



GRACE NOTES



Volume 10, Issue 5
May 2021

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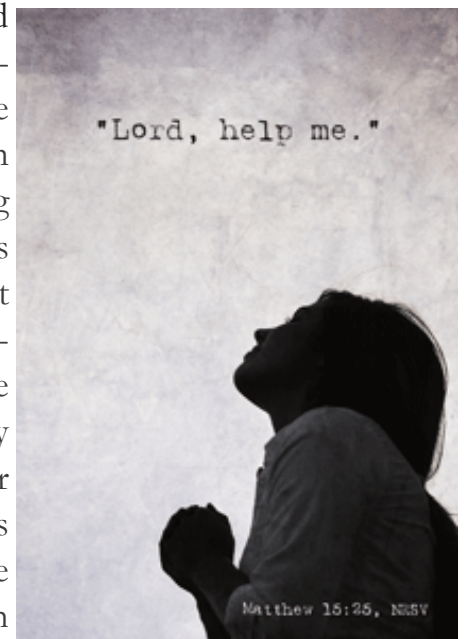
PASTOR'S PEN

“A Mother Unlike Many Others”

May 9th will be celebrated as Mother's Day. How did the day originate? Where did it come from? Well, Mother's Day is celebrated by many people around the world but not always in the same month. In some areas it is celebrated in the month of March. Here, in the United States we have set aside May 9th as a day to pay special respect to all moms. So, ladies whether you are a mom or not you have or have had a mom and so we wish a Happy Mother's Day to all of you.

For history's sake the modern Mother's Day began in the United States, at the initiative of Anna Jarvis in the early 20th century. Like many other “special days” Mother's Day” has become heavily commercialized. There are probably more telephone calls made and more cards sent on this day than any other day of the year. What was special about your Mom? When you think of your mom what special thoughts come to your mind? Why was your mom unlike many other mothers?

Allow me to take a few moments and share with you the story of a very special mom for whom we should all be grateful. No, she was by no means perfect and no her children were far from perfect. Her husband was a non believer. She had one son who lived a wild and reckless life and who struggled with sexual immorality. He showed no desire to entertain the thought of living a Christian life. Rather than go to his mother's church he brought young women into his parent's home to satisfy his sexual pleasures. When he joined a popular cult of the day it was the “last straw” for his mother who ordered him out of the house. She loved him, she wept tears over him and every day she prayed for him. She would go to her minister with tears streaming down her cheeks saying, “What can I do?” It looked like there was very little she could do except pray for him and so pray for him she did.



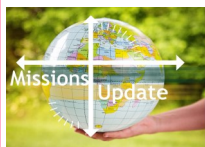
Surprisingly her son managed to get a good education and began to make his way in the world as a noted speaker. Still, he had no interest in the Christian faith. His mother continued to pray for his salvation. As a means of sharpening his skills he went to listen to a man who excelled in rhetoric and persuasion. Surprisingly enough the man happened to be his mother's minister! He knew who the man was but he was not interested in what he had to say but "how he said it." Over a period of time this all changed and his heart became convicted of his sinful lifestyle as God called him by his grace to become a follower of Jesus Christ.

Who was this man? Who was his mother? Who was his mother's minister? The minister's name was Ambrose, the mother's name was Monica and the runaway son was none other than St. Augustine who became one of the greatest leaders in the early Christian Church. He went on to silence the heresies of many of the heretics of his day. Augustine believed that it was by grace and grace alone that we live and die. John Calvin cites Augustine as an authority in theology. Dr RC Sproul believed that, "Augustine was undoubtedly the greatest theologian of the early church." As an interesting side-line the constant prayers and tears for her son had the effect of converting her husband to Christ before his death.

The prayers of a Christian mom can lead to great and wonderful things. Never stop praying.

HAPPY MOTHER'S DAY

Pastor John Fraser



Missions Updates!

Missions would like to remind everyone to stop and read the letters we receive from all the missionaries we support. Mandy posts as many as space will allow in the Newsletter but there isn't room to print all of them in our monthly report. Mandy does a wonderful job of posting them on the bulletin board located in the Narthex.

John and Abby Schuller with CRU are proud to announce the birth of their beautiful daughter. Please keep them in your prayers. They expressed their gratitude for our support of their ministry and hope we will be able to continue to help them continue their Mission.

With praise and blessings
Shelby Reed, Missions

A Little Easter Fun!





Hi again! It is now late April and you will be reading this in May when we will be approaching mid-year. How time flies. That brings me to the heart of my message for the month. Time does pass quickly and all of us will get to a point in our lives when God takes us home. When that happens and we face Him at last, will your worldly affairs be in order and will He be one of your beneficiaries? I read an article some time ago that said that most Americans die without a will. The article went on to list some very well-known people, including one that I was not familiar with. Thomas Jarman, who was, according to the article, considered to be one of the greatest legal experts on wills, died without one.

On average we spend 40+ years accumulating assets, then another 15 or 20 years or so trying to conserve those assets, so we do not outlive them. But, given all those years of focus, very little, if any, time is spent planning for their distribution when we no longer need them. I think that most of us are afraid to admit that we will ultimately die. But death is inevitable and refusing to plan for it will not change that fact.

Perhaps it is time to consider making a provision in your will for our church or another ministry or charity that you want to support. Your will can specify your charitable intentions and provide the opportunity to express your faith and stewardship. It is up to you to make sure your final statement reflects your faith and your values. But your will is just one way to accomplish this. There are also charitable trusts, or endowments that can be used to further the mission of our church.

On another subject, did any of you see the articles about the community being planned on property located south of our lot and east of US-27? It stated that there would be more than 5,000 homes built along with commercial space and of course all the necessary infrastructure. Wow, 5,000 homes to me says 10,000 people. That is twice the size of my hometown! But, add those to the Villages homes that are being built just a few miles west of us and that adds to a large number. So, the question that comes to my mind is how do we as a church position ourselves to have the facilities and programs that will allow us to share the Gospel with those new people?

I ask each of you to pray that we will have the wisdom to recognize and follow the path our Heavenly Father lays before us.

Dave Hoffmeyer for the
Stewardship & Finance Team



*"You shall love
your neighbor
as yourself."*

Matthew 22:39, NRSV

MAY



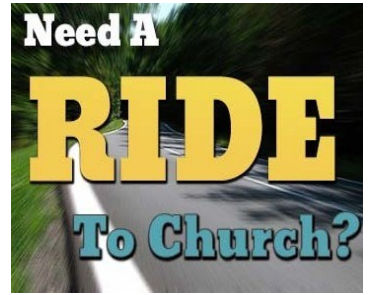
Sally Peck - 3rd
Rose Rode - 11th
Cindy Semenik - 14th
Roger Bass - 17th
Linda Klee - 19th
Jeanette Rosenkrans - 21st



John & Louise Romano - 3rd
Jim & Gail Kohler - 20th
Wally Sr. & Linda Klee - 21st

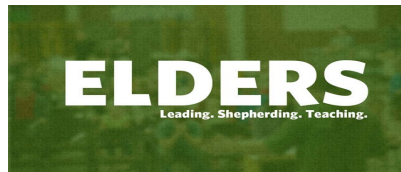
Need a ride?

Give us a call and let us know. We have friends that would love to help!
(352) 552-0052



The Last Friday Women's Breakfast is scheduled for

May 28th at 8:30am
at Blooms in Leesburg



John Fraser
Larry Hochhalter
Jack Homoney
Wally Klee, Sr.
Kris Ogden
Marvin Pool
Shelby Reed
Al Rode, Jr.
Rick Rosenkrans
Jim Teets



All-Church Prayer

May 6th & 20th
1:00PM - 2:00PM

We would love to hear all of your prayer requests. You can email them to GraceEPCLeesburg@gmail.com or call the office at (352) 552-0052.



The Widow's Luncheon is scheduled for
Thursday, May 20th
at 11:30am.

It will be at Sammy's Restaurant in Wildwood at 9668 N. US Hwy 301, Ste 800 in Wildwood

Please let Sue know if you are attending by Sunday, May 16th.



CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

By Elder Linda Pool

SEEK YE FIRST

Seek ye first the kingdom of God
 And his righteousness,
 And all these things shall be added unto you.
 Allelu, Alleluia.

Ask and it shall be given unto you,
 Seek and ye shall find.
 Knock and the door shall be opened unto you.
 Allelu, Alleluia.

--Karen Lafferty

Seek first the kingdom of God. In other words, make it a priority. It sure would feel safer if Jesus had said to take care of our needs first and then to look for ways to build His kingdom. That's because we want to give out of our overflow, after we know we have taken care of our needs. But Jesus tells us to put Him first, seeking His Kingdom and His righteousness, trusting that He will meet our needs.

We can share honestly everything about ourselves with Christ, knowing that He will purify our hearts. His love is strong enough to mold our desires and to remove any obstacles that keep us from wanting His kingdom first.

So He invites us to *ask*--to tell Him all our desires, not just the spiritually correct ones. We may never know what Jesus thinks about them until we do. He invites us to *seek*, for only in the seeking can we find what we truly need. He invites us to *knock*, expecting him to answer. We can only do that when we realize how much God loves us. He only has our best interests in mind. He isn't stingy nor does He rejoice when He sees us in need. Like a loving father, He delights in caring for us, and He wants us to know He can be trusted.

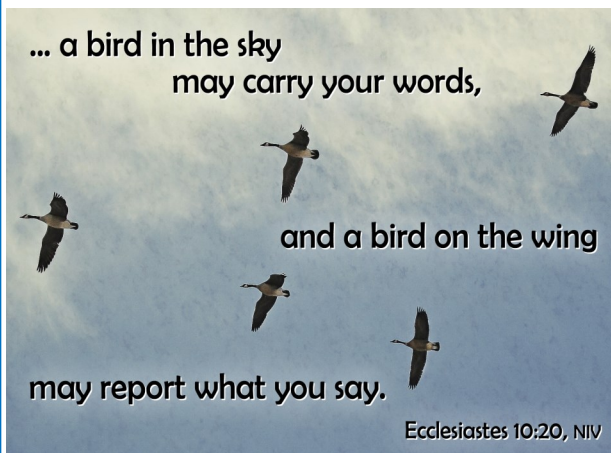
But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. Matthew 6:33

PRAYER: Ask, seek, knock. Talk with the Lord about how you can seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, today and every day.

From "*Songs 4 Worship presents Open the Eyes of My Heart*"




May in Ecclesiastes - Living Life Backward



- May 2nd** The Power of Paradox (7:1-29)
- May 9th** The Proof of Providence (8:1-17)
- May 16th** Enjoy Life! (9:1-18)
- May 23rd** How to Live Skillfully (10:1-20)
- May 30th** Cast Your Bread Upon the Waters (11:1-10)

May 2021

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
2 Communion Sunday 10:00am Worship 11:15am Sunday School	3 6:30pm Royal Highlands Small Group Sally Peck Birthday John & Louise Romano Anniversary	4 8:00am Perkins Men's Bible Study	5 4:30pm Choir	6 1:00pm All Church Prayer Meeting	7	8
9 10:00am Worship 11:15am Sunday School	10 6:30pm Royal Highlands Small Group 6:30pm Howey Monday Small Group	11 8:00am Perkins Men's Bible Study 6:30pm Howey Tuesday Small Group Rose Rode Birthday	12 4:30pm Choir 2:00pm Villages Small Group	13 10:00am Finance Committee Meeting 10:30am Plantation Small Group	14 Cindy Semenik Birthday	15
16 10:00am Worship 11:15am Sunday School	17 6:30pm Royal Highlands Small Group Roger Bass Birthday	18 8:00am Perkins Men's Bible Study 10:00am Session Meeting	19 4:30pm Choir Linda Klee Birthday	20 11:30am Widow's Luncheon 1:00pm All Church Prayer Meeting Jim & Gail Kohler Anniversary	21 Jeanette Rosenkrans Birthday Wally Sr. & Linda Klee Anniversary	22
23 10:00am Worship 11:15am Sunday School	24 6:30pm Royal Highlands Small Group 6:30pm Howey Monday Small Group	25 8:00am Perkins Men's Bible Study 6:30pm Howey Tuesday Small Group	26 4:30pm Choir 2:00pm Villages Small Group	27 10:30am Plantation Small Group	28 8:30am Last Friday Women's Breakfast	29
30 10:00am Worship 11:15am Sunday School	31 6:30pm Small Group with Bob Schielke 					

Mary of the Calabar

“God has chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty....things which are despised, hath God chosen.” (1 Corinthians 1: 27-28)

Towards the end of this month the Church celebrates Pentecost—the birth of the Christian Church. Pentecost springs from the Old Testament Festival of Weeks or Harvest. The harvest of believers from all over the globe still happens as Christian missions are still making inroads in many countries. Mary Slessor was one of the most heroic women who went to the Calabar, West Africa (now Nigeria) from 1876–1915 bringing the gospel to the natives.

Mary grew up in the slums of Dundee, Scotland but faithfully attended church with her mother and siblings. They were intrigued with missionary stories and were always present when a missionary was speaking in church. She was 28 years old when she sailed for the Calabar, under the auspices of the United Presbyterian Church of Scotland. She taught children to read and write, defended the abused, oversaw the building of schools and churches, was asked to sit in the courts because of her wise judgment and love of people, worked at overcoming witchcraft and heathen customs among the people, such as the killing of twins and their mother. She knew she had to live a Christian life and preach the truth about God and redemption through Christ before natives would accept her teaching and her Savior.

Who knew that a girl from the slums would turn hearts to Christ in Africa? She would often say, “It is not Mary Slessor, but God and our United prayers that have brought blessings to the Calabar. Christ shall have all the honor and glory for the multitudes saved.” When she died in 1915 the natives cried bitterly, “Our mother is dead.” (info taken from: Mary Slessor, Among the Cannibals of Calabar, by Thomas John Bach)

God still uses people to build his church, sometimes under seemingly impossible circumstances. But it is always His plan and for His glory. Let us continue to pray for the Church that she will be faithful to her Lord and master.

Blessings,
Jill Fraser



Safety Team

Join us **May 20th** after the All-Church Prayer Meeting! Our thinking is to encourage more attendees for both and we will save y'all two trips to the church! Let's face it ... we can all benefit from more prayers too.

Our Safety Team has a few “**Protectors**” and we don't need many, if you want to join that team there will be opportunities for laser training (due to the shortage of ammunition) on **May 27th** at 1:00. As ammunition becomes more available, we will have range training too.

“**Medical**” We need people with medical backgrounds even if just to use an AED and first aid kit. If you have any medical experience, we need help checking out our current supplies and assess what other supplies we may need to add or replace, please come to the meeting on **May 20th**.

“**Eyes and Ears**” We need volunteers to watch the south parking lot from the meeting room during services, and to take turns sitting in the narthex during services. Recently a few parishioners were kept from joining us because no one saw the late arrivers... that's very sad! Soon we will start using radios and training will be available for that in June.

What we REALLY NEED is people who can help other people in the unlikely event that we need to evacuate the building. Just knowing where the exits are and having the ability to gather another person's belongings and help them to safety is one of the biggest jobs. I expect everyone here has the heart for this ministry. Hopefully we can talk about this some Sunday after church.

And most importantly... keep this ministry in your prayers – thank you!



Worship: 700 S. 9th St., Leesburg, FL

Mailing: P. O. Box 490001

Leesburg, FL 34749

352-552-0052

Rev. Dr. Dave Dorst

Email: graceepclesburg@gmail.com

Website: Graceepchurch.org

Like us on Facebook: Grace EPC

All activities are tentative and subject to change.

SUNDAYS:

- 10:00 AM ~ Worship
- 11:15 AM ~ Sunday School

MONDAYS:

- 6:30 PM ~ Royal Highlands Small Group
- 6:30 PM ~ Howey Monday Small Group (5/10 & 5/24)

TUESDAYS:

- 8:00 AM ~ Men's Bible Study & Breakfast @ Perkins
- 10:00 AM ~ Session Meeting (5/18)
- 6:30 PM ~ Howey Tuesday Small Group (5/11 & 5/25)

WEDNESDAYS:

- 2:00 PM ~ Villages Small Group (5/12 & 5/26)
- 4:30 PM ~ Choir Practice

THURSDAYS:

- 10:00 AM ~ Stewardship & Finance Committee Meeting (5/13)
- 10:30 AM ~ Plantation Small Group (5/13 & 5/27)
- 11:30 AM ~ Widow's Luncheon (5/20) ~
- 1:00 PM ~ All Church Prayer - (5/6 & 5/20)

FRIDAYS:

- 8:30 AM ~ Last Friday Women's Breakfast (5/28) at Blooms in Leesburg