboard

- *items are FREE to you
- *always open when the church is open
- *grocery bags in drawer for your convenience
- *please be kind; take only what you need, leave a blessing for others
- *if you have some, give some; if you need some, take some

Along with the food items we send our prayers and best wishes.

Items donated for the Lincoln Little Free Pantries are delivered to the Lincoln Little Free Pantry Network and then distributed to the approximately 20 Little Free Pantries in various neighborhoods in Lincoln.

Lincoln's Little Free Pantries carry food items, men and women's hygiene items, small items of warm clothing, etc. These little free pantries are a great way to help people feel cared for at any time but especially in bad weather, hard times, or a pandemic. People can walk by take what they need at no cost to them and without explanation or qualification.

Our goal is to send tangible evidence of God's love and prayers and goodwill wishes to our Lincoln community brothers and sisters no matter what their situation in life.

For more information on Lincoln's Little Free Pantries:
<https://www.1011now.com/2020/09/18/little-free-pantries-see-heavy-use-bare-shelves-during-pandemic/>

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/247118765449973/>
 For more information visit www.piedmontparksda.org/olivebranch

Women's Ministries Report

One of the things that Women's Ministries does to serve the members and families of Piedmont Park is to oversee the church library. It was first a passion of member Sherrie Binder who passed away from cancer in 2009. She collected and catalogued many books for the library. Over the years, the library has expanded due to the donation of many volumes, new shelving, and the work of past church librarians Bonnie Daniel, Laura Maybin, Kristi Manestar, and Joanne Reinke. Currently, Delores Jerke is volunteering to place volumes on the shelves in the coatroom. The collection contains books on Adventist history and beliefs, parenting, prayer, health, mission and faith stories, and books for children. All have been carefully numbered according to their subject category. Checkout is on the honor system. There are no cards to sign and no one will call to remind you to return a book. Women's Ministries is looking for someone who enjoys reading who will write up short book reports or reactions to books that they have read and think others will enjoy. These will be published in the church newsletter, bulletin, or Facebook page to inspire good reading. Please contact Carol Leonhardt, Women's Ministries leader, with your interest.

By: Carol Leonhardt



You're invited to a great southern gospel concert with **Tribute Quartet!** Bring your family and friends to hear some of the best Gospel music around! Doors open 1 hour before this FREE concert. An offering will be taken. Call 402-792-2450 for information. (As directed by the Lancaster Health Department, because of current COVID restrictions there may be limited seating and, at the present time, face masks are required. Please be considerate of everyone attending the programs and stay home if you are feeling ill.) This concert is sponsored by Midwest Gospel Music. Find them on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/Midwest-Gospel-Music-102763495273857>

Thunderbirds Campout

On March 26, 27, and 28 the Thunderbirds Pathfinder Club went camping at Woodland Acres. Just like the usual campouts we set up our mess tent, sleeping tents, and the kitchen. Unlike the usual campouts, our Pathfinders needed to split into small groups, gather wood, and start their own fires so they could prepare and cook their own meals for the weekend. They planned what they wanted to eat and cook, and they did not just take the easy way out for meals either! From crepes to fettuccini alfredo to grilled brussel sprouts, I dare say the Pathfinders ate better than the staff!



This is one of my favorite events that our club does. At the beginning of the year we go on a campout and learn how to build a fire and do some basic cooking throughout the year. This event brings it together so Pathfinders can test themselves! It also boosts confidence I can see the effects of for years to come. The Pathfinders who stay and enter into the Teen Leadership Training program, help the younger ones keep their fires lit, show them how to cook over an open flame, and get to share stories of when they did this not so long ago. This is another part of why this weekend is so important and why I love it so much. It's an opportunity for our TLTs to put what they have learned to the test. I'm proud to say, they did very well! Guiding your peers is no small task, nor is the knowledge that if the meal is botched, there are no second chances for that meal! But they rose to the occasion, and there were many comments about the



excellence of the food.

The final and most important reason Club campouts are my favorite is the worship. At club meetings we have worship, but due to limited time we are not always able to go in depth or have much discussion. On a campout, we have a longer worship talk and discussions can go for as long as they need to. We talked about fire in the Bible, and what it means and can symbolize, floating axe heads, and female bears doling out punishments for God. Although I didn't plan it, all our worship talks had a camping theme.

We always try to return the Pathfinders to parents tired, and this weekend was no exception! Everyone seemed to go home happy and exhausted. I heard a few Pathfinders were asleep before 5pm! Even though we are barely done with this Cooking Campout, I am already looking forward to the next one. **By: Josh Kittleson**



Join us for Piedmont Park's...

FAMILY BIBLE ADVENTURE

Our Piedmont Park Team has created a special **ADVENTURE** where we will get to know **JESUS** through the **STORIES** He told called Parables!

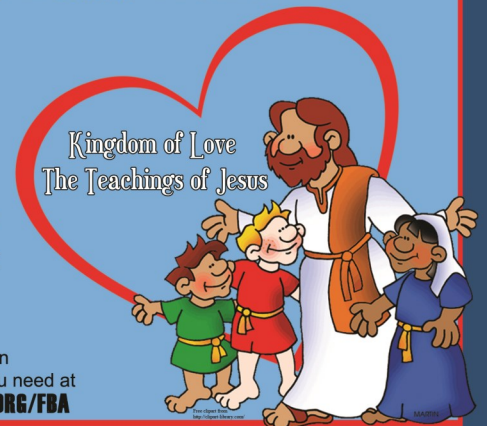
Your **FAMILY** is invited to join the **ADVENTURE** either In Person or On Demand!

IN PERSON July 11-15, 2021
6:30-8:00pm @ 4801 A Street
(We will follow current City of Lincoln guidelines for Covid Safety including masks and attendance capacity)

ON DEMAND Premieres July 11, 2021
youtube.com/piedmontparkchurch

REGISTER for In Person and find all the information you need at WWW.PIEDMONTPARKSDA.ORG/FBA

Your ENTIRE Family is encouraged to participate!



Kingdom of Love
The Teachings of Jesus

4801 A Street, Lincoln