



Volume 11, Issue 9
September 2022

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SEPTEMBER PASTOR'S PEN

“A Word Fitly Spoken Is Like Apples of Gold”

Beloved Members and Friends of Grace EPC,

At least 50% of the time, when I meet someone new and tell them I live in The Villages, they say something like, “I’ve heard about The Villages. It’s the STD Capital of America!” I patiently tell them that’s an evil rumor and untrue. It began with a young man named Andrew Blechman, who wrote an awful book entitled, *Leisureville*. Andrew really liked his neighbors in New England, who retired and moved to The Villages. He was unhappy they left and particularly unhappy that they moved to a 55+ community, since he disliked the idea of age restricted communities. He came to stay with his friends and wrote the book; a great example of how a prejudice (age restricted places are bad) is confirmed despite evidence to the contrary. During his stay he became friends with an older lothario who called himself, “Captain Midnight.” This guy boasted of numerous seductions and said that he always used protection because, “The Villages is the STD capital of the US.” Despite there being no evidence whatsoever for this assertion, the wire services repeated this spectacular statement and it became known nationwide. According to the Florida Department of Health, Sumter County (in which most Villagers live) is at the bottom of STD statistics. The Florida average is 175 per 100,000 people; Sumter is 39. This is an absurd and offensive example of how rumors and gossip can be destructive. Mark Twain once wrote, “A lie travels around the world before the truth can put on its pants.”

For Christians, spreading rumors is a cancer we are warned against in Scripture. In Ephesians 4, Paul writes, “Let each one of you speak the truth with his neighbor...Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear” (Eph. 4: 25, 29). I’ve preached on these verses at Grace and summarized God’s commands about speech in these questions: “Is it true? Is it necessary? Is it helpful? Is it gracious?” We have a responsibility to be sure that something is true before we share it, lest we be guilty, like the author of *Leisureville*, of destructive “idle words.”

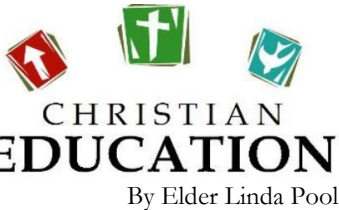


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Careless speakers will have to answer for every idle word, according to Jesus (Matthew 12: 36). Repeating something that is true can also be wrong if it is unnecessary, unhelpful or lacking in grace. Our tongues have the capacity to bless and to curse (Proverbs 18: 21, James 3: 5-12). The power of the tongue is a major theme of Proverbs and its destructive power is eloquently described in Proverbs 26: 18-28. On the other hand, one of the most beautiful descriptions of positive speech is given in Proverbs 25:11. "A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in a setting of silver." Can you picture that beautiful centerpiece?

May our speech in all situations reflect the name of our church. May we "give grace to those who hear.

Big love in Jesus,
Pastor Dave



MAKE ME A SERVANT

Make me a servant, Humble and meek,
Lord, let me lift up Those who are weak.
And may the prayer Of my heart always be,
Make me a servant, Make me a servant,
Make me a servant today.
--KELLY WILLARD--

Throughout the Bible, we read of God's choosing humble servants to convey His power. Where would Naaman be without his wife's servant girl sending him to Elisha to be healed? Where would Jesus be without Mary accepting God's will as the handmaiden of the Lord? Where would the Christian church be without Paul and Timothy? Where would we be without Jesus, the One who came to serve and give His life as a ransom for many?

These servants, and countless others like them, humbled themselves in order to serve. Their lives didn't revolve around developing their spiritual gifts, finding something great to do for God, or even becoming the best they could be. Instead they asked: Who can I help? What can I do to fit in with God's plan? What need is God calling me to meet? How can I obey? As a result, they changed the world.

Your humble service can do the same. Trust that whatever God has put in you He can work powerfully through. Whatever your gift, use it to serve others. Then people will hear the powerful message of God's grace: They are worth being loved.

"For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."
Mark 10:45

PRAYER: Ask God to examine what holds you back from serving others.

From the Greatest Praise and Worship Songs of All Time.



Evangelism Task Force Defining Evangelism ~ *Ligonier*

Romans 10:13-15

For “everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.” How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching? And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, “How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!”

Knowing whether we have actually proclaimed the gospel is necessary if we are going to be sure that we are fulfilling Christ's mandate to take the good news of salvation to all creation (Mark 16:15). Therefore, we have distinguished between witnessing and evangelism. Evangelism is a subset of witnessing, but it is not the only way to bear witness to Christ. Essentially, anything we can do that makes visible the invisible reign of our Savior can be classified as witnessing. When we do good works of service to God and neighbor, for example, we are providing a testimony to others by which they may be led to glorify our Lord in heaven (Matt. 5:16). But the doing of good works, however much it may reveal Christ's reign over our hearts and minds, is not evangelism.

Why does living a good life and doing what is right not qualify as evangelism? The answer is that evangelism refers very specifically to telling people about the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus and calling them to faith in Him. Just consider the background of the English term evangelism. It comes from the Greek word for gospel (*euangelion*), or "good news." Bringing it into English as *evangelism*, we get a word that literally means "gospeling," or "good newsing." Since *gospel* refers to a message of good news, if we are "gospeling"—if we are conducting evangelism—we are declaring a message. We can do so by speaking words, writing them on a piece of paper, or typing them in an e-mail, but the key point is that true evangelism means declaring content. To evangelize is to share a message with others and call them to respond.

As worthy and necessary as it is to show kindness to others, to love our neighbors and our enemies, to be honest and virtuous, and to fulfill all the other biblical commands, no one is converted by our doing such things. There is an important reason why we are ordered to proclaim a message—people are brought into the kingdom of heaven only through repentance and faith in Jesus Christ and what He has done (Acts 16:25–34). As Paul tells us in today's passage, people must call upon the name of the Lord to be saved, and the only way they can do this is if someone preaches the gospel to them. Not all of us will have the same gift for evangelism. Though preaching the good news comes more easily to some than others, this does not excuse our silence. We must preach the gospel where we are and as we have opportunity.

Coram Deo

God does not give all His people the same evangelistic gifts. However, that does not mean we cannot grow in our ability and willingness to evangelize. Studying the basic outline of the gospel message will help us be ready to share the gospel when the opportunity arises. We should also pray that God would open doors for us to preach His good news to others in our lives.





STEWARDSHIP & FINANCE

Thankfully time keeps moving and we can start looking forward to cooler weather, the return of our part-timers and a slowdown in the economy. My current prediction is that we will see fewer new residents coming into our area over the next year or two which should provide us with some time to determine how we can improve our situation so we can better attract and minister to them.

I read an article recently which spoke about churches, what distinguishes them and what is common amongst those that are dynamic and growing. What I found interesting is that we provide some of the things mentioned but don't have the capability of providing others. Those "others" require more space which we don't currently have. But we have the property on which to create that space and should be pursuing the means to use that.

In previous articles I have written about the blessings that our Lord has bestowed on this church and added that it is my firm belief that when following God's path we can expect His help so I believe that when we step out in faith, He will be there for us.

Florida is growing rapidly with the three fastest growing US cities being Miami, Orlando, and Tampa. That growth is showing up all around us also with new homes being built everywhere you look. So, think about the numbers of new residents that will be filling those homes and then consider how many of them will be looking to experience the fellowship, the meaning, and the sense of family that can only be provided by an uplifting worship experience and becoming part of our church family.

I also read an article that spoke of the impact of giving on us. Did you know that those that give for others are far more healthy, happier, and live longer on average than those that don't? I did not know that, but according to the article, those facts are backed up by numerous scientific studies over the past 20 years. So, think about how you feel when you do something that will make a positive impact on someone else's life. Then consider the impact on you if you felt that every day.

One of the fundamental errors that we have as human beings is greed, which is manifested mostly in terms of money or monetary value. Greed, by its very nature, is striking against the riches within oneself because it appears that there is never enough. Our eyes are always "hungry."

"Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test me in this," says the Lord Almighty, "and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that you will not have room enough for it" (Malachi 3:10 NIV).

Dave Hoffmeyer
Stewardship & Finance



Malachi 3:10, NIV



Linda Dattler—2nd
Gail Edelman—3rd
Betty Russell—5th
Joyce Lewis—6th
Linda Williams—16th
Pastor Rick Rosenkrans—17th
Mary Small—30th



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



*Do you need help
with anything?
Would you like to be
part of a team to help
others?*

Just let us know!



Last
Friday
Women's
Breakfast

September 30th at 8:30am
at Wolfy's 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
September 15th
1:00pm

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



The Widow's
Luncheon will
be on

Thursday, September 15th at 11:30am
It will be at the Crown and Shield Restaurant in
Royal Highlands.

Please let Sue know if you are attending by
Sunday September 11th.

Jim and Sue Davids on God's Path

Jim and Sue Davids were both born to and raised by Christian parents in the Chicago suburbs. Sue learned hair-cutting in high school and her mother and grandmother were teachers, so Sue cut hair while getting a teaching degree from Western Michigan University. While Jim attended and graduated from Calvin College. Jim's favorite class in high school was Civics, he was president of Student Council and founded the Debate Team, so not surprisingly Jim was a Political Science major at Calvin College and then went on to Duke Law School.

Jim and Sue met at a Career Group meeting at Christ Church of Oak Brook. Sue was back in Chicago the summer between her third and fourth year, and her brother Paul was hounding her to attend the Career Group because he wanted to introduce her to a young lawyer (a graduate of the University of Chicago Law School) who was also a CPA. Sue wasn't much interested in starting a relationship during a summer break, but Paul was insistent, so she went. Paul introduced her to the young lawyer, but he made little impression on her. Sue, however, looked across the room, and there stacking chairs while in a blue suit was a young man who was very interesting. While Sue stared at this young man, it seemed like the heavens opened and a dove descended upon him. Sue asked her brother for the name of the young man, and Paul said, "I don't know him, but I think his name is Jim." Sue marched over and gave Jim a hair cutting business card (despite the fact that Jim just had a haircut earlier that week), and when Sue got home, she told her mother she had met the man she was going to marry.

Shortly thereafter, Sue decided to throw a party and invited Jim, but he ignored her the entire time. A couple weeks later, Jim decided to host a party at his parents' summer home in Michigan, and he asked Sue to be the hostess for the party and she agreed. Sue and Jim dated for the balance of the summer, and then Sue returned for her final year at Western Michigan. After graduation, she returned to Chicago and they resumed dating, with Sue once or twice a week going to Jim's condo to cook for him. After a broken engagement and a short time apart, they re-engaged and married in April, 1979.

Two and a half years later, Carolyn was born. She suffered greatly from colic. Being newby parents, Jim and Sue thought all babies cried incessantly for 9 months, and that gave them pause from having another. Nevertheless, two and a half years later Laura was born. She was a delightful baby with many smiles (Laura had her moments of rebellion about 17 years later), and two and a half years later (do you see a pattern?) Steven was born. Steve almost immediately vied for supremacy with his older sisters, which often got him in trouble. Steve was the type of boy for whom you had to put up **two** gates in the doorway to keep him in a room. He shook the side of his crib so much you thought the whole thing would collapse. Four years later, Teddy was born.

All four children attended Christian schools through high school (Jim said it was the best investment he ever made, since all four children love the Lord and married Christian spouses). During these years Sue was a stay-at-home mom (although sometimes she got so involved in politics that she seemed NEVER to be home), while Jim worked in downtown Chicago (the last 15 years as a name partner in a firm on Michigan Avenue). Jim's practice was primarily defending doctors and hospitals in malpractice cases, although he also did employment law and general litigation. In 2001 Jim, not knowing that political appointee jobs only last for 18 months, took such a job in the U.S. Department of Justice under Bush II. His focus was the constitutionality of the Faith-Based Initiative, which allowed churches to partner with government in providing services to the poor. Sue continued teaching at a junior high school.

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Jim's political appointment expired, so he volunteered working as Legislative Counsel on Capitol Hill for the Christian Legal Society until he got a job teaching constitutional law at Regent University's School of Government. After one year, Regent asked Jim to relocate the family down to the main campus in Virginia Beach, and Regent appointed Jim to an Assistant Dean's position. He continued teaching in the Schools of Government and Law, and Sue taught at Deep Creek High School in Chesapeake, Virginia. During these years, Carolyn got married and started having children (she has now 5), Laura went to Regent Law and married one of her classmates (they now have 6 children), Steve married one of his classmates at Virginia Tech (he became a computer scientist and they have 3 children), and Teddy (a physical therapist) married a girl he met online, and they have one child. For those not counting, that's 15 grandchildren (11 boys and 4 girls) spread between Virginia, New Hampshire and Washington State.

While at Regent, Jim started working part-time for a law firm that specialized in suing doctors and hospitals. He did this for seven years until he retired from both Regent and the law firm at the beginning of the Covid lockdowns. Also while at Regent, Jim developed the foundational worldview course for the Government School focusing on Creation, Fall and Redemption, and its application to our lives. Jim has given lectures from this course in Ukraine, Belarus, Singapore, and Indonesia, and it is this course that Jim will teach in Sunday School this fall.

Since Jim is not the retiring type (in many ways), after leaving Regent he decided to start a public interest law firm for The Family Foundation of Virginia, the leading conservative public policy group in Virginia. He became General Counsel of this firm when it launched, and he now litigates religious liberty and parental rights cases for The Family Foundation. In addition, when the Christian Legal Society had two lawyers resign within one year, Jim became the volunteer Senior Litigation Counsel, again serving clients whose religious liberty was violated.

Jim joined his brother and sister-in-law in The Villages in June 2021, and soon thereafter Jim and his brother moved their mother from Chicago to The Villages. Over the past year, which proved to be their mother's last year of life, both Jim and his brother spent considerable time with their mother. Sue retired from her teaching job in Virginia this past June, and she also has moved permanently to The Villages.

Jim and Sue during their adulthood have been members of the Christian Reformed Church, the Reformed Church of America, the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church, the Evangelical Presbyterian Church, and the Presbyterian Church in America. Our continued adherence to the Reformed tradition is attributable to the strong and orthodox preaching of our pastors, excellent Sunday School, outstanding hymnal music, and the worldview that underlies it.



Want to know what's going on?

We have updates from our mission partners regularly and it would be impossible to include them all in our newsletter each month. So please be sure to check out our Missions board in the lobby every week to see what's new and how our mission partners are doing!

Wycliffe Update!

Our Wycliffe missionaries finally made it back to Malaysia and they have been busy!



This is their Trauma Healing class, the first one done in the Malay language!


Dinner with the community they are working on language development in.



The Gospel of Mark in the “Kasih” language!

They are thrilled to be back and ask for prayers for the follow up Trauma Healing class to keep the movement going. They also ask for prayers for their physical health and getting over the jet-lag and getting re-acclimated to being back. And also pray for upcoming travel safety to expand their training so that they can continue to help this country who has been wracked by conflict for decades.

September 2022

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
4 Communion Sunday **No Sunday School 9:45am Coffee & Fellowship 10:30am Worship Bob & Betty Russell Anniversary	5  Betty Russell Birthday	6 8:00am Perkins Men's Bible Study Joyce Lewis Birthday Dirk & Molly Bod Anniversary	7 2:00pm Safety Meeting 4:30pm Choir Rehearsal	8 10:30am Plantation Small Group 10:00am Finance Committee Meeting	9 Linda Dattler Birthday	10 Gail Edelman Birthday
11 9:00am Sunday School 9:45am Coffee & Fellowship 10:30am Worship	12 6:30pm Royal Highlands Small Group 6:30pm Royal Harbor Small Group	13 8:00am Perkins Men's Bible Study	14 4:30pm Choir Rehearsal 2:30pm Villages Small Group	15 1:00pm Prayer Time with Pastor John 11:30am Widow's Luncheon Jim & Shelby Reed Anniversary	16 Linda Williams Birthday	17 Rick Rosenkrans Birthday
18 9:00am Sunday School 9:45am Coffee & Fellowship 10:30am Worship	19 6:30pm Royal Highlands Small Group	20 8:00am Perkins Men's Bible Study 10:00am Session Meeting	21 4:30pm Choir Rehearsal	22 10:30am Plantation Small Group	23 Phil & Debbie Beahm Anniversary	24
25 9:00am Sunday School 9:45am Coffee & Fellowship 10:30am Worship	26 6:30pm Royal Highlands Small Group 6:30pm Royal Harbor Small Group	27 8:00am Perkins Men's Bible Study	28 4:30pm Choir Rehearsal 2:30pm Villages Small Group	29	30 8:30am Women's Breakfast Mary Small Birthday	

Church Safety



Safety Meeting!

**Wednesday, September 7th
at 2:00pm**

We're going to talk about those "What If" situations and what to do if one of those situations should happen. You won't want to miss out on this helpful information!

Do you love to sing and praise the Lord through music?

Do you have a desire to be a part of leading our congregational worship music on Sunday? If so, we have a place for you in our choir. After our summer break, we will resume rehearsal on **Wednesday, September 7 from 4:30-6:00 p.m.**

We also meet at 10:00 a.m. on Sunday mornings to warm up our voices and go over the day's anthem.

Also, we will begin rehearsing Christmas music early in the fall, so this is a great time to join in.

Looking forward to seeing you in choir!

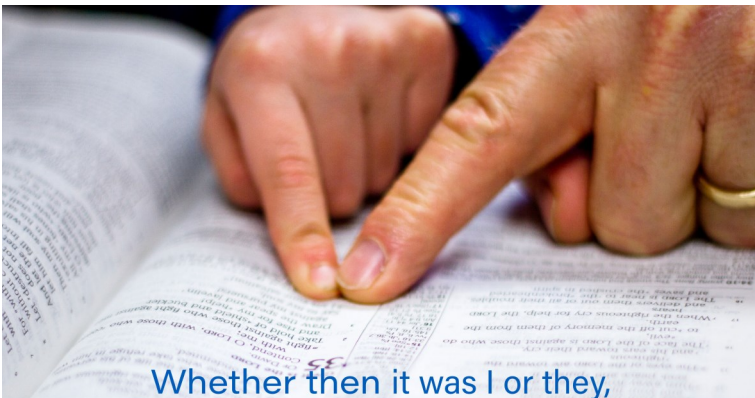
I will sing to the LORD,
because he has dealt
bountifully with me.



Psalms 13:6, NRSV

September Sermon Schedule The Corinthian Correspondence

- Sep 4th The Reality of the Resurrection
- Sep 11th Giving and Grace
Beginning of series, "He Spoke in Parables"
- Sep 18th Great Things Start Small
- Sep 25th Hidden Treasures



Whether then it was I or they,
so we preach and so you believed.

1 Corinthians 15:11, ESV

*The
kingdom
of heaven
is like
treasure
hidden
in a field...*

MATTHEW 13:44



Grace
Evangelical Presbyterian Church
Leesburg, FL

Happy 5th Birthday!

All welcome!

Saturday, October 1st
2:00pm to 4:00pm

**Live Music
Fun Fellowship
Mystic Ice
Cream Truck***
*Ice Cream \$6

Happy 5th Birthday Grace!!!

*Join us as we celebrate!
Bring a friend!*

On Sunday, October 2nd we will also be having a potluck after worship. It will be a weekend of celebration!



Prayer Shawl
Ministry

KNIT. CROCHET. PRAY.

Blessings from the Prayer Shawl Ministry

“Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.”

Matthew 11:29

Fall is on the way. It has been a very hot summer and I know we will all be glad to have a little cooler weather even though it means we will be changing time. Ugh!

The Prayer Shawl Committee has another grateful recipient of our Prayer Shawls. Frank recently received a lapghan. I met him at a memorial service a short time ago. He thanked me for the lapghan and he told me that when he wrapped it around himself he immediately could feel the warmth of God’s love.

Frank was recovering from covid and he was having a lingering problem of being unable to sleep. But over time the knowledge of God’s presence enabled him to get much needed rest. We receive so many thankyou notes from Prayer Shawl recipients with heartfelt testimonials. We, as well, are truly blessed by these testimonials.

God Bless and may you as well feel God’s presence in your life.

Blessings from The Prayer Shawl Committee

Molly Bod, Mary Burton Alice Crotty, Connie Detherage, Gail Edelman, Jill Fraser, Jean Howse-Henke, Lois Schielke, Judy Scott, Shirley Robertson





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

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Leesburg, FL 34749

352-552-0052

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:

- 9:00 AM ~ Sunday School (**No Sunday School on 9/4*)
- 9:45 AM ~ Fellowship Time
- 10:30 AM ~ Worship Service

MONDAYS:

- 6:30 PM ~ Royal Highlands Small Group
- 6:30 PM ~ Royal Harbor Small Group (9/12 & 9/26)

TUESDAYS:

- 8:00 AM ~ Men's Bible Study & Breakfast @ Perkins
- 10:00 AM ~ Session Meeting (9/20)

WEDNESDAYS:

- 2:30 PM ~ Villages Small Group (9/14 & 9/28)
- 4:30 PM ~ Choir Rehearsal

THURSDAYS:

- 10:00 AM ~ Stewardship & Finance Committee Meeting (9/8)
- 10:30 AM ~ Plantation Small Group (9/8 & 9/22)
- 11:30 AM ~ Widow's Luncheon (9/15) ~ *Crown and Shield Restaurant*
- 1:00 PM ~ Prayer Time with Pastor John (9/15)

FRIDAYS:

- 8:30 AM ~ Last Friday Women's Breakfast (9/30) ~ *Wolfy's*