

Letters of ENCOURAGEMENT

God Loves You  No Matter What

April 17, 2024

A Note from Pastor April & April Andrick



Dear Friends,

Today's letter is a tag team from the Aprils — Pastor April and April Andrick, our Director of Youth Ministry.

April Blaine: While I had always enjoyed outdoor gardening, it wasn't until the pandemic that I ventured into indoor houseplants. They seemed to require a lot more attention and care than I had time for. How much water to give them? How much sunlight did they need?

My first few attempts had ended badly, so I was reluctant to give it another try. Part of what nudged me back in that direction was an invitation from a local businesswoman to purchase some very specific plants designed for beginners, with very clear instructions on how to care for them. She was even available for consultations. It was exactly what I needed.



With the right instructions and guidance, I soon found that indoor gardening was way more manageable than I had originally thought. Not only that, but as my plants grew, I started learning how easy it was to grow new plants from the existing ones.

Nature has this amazing way of bringing life not only from seeds, but also sometimes from the discarded stems and leaves of existing plants (a process called propagation).

My mom was the main person who began passing on this knowledge to me. We started with some of the hanging plants, and recently we successfully grew three new African violet plants from the leaves of a plant that had belonged to



my late grandmother! I have loved watching my stems become new plants, and my favorite part of all was that it didn't cost a thing!



The whole process itself mimics the patterns of death and resurrection that we are celebrating during this Easter season. Nature doesn't waste the things that have been cut off or died. It is out of those very things that new life can come.

April Andrick: As we thought about ways to engage our youth in raising funds for their summer camp and other endeavors, we thought it might make some sense to give them a chance to experience this process firsthand.



Most of the time, our fundraisers are a single act of service and support — providing a meal, washing a car, or selling an item. They are tasks to be completed. Working with plants, however, would take time, commitment, and attention to the process.

The natural benefits of working with plants really fueled our passion for this endeavor. Working hands-on with plants and seeing them flourish can help foster better self-esteem and a sense of accomplishment and responsibility. It can help us lean toward a sense of long-term benefits and satisfaction, offsetting the instant gratification we seek in most areas of life. Working with plants has also been proven to help reduce stress, depression, and anxiety, all things our youth are battling.

Additionally, none of the other fundraisers really offer the opportunity for both sides to engage in intergenerational relationships with each other. Imagine the conversations that could also root and thrive between the youth and those willing to share their knowledge and experience — the learning of a new skill set for the youth, maybe even an undiscovered

passion, and the legacy of information passed down by those willing to share what might have once been passed down to them.



April Blaine: Are you a gardener who loves indoor plants? Do you have some plants already growing in your home that could easily be propagated?

In the first couple of weeks of August, we will be inviting folks in the congregation to bring a few of their houseplants to the church and assist our youth in learning how to take the leaves and stems and grow new plants.

The youth will then watch as new roots begin to grow, and eventually pot those plants and nurture them into maturity. **The results will be a spring indoor plant sale for the congregation to purchase and support our youth!**

We expect that all of us will learn some things when people bring their knowledge and passion together and share them with the youth.

Let us know now that you might be interested in this project and what kind of indoor plants you have growing in your house that you could offer. We would love for some of you to come in person and actually work with the youth in showing them how to propagate and care for the plants throughout the process!



Copy this link into your browser to share your interest.
(<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSf5GjGKpamijqeoECKect28owVjg7Iv4WlZxZCm9b6SmJZE1w/viewform>)

For now, use the spring and summer to let your plant babies grow some extra foliage and be ready for pruning and propagating!

We're excited about how we will be able to work together to make the story of resurrection even more alive for our young people through this intergenerational project!

April & April

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Here are the Aprils at a Vietnamese cooking class with the delicious Pho they made.