



GRACE NOTES



Volume 10, Issue 7
July 2021

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“Faith of Our Fathers”

When we think of, “Faith of our Fathers,” we think of the hymn by Frederick W Faber. The hymn reminds us of the trials and tribulations of those who endured much in order to maintain the faith. As you read through the following lines, I would like you to think and give thanks for the faith and beliefs of America’s founding fathers. I want you to think about such men as George Washington, Alexander Hamilton, Benjamin Franklin, John Adams, Thomas Jefferson, James Madison and one very prominent Presbyterian minister by the name of John Witherspoon. I also want you to think of several men who in their university years studied under Witherspoon.

It has been said by historians that the Founding Fathers were a mixture of deists and Christians. Deists were those who believed that God created the world but then stepped back and refused to intervene. Not all those who claimed to be Christians necessarily believed in the divinity of Christ. There is a wide divide between what Scripture claims constitutes one to be a Christian and what many believed made for a Christian in 1776. However, all of our Founding Fathers believed in the separation of Church and State. They maintained that people could believe in any god they so decided. The Founding Fathers refused to form a state church. It should be pointed out that many of our early founders came from an Anglican and Presbyterian background.

What I would like to share with you now are those men that we seldom hear of but who did much in bringing these United States together. The following comes from the website of Ligonier Ministries.

The Scots-Irish filled the ranks of General George Washington’s army for the duration of the Revolutionary War. At Valley Forge, when many had deserted, the Scots-Irish remained, enduring the cold and hunger. During the war, a Hessian officer wrote home: *“Call this war by whatever name you may, only call it not an American rebellion; it is nothing more or less than a Scotch Irish Presbyterian rebellion.”*

As Presbyterian churches in the South and Middle Colonies proliferated under the revival, the need for more clergy made a theological school imperative. Pro-revival Presbyterian ministers in 1747 received a charter to start the College of New Jersey for college studies and training ministers. Several prominent leaders served as president of the new college, including Jonathan Edwards. By the 1760s, the school needed a new president, and the trustees selected a Presbyterian minister from Scotland, John Witherspoon (1723–1794), to lead the fledgling school. In 1768, the Witherspoon family arrived in New Jersey. His first political sermon, preached in May 1776, urged resistance to tyranny as obedience to God and encouraged listeners to trust in God to bring good out of evil. A member of the British Parliament exclaimed, *“Cousin America has run off with a Presbyterian parson.”* The American forces that defeated the redcoats at Kings Mountain were predominately Scots-Irish, led by five colonels who were Presbyterian elders.



When the Second Continental Congress convened in Philadelphia, Witherspoon served as the only clergy delegate and signed the Declaration of Independence on July 4, 1776. Witherspoon also signed the Articles of Confederation (1778), helped ratify the Constitution (1787) as a member of the New Jersey convention, and served on the Board of War and Board of Foreign Affairs.

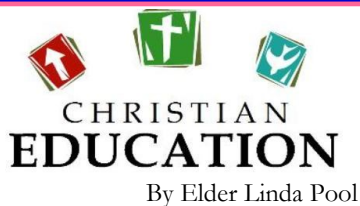
The War for Independence cost Witherspoon dearly; he lost two of his sons in battle. He was keenly aware of God's providence in the conflict and wrote several proclamations on behalf of Congress, calling on Americans to offer God thanksgiving for His mercy.

Presbyterian inspiration upon American government came through Witherspoon's most prominent student, James Madison, the "Father of the Constitution" and fourth president of the United States. Madison studied at the College of New Jersey, even staying an extra year after graduation in 1771 to study Hebrew. In addition to his famous student who became president, Witherspoon's former pupils included a vice president, twelve members of the Continental Congress, five delegates to the Constitutional Convention, forty-nine U.S. representatives, twenty-eight senators, and three Supreme Court justices.

When George Washington was elected president in 1789, the Presbyterian General Assembly sent him a congratulatory letter; Washington replied, reminding the Presbyterians, "*All men within our territories are protected in worshipping the Deity according to the dictates of their conscience.*"

Please allow this Canadian and his wife (hopefully soon to become American) to wish one and all a very Happy July 4th. Also, please don't forget to pray for all of our leaders on every level of government. GOD bless America

(Pastor) John Fraser



OH LORD, YOU'RE BEAUTIFUL

O Lord, You're beautiful,
Your face is all I seek,
For when Your eyes are on this child,
Your grace abounds to me.
--Keith Green

What hope keeps you going when life gets rough? This song tells us that we can seek the Lord's face and there, in His eyes, find the grace to go on.

Simeon sought the Lord's face. We read about him in Luke 2:25, shortly after the birth of Jesus. Simeon had waited his whole life to see God's plan unfold. The Holy Spirit had promised Simeon that he would see the Messiah, and that promise had kept his hope alive. Imagine Simeon's joy when, after a lifetime of obedience and longing, he looked into the face of Jesus!

Like Simeon, we, too, will one day see Jesus. Revelation 22:4 promises that we "will see his face." What better hope to keep our spirits refreshed than knowing we will see God. This truth transforms the hard work of serving Him into the sweet anticipation of being with Him. The One who called us and equips us will one day welcome us home.

Yet even today, God promises that we can see His face. The psalmist wrote, "Let your face shine on your servant; save me in your unfailing love"(Psalm31:16). When you seek God's face, you will find it—in prayer, in His Word, in the kind word of a friend. Look closely today. Ask God to reveal His face to you.

My heart says of you, "Seek his face!" Your face, LORD, I will seek. PSALM 27:8

PRAYER: Ask the Lord to show you His face today. Be ready for Him to reveal Himself in unexpected ways.





After getting a gentle nudge from our office staff I was forced to start thinking about what I could write this month that would be exciting and interesting for you the reader. As usual I came up with a big blank. But then, I picked up an article I found thought provoking. It talked about the billions of dollars spent in this country every year with the sole intent of convincing us that we don't have enough. Enough what, you might ask. Well, enough stuff, just stuff. But the rest of the message is that if we would just buy what they are selling we will be closer to "enough." Closer, but not there yet. While pondering this I read something that referred me to Paul's 2nd letter to the Corinthians. There, Paul writes that all we have is from the generosity of God and that He has and will continue to provide us with more than enough. Doesn't that mean that I have will enough for my needs while also having some left over with which to be generous? After all, if all that we have is from God, then giving back to God is simply a matter of trust that God will continue to fill our needs. Now let's differentiate between "needs" and "wants." God does not say that He will fulfill all our "wants." This is a message that we all need to remember as we prayerfully consider our giving for our church.

Supporting our church is not simply putting some money in the plate during services. That really amounts to just paying an admission. Supporting the church is cheerfully giving of our time and talents in addition to our money, to aid the church in its mission to reach out to the surrounding community and extend God's influence into more lives. Currently, we are somewhat limited in our ability to do that as we are an older congregation with limited facilities. I know that I have said this before, but I would like to see us able to safely house at least double our current attendance and have space for additional activities. And, not to keep beating the horse, but this area is continuing to grow, and we should be praying about and discussing what we can do to attract more of those that are moving in. While overall attendance at church services is down, there was a poll that discovered that 44% of the unchurched admitted to praying on a regular basis and I think that many of those are looking for a church but just don't pursue it. That is a lot of people and I think that many of them would appreciate being invited into a church that is as friendly as ours.

In closing I remind each of you that our mission is to spread God's word and that you should be prayerfully looking for ways that you can use your time, your talents and your money to help the church in doing that.

In the Spirit of Christ,
Dave Hoffmeyer for the
Stewardship & Finance Committee



... we have been approved
by God to be entrusted with
the message of the gospel ...

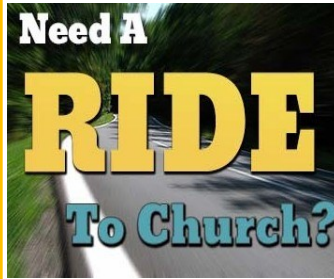
1 Thessalonians 2:4, NRSV



Brian Harris - 1st
 Jean Howse-Henke - 7th
 Louise Romano - 7th
 Geri Hillhouse - 10th
 Caren Byrnes - 13th
 Linda Miazga - 13th
 Vonnie Frey - 20th
 Pat Ghen - 20th
 Tom Scott - 22nd
 Vera Besterman - 26th
 Ben Schaeffer - 27th
 Marvin Gertz - 29th
 Josh Dorst - 31st



Pastor John & Jill Fraser - 2nd
 Pastor Dave & Ann Dorst - 5th
 Moe & Kathleen Bittle - 16th



Need a ride? Can we help you with anything?
 Let us know!



The Last Friday Women's Breakfast
 is scheduled for
July 30th 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

July 1st & 15th
 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 Group will be breaking for summer. The next luncheon will be in September. Have a great summer and safe travels!



Cheryl and Craig Sexton

Cheryl and Craig Sexton, live in Continental Country Club in Leesburg. Cheryl and her husband Craig were both born in Flint, Michigan. They both lived in Flint until Cheryl's parents moved to a smaller town (Clio), north of Flint, when Cheryl was 4 years old.

Craig graduated 1968 from Southwestern High School in Flint, and Cheryl graduated 1969 from Clio High School. They met in Flint in 1968 and were married two years later. They celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary in December 2020.

Cheryl and Craig have 3 children. Phillip, the oldest, is an RN at a hospital in Saginaw, Michigan. Marcy has an Associate degree of Applied Science and now works for a retail store called "Meijers" and is becoming a manager for the chain. Timothy, the youngest, has a Bachelor of Business Administration and works for the VA Hospital in Saginaw, Michigan. They have 12 grandchildren and 8 great grandchildren.

Craig has a degree in business and was a supervisor in the manufacturing field. Cheryl attended Eastern Michigan University. Most of her work history is in business, as a supervisor in grocery, small stint as a Wonder Bread driver, District Manager in the inventory field and lastly, Accounts Receivable with a fishing and trucking company here in Florida.

They decided they wanted to move to Florida in 2001 and finally made the move in 2005. Cheryl's interests are anything in the arts field, reading and working in their yard. Craig's interests are relaxing around the house and small trips around Florida.

Cheryl started attending Grace EPC with her friend Joyce Falk and later became a member. She enjoys the family of Grace EPC and hopes we, as a church, continue to grow, wherever that may be.



Pray for the Peace of Jerusalem

By Elder Pat Byrnes

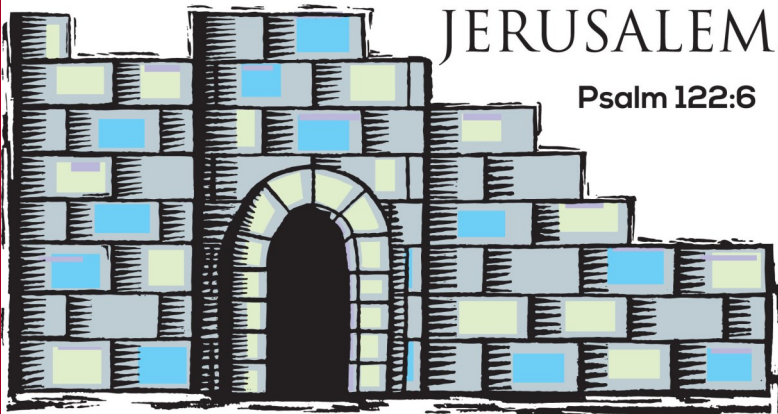
The title of this article is taken from the words of King David in Psalm 122 verse 6. It is one of the grouping of Psalms known as the songs of ascent that were sung by the priests as they ascended the stairs to the temple mount. Psalm 122 starts out with the familiar words of David... *I was glad when they said to me, "Let us go to the house of the Lord!"* Take a few minutes and read the whole psalm. It is only eight verses but gives a snapshot of David's love for Jerusalem because it was ordained by God as a city for Israel... a special place to gather and give thanks and honor to His name.

I am stimulated to think of this verse again and again as I watch the news about events in the Middle East, especially the recent re-ignition of the ongoing Hamas/Palestinian antagonism of Israel. Certainly, we have plenty to pray about in our own country and we should. But I find myself praying a lot for Israel and I encourage you to as well. If it seems like taking sides in this conflict/standoff, it most certainly is. Why? Because God has already taken sides for Israel, the "apple of His eye" (Deut. 32:10), for no other reason than it pleases Him to do so. Take a look at Jeremiah chapter 31 for God's long term plan for Israel... He says in verse 3 *"I have loved you with an everlasting love; therefore I have continued my faithfulness to you."* His faithfulness is expressed in (verse 31) as a new covenant for the house of Judah and the house of Israel. And further in verse 38 *"Behold, the days are coming declares the Lord when the city (Jerusalem) shall be rebuilt for the Lord from the tower of Hananel to the Corner Gate..."*

Like a lot of people I have empathy for the Palestinians and I truly wish the Muslim nations would step up and take them into their societies where they belong. There are lots of reasons they don't, one of which would be to concede Jerusalem to Israel which is tantamount to conceding Islam to the "higher" Judeo/Christian faiths. God has placed his name in Zion. Psalm 132 starting at verse 13... *"For the Lord has chosen Zion; He has desired it for His dwelling place: 'This is my resting place forever; here I will dwell, for I have desired it'."* And actually, God has a plan for Israel's neighbors who really believe they need to live in Jerusalem. Check out Jeremiah 12:14-17. It reads... *"Thus says the Lord concerning all my evil neighbors who touch the heritage that I have given my people Israel to inherit: 'Behold, I will pluck them up from their land, and I will pluck up the house of Judah from among them. And after I have plucked them up, I will again have compassion on them, and I will bring them again each to his heritage and each to his land. And it shall come to pass, if they will diligently learn the ways of my people, to swear by my name, as the Lord lives, even as they taught my people to swear by Baal, then they shall be built up in the midst of my people. But if any nation will not listen, then I will utterly pluck it up and destroy it, declares the Lord'."* There is to be no dividing up the land, no "two-state solution." There is Israel

Pray for the PEACE of JERUSALEM.

Psalm 122:6



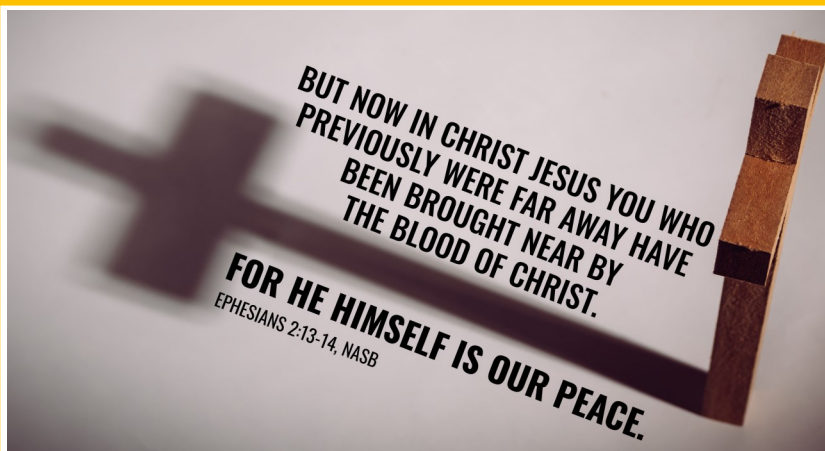
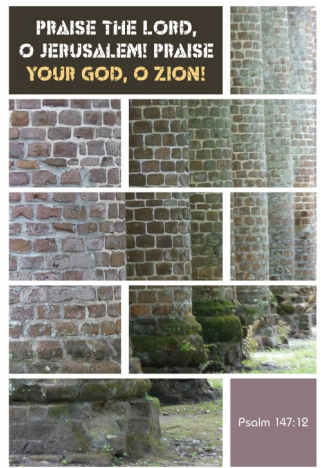
under God and anyone who diligently strives to seek and honor God is welcome to be built up within Israel. The prophet Joel presents the judgement God has planned for those who divide Israel in chapter 3 starting with verse 1... *"For behold, in those days and at that time, when I restore the fortunes of Judah and Jerusalem, I will gather all the nations and bring them down to the Valley of Jehoshaphat. And I will enter into judgment with them there, on behalf of my people and my heritage Israel, because they have scattered them among the nations and have divided up my land..."*

Continued on next page

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Without a Biblical world view, it is natural to try not to take sides, rather to try to come up with a fair and equitable accommodation for each. Unfortunately, most of the world does not have a Biblical world view. Hence the constant standing up for the rights of the Palestinians to the land God promised to Israel and urging Israel to accommodate them. But there can be no doubt about the outcome God has planned and willed for Israel and Jerusalem and the nations around her. We can certainly have empathy but with our Biblical world view, we must side with the omniscience and sovereignty of God.

You might recall the article I wrote earlier this year for the February newsletter about “The Intersection of prayer and God’s sovereignty.” In it, I explained the role God has created for us to pray for Him to bring about the things He wills to bring about. It seems the times are converging on these outcomes and I believe it is incumbent on us to lift them up to God in fervent prayer to bring them about just as He has promised in His faithfulness. John Bunyan, the famous Puritan, is said to have stated that praying for the peace of Jerusalem is the same as praying for Christ’s return because it will never come about without it. And so... “Amen, come Lord Jesus.” (Rev. 22:20)



July Sermon Series

The Christian’s Wealth, Work, and Warfare

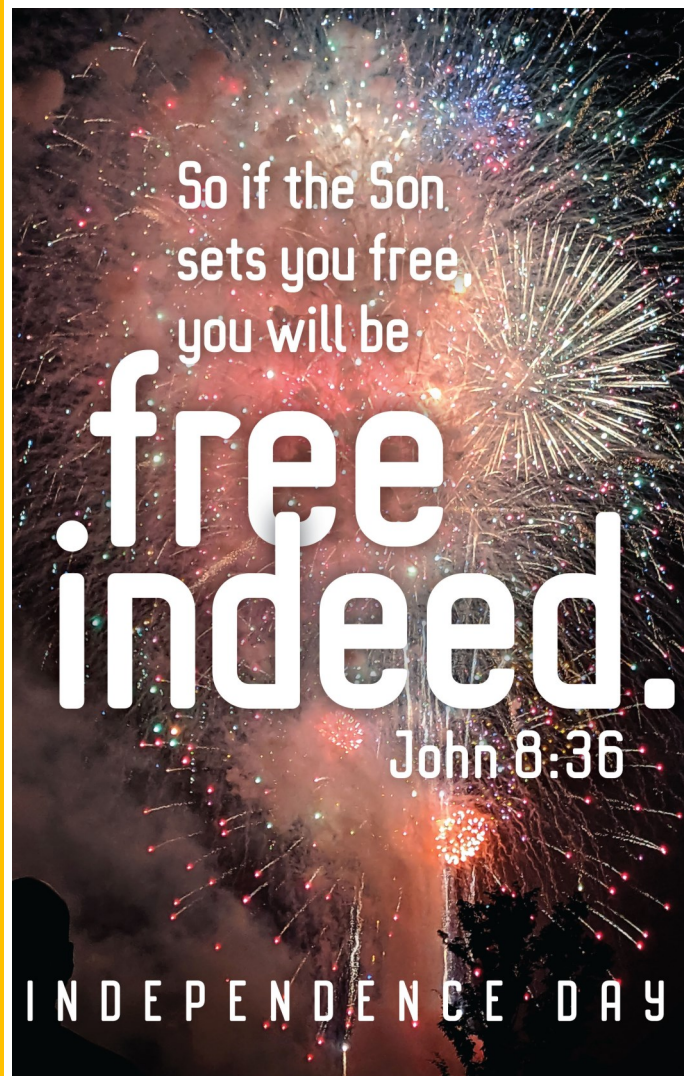
July 4th The Broken Down Wall

July 11th The Mystery Has Been Revealed

July 18th Transformed By His Love

July 25th Building Up the Body

Journey Through Ephesians



July 2021

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
4 Communion Sunday 9:30am Coffee & Fellowship 10:00am Worship 11:15am Sunday School	5 Pastor Dave & Ann Dorst Anniversary	6 8:00am Perkins Men's Bible Study	7 10:00am Small Group Bible Studies Committee Meeting Jean Howse-Henke Louise Romano Birthdays	8 10:00am Finance Committee Meeting 10:30am Plantation Small Group	9 Pastor John & Jill Fraser Anniversary	10 Geri Hillhouse Birthday
11 9:30am Coffee & Fellowship 10:00am Worship 11:15am Sunday School	12	13 8:00am Perkins Men's Bible Study Caren Byrnes Linda Miazga Birthdays	14 2:00pm Villages Small Group	15 1:00pm All Church Prayer Meeting	16 Moe & Kathleen Bittle Anniversary	17
18 9:30am Coffee & Fellowship 10:00am Worship 11:15am Sunday School	19	20 8:00am Perkins Men's Bible Study 10:00am Session Meeting Vonnie Frey Pat Ghen Birthdays	21 3:00pm - 6:00pm CPR/AED Training	22 10:30am Plantation Small Group Tom Scott Birthday	23	24
25 9:30am Coffee & Fellowship 10:00am Worship 11:15am Sunday School	26 Vera Besterman Birthday	27 8:00am Perkins Men's Bible Study Ben Schaeffer Birthday	28 2:00pm Villages Small Group	29 Marvin Gertz Birthday	30 8:30am Last Friday Women's Breakfast	31 Josh Dorst Birthday

Notes from your friendly neighborhood Administrator...

Flyers for Community News Boards: Want to get the word out about Grace? Grow the Kingdom? If your community allows posting on their bulletin boards, you can get a invitation flyer from Mandy to hang up and invite your neighbors to church! We would love to have them join us! Please let Mandy know if you would like a flyer for your community.



Operation Christmas Child (aka the ShoeBoxes): Don't forget we are still collecting for our ShoeBoxes for the children. We will be collecting for boys and girls ages 2-4 through July 11th. Then from July 12th—August 22nd we will be collecting for boys and girls ages 5-9. You can bring your items in now so we can sort them and see where we need more help, or you can bring them in October when we have our "Packing Party". If you are planning to participate, but are waiting to bring your items in, please let Mandy know so that we can make sure we have enough ShoeBoxes when packing day arrives.

Don't forget to check out the new website: www.GraceEPC.church

CPR/AED Training!

Wednesday, July 21st

3:00pm - 6:00pm

We would love for you to join us in a community training for CPR and AED basics in the case of an emergency. This awesome instructor is kindly doing the class for FREE and the tools you learn from it are invaluable. These will be things that you can also use at home in case of emergency with your loved ones, so we highly encourage you to attend. If you would like to join us, please let Mandy know so she can have a count for our instructor.

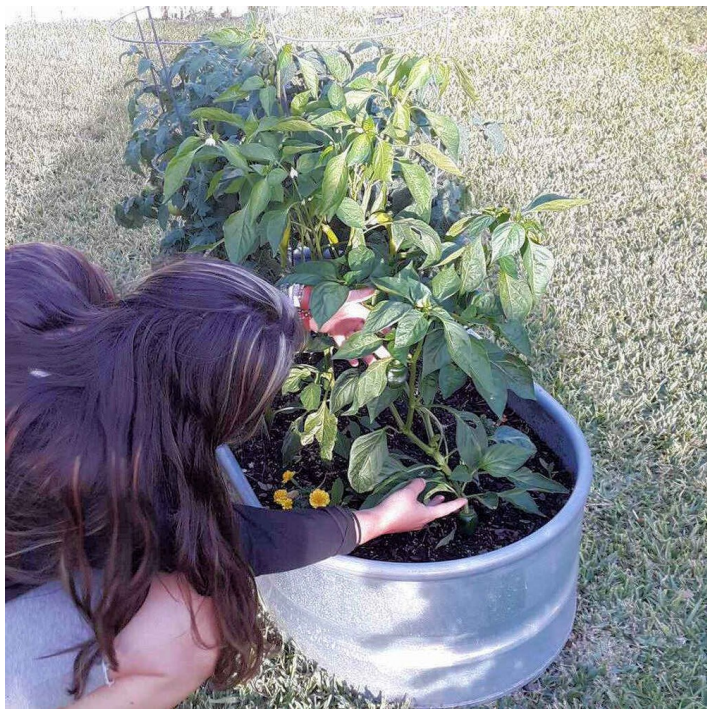


*It is not necessary to carry a CPR card to take the class or learn these valuable tools, but if you would like to have a card, there is a \$10 fee that the agency charges.



Garden Growth at the Women's Care Center

Recently, the ladies at the Women's Care Center were introduced to gardening. Not only were they blessed with two horse trough planters, but also everything needed to start – everything from soil & Miracle Gro to pepper, tomato and cucumber plants. They even got some seeds (green beans & peas) to start from scratch! It has been exciting to watch and experience the beauty of growing your own veggies. The ladies are reminded of their own growth as they have watched the roots take hold and the transformation take place. What a joy to watch something grow from seed to harvest and see the first tomato and pepper on the vine!



"So now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; but the greatest of these is love." 1 Corinthians 13:11-13

I think we are all familiar with this passage of scripture, have heard it many times perhaps especially heard it read at a wedding. Love is one of many fruits of the Spirit that we as believers are meant to bear (see Galatians 5:22-23). However, love is the preeminent fruit of the Spirit, a virtue that lasts forever as the above verse indicates.

We are living through turbulent times as we hear of riots, protests, violence, and racial discord. The Church itself it being challenged with many cultural concerns. Through it all we are required to love our neighbors as ourselves, especially those of the household of faith. Not only do we show love tangibly such as lending a helping hand in times of need, the giving of our time and resources, but also in prayer. Love makes us into believers who never stop praying for others. Do we pray for our unbelieving neighbors that they may be converted? Do we pray for the souls of our enemies – a much harder task, and yet we are commanded to do so.

When we give a prayer shawl/lapghan to someone remember to tell them that we lift them up in prayer, we care for them. We are trying to show our love and concern for them. Let us seek to love others in the Church and repent where we fall short – in so doing we bear witness that love never ends.

When this present world passes away, love will remain. Faith and hope, which focus on what we cannot see in the present, will pass away when we see God directly; but love will endure. Love will be made perfect in the world to come, we will love God perfectly, and we will love one another perfectly as we ourselves are made perfect in Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior.

Blessings,
Jill Fraser

Love

DOES NO WRONG TO
A NEIGHBOR;

therefore
Love

IS THE FULFILLING OF
the law.

ROMANS 13:10, ESV



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Rev. Dr. Dave Dorst

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Website: GraceEPC.church

Like us on Facebook: Grace EPC

All activities are tentative and subject to change.

SUNDAYS:

- 9:30 AM ~ Coffee & Fellowship
- 10:00 AM ~ Worship
- 11:15 AM ~ Sunday School

MONDAYS:

TUESDAYS:

- 8:00 AM ~ Men's Bible Study & Breakfast @ Perkins
- 10:00 AM ~ Session Meeting (7/20)

WEDNESDAYS:

- 2:00 PM ~ Villages Small Group (7/14 & 7/28)
- 4:30 PM ~ *No choir for the months of July and August*

THURSDAYS:

- 10:00 AM ~ Stewardship & Finance Committee Meeting (7/8)
- 10:30 AM ~ Plantation Small Group (7/8 & 7/22)
- 1:00 PM ~ All Church Prayer - (7/1 & 7/15)

FRIDAYS:

- 8:30 AM ~ Last Friday Women's Breakfast (7/30) ~ *Blooms in Leesburg*