

Last chance to sign-up TODAY!



May 26 - 6:00pm

We are **so appreciative** of all our volunteers and your heart to serve at St. Albert Alliance Church - and we want to say **THANK YOU!**

All StAAC Volunteers are invited to join us for an evening of food, games, awards and music

RSVP NOW @ staalliance.org
or via the StAAC App

STEPPING INTO YOUR story

The Cross Shaped Story

May 21, 2017 ~ Matt Garvin

There is a unique race that is yours to run.

Let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith.

Hebrews 12:1b-2a NIV

We need to thunder from our pulpits and celebrate at every turn in the life of the church that God is calling people into education, the arts, public office, business, engineering, medicine, the service professions – quite literally into every area and sector of human life. We need to proclaim this truth and celebrate it often because the older, unbiblical notion is so deeply embedded in our corporate consciousness.

Gordon Smith

The danger in focusing on stepping into our story is that there are strong forces encouraging you to run the _____ race.

The Flesh: wants to minimize pain and maximize pleasure

Whoever sows to please their flesh, from the flesh will reap destruction; whoever sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life.

Galatians 6:8 NIV

The Devil: tries to get you to believe lies about where life is found

The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.

John 10:10 NIV

The World: Promises ways to alleviate the pain and increase the pleasure of life

Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.

Romans 12:2a NIV

The disciples wanted to win the race in the “normal” way.

From that time on Jesus began to explain to his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things at the hands of the elders, the chief priests and the teachers of the law, and that he must be killed and on the third day be raised to life. Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. “Never, Lord!” he said. “This shall never happen to you!” Jesus turned and said to Peter, “Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me; you do not have in mind the concerns of God, but merely human concerns.”

Matthew 16:21-23 NIV

Seeing the false story and the brokenness it produces, is actually the starting point to finding your story.

An authentic Christian conversion fosters our capacity to discern the call of God to be in the world. However, a Christian conversion just as surely enables the believer to see and feel, to understand affectively, that their identity is not anchored in a world that is alienated from Christ... The whole process of conversion necessarily needs to highlight and cultivate this discontinuity or, quite simply, it is not a Christian conversion.

Gordon Smith

Jesus introduces a completely new way of approaching a broken world: cross-shaped love.

Then Jesus said to his disciples, “Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me.”

Matthew 16:24 NIV

Because Jesus bore the cross uniquely for us, we do not have to purchase forgiveness again; it’s been done. But because, as he himself said, following him involves taking up the cross, we should expect, as the New Testament tells us repeatedly, that to build on his foundation will be to find the cross etched into the pattern of our life and work over and over again.

N.T. Wright

The great paradox of the Christian faith is that it is in being willing to _____ our lives we actually _____ real life.

For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will find it. What good will it be for someone to gain the whole world, yet forfeit their soul? Or what can anyone give in exchange for their soul?

Matthew 16:25-26 NIV

There is either the pain of self-denial or the pain of self-destruction.
Anne Voscamp

And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.

Romans 8:28 NIV

The race we are called to run leads us away from _____ and directly into the pain of the world, in the shape of a cross.

God had called us to this place (Nazi concentration camp), and here was now our task. I had to learn not to look forward constantly to being released, but to accept the fact that I was here and that my calling was here. All of this was not a mistake; God makes no mistakes. He looks upon trouble and grief with the intent that we shall bring it to him and leave it with him. That was the lesson I had to learn here.

Corrie Ten Boom

The Christian Vocation is to be in prayer, in the Spirit, at the place where the world is in pain, and as we embrace that vocation, we discover it to be the way of following Christ, shaped according to his messianic vocation to the cross, with arms outstretched, holding on simultaneously to the pain of the world and the love of God.

N.T. Wright

**Where is Jesus inviting you
to step into the pain and brokenness of the world
and live according to his cross-shaped pattern
and not the pattern of the world?**