

# New Growth of Spring

## Spring Celebration at Long's Park

2021-04-11 by Ben Deaver at Tallgrass Church on Mark 12:28-31

### CG Flow:

- All Creatures of Our God & King
- Come Thou Fount
- Graves Into Gardens
- Teaching
- Springtime
- The Blessing

### Facebook Live Description:

Happy Spring! Join us at Long's Park at 10am or right here online for our Spring Celebration.  
"New Growth of Spring"

Mark 12:28-31

April 11, 2021

Ben Deaver

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WEB: <https://tallgrass.church>

INSTAGRAM: <https://www.instagram.com/tallgrasschurch/>

YOUTUBE: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC0drX4wrsE5n9yLza8HSNIQ>

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*Because God first loved you, you exist to love God and love your neighbors!*

Happy Spring! Welcome to Long's Park!  
Welcome to SoPo, our neighborhood South of Poyntz!  
Welcome to Tallgrass Church!  
We're ready for NEW GROWTH of spring after a hard winter!

Everyone needs a flyer! This flyer invites you to join us at Boys & Girls Club next Sunday morning and 20 Neighboring Ideas on the back and a link to lyrics for this morning. Or just go to [tallgrass.church/lyrics](http://tallgrass.church/lyrics).

Now's a great time to get outside and plant a garden. Spend time in creation connecting with the Creator and connecting with one another.

*All Creatures of Our God and King* is a hymn that's based on a poem by St. Francis of Assisi called *Canticle of the Sun* written in 1225 and based on Psalm 148.

## Sing *All Creatures of Our God & King*

Thanks for celebrating with us today!

- Today we celebrate spring's arrival.
- Today we celebrate Tallgrass Church turning three years old. We're still standing...and that's worth celebrating. It's been a tough year for most people and for us as a church family...but we're still here...and that's worth celebrating.
- Today we celebrate our new trailer! For us, that's a big deal.
- Today we celebrate the Good News of the Gospel, that God makes a way for us when we cannot make a way for ourselves.
- What are YOU celebrating today?

Find a neighbor, just someone who's near you but you don't know very well.

Ask one another:

1. What's one thing you're celebrating today?
2. What's one thing that's been hard this past winter?
3. What's one way you want to grow this spring?

## Sing *Come Thou Fount*

Pray!

## This all started in a garden...

Look around you! This all started in a garden, the people that is. God planted humanity in a garden, the Garden in Eden.

When we open the Bible, we read that in the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. In the beginning, God planted a garden in Eden and then planted humanity in that garden. That was a nice garden. Things grew very well in that garden. Relationships flourished in that garden. People were content and grateful and full of joy in that garden.

But things didn't stay that way.

As we read on in the Bible, we learn that relationships were broken and then things didn't seem to grow quite as well and there was a lot of hurt and pain and sadness and shame and brokenness. We can learn about this by reading the Bible and also by reading the news and also by reading the looks on the faces of those we love so much and by tending to our own souls. The reality of that initial break in relationship has been made as clear as ever this past year as we have all faced Covid-19 together...yet separately.

Think back on this past year and ask yourself if relationships in our world are generally flourishing or fractured?!

The Good News of the Bible is that God is a God of redemption. He makes beautiful things out of broken things. He makes beautiful people out of hurt people. He has built into the very seasons the theme of death and resurrection, winter giving birth to spring!

From *Graves Into Gardens*:

You turn graves into gardens—Romans 5:12-21; 1 Corinthians 15:20-49

You turn bones into armies—Ezekiel 37:1-14

You turn seas into highways—Exodus 14:1-14

You're the only one who can—God's the Way Maker, He makes a way where there is no way.

You turn winter into spring!

## Sing *Graves Into Gardens*

## Tallgrass Church Mission Statement:

Because God first loved us, we exist to love God and love our neighbors!

**Mark 12:28** And one of the scribes came up and heard them disputing with one another, and seeing that he answered them well, asked him, "Which commandment is the most important of all?"

- Let's cut straight to the purpose of humanity. Why do we exist? Why are we here? What's most important?

**Mark 12:29-30** <sup>29</sup> Jesus answered, "The most important is, 'Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. <sup>30</sup> And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.'"

- There is a God who is the real God who created all of this....and not only that. The Lord our God longs to be in a loving relationship with you, not just part of you but all of you.
- The most important thing in life is to tend to the soil of your relationship with your Creator.

*How will you tend to the soil of your relationship with God?*

**Mark 12:31** <sup>31</sup> "The second is this: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these."

- The second most important thing in life is our relationship with our neighbor.
- Does anyone remember what Jesus said when someone was trying to test Him and asked Him, "Who exactly is my neighbor?"
  - That's when Jesus told the story of the Good Samaritan, the story of the man who was beaten and left for dead on the side of the road with no indication of his status, wealth, ethnicity, nothing, just a human in need....that is your neighbor.
  - Jesus basically says that we are all one another's neighbors...and that we are to love our neighbor as we love ourselves.
- Interesting, if we are to love our neighbor well, we must first love ourselves well. We must tend to the soil of our own body and soul before we're able to tend to the soil of our relationship with our neighbor.

*How will you tend to the soil of your own body and soul?*

*How will you tend to the soil of your relationship with your neighbor?*

These commandments are lifegiving! They aren't burdensome and heavy. They may be very difficult, but they are good and bring us the life we truly desire.

How will you tend to the soil of your relationships this spring? How will you cultivate your relationship with your Creator, yourself, and your neighbor?

## Three Action Steps:

This morning I want to encourage you to walk away with three specific action steps that you'll take towards new growth in these three relationships—with God, with yourself, with your neighbor.

### 1. Love God—Cultivate your relationship with your Creator...

**Mark 12:30** And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.

*How will you tend to the soil of your relationship with God?*

- **1 John 4:19** We love because he first loved us.
- **John 15:13** Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends.
- **Romans 5:6-8** <sup>6</sup> For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. <sup>7</sup> For one will scarcely die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die— <sup>8</sup> but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.
- “Created from love, of love and for love, our existence makes no sense apart from Divine love.” –*The Gift of Being Yourself* by David Benner
- Judgment and Rules vs. Healing and Growth—I’ve been reflecting a lot on how people perceive the church. Many think of church as a place you go to be judged and to hear about a bunch of rules RATHER than a place of grace and mercy where you can find healing and growth.
- Stepping into the gym—How can I overcome all my insecurities and be strong before I step into the gym when that’s the whole point of the gym? It’s the same way with the church. A lot of people get hurt in the gym and a lot of people get hurt in the church. Leadership is important. No one’s doing this perfectly but we need to cultivate a healthy culture for growth, whether in a gym or in the church. That’s what we want to do.
- Zoom calls—Has anyone been on an important Zoom call this past year? Zoom and cleaning up your background.
- **Luke 22:39-46** <sup>39</sup> And he came out and went, as was his custom, to the Mount of Olives, to the garden in Gethsemane, and the disciples followed him. <sup>40</sup> And when he came to the place, he said to them, “Pray that you may not enter into temptation.” <sup>41</sup> And he withdrew from them about a stone’s throw, and knelt down and prayed, <sup>42</sup> saying, “Father, if you are willing, remove this cup from me. Nevertheless, not my will, but yours, be done.” <sup>43</sup> And there appeared to him an angel from heaven, strengthening him. <sup>44</sup> And being in agony he prayed more earnestly; and his sweat became like great drops of blood falling down to the ground. <sup>45</sup> And when he rose from prayer, he came to the disciples and found them sleeping for sorrow, <sup>46</sup> and he said to them, “Why are you sleeping? Rise and pray that you may not enter into temptation.”
- Then Jesus went and lived out His own teaching that greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends.

- Jesus laid down His life for His friends who were sleeping in that garden when they should've been supportive of Jesus. Jesus also laid down His life for YOU and longs to call you friend too.

*What might growth look like one year from now if you take this step to respond to God's initiating love today?*

## 2. Love yourself—Cultivate your relationship with yourself...

**Mark 12:31** 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'

*How will you tend to the soil of your own body and soul?*

- What's one way you can love yourself better this spring?
- Maybe you're exhausted and you need better sleep.
- Maybe you feel weak and need to strengthen your body.
- Maybe you're reeling from grief or some kind of trauma and you need mental or emotional help.
- Maybe you're lonely and need to risk finding community or deepening your community.
- Maybe you've been really hard on yourself and you need to intentionally be kind to yourself.
  - "If God loves and accepts you as a sinner, how can you do less?" –*The Gift of Being Yourself* by David Benner

*What might growth look like one year from now if you take this step to love yourself well today?*

- One of the reasons to love yourself well is so you're able to love your neighbor well.

## 3. Love your neighbor—Cultivate your relationship with your neighbor...

**Mark 12:31** 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'

*How will you tend to the soil of your relationship with your neighbor?*

- What will it look like you to be present in your neighborhood this spring?
- Is there a specific neighbor who comes to mind that you can love well this week?
- How can you practice loving your neighbor?

*What might growth in your relationship or neighborhood look like one year from now if you take this step to love your neighbor well today?*

I'm excited to celebrate again one year from now and to see all the new growth of this season ahead.

**Isaiah 61:11 MSG**

For as the earth bursts with spring wildflowers, and as a garden cascades with blossoms,  
So the Master, GOD, brings righteousness into full bloom and puts praise on display before the nations.

**From *Springtime*:**

You're the resurrection that we've waited for  
You buried the night and came with the morning  
You're the king of heaven; the praise is yours  
The longer the quiet, the louder the chorus

We will sing a new song  
'Cause death is dead and gone with the winter  
We're coming back to life  
Reaching towards the light  
Your love is like springtime

You're the living water; God, we thirst for you  
The dry and the barren will flower and bloom  
You're the sun that's shining; You restore my soul  
The deeper you call us, oh, the deeper we'll go

Come tend the soil, Come tend the soil of my soul  
And like a garden, And like a garden I will grow  
Like a garden WE will grow

**Sing *Springtime*****Maris gives an invitation!**

- It has been a hard winter. We are ready for the new growth of springtime! We believe God is doing and will do some great things in and through our little faith community. We invite you to join us on this journey.
- Central Gathering at the Boys & Girls Club next Sunday.
- Guys Group this Tuesday evening.
- *Emotionally Healthy Discipleship* on Tuesday evenings starting soon.
- We want to help tend to the soil of one another's souls and invite you into that with us.
- Leave an encouraging note for Crystal, who's having surgery for thyroid cancer this week.

**Maris prays!****Sing *The Blessing***