



Volume 11, Issue 2
February 2022

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FEBRUARY PASTOR'S PEN

“Build the House That I May Take Pleasure In It and That I May Be Glorified”

Beloved Members and Friends of Grace EPC,

On February 6, I will preach, as part of our LITTLE BOOKS WITH BIG MESSAGES series, a message from the prophet Haggai. He was one of the Jewish exiles in the Babylonian captivity who was returned to Jerusalem by King Darius of Persia, in fulfillment of the prophecies of Jeremiah and Obadiah, among others. But Haggai and his buddy, Zechariah, though happy about returning to the land of their fathers, were unhappy about the attitude of their fellow exiles/pilgrims. Zechariah was concerned about their spiritual condition. They needed to repent of the sins their fathers practiced, failing to pay attention to God and His Word. Zechariah implored them to renew the covenants God had made with Abraham, Moses and David.

Haggai was more practical. He saw the problem as a matter of priorities. “Is it time for you yourselves to dwell in your paneled houses, while this house (the Lord’s temple) lies in ruins?” (1:4) “Go up to the hills and bring wood and build the house, that I may take pleasure in it and that I may be gloried, says the Lord” (1: 8). Now, even though most of us live in nicely paneled (or drywalled) houses, this exhortation does not necessarily mean that it is God’s will for Grace to build a “new temple.” But I will try to make the case on February 6, and in this column, that God would take pleasure in us building Him a new home. Here are some of the reasons I feel this way:

Our mission statement is, “To Know and Grow in Christ and to Go in His name, serving and sharing the gospel.” For more people to know Christ and grow in their faith, we need a more visible location. When Ann and I first tried to find our current location (which was then The Ladies’ Club of Leesburg) we drove around for a long time. (We are technofebs, not technophobes, who don’t have GPS!) Our current location is pretty much invisible to the general public. We aren’t even able to put up effective signage to let people know where we are. Our new location on State Road 27 would give us much more visibility.

Studies show that people are much more inclined to visit a church that is near them geographically than one they have to travel some distance to attend. The location on 27 is much closer to most of the congregation. It would make it much easier to invite friends to worship and church events. It is also much closer to the new section of The Villages, which is exploding with new people.



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The proposed new building has much more space which gives us much more of an opportunity to increase our church's program and ministry. I may be in the minority, but I would love to see Grace eventually become a multi-generational church. The building Jamie Senatore, our architect, has designed, would have a lot of usable space for children and youth ministries, as well as senior programs.

I pray you will have an open mind and an open heart as our building committee presents plans for a new house for the Lord. I pray it would be built for His glory!

Big love in Jesus,
Pastor Dave



HE IS LORD

He is Lord, He is Lord,
He is risen from the dead.
And He is Lord.

Every knee shall bow, every tongue confess,
That Jesus Christ is Lord.
----Traditional



By Elder Linda Pool

Sometimes we can feel like walking away from God. Sorrows threaten to break us. Grief sneaks up on us. Unfair treatment takes us by surprise. We want to protest. "This wasn't supposed to be so difficult!"

Jesus never promised that it would be easy. In fact, the first disciples soon discovered that following Him turned out to be tougher than anyone had expected. When disappointments overwhelm us, we may feel like we want a new god. But the fact remains that He is Lord whether we like it or not. Our only choices are to be angry and alienate our only source of help or to bow to the mystery and follow Him as Lord.

By following Him through the tough times, you will discover this wonderful truth: Life may feel like a roller coaster, but the people who trust the safety belts enjoy the ride. Even through steep dives and dark tunnels, you need not fear. He is Lord over the things that threaten to destroy you, and He is Lord over anything that could separate you from His love.

Jesus didn't come to make our lives more difficult. He came to give us the security we need to live them with joy. You can abandon yourself to His plans, knowing that Jesus Christ is Lord.

They will make war against the Lamb, but the Lamb will overcome them because he is Lord of lords and King of kings---and with him will be his called, chosen and faithful followers. Revelation 17:14

PRAYER: Is life difficult today? Confess your frustration and ask Jesus to take over and be Lord of your life. Then trust Him and begin to enjoy the ride.

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

LORD OF HEAVEN AND EARTH



It is February and we are looking at Valentine's Day. I did some (a little) research into the origins of this holiday and determined that while its history is somewhat murky, each story ended with the idea of celebrating the feelings of love that we either have for others or share with them. So, the thought that struck me was why don't we also celebrate the love that we share with our Lord? Should this day be focused exclusively on our family or social relationships? Why not also include He who gave His all for us and cleansed us of all our sin?

Now, the next question that comes to mind is how do we show our love for those that we honor? Well, I am glad you asked. Don't most of us purchase cards and gifts, and aren't we prompted to believe that the more love we have for the recipient the more expensive the gift must or at least should be?

Our church has vacant property on US27 just south of our current location on which we are projecting the construction of a larger facility. I pray you will all consider a donation to our building fund that is reflective of your love and appreciation of what our Lord has done for you. Just consider what He endured just to assume punishment for our sin. Then consider that all He has asked of us is to spread His word to others.

Here is an idea that you may consider. First, let me begin by saying that I am not a CPA or a tax advisor, but I recently found an idea that might be of interest of some of you. It is called a "Donor-Advised-Fund", and while I found the write up on the Fidelity.com website I also found a good explanation at MorganStanley.com, and there are other brokerages and financial management companies that support them. This is the type of investment that can help givers get a tax break, and also help our church. Let's say that you usually take the standard deduction when filing your income tax each year. Now also assume that you give to our church but not enough to provide a benefit based on itemizing your deductions. Now also assume that you have the funds available for investment that equals several years of your normal giving. If those funds were moved into a "Donor-Advised-Fund, you could take a deduction on your taxes for the entire amount in the year that the fund was established. Once the fund is established you have control over the amounts and timing of the payouts to our church which will continue until the funds are exhausted. You also have the ability to add more into the fund in the future as your means allow. That sounds like a win-win. Be sure to ask your financial advisor for assistance.



Working for Christ,
Dave Hoffmeyer for
Stewardship & Finance

FEBRUARY



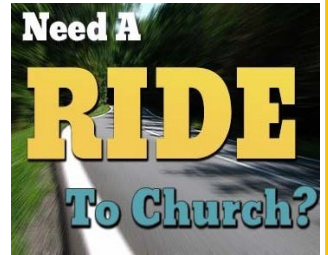
- Ann Dorst - 2nd
- Jon Arnold - 5th
- Jackie Nicklas - 5th
- Dave Ghen - 7th
- Larry Hochhalter - 9th
- Debbie Beahm - 10th
- Peggy Ernest - 11th
- Al Rode - 11th
- Rose Hoxie - 13th



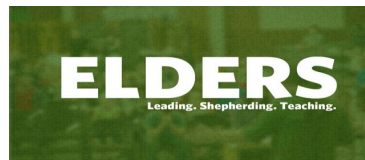
Jack & Carol Homoney - 9th
Pat & Caren Byrnes - 24th



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



The Last Friday Women's Breakfast is scheduled for February 25th at 8:30am at Perkins in Leesburg



- Pastor Dave Dorst
- Pastor John Fraser
- Pastor Rick Rosenkrans
- Bill Frakes (2024)
- Jack Homoney (2023)
- Wally Klee, Sr. (2023)
- Kris Ogden (2024)
- Marvin Pool (2023)
- Shelby Reed (2024)
- Al Rode, Jr. (2023)
- Jim Teets (2024)



Prayer Time with Pastor John

February 3rd & 17th at 1:00PM

We would love to pray for you!
GraceEPCLeesburg@gmail.com
(352) 552-0052.



Widow's Luncheon
Thursday,
February 17th

11:30am at the Crown and Shield

Please let Sue know if you are planning to attend by Sunday, February 13th



In the Spotlight

Dirk & Molly Bod

Dirk and Molly Bod are snowbirds from Canada and winter here at Holiday RV Village, Leesburg.

Dirk and Molly were both born in The Hague, Holland. They graduated from high school there. After high school, Dirk earned his accounting diploma and 2 years of Business Administration. Molly took a 2-year course in Childhood Education.

They met at a YMCA dance and 2 years later married, in 1962 in Holland. Eight months later they emigrated to Canada. They adopted 3 children, Rita, Richard, and Daniel. Sadly, Rita was killed in a car accident in 1994 at age 29. Rita's death was very hard for them, but God helped them through it.

Dirk worked at the University of Guelph, Ontario as an Administrative Officer for 25 years. Molly was a volunteer at a home for handicapped children and then later became a nursery teacher. She also volunteered at a mental hospital for 14 years. After Rita's death, Molly had a difficult time and Dirk decided to take early retirement and suggested a vacation to Florida. Looking back, they thank God for this vacation. They have spent 27 winters in Florida.

Dirk's hobbies are soccer, for 50 years, player for 30 years, coach for 7 years and referee for 13 years. He enjoys playing bridge, biking, fixing bikes and walking. Not to forget singing in the choir and the Men's Breakfast. Molly loves to crochet prayer shawls, etc. for the Prayer Shawl Ministry.

She also crochets blankets, (more than 150!) for terminally ill children at Boggy Creek. Kids spend a week there and are allowed to take the blanket home with them. Molly and Dirk love listening to hymns, as it good for the soul.

Dirk and Molly joined the church in Howey in the Hills in 1994, for 2 seasons, then went to First Presbyterian Church in Leesburg, but back to the church in Howey in 2001. They enjoy the care and fellowship at Grace EPC. They hope we will have younger families join us in our new church, but also continue pastoral care for seniors. They are very happy with our pastors and the people in this loving church. They have never belonged to a congregation so caring as Grace EPC.



Thank you Grace!

from
Dana Brigham

When Wallace Hoffman surprised me with a birthday cake I did not know it was his 90th birthday too and I owe him special thanks! It was the best 90th birthday I ever had. Many thanks folks for all the cards and well wishes. Don't forget Heaven is a place and I expect you to be there to celebrate our second birthday together. Love to all----Dana



My Journaling Experiment

by Elder Pat Byrnes

A couple of months ago, I wrote an article based on the seventeenth chapter of Deuteronomy where God instructs future kings of Israel to write their own books of the law and keep them ever before them (17:18-20). You might recall that this lesson was featured by Dr. David Jeremiah in his November monthly devotional with the recommendation that we try it ourselves... “journaling” scripture, that is. His organization had prepared a hard cover journal with pages specifically lined and numbered to accommodate Paul’s letter to the Romans. Dr. Jeremiah challenged his readers to take God’s instruction seriously and hand write scripture for understanding and memory. Seemed like a good idea so I called and obtained this journal with the intention to hand write the entire Book of Romans. I promised to report to you later on how that is going.

The plan (recommendation) was to write just five verses each day which means that by now I should be well into the sixth chapter, since I received the journal and started in early December. In fact I have just finished the second chapter... about 60 total verses. So that is the first lesson learned... it takes self-discipline. Obviously, I am coming up a bit short on that attribute. It also requires sufficient quiet time without the distraction of TV or other such things. Jesus gave instruction in the Sermon on the Mount that *when you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your father who is in secret* (Matt. 6:6). I can tell



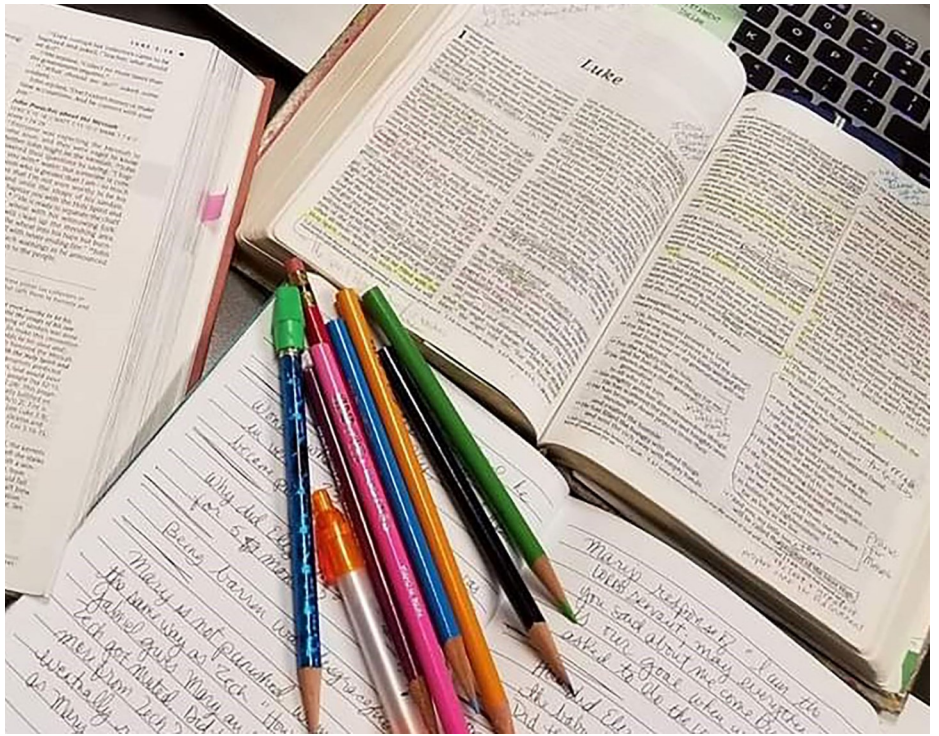
you from this short experience, that such privacy is absolutely essential to meaningful journaling. Like most people, my best time for this is in the morning. But also like many of you, my mornings can have lots of distractions that make the necessary quiet time a bit elusive if not impossible each and every day. But the key question is does it work? Am I able to recall whole verses from having written them down? The short answer is not so much. Certainly for 1:16... *For I am not ashamed of the Gospel for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.* That one was probably already cemented into my brain from previous study and to be honest, just having written it down once, I could recall the verse but not the verse number and had to look it up again. And for most of the other verses, I can’t just bring them to mind without peeking. But all it takes is one peek and whole segments come back to mind. This points to perhaps needing a different approach for Scripture memorization (if that is the only objective).

The unexpected and most useful benefit to this exercise is the incredible clarity of the words, phrases and sentences that comes from writing down each and every word and punctuation mark rather than what just reading alone brings. It takes far longer to write a word or phrase by hand than to just read it so the impact is that much greater. For example, did you realize that Paul’s introduction/greeting, which takes up the first seven verses of the first chapter, is actually one very long sentence? And what an amazing sentence! At every comma, Paul brings in a theological truth such that in this one loooooong sentence, there are at least thirteen, perhaps fifteen, points of such truth. If you just read it, it is easy to grow impatient with it... like “hey Paul, for crying out loud, take a breath would you!” But when you write it out, it comes more alive.

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An astute pastor could preach on a different topic every week for three to four months and not have to go beyond this first sentence! I heard it said of a famous British preacher who preached for ten years on just the first chapter of Romans. I once thought that was made up (and I can't immediately find a reference to corroborate it so it might be) but having written the entire first chapter, word for word, punctuation marks and all, I can see the possibility. This is teaching me to approach the reading of scripture with much more attention to the words. By that I mean stop, let them settle, react and absorb them. When you are reading, it is too easy to just gloss over segments of scripture while seeking just those most pithy verses. But each and every word is God breathed and therefore important, useful, and worthy of our attention. So far, that is the main lesson for me from this manner of Bible study.



And study it is... I found myself stopping at words to let them settle and if they didn't, then looking at whatever notes for that verse I could find in my study Bible, or Matthew Henry's commentary, or lately, Pastor Dave's New Testament commentary. In fact, at times during the journaling of the second chapter, I could not bring myself to stop at writing just five verses. The theological issue of God's judgement and the Law spans more than the allotted five verses. As with reading any good book, I could not stop so I wrote ten verses that day. In fact, I consulted several of my many commentary sources to gain that "settling" for this section. So, properly approached, this method of writing each word, being patient to make sure each word "settles" and if not, seeking understanding from other resources so it does "settle", is nothing short of amazing. Who knew?!?! God knew! And that is why He gave the instruction to future kings of His chosen nation. King David got it for sure... if you have any doubts about that, just read the entirety of Psalm 119.

So coming back full circle to Deuteronomy 17:18-20, the instruction to the future king is not about memorization but about understanding... *"that he may learn to fear the Lord his God by keeping all the words of this law and these statutes and doing them..."* (my underline). Writing it down was part of the process God ordained to bring that understanding.

I like this method of study and wish I had learned it sooner. I plan to complete journaling Romans and will modify the program to write not just five verses each time but as many as it takes to learn and, with God's help, understand the passages. I think then I will move on to other Pauline letters. Give it a try. I promise you wonderful blessings of understanding.

February 2022

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 8:00am Perkins Men's Bible Study	2 9:45am Women's Bible Study 4:30pm Choir Practice Ann Dorst Birthday	3 1:00pm Prayer Time with Pastor John	4	5 9:00am Narnia Class Jon Arnold Jackie Nicklas Birthdays
6 Communion Sunday 9:00am Sunday School 9:45am Coffee & Fellowship 10:30am Worship	7 6:30pm Royal Highlands Small Group Dave Ghen Birthday	8 8:00am Perkins Men's Bible Study	9 9:45am Women's BS 2:30pm Villages SG 4:30pm Choir Practice Larry Hochhalter Birthday Jack & Carol Homoney Anniversary	10 10:00am Finance Committee Meeting 10:30am Plantation Small Group Debbie Beahm Birthday	11 Peggy Ernest Al Rodé Birthdays	12 9:00am Narnia Class
13 9:00am Sunday School 9:45am Coffee & Fellowship 10:30am Worship Rose Hoxie Birthday	14 6:30pm Royal Highlands Small Group	15 8:00am Perkins Men's Bible Study 10:00am Session Meeting	16 9:45am Women's Bible Study 4:30pm Choir Practice	17 11:30am Widow's Luncheon 1:00pm Prayer Time with Pastor John	18	19
20 9:00am Sunday School 9:45am Coffee & Fellowship 10:30am Worship	21 6:30pm Royal Highlands Small Group	22 8:00am Perkins Men's Bible Study	23 9:45am Women's Bible Study 2:30pm Villages SG 4:30pm Choir Practice	24 10:30am Plantation Small Group Pat & Caren Byrnes Anniversary	25 8:30am Last Friday Women's Breakfast	26
27 9:00am Sunday School 9:45am Coffee & Fellowship 10:30am Worship	28 6:30pm Royal Highlands Small Group					



Knowing Christ

THE "I AM" SAYINGS OF JESUS

by R.C. Sproul



New Sunday School Class!

Beginning Sunday, **February 13th** we will start a new series taught by Elder Jack Homoney titled, "Knowing Christ—The I AM Sayings of Jesus". It is an 8 week study by R.C. Sproul.

Who Do You Say That I Am?

The Bible distinctively presents Jesus as the Logos, the eternal Word of God (John 1:1). Through Him the cosmos was created, and through Him the Father is most perfectly revealed. In this series, Dr. R.C. Sproul examines the eight unique "I AM" sayings of Jesus recorded in John's gospel, all of which are powerful expressions of His saving relationship to the world. He uses God's Word to bring us to a deeper understanding of the God-man as both protector and nurturer of His people.

February Sermon Schedule Little Books with Big Messages

Feb 6th	Haggai
Feb 13th	Philemon
Feb 20th	II & III John
Feb 27th	Jude

Beginning in March will be the Luke Series
"Luke's Last Week"

REFRESH
my
HEART
in
CHRIST.



PHILEMON 1:20



Soooo, What Happened With the ShoeBoxes?

There was a worldwide total of 10,505,155 shoeboxes delivered to children all over the world that you helped be a part of!! That many children have been given a Gospel Opportunity and learn how to have a relationship with God through His Son Jesus Christ! Praise the Lord!!!

It brings us great joy to let you know that our shoeboxes went to Burkina Faso, a country in North West Africa and also to Angola, a country on the Western Coast of Africa.

Burkina Faso is hope to a large rural population that is known to be honest. This fits well since the country's name means "Land of Incorruptible People." Samaritan's Purse started delivering Operation Christmas Child shoebox gifts to children here in 1999 and by 2011 began offering them the Greatest Journey, our follow-up discipleship course, that teaches boys and girls how to follow Christ and share Him with others.

Angola is known for its natural resource of oil as well as its recent recovery from decades of civil war. Operation Christmas Child began delivering shoeboxes to children in this nation in 1997 and many have participated in their follow-up discipleship program, The Greatest Journey, since its launch in 2010. A teacher of The Greatest Journey wrote, "I thank God and all who work in this ministry. May God bless you richly to continue this important work for Christ that has materially



and spiritually helped thousands of needy children around the world to hear the Word of God. Being a teacher of The Greatest Journey is an honor for me because I was chosen by God (Eph. 4:1). I give thanks to Him. I liked teaching children to know, to follow, and to talk about Jesus. Many of these children did not read correctly, but after three months of the courses, I received so much praise from the school teachers that today their children can read and talk about Jesus with their friends."

Are You Sad It's Over...

It's not over! Don't be sad!!! You can already start preparing for 2022's shoeboxes! Each month there are different things that you can look for that might be seasonal and you can find for the shoeboxes! For instance, right now you may be able to start finding the winter stuff on clearance!! Who doesn't love a good sale! You can pick up a complete list of year-round ideas on the table in the narthex and here are a few ideas to get you going:

January - Hats, Gloves, & Scarves

February - Fashion Accessories (sunglasses, watches, hair accessories)

March - Quality crafts or craft kits (no liquids like glue or paint please)

April - Stuffed animals





Love That Won't Let Go

*"Be strong and courageous...He will never leave you or forsake you."
Deuteronomy 31:6*

KNIT. CROCHET. PRAY.

O Love, that will not let me go,
I rest my weary soul in Thee;
I give Thee back the life I owe,
That in Thine ocean depths its flow
May richer, fuller be.

O Light, that followest all my way,
I yield my flickering torch to Thee;
My heart restores its borrowed ray,
That in Thy sunshine's blaze its day
May brighter, fairer be.

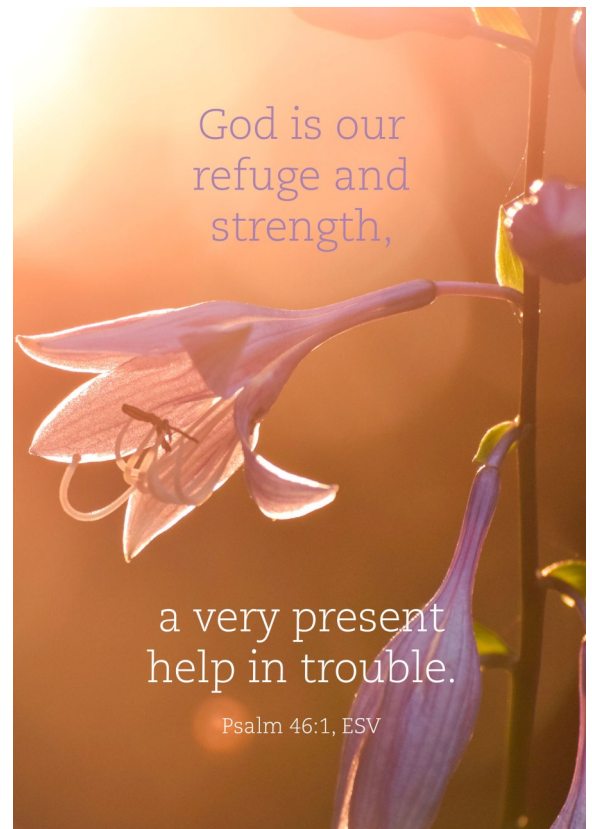
O Joy, that seekest me through pain,
I cannot close my heart to Thee;
I trace the rainbow through the rain,
And feel the promise is not vain
That morn shall tearless be.

O Cross, that liftest up my head,
I dare not ask to fly from Thee;
I lay in dust life's glory dead,
And from the ground there blossoms red
Life that shall endless be.

George Matheson was a brilliant student living in Scotland. Some said he could have become the leader of the Church of Scotland. Life was going well, he graduated university with a B.A. and then a Masters in philosophy even though his eyesight was extremely poor. He hoped to marry but when doctors told him he was going blind his fiancé broke off their engagement, telling him she could not go through life with a blind man. Needless to say, he was heartbroken and this caused him much anguish. Nevertheless he continued on into pastoral ministry. His sister looked after him for years, helping around the house and taking time to write out his sermons that he dictated. She also helped running the Parish where Matheson served. Then his sister got married and he wondered who would look after him now. He had an extra need for dependence on God. The hymn he wrote on the eve of his sister's wedding is "O Love that Wilt Not Let Me Go." He said that it was the quickest piece of work he'd ever written and it seemed like it was almost dictated to him.

Why do I tell you this? Well, George Matheson realized how great his dependence on God should be, the importance of giving your life over to Christ, the cross of Christ that gives us eternal hope. Prayer shawls and lapghans are given to those going through the harder times of life to remind them that their Church family cares for them. More importantly, God keeps his children to the end and then eternally. May our hope rest in Him and may we be comforted by our Savior.

Blessings,
Jill Fraser





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Rev. Dr. Dave Dorst

Email: graceepclesburg@gmail.com

Website: GraceEPC.church

Like us on Facebook: Grace EPC

All activities are tentative and subject to change.

SUNDAYS:

- 9:00 AM ~ Sunday School
- 9:45 AM ~ Fellowship Time
- 10:30 AM ~ Worship Service

MONDAYS:

- 6:30PM ~ Royal Highlands Small Group

TUESDAYS:

- 8:00 AM ~ Men's Bible Study & Breakfast @ Perkins
- 10:00 AM ~ Session Meeting (2/15)

WEDNESDAYS:

- 9:45AM ~ Women's Bible Study
- 2:00 PM ~ Villages Small Group (2/9 & 2/23)
- 4:30 PM ~ Choir Practice

THURSDAYS:

- 10:00 AM ~ Stewardship & Finance Committee Meeting (2/10)
- 10:30 AM ~ Plantation Small Group (2/10 & 2/24)
- 11:30 AM ~ Widow's Luncheon (2/17) ~ *Crown and Shield Restaurant*
- 1:00 PM ~ Prayer Time with Pastor John - (2/3 & 2/17)

FRIDAYS:

- 8:30 AM ~ Last Friday Women's Breakfast (2/25) ~ *Perkins in Leesburg*

SATURDAYS:

- 9:00 AM ~ Chronicles of Narnia Class (2/5 & 2/12)