



Volume 10, Issue 9 September 2021

Inside this issue:

Pastor's Pen cont'd	2
Christian Education	2
Stewardship & Finance	3
Birthdays & Anniversaries	4
Elders	4
Monthly Activities	4
Spotlight & Women's Bible Study	5
Bible Studies	6
Bible Studies cont	7
Calendar	8
Administrator Notes	9
Sermon Schedule	9
Missions	10
Missions cont	11
Important Dates	12

SEPTEMBER PASTOR'S PEN

"I Can't Wait to See You in September!"

Beloved Members and Friends of Grace EPC,

In my last Pastor's Pen in April, I wrote that I would see you in September and mentioned several things I was hoping for this summer. God has been faithful in answering all of those prayers and I want to give a brief report and a word about the fall.

I suggested that if anyone was heading up I-75, we would like to see you. Larry Hochhalter and his wife Pam took me up on the invitation! We had a delightful Lord's Day with them and I hope they reported back that I'm still preaching the Word. I'm so glad Larry and Pam could see the quaint town of Thomasville, GA.

I asked you to pray for me that God's Spirit would sustain me for this challenging assignment. This has, indeed, been a full-time job and I am tired! But God is faithful, as always, and good things have happened here. A large number of people have visited this summer and the Membership Committee tells me that there are 37 potential new members! Many of them began coming before I arrived, but it's wonderful that they kept coming all summer, when many folks in Georgia (as well as Florida!) head for cooler locations. As I write this, I'm preparing my final sermon here. We will have some time off and a chance to visit with our sons before returning to Grace on September 5th. I'm thankful for the break!

I also asked you to pray for and encourage Pastors John and Rick. I've watched the services and looked at each week's bulletin and prayer requests and I believe you've been praying and God has been answering. An interesting staff highlight is

that FPC Thomasville just hired a new Pastor of Student Ministries and I've had a chance to "break him in." His name is Tyler Wilson and he is a friend and former co-worker of Mandy Klee! God's World is indeed small.

Our prayers for Pastor Tim Filston and his wife Beth have been powerfully answered as well. Beth completed her chemotherapy treatments for pancreatic cancer. More than half of patients who undergo this several chemo regimen do not complete it, so that is a victory in and of itself. In addition, however, Beth just had an MRI that was clear—there is no evidence of a tumor anywhere! Special thanks to Gail Edelman and the Prayer Shawl Ministry for sending Beth a lapghan. She really appreciated it, along with all of your prayers.



...Continued from previous page

I am eager to begin a new series in September, with Pastors John and Rick, on the Gospel of Mark, "The Gospel in a Hurry." I will also be very happy to only have to preach one time Sunday mornings. We miss Beverly's wonderful music and very much look forwarding to worshiping with our brothers and sisters at Grace.

Big love in Jesus, Pastor Dave





By Elder Linda Pool

JESUS, LOVER OF MY SOUL

Jesus, Lover of my soul,
I love You, I need You.
Jesus, I will never let You go
Though my world may fall.
You've taken me from the miry clay,
I'll never let You go.
You've set my feet upon the rock,
And now I know I will worship You
Until the very end.
---John Ezzy, Daniel Grul, Stephen McPherson

What God did before, He still does today. Those who have had God pull them out of the "miry clay" know how much they need Him. It is a defining experience. Up to that point, they may have squeaked by knowing all the right answers or having a godly heritage. But when all of one's good efforts prove useless, real faith begins. Everything before this experience was self-reliance: after all, it's all Godreliance.

God saves us when we are at our weakest so that we'll learn to rely on His love. We see that He is

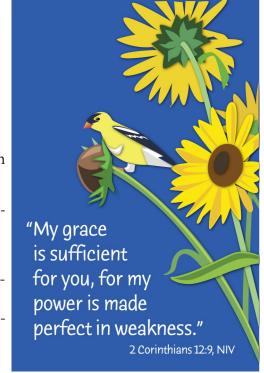
stronger than our sin and more real than our circumstances. Personal abilities, favorable circumstances, worldly success, and people's love will all let us down. If we depend on them, we'll be up when they're strong and down when they are weak.

Only total reliance on our soul's lover can give us true stability. Once we have that, we have a source of strength that will endure. Trusting in God's unchanging love gives us the security we need. If your feet are planted on Him, your Rock, you can say with glad determination, "Come what may, I'll never let You go."

I will declare that your love stands firm forever, that you established your faithfulness in heaven itself. Psalm 89:2

PRAYER: Do you feel mired in life? Ask God to help you remember the words of God to Paul: "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Ask Him to give you a heart that responds, "Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me" (2 Corinthians 12:9b).

From: Songs 4 Worship presents Open the Eyes of My heart



Page 2 Grace Notes



It is already September and we should start seeing a few of our part timers return to help increase our attendance. Also we will welcome home Pastor Dave and Ann as they return to us.

Our giving is down a little which is usual for this time of year but overall we are doing very well. So, as we start preparing a budget proposal for 2022 the Stewardship & Finance Committee has determined that we should project about a 10% increase in giving for next year so we can provide more for our missions support.

Now, back to a subject that is near and dear to me. I have asked this question in the past, but "how many of you have ever worshiped in a facility that you helped build?" I haven't either. So, we should be looking forward to crossing that off our bucket list by stepping up our support of our building fund.

This area in which we live is exploding with new people. If you are like me, I look around when I am out and I see evidence of new construction everywhere and the latest census reported that Lake County's population exploded by 29% over the past 10 years. That means that much of the construction is housing for those that have decided to move into our area. And, many of those newcomers will be looking for a church home that exudes friendliness while fulfilling their desire for a meaningful worship experience.

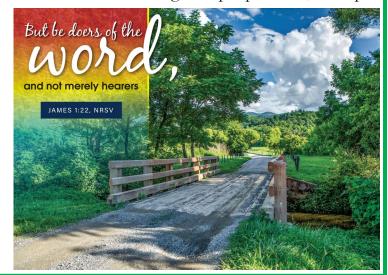
In this case the meaningful experience may be somewhat different than what we are used to as some of those folks will be "hopefully" somewhat younger that many of us. And we must realize that the continued growth of this church will depend on us attracting those younger folks to us.

I reread an article this week that speaks of effective churches doing two things well. Those things were defined as bonding and bridging. The bonding, which I think we do extremely well, deals with the building of relationships within the congregation while the bridging is the act of reaching out and including newcomers in the bonding aspect. So, remember this when you recognize a newer face in the service, be sure to welcome them and let them know that you are pleased that they chose to worship with us. While we depend on our Lord to bring new people to us, it is up

to us to ensure that they are "bonded" into the congregation.

One last thing...we have a member that runs a "Thrift Store" for the benefit of our church. Any items that you want to get rid of, she will sell with the proceeds going directly to our church.

In Christ, Dave Hoffmeyer Stewardship & Finance





Linda Dattler - 2nd
Gail Edelman - 3rd
Betty Russell - 5th
Joyce Lewis - 6th
Ann Preston - 9th
Sandy Teets - 13th
Linda Williams - 16th
Pastor Rick Rosenkrans - 17th
Dorothy Shook - 23rd
Glory Anne Prophet - 28th
Mary Small - 30th



The Last Friday Women's Breakfast is scheduled for September 24th at 8:30am

at Breakfast Station in Leesburg



All-Church Prayer

September 2nd & 16th 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.



Bob & Betty Russell - 4th Dirk & Molly Bod - 6th Jim & Shelby Reed - 15th Phil & Debbie Beahm - 23rd



Need a ride? Can we help you with anything?

help you? Let us know!





Pastor Dave Dorst Pastor John Fraser Pastor Rick Rosenkrans Larry Hochhalter (2021) Jack Homoney (2023) Wally Klee, Sr. (2023) Kris Ogden (2021) Marvin Pool (2023) Shelby Reed (2021)

Al Rode, Jr. (2023)



Widow's Luncheon **Thursday, September 16th** 11:30am at the Olive Garden (On Highway 441 in Leesburg)

Please let Jean Howse-Henke know by Sunday, September 12th if you plan to attend.

Page 4 Grace Notes



Fred and MaryLou Nichols

Fred and Marylou Nichols live in" Legacy," south of Leesburg.

If you mention these names to Fred and MaryLou: Cutco/K-Bar knives, Case knives, Zippo lighters, Quaker State, Sinclair, Pennzoil, Wolfs Head, Kendall, United Refineries or Ethan Allen furniture, you will see smiles on their faces.

These were the primary employers where they both grew up, western New York State and western Pennsylvania.

Marylou and Fred were married in 1967 and promptly began a career in public education, most of which was in south western New York State.

They have a daughter and two sons, all employed in the technologies field. 340 days of sunshine was the magnet drawing them to Florida in 2004, and with God's guidance and care, they have enjoyed good health, RVing, cruising, sewing/quilting and most of all excellent neighbors in "The Plantation at Leesburg" and now in "Legacy."



Women's Bible Study

We would love for you to join us as we return for the Women's Bible Study on Wednesday mornings, beginning

September 15th at 9:30am.

We will dive into a study called "Blessed Hope" based on the book of Revelation. We look forward to seeing you there!



Angst - God's Will - Our True Mission

By Elder Pat Byrnes

Strange title for sure but read on and I think it will make sense... at least Biblical sense. As for **ANGST**, I need not elaborate much... we are all feeling it as we see the deterioration of just about everything we value: the church, the honor of the Constitution of the US in a true democracy, the strength and leadership of our country, the Biblical world view of our founding fathers, the Divine appointment of roles for men and women and the family, the sanctity of life from conception, and I could go on. All are being overrun by forces that are anti-Christ, against God, who flatly deny God, and who are willing to abrogate the Constitution of the US to persecute those who are not in line with their world view. The ongoing debacle in Afghanistan is, in reality, just part of the iceberg that could sink our nation.

In the midst of this angst, we need to remind ourselves what the Bible says about God's plan for the world. While we read of many kingdoms over the four thousand years of Biblical history, God has sanctioned only one... the Kingdom to be ruled by His Son Jesus, the King of Kings and Lord of Lords. Furthermore, He has chosen, created, and will redeem only one nation and that is Israel. All other nations and kingdoms have been raised by Him (and removed by Him) to achieve His purposes. All these raising up and tearing down sequences have been in the fullness of specific times as God's plan has unfolded over the millennia. The USA is on that list as certainly as we have been raised up and mightily used by God.

But the USA is not His ultimate nation or kingdom and in the fullness of time will be torn down. I always thought the USA would be an everlasting friend to Israel and always be blessed by God as we bless Israel. But in the end, we will be in that group referred to in prophecy as "all nations" that are not Israel. Look at the similarity of two prophecies given to us by Zechariah and Joel. Joel chapter 3:1-3 reads: For behold, in those days and at that time, when I restore the fortunes of Judah and Jerusalem, I shall gather all the nations and bring them down into the valley of Jehoshaphat; I shall 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.

Likewise, Zechariah tells Israel in chapter 14:1-3 Behold, a day is coming for the Lord, when spoil taken from you will be divided in your midst. For I will gather <u>all the nations</u> against Jerusalem to battle, and the city shall be taken and the houses plundered and the women raped. Half of the city shall go into exile, but the rest of the people shall not be cut off from the city. Then the Lord will go out and fight against those nations as when he fights on a day of battle.

Notice these prophets don't say "all nations except the one who has been Israel's friend and defender since 1948." They say all nations. So, how do we get from where we were just a few years ago to where we will end up in the valley of Jehoshaphat? It is a big slide, a total collapse, the birth pangs of which have already started. Of course, we don't know, but that God will send his Holy Spirit to lead yet another great awakening as we pray earnestly for it. But the eventual outcome seems pretty clear.

Be sure, it is not my purpose here to begin a discourse on eschatology. We tend not to poke too far into end times prophecies even though it is a large and important part of scripture. Opinions on the what, when, where

and how regarding the end times are like belly buttons... everyone has one and they are all different. Hence the reluctance to devote much time to this matter. Nevertheless, we can't ignore all that the Bible has to say about the Day of The Lord. But rather than get tangled up in debate, we should focus instead on the final results and take the intended comfort in them. The nations are judged, Christ is victorious, all believers are raptured, the sheep and goats are separated between the left and the right and each group is sent to its eternal destination, the Kingdom is physically established. We could say more but I think the point is made as we will see as I talk a bit about Mathew 24.

"And there will be signs in sun and moon and stars, and on the earth distress of nations in perplexity ... neonle fainting with fear



people fainting with fear and with foreboding of what is coming on the world ...

Now when these things begin to take place, straighten up and raise your heads, because **your redemption is drawing near."**

Luke 21: 25-26 & 28, ESV

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Page 6 Grace Notes

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I love this chapter, the first half of the Olivet discourse. Jesus is presented with the Temple by His disciples and responds with a stream of prophetic information. He talks about the complete destruction of that very temple, wars and rumors of wars, tribulations as never seen before, His sign appearing in the heavens and the rapture of the Church. And he tells them in verse 5 not to be alarmed when they see all these things coming to pass because they must take place. He is giving them essentially a heads up for their comfort. We can dig into each of these elements to see if we can figure out more and connect it to other prophetic writings within Scripture but it is really not all that important. Instead, we should focus on what Jesus does at the end of the chapter. After he gives them the thumbnail sketch of end times events, He stops and in what seems at first like a complete disconnect, throws out the parable of the faithful servant. The key verses here are 45-46 which read: Who then is the faithful and wise servant whom his master has set over his household, to give them their food at the proper time? Blessed is that servant whom his master will find so doing when he returns.

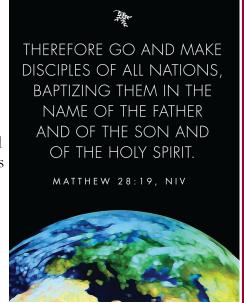
Jesus told His disciples that their relationship has evolved, changed and they are now friends (John 15:15) so he shares all this information with them so they will not become discouraged. But he concludes all this sharing with what is basically a command to keep on keeping on. If I were there, I would say, "hey wait a minute... tell me more about these end time events!" But he is essentially telling them they don't need to waste their energy on all this stuff but to continue to serve as he will command them to serve at the end of His earthly ministry a couple of chapters later in Matthew 28:18-19: the great commission.

In the August issue of Turning Points magazine, Dr. David Jeremiah addresses this matter with a concept he calls "living a great commission lifestyle." He characterizes people who live such a lifestyle by three things: they live the message, they share the mission, and they extend their ministry. Living and sharing the message kind of go hand and hand and are done best right where God has placed us... in our homes, neighborhoods, and communities. He writes: "Let's be clear: Jesus gave His Church a global task. And yet, to whom did He deliver that task in its initial format? A small group of individuals. No matter how large our global task is, it all starts at home. If we ever separate the Gospel from the lives – from the lifestyles – of those to whom it is entrusted, it will be no different than a global marketing campaign for a widget or a commodity. Evangelism is a lifestyle enterprise. It began with the life of Jesus Christ, and it continues with the life of Jesus Christ in us." And "Don't let visions of the globe block your vision of the world at your doorstep."

Giving of our time, talent and treasure are ways of characterizing sharing the mission. Small groups, neighborhood gatherings, involvement in a local church to do the works God has prepared for us to walk in (Eph. 2:10). Working in and/or supporting missions that spread the Gospel are "extending our ministry."

If I could paraphrase what Jesus said in Matthew 24 it would be as follows: "We see the good things of the times we are in but take heed... they will be changing in a terrible way. Take comfort that these changes are part of the Divine plan for the world and they must come in order to achieve the final outcome. To help give you that comfort, I will share with you a broad outline of events. Do not be overwhelmed by them but overcome them with your obedience to my commands. I will be going away for a while and am placing you in charge of continuing the mission. I will return but I can't tell you when. Just know that when I return for my kingdom, my expectation is that no matter how bad things get, I will find you working diligently and faithfully at its building... one stone at a time."

May we take comfort in the knowledge of end times victories and pray for strength and courage to live a great commission lifestyle in the meantime knowing that... Blessed is that servant whom the master finds doing so when he returns.





September 2021

Sat	Bob & Betty Russell Anniversary	11	18 ick Sirthday	ast men's st
Fri	3 Gail Edelman Birthday	10	17 Pastor Rick Rosenkrans Birthday	8:30am Last Friday Women's Breakfast
Thu	2 1:00pm All Church Prayer Meeting Linda Dattler Birthday	9 10:00am Finance Committee Meeting 10:30am Plantation Small Group Ann Preston Birthday	16 11:30am Widow's Luncheon 1:00pm All Church Prayer Meeting Linda Williams Birthday	10:30am Plantation Small Group Dorothy Shook Birthday Phil & Debbie Beahm Anniversary 30 Mary Small Birthday
Wed	1 4:30pm Choir Practice	8 2:00pm Villages Small Group 4:30pm Choir Practice	9:30am Women's Bible Study 4:30pm Choir Practice Jim & Shelby Reed Anniversary	9:30am Women's Bible Study 2:00pm Villages Small Group 4:30pm Choir Practice 29 9:30am Women's Bible Study 4:30pm Choir Practice
Tue		7 8:00am Perkins Men's Bible Study	8:00am Perkins Men's Bible Study 6:30pm Howey Small Group	8:00am Perkins Men's Bible Study 10:00am Session Meeting 28 8:00am Perkins Men's Bible Study 6:30pm Howey Small Group
Mon		LABAR LABAR Joyce Lewis Birthday Dirk & Molly Bod Anniversary	5:30pm Royal Highlands Small Group 6:30pm Howey Small Group Sandy Teets Birthday	6:30pm Royal Highlands Small Group 27 6:30pm Royal Highlands Small Group 6:30pm Howey Small Group
Sun		5 Communion Sunday 9:30am Coffee & Fellowship 10:00am Worship Betty Russell Birthday	12 9:30am Coffee & Fellowship 10:00am Worship 11:15am Sunday School	9:30am Coffee & Fellowship 10:00am Worship 11:15am Sunday School 26 9:30am Coffee & Fellowship 10:00am Worship 11:15am Sunday School

Page 8 Grace Notes

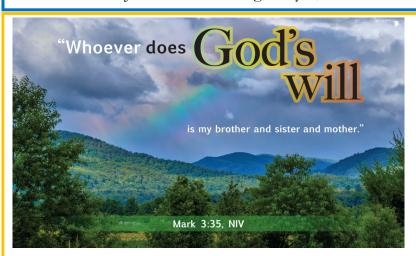
Notes from your friendly neighborhood Administrator...

Directory Updates: You've got it! We are getting into that time of year again when we will be looking at updating our church directory. I would love to get some new pictures of you friends! I am also noticing that I am missing some birthdays and anniversaries still. Please get with me on any Sunday and we can get your information updated and a new picture taken of your beautiful smiles:)



We Need Your Help!!! We are in need of help in a variety of our ministries here at Grace EPC. We need help with transportation of donations that we receive to go to places like the Christian Care Center. We also need help with our Sunday Media Team, no experience necessary, just a heart for the Lord and a willingness to learn. We would also love some help with our little library that is growing. To help get it organized better so friends can find what they would like to read a little bit easier:) Do you hear the Lord calling you? Let Mandy know and she will help get you started.

Operation Christmas Child (aka the ShoeBoxes): Please check our shoebox table for updates on supplies that we are needing. 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." SAVE THE DATE!!! The Packing Party will be on Saturday, October 9th starting at 10:00am until we are finished. Join us for Packing, Prayer, and Pizza!!!!



September Sermon Series

The Gospel in a Hurry

Sep 5th The Gospel of Jesus Christ, the

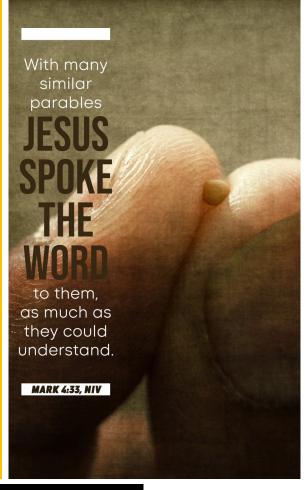
Son of God

Sep 12th Tear Up Your Roof!

Sep 19th The Problem of Wineskins

Sep 26th The Parable of the Soils

A Journey Through Mark



What is the Samaritan's Purse?

Everyone has been hearing about the Shoebox Project, but did you know that it is put on by Samaritan's Purse? So what is Samaritan's Purse? They do more than the Operation Christmas Child shoeboxes! Here is just a little sneak peek at what they are all about:

The story of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:30-37) gives a clear picture of God's desire



for us to help those in desperate need wherever we find them. After describing how the Samaritan rescued a hurting man whom others had passed by, Jesus told His hearers, "Go and do likewise." For over 50 years, Samaritan's Purse has done our utmost to follow Christ's command by going to the aid of the world's poor, sick, and suffering. We are an effective means of reaching hurting people in countries around the world with food, medicine, and other assistance in the Name of Jesus Christ. This, in turn, earns us a hearing for the Gospel, the Good News of eternal life through Jesus Christ.



As our teams work in crisis areas of the world, people often ask, "Why did you come?" The answer is always the same: "We have come to help you in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ." Our ministry is all about Jesus—first, last, and always. As the Apostle Paul said, "For we do not preach ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, and ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake" (2 Corinthians 4:5, NIV).

Mission Statement: Samaritan's Purse is a nondenominational evangelical Christian organization providing spiritual and physical aid to hurting people around the world. Since 1970, Samaritan's Purse has helped meet needs of people who are victims of war, poverty, natural disasters, disease, and famine with the purpose of sharing God's love through His Son, Jesus Christ. The organization serves the Church worldwide to promote the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Samaritan's Purse was originally founded in 1970 by Bob Pierce and in 1973 he met Franklin Graham, who succeeded Bob in leading Samaritan's Purse in 1978 after Bob died from Leukemia.

Their ministries include:

International Crisis Response: Samaritan's Purse stands ready to respond at a moment's notice whenever and wherever disaster strikes. We specialize in meeting critical needs for victims of conflict, disaster, famine, and epidemics throughout the world, often working through ministry partners on the ground. We provide food, water, shelter, medicine, and other assistance in the Name of Jesus Christ. We are currently helping desperate Afghans in the Afghanistan crisis.



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Page 10 Grace Notes

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Operation Christmas Child: Sharing the love and gospel of Jesus Christ to children all over the world through an amazing shoebox program.

The Greatest Journey: a 12-lesson discipleship course designed for Operation Christmas Child shoebox recipients. Children who participate in the program learn how to follow Christ and share Him with others. As they do, entire families and communities are transformed by the power of the Gospel, and churches are started.



US Disaster Relief: North American Ministries responds quickly when natural disasters strike, deploying an army of volunteers to come alongside homeowners to bring relief and compassion in Jesus' Name. We also lead construction projects in remote Alaska and other parts of the world.



World Medical Mission: World Medical Mission places Christian physicians, dentists, and other medical professionals on short-term volunteer service assignments at mission hospitals and clinics in Africa, Asia, Oceania, Latin America, and the Middle East.

Greta Home and Academy: The Greta Home and Academy is a safe place for orphaned and vulnerable children in Haiti to receive an education and grow in their faith in Jesus Christ. It was named in honor of former Fox News host Greta Van Susteren, whose advocacy for the people of Haiti helped save thousands of lives.

Children's Heart Project: Children's Heart Project arranges life-saving operations for hundreds of children who live in countries where the required medical expertise and equipment are not available. Since 1997, Children's Heart Project has arranged lifesaving surgery for more than 1,400 children.

Operation Heal Our Patriots: Operation Heal Our Patriots gives wounded veterans and their spouses the opportunity for spiritual refreshment, physical renewal, and marriage enrichment. Couples participate in Biblically based seminars that help strengthen their relationships with God and others and enjoy the beauty of God's creation with outdoor activities at our Alaskan wilderness lodge. We continue to support these men and women after their initial stay, keeping their spiritual needs and marriages a priority.

To learn more about these different areas of Samaritan's Purse, visit samaritanspurse.org





Worship: 700 S. 9th St., Leesburg, FL Mailing: P. O. Box 490001 Leesburg, FL 34749

352-552-0052

Rev. Dr. Dave Dorst

Email: graceepcleesburg@gmail.com

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
- 11:15AM ~ Sunday School will begin again on 9/12

MONDAYS:

- 1:00PM ~ Women's Bible Study (beginning on 9/13)
- 6:30PM ~ Royal Highlands Small Group (beginning on 9/13)
- 6:30 PM ~ Howey Monday Small Group (9/13 & 9/27)

TUESDAYS:

- 8:00 AM ~ Men's Bible Study & Breakfast @ Perkins
- 10:00 AM ~ Session Meeting (9/21)
- 6:30 PM ~ Howey Tuesday Small Group (9/14 & 9/28)

WEDNESDAYS:

- 2:00 PM ~ Villages Small Group (9/8 & 9/22)
- 4:30 PM ~ Choir Practice

THURSDAYS:

- 10:00 AM ~ Stewardship & Finance Committee Meeting (9/9)
- 10:30 AM ~ Plantation Small Group (9/9 & 9/23)
- 11:30 AM ~ Widow's Luncheon (9/16) ~ Olive Garden in Leesburg
- 1:00 PM ~ All Church Prayer (9/2 & 9/16)

FRIDAYS:

• 8:30 AM ~ Last Friday Women's Breakfast (9/24) ~ Breakfast Station in Leesburg