



Last month Karise Pagano, Waterbrooke’s missionary to Italy, represented Alba Safe House alongside Boyce College students Linnea Barto, Abbey Hubin (intern) and Lily Tanaka (intern).

Couple Helps Cultivate Grace in Honduras

Waterbrooke missionaries Diego and Lauren De La Vega live in Tegucigalpa, Honduras with their three children Ellie, Joaquin, and Rowan. They serve the people at *Iglesia Presbiteriana Gracia Soberana* and their community by helping build a culture of genuine gospel grace through biblical discipleship and hospitality.

Diego manages a small business and is doing an online masters in theological studies from a seminary in Medellin, Colombia. Lauren works at home educating their children and fostering an environment of hospitality for their church family and community.

“Honduras is a beautiful country that is affected by ongoing safety concerns and corruption, yet we firmly believe that Christ is King and that He is doing a mighty work in and through the church in Honduras,” Diego says.

The De La Vega family visited Minnesota this winter and, Lord willing, will be back again this summer. Please pray for the gospel to deepen not just in the minds but also in the hearts of their church. Also, pray for guidance for the De La Vegas as they seek out more ministry opportunities. ♦

Karise Represents Alba in Louisville

Before returning to Italy in March, Waterbrooke’s Karise Pagano stopped in Louisville, KY, to make a presentation about the Alba Safe House and Recovery Program, connect with current interns, and recruit future interns and coworkers from Boyce College. The college recently added Alba to its list of approved organizations for the internship programs it requires students to complete.

“It was a really sweet time,” Karise says, noting that she was also able to meet with leaders from Scarlet Hope, a ministry in the U.S. that, like Alba, reaches exploited and trafficked women with the hope of the gospel.

Karise is now back home in Varese, Italy, for the next few months. Please pray for wisdom for her to disciple well, for sustaining grace for transitions, and for God’s provision of funds. ♦



Lauren and Diego De La Vega work to build a culture of genuine gospel grace in Tegucigalpa, Honduras, where they live with their three kids.

Edify

a quarterly publication of Waterbrooke Church | spring 2025

The Resurrection of Jesus is Your Resurrection

Several weeks ago, I had the joy of leading a study of Romans 6 at Abbott Labs where Waterbrooke’s Ron Gentolizo leads a weekly Bible study with several of his coworkers. I love Romans 6. I love it because there the apostle Paul tells us that the historical resurrection of Jesus from the dead has immediate implications for the life of every genuine believer. This is what Paul teaches: *The resurrection of Jesus has resurrected you.*

Catch what Paul writes in Romans 6:4 “We were buried therefore with Him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life.”

I want you to consider that little phrase, “in order that.” Paul is saying that the act of baptism is an expression of our faith in the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus. Christ’s death becomes our death. In other words, Jesus died in our place and for our sins. Why? “*In order that...* we too might walk in newness of life.”

Christ didn’t die and stay dead. He died and rose again. Why? Because God’s goal in the death and resurrection of Jesus was to not only pay for your sin but to crucify your sinful nature and to raise you to live an entirely new way of life. If you are “in Christ,” you have been crucified with Christ.

Galatians 2:20 says “I have been crucified with

Christ. *It is no longer I who live but Christ lives in me.* And the life I now live in the flesh, I live by faith in the Son of God who loved me and gave Himself up for me.” I don’t live my Christian life in my own old sinful weakness anymore. The risen Christ lives in me and in His power I can “walk in newness of life.”

The resurrection is meant to be the way we view our lives as believers. Paul says later in Romans 6:11 “So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.” Do you remind yourself of this daily? Jesus triumphed over many things through His death and resurrection. He defeated Satan. Satan can no longer bring accusations against us. He defeated death. Death has lost its power and its sting. He defeated sin. Sin no longer has dominion over you.

Every day, we need to remember and to celebrate the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. We need to remind ourselves: I am not yet perfect, but I am no longer powerless in the face of sin and

temptation. The risen Christ reigns in me and my life is a life of resurrection – a new me living a new life under a risen and reigning King Jesus! That’s really, really good news, friends! That’s one of the great reasons why we celebrate the resurrection! Happy Easter! Everyday! ♦

-Senior Pastor Kevin Dibbley



“The Resurrection” by Albrecht Dürer

Review: *Did the Resurrection Really Happen?*



By Diana Barto

“People believe in the resurrection not because of good evidence (there isn’t any) but because, if the resurrection is not true, Christianity becomes null and void,” says Richard Dawkins. He’s a British evolutionary biologist well known for being an outspoken atheist.

To an extent, Christian author Timothy Paul Jones agrees.

“The entirety of Christianity stands or falls on the question of whether Jesus really returned from the dead...Either there is an empty tomb, or Christians have an empty faith,” he says.

But unlike Dawkins, Jones argues there is good evidence for the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

“Faith may entail more than mere acceptance of evidence, but it certainly includes no less. Far from eschewing evidence, faith seeks evidence,” Jones writes in his new book *Did the Resurrection Really Happen?*

The book tackles this hard question thoroughly in just 78 pages. Jones is honest about his own past doubts and also is winsome in answering the question of whether the resurrection of Jesus Christ happened. And he covers a few other questions that arise about Jesus and those who witnessed the resurrection.

For instance, he responds to the doubt “What is so different about Jesus?” Roman soldiers crucified tens of thousands of people who were rebels, slaves, or suspected insurrectionists, he says.

“And yet,” Jones notes, “two thousand years after His death, the name of one crucified man is cherished around the globe...The message of His miraculous return to life would eventually engulf

the very empire that had sentenced Him to die. Today, this singular crucified man is not merely remembered. He is revered by billions as divine.”

In addition, Jones explores the question “Why should anyone believe the witnesses?” and shares how multiple independent sources agree and together preserve the truth of what happened, even when the details are inconvenient, awkward, or costly.

If you struggle to believe the resurrection, know someone who does, or simply want to better understand the evidence of the resurrection, this short book is a useful resource. Purchase it online at a discount through the publisher, Crossway.org, or through the book ministry 10ofThose.com. ♦

More Resources about Christ’s Resurrection

Here are a few more books to check out for further study on the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead:

1.) *Is Easter Unbelievable? Four Questions Everyone Should Ask about the Resurrection Story*
by Rebecca McLaughlin

2.) *Cold-Case Christianity: A Homicide Detective Investigates the Claims of the Gospels*
by J. Warner Wallace

3.) *The Fate of the Apostles: Examining the Martyrdom Accounts of the Closest Followers of Jesus*
by Sean McDowell

4.) *Can We Trust the Gospels?*
by Peter Williams

5.) *Resurrection Hope and the Death of Death*
by Mitchell Chase

LET’S GET TO KNOW: Bruce Washington, Elder

By Karen Kowalke, Treasurer

Quiz time! Why does Bruce Washington always sit in the front row at church?

a.) *He likes to make faces at Kevin during the sermon.*

b.) *He’s very nearsighted and that’s the only way he can read the screen.*

c.) *He’s afraid his loud singing will be a distraction if there is anyone in front of him.*

If you answered “c” you’re right! Although only the worship team can attest to the truth about his singing volume!

Bruce wasn’t always so joyful in church. Growing up as a pastor’s kid in Minneapolis, the long hours in church felt like a duty. After he completed high school, he decided his “duty” was over and he walked away from God for about 10 years. But God didn’t give up on him! The violent death of his best friend got him thinking about the reality of death and what he was doing with his life. Then, in quick succession, the person he was dating (Lisa, now his wife) and an atheist friend got saved. Soon after that, on his way to work, Bruce cried out to God and felt a rush of forgiveness that he could only respond to with tears. He now knew the power of God’s grace at 28 years old.

Did you know?

- **A huge *Star Trek* fan, Bruce has watched all the series and spin-offs.**
- **He is very particular about laundry being folded in a certain way; maybe that’s why there are never any wrinkles in his polo shirts!**
- **If you taped his hands to his sides, Bruce might not be able to talk!**
- **Cinnamon rolls are Bruce’s favorite food. ♦**

Since then, Bruce has often reflected on the power of resurrection in our lives. To Bruce, the fact that Jesus was equal to God but willingly gave up the glories of heaven is a testament to God’s love. The fact that God overcame death and hell is a testament to His power. God can’t be stopped, and what He wants to happen will happen.

How Bruce, Lisa and their family (Hannah, Caleb and Sam) learned about Waterbrooke is another example of God’s work behind the scenes to bring about His purposes. Shortly after moving to Victoria, they prayed that they would find a church nearby to get involved with. One Sunday afternoon, a friendly woman rang their doorbell and handed them a petunia and a brochure about Waterbrooke. It was one of our founders, Maureen Bonner, with a group from the church reaching out in new neighborhoods. The Washingtons decided to give Waterbrooke a try, and 23 years later, they’re still here. They enjoy the interactions with other believers who encourage one other and love one another because of Jesus.

Over the years, Bruce has been involved in several ministries at Waterbrooke, including serving on the tech team – before it got so complicated – and teaching Sunday School and participating in outreach events. Currently he helps with the biblical counseling ministry and with teaching youth group, and he occasionally preaches in Pastor Kevin’s absence.

When asked in what way he would encourage the believers at Waterbrooke, Bruce echoes Pastor Kevin’s recent reminders to not to give up on the person we think may be too “far gone” to be reached by God. All of us can look for others who seem to be floating in the background, who may be hurting or afraid. After all, at one time, Bruce himself had rejected God. Yet he experienced the power of resurrection in his life, proof that God is alive and well and at work in the most unexpected ways. ♦

Karen Kowalke and her family started attending Waterbrooke in 2000, and for the past 15 years, she’s handled finance and human resources for the church. She enjoys hiking at their Black Hills cabin, reading, and improving her rusty French.

