



Volume 11, Issue 11
November 2022

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NOVEMBER PASTOR'S PEN

"Living With Thanksgiving"

Beloved Members and Friends of Grace EPC,

I believe Thanksgiving is the "purest" of the holidays we celebrate in America. There are no secular icons like the Easter Bunny or Santa Claus to detract from the meaning of the day. Though many people spend the day thinking about and gorging themselves with food or participate in an orgy of football games, the main idea is not lost even on the unbeliever. As one person wrote, "The most embarrassing moment for an atheist must be when something wonderful happens to him and he has no one to thank."

In every November Pastor's Pen, I've tried to focus on the attitude of gratitude. As Reformed Christians we, of all people, should be most grateful because we believe that our salvation—abundant and eternal life—is a gift from God. As Charles Haddon Spurgeon once wrote, "Where God becomes a donor, man becomes a debtor. Every gift of grace involves a debt of gratitude." Perhaps the most profound and all-encompassing command in the New Testament is from Colossians 3:17, "And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him."

I read a great book a while ago entitled, *Thanks a Thousand*, by A. J. Jacobs. He set out to investigate a new branch of psychology, which focuses not on what causes dysfunction in individuals, but on what factors contribute to a happy life. Here are just a few of the facts he discovered:

- *Gratitude can lift depression, help you sleep, improve your diet and make you more likely to exercise.
- *Heart patients who keep a gratitude journal recover more quickly than those who don't.
- *Gratitude causes people to be more generous givers and kinder to strangers.
- *Gratitude is the single best predictor of well-being and healthy relationships, beating 24 other good qualities including hope, love and creativity.
- *Happiness doesn't lead to gratitude, gratitude leads to happiness.

So, like a good Presbyterian preacher, I have three questions to ask as you get ready to celebrate yet another Thanksgiving day:

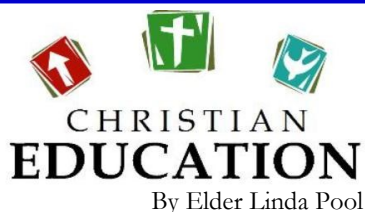


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- 1) I Thess. 5: 18 reads, "Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. Notice that it says give thanks *in* all circumstances not necessarily *for* all circumstances (we should never give thanks for sin). Are you able to thank God even in difficult and trying situations?
- 2) Think of one of the most thankful people you know. How do you think giving thanks has enriched his or her life?
- 3) Would you consider keeping a gratitude journal in which you simply record each day a number of things for which you are thankful? It could greatly enrich your life.



Big love in Jesus,
Pastor Dave



HERE I AM, LORD

Here I am, Lord
Is it I, Lord.
I have heard You calling in the night.
I will go, Lord
If You lead me,
I will hold Your people in my heart.
---Daniel L. Schutte

When God needed a faithful leader for Israel, He called Samuel. And He literally called. "The Lord came and stood there, calling as at the other times, "Samuel! Samuel!" Then Samuel said, 'Speak, for your servant is listening'"(1Samuel 3:10). When He needed a prophet for Israel, Isaiah answered the call, "Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, 'Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?' And I said, 'Here am I. Send me!'" (Isaiah 6:8).

God may not call you to serve Him as clearly as He did Samuel or Isaiah. Instead, He may call in a more quiet, but no less certain way. However it's packaged, God is calling you to love people the way He does. Where do we get the power to love people who may wound us, offend us, or not deserve it in our minds? Only by seeing them as broken, blind, and in need of a Savior—at exactly the same place we would be if Jesus hadn't rescued us. Jesus' love never forgets that this is what we are. He doesn't expect perfection. He isn't surprised when we fail. He knows we would be empty if He didn't fill us, broken if He didn't heal us, and alone if He didn't belong to us.

That's the message He asks us to share with others. He's calling you. How will you respond?

A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. John 13:34

PRAYER: Is God's call clear in your life? If not, ask Him to put His desires on your heart. As you step out, you'll find out what He wants.

From : "Open the Eyes Of My Heart", Daily Devotions From the Greatest Praise and Worship Songs of All Time.



Here am I;
SEND ME!
Isaiah 6:8, NRSV

Evangelism Task Force

“Every Other Way Leads to Death” **Why We Keep Sharing Christ!**

A man sat along the road where one path broke into ten. A deep fog rested upon the land so no traveler could perceive each path's end.

The man's King, before going off to his kingdom, told the man the end of each. One path led to a den of lions. One to a cliff with jagged rocks at the bottom. One through a forest with bloodthirsty beasts. Another to a swamp with inescapable quicksand. Still another to a tribe of cannibals. And the unsavory reports continued in this fashion. Only one led to the King's kingdom. His charge was simple: warn others away from destruction and toward the path of life.

A young man first crossed his path. “My friend, I have good news for you,” he said to the traveler. “The King of this world sent me to help you along. This path here, of the ten before you, alone is safe. And not only safe, but it leads directly to the King and his kingdom — a kingdom where you will be received, robed, and reconciled by his incredible mercy. The other paths — as the King has most solemnly recorded in his book — lead to certain ruin.”

To his amazement, the passerby completely ignored his pleadings. A woman upon his arm held his ear, bidding him to follow another of the ten paths. “Sir! Come back! That way is the path of death! Come back!” he cried until the man faded from sight. The servant sat down in silence for hours. What should I have done differently?

The second traveler, this time a young woman, paused momentarily to hear what he had to say. She considered the prescribed way, saw it was both narrow and hard, and without much more thought chose against it, telling him not to worry; she would be fine.

The sight of the next travelers forced the horror of that woman's end from his mind. A husband and wife approached (hardly speaking or looking at one another). This couple, as self-confident as they were unhappy, met his royal invitations with a sharp rebuke.

“But what will they think of me?” has lodged the name of Christ in many throats.

“Barbarously arrogant!” the woman scolded.

“Hypocritical and judgmental,” the husband added.

“Love,” the woman said without stopping, “lets others travel their own path for themselves by themselves, and does not force one's own way upon anyone.”

He tried to tell the back of their heads that it was not his way but the King's, yet they paid no mind. Hand in hand, they walked toward the cliff, mocking such a fool upon the road.

Days went by after this fashion. Each encounter weakened his pleadings. The mission that he began with a royal sense of privilege soon waned into callousness, confusion, and apathy. Family, friends, colleagues, and strangers now pass by, all stepping upon their chosen path. He gives but a feeble smile at the unsuspecting people who embark upon their preferred way to perdition.

Weary in Speaking Good

I have felt like this servant of the King.

I have often asked with Isaiah, “Who has believed what he has heard from us? And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?” (Isaiah 53:1) The temptation to compromise finds me in my defeat, whispering, “Is it really worth it?” or, “Did God really say that the gospel is the power of God for salvation?”

Add to this whisper the fleshly impulse to avoid conversations that can easily lead to awkwardness or rejection.

Some of us, myself included, heed the voice telling us that “going there” is neither polite nor promising, rather than the voice telling us to share the only name given under heaven by which they must be saved (Acts 4:12). But what will they think of me? has lodged the name of Christ in many throats.

Now add to these challenges the sweet words in our day about “tolerance” — words that regularly convince Christians to consent to compromise while person after person passes by on the road to ruin. While Jesus didn't blush to tell people that he alone was the way, the truth, and the life (John 14:6), we often fail to pass along the life-saving message we have been given.

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Word to Passersby

If you are considering which path to take and desire the King's perspective, here you have it: Jesus alone is the way, the truth, the life; he alone is the mediator between God and man (1 Timothy 2:5); he alone brings reconciliation to sinners (Colossians 1:20); he alone reveals God perfectly (Hebrews 1:3); he alone is the resurrection and the life (John 11:25); there is salvation in no one else (Acts 4:12). Two types of paths exist: the way of Christ, and the ways of condemnation (Matthew 7:13). Every path not leading to repentance and faith in Jesus for the forgiveness of sins is a path leading to never-ending death.

God sent his Son into the world of condemned criminals in order to save it and give eternal life to all who believe (John 3:16–18). Jesus is the one name offered to you for your salvation. He is the only one who can take away your sins. Your good works will not spare you; your good character will not shelter you; your good intentions will not clothe your nakedness. The angel of death walks outside; only the door with Christ's blood painted on the frame can shelter you.

“Two types of paths exist: the way of Christ, and the way of condemnation.”

Consider your path before it is too late. Not choosing a path is a path. Believing that no true paths exist is itself a path. Secularism, materialism, and false religions have paths. Contrast these with the only one that can lead to life, that of Jesus Christ and his gospel.

Politically correct? No. Tolerant? No. Exclusive? Assuredly. Loving? Absolutely. “God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us” (Romans 5:8). Will you be a part of the us?

Plea to Christians

If, on the other hand, you are one of the many men or women at the crossroads, charged by the King to warn and to guide, do not give in or give up; the world needs your voice. Do not bow to the hollow statue that the world has erected and named “Love.” Compromise is love only with respect to self and sin, tolerant only toward the masses going to hell, and accepting only of a cowardice that makes us complicit in condemning those we claim to love.

If we believe our King, we cannot sit silently. If we care for souls, we cannot grow mute. If we love our God's glory, we must speak. We cannot watch family, friends, and even enemies pass by with indifference.

In Due Season

Eventually, this servant of the King, through considering his own relationship with the King and meditating on the words of his book, revived his trust in the King's message.

An old man made his way slowly toward him.

“Sir, I have wonderful news for you — and I hope, I pray you receive it. My King has sent me with an urgent message that you, even in your old age, can find eternal life. This path, sir, though hard and with a narrow gate, is the singular path to life. Every other has something worse than death inscribed upon it. Even now, my King awaits, ready to receive you.”

“Why should such a King offer me such a welcome?”

“Because, in his great love, he has made a way — through highest payment to himself — to receive all who come to him in faith. . . Yes, even you. . . Yes, that is his promise. . . Yes, this path.”

Do not give in. Do not give up. Keep praying for your child; keep speaking the truth in love to that neighbor; keep pointing to Jesus Christ. Do not grow weary of speaking good, for in due season you will reap, if you do not give up (Galatians 6:9).

Greg Morse is a staff writer for desiringGod.org and graduate of Bethlehem College & Seminary. He and his wife, Abigail, live in St. Paul with their son and daughter.

“Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.”



Galatians 6:9, NIV



Bunny Menges—14th
Holly Gailey—15th
Rosie Hawthorne—20th
Jane Wertley—20th
Jack Homoney—26th
Bob Schielke—29th
Rupert Waite—29th

A Time to Pray Service
November 19, 2022 at 10:00am

A lot has happened over the past few years that has given us reason to be deeply concerned of where this old world is going! We have had a pandemic that has resulted in lock-downs, business closures and many deaths. Harmful drugs have taken the lives of many, young and old alike. There have been riots in the streets of major cities. Members of our police force have been killed in their line of duty. A violent hurricane has recently destroyed the lives, homes and businesses of many. Our President has warned us of a Nuclear Armageddon. What is happening? What can we do?

Churches can come together in prayer. Listen to 2 Chronicles 7:14 *if my people who are called by my name humble themselves, and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land.*

There are pastors from three churches coming together for a time of prayer here at Grace EPC on **Saturday November 19th at 10:00am.**

- Pastor Ian Lamont of Grace Way Presbyterian Church
- Pastor Bill Eaton from South Lake Christian Church
- Pastor John Fraser of Grace EPC

We invite all of you to attend to hear what these pastors have to say about prayer and to pray along with them. We can't change the world we live in but God can.



**Last
 Friday
 Women's
 Breakfast**

November 25th 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 (2022)
Marvin Pool (2023)
Shelby Reed (2024)
Al Rode, Jr. (2023)
Jim Teets (2024)



Prayer Time with Pastor John
November 3rd & 17th
at 1:00pm

Tell us how we can pray for you!
 GraceEPCLeesburg@gmail.com
 (352) 552-0052.



The Widow's Luncheon
 will be on

Thursday, November 17th at 11:30am
at Belle Glade in the Villages

Please let Sue know if you are attending by Sunday, November 13th. ****If you would like to carpool, we will be meeting at the church at 10:45am. Please let Sue know if you wish to carpool.**



STEWARDSHIP & FINANCE

Good grief November is here already. Going forward we will be rushed into Thanksgiving, Christmas (the season of giving), New Years and then 2023. In other words, going forward

it is now all about what is next. But we need to take the time to stop and consider where we have been and then give thanks to the Father for His guidance and support that brought us to this point. We must continue to pray, plan, and consider how to use what we have been given to reach out into our community. There are many who if asked would say they are Christians yet do not attend a worship service or seek to become part of a church. We must be doing whatever we can to reach those folks and to provide them a path that will bring them into the flock.

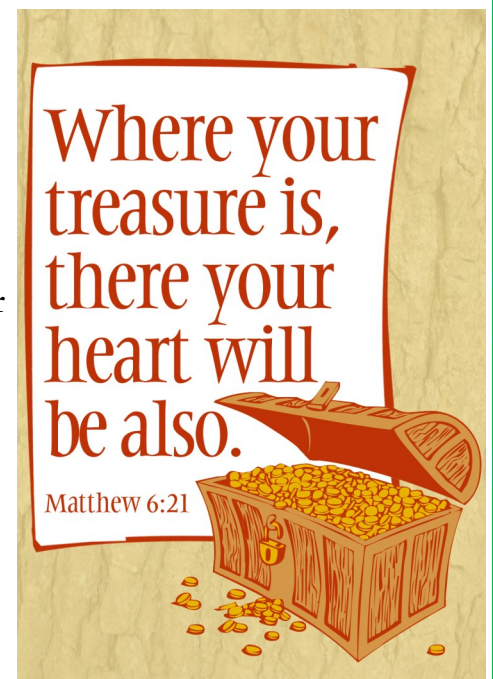
Now as we approach another year end let's think about giving and how we can and will support our mission. This facility is almost as old as I am. I remember not long ago when I would say that I just turned 60 or that I was almost 65, now I find myself thinking that I am "pushing" 70+X. I also see what the ravages of time are doing and the costs of staying healthy(?). Those costs also apply to this facility and as it continues to age it will require more upkeep. So that is something that you must consider when thinking about your giving as we must keep it this building as functional and friendly as possible in order to have our visitors return. After all, if someone comes in and does not feel comfortable, they will not be back. And having them return is our mission, that is what we are to do. That is how we spread the Word and help so called Christians become true believers.

I was reading an article that spoke about why people attend worship services. First on the list was for the 'experience', and it explained that the experience had to satisfy both spiritual and social needs. The article then went on to describe what could be provided in a facility in order to further meet those needs. When I looked at that I just shook my head as we just don't have the space for what was described. However, we own 2.6 acres on which we can design and build a facility that can meet those needs.

In addition to your regular giving, your faith can and should play a role in your estate planning. This can be accomplished as simply as including the church in your Will as a beneficiary. Actually, that is an ideal opportunity to make a statement of your faith and support your church or favorite mission for years to come. Charitable estate planning leaves a legacy of faith that will live on long after you're gone. Doing this can also have positive impacts on the taxes paid when your estate is distributed. For example, a traditional IRA is taxed at the recipient's regular rate unless it is donated to a charitable entity such as our church.

Remember this quote by Billy Graham. "Give me five minutes with a person's checkbook and I will tell you where their heart is." Where is your heart?

Dave Hoffmeyer ~ Stewardship & Finance





Clothed in Hope

Teamwork Makes the Dream Work

Our Entrepreneur Co-op is comprised of 15 women who graduated from our program and are now successful entrepreneurs. Most all of these women have received at least one Business Grant from us over the last few years.

This group of women is committed to meeting every few weeks, checking in with each other to share new ideas, problem solve, and best of all to provide encouragement every step of the way. As some of you may know, running a business is tough stuff. Running a business as a woman in Zambia is extra tough stuff.

When we formed this group, we were excited for the strength in unity that would surely come about. And it absolutely has. But one unexpected perk has also arisen, because these women are just that amazing.

Enter: Village Banking

This form of group savings is just like it sounds in the name- familiar, cultural, communal. And while this group of women doesn't live in the village but rather in an urban neighborhood, the premise remains the same.

How does it work?

Each woman saves money to her name, recorded in a group notebook. Rather than keeping funds in a box with a shared key, as is sometimes customary (called merry-go-round savings), this method doesn't put the burden of safe-keeping of the box on any one person.



Each time the women gather together, everyone puts money into the pot, each choosing how much she wants to save. Then one woman can choose to withdraw or take a loan from the pot. She will re-pay the loan with interest over a set period of time. The next time that the women meet, another woman will take a loan from the pot, and she'll repay that loan with interest over time. At the end of that time period, all of the interest collected is proportionally shared amongst the women according to how much each woman has saved, which is typically a large sum.

Sound confusing? Yes, I've had to ask for clarity many, many times and still probably don't have every detail understood. But what matters most is that the group of women have it under control, and they absolutely do.

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During this last share, each woman was able to purchase or pay for some really substantial things. And when access to capital is pretty tricky, this Village Banking model provided them with larger sums of money to be able to make dreams come true.

Here's just a snapshot of what some women did with their "shareout:"

- One woman purchased tiles to put down in her primary school classroom, covering the dusty concrete floor with beautiful tiles for cleanliness and a nice learning environment
- Another paid for her daughter's school fees. Did you catch that? Because of this Village Banking model, she was able to send her daughter to school.
- And another bought popcorn seeds to start a side business when it's not farming season.
- Another bought a small plot of land to build shops for passive income generation.



I know we say it a lot, but we really are so proud of these women. For their ingenuity, for their grit, for their determination, and for their commitment to one another and to paving a new path for their children.

Thank you for supporting these women through your monthly HOPE Club gifts, one-time contributions, and end-of-year donations. You are helping create these ripples of HOPE in Zambia.

With Chikondi (Love),

Amy
CiH Founder & Executive Director



November 2022

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 8:00am Perkins Men's Bible Study	2 9:45am Women's Bible Study 2:30pm Villages Small Group 4:30pm Choir Rehearsal	3 1:00pm Prayer Time with Pastor John	4	5
6 Communion Sunday 9:00am Sunday School 9:45am Coffee & Fellowship 10:30am Worship	7 6:30pm Royal Highlands Small Group	8 8:00am Perkins Men's Bible Study	9 9:45am Women's Bible Study 2:30pm Villages Small Group 4:30pm Choir Rehearsal	10 10:00am Finance Committee Meeting 10:30am Plantation Small Group	11	12 10:00am ShoeBox Packing Party!!!
13 9:00am Sunday School 9:45am Coffee & Fellowship 10:30am Worship	14 6:30pm Royal Highlands Small Group 6:30pm Royal Harbor Small Group Bunny Menges Birthday	15 8:00am Perkins Men's Bible Study 10:00am Session Meeting Holly Gailey Birthday	16 9:45am Women's Bible Study 2:30pm Villages Small Group 4:30pm Choir Rehearsal	17 11:30am Widow's Luncheon 1:00pm Prayer Time with Pastor John	18	19 10:00am A Time To Pray Service
20 9:00am Sunday School 9:45am Coffee & Fellowship 10:30am Worship **Thanksgiving Pot Luck to follow Worship Rosie Hawthorne Birthday Jane Wertley Birthday	21 6:30pm Royal Highlands Small Group	22 8:00am Perkins Men's Bible Study	23 4:30pm Choir Rehearsal	24 THANKS Giving Day	25 8:30am Women's Breakfast	26 9:00am Decorate the Church for Christmas! Jack Homoney Birthday
27 9:00am Sunday School 9:45am Coffee & Fellowship 10:30am Worship	28 6:30pm Royal Highlands Small Group 6:30pm Royal Harbor Small Group	29 8:00am Perkins Men's Bible Study Bob Schielke Birthday Rupert Waite Birthday	30 9:45am Women's Bible Study 2:30pm Villages Small Group 4:30pm Choir Rehearsal			

Pastoral Search Committee Update

A few months ago our congregation approved a committee to search for a new pastor to replace Pastor Dave who is retiring. We have been working with the Presbytery and General Assembly getting all the forms in and they are now complete.

We have met with Pastor John and Pastor Rick, both whom have stated that they would like to continue in their present positions and are willing to stay on and continue serving in the same capacity when we find the right senior pastor.

If any friend or member of Grace may know of someone who might be a candidate, please let us know.

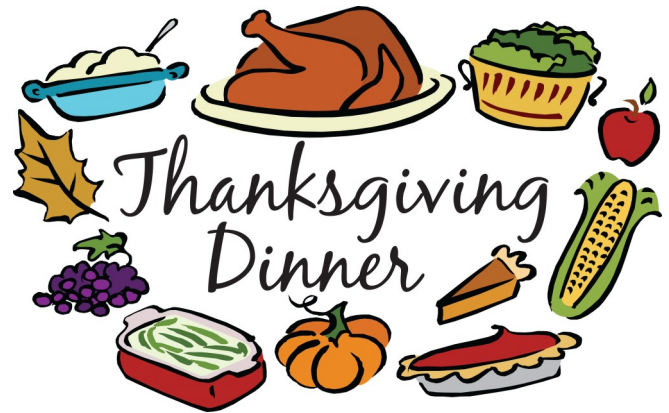
Please continue to remain in constant prayer for God's guidance in filling this position.

In Jesus' love,
Shelby Reed
Chair, Pastoral Search Committee

Thanksgiving Celebration!

Please join us for our Thanksgiving Fellowship Pot Luck on **Sunday, November 20th** following the worship service. The turkeys will be provided, but your delicious side dishes are what makes our luncheons so spectacular.

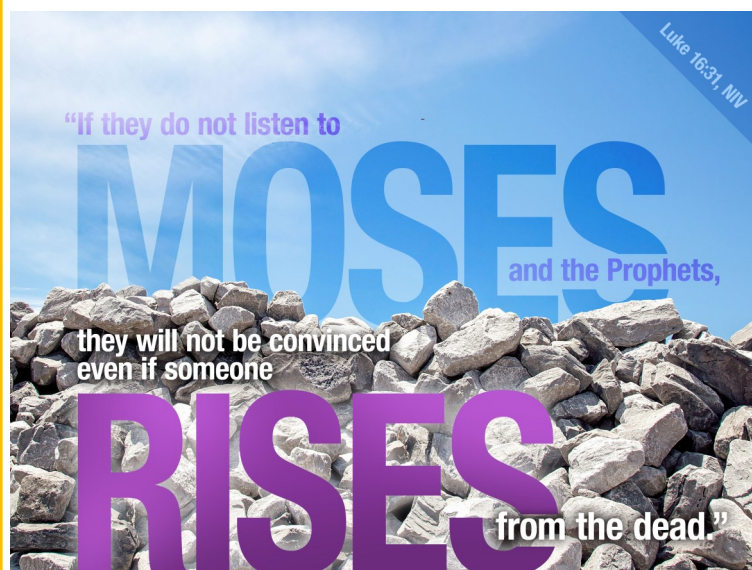
Please take this opportunity to invite a friend or neighbor! They will not be disappointed in the food or your warm welcome!



November Sermon Schedule

He Spoke in Parables

- Nov 6th Lessons From a Loser
- Nov 13th The Great Reversal
- Nov 20th The Cross and the Prodigal
Advent Season Begins!
"Minor" Characters in the Christmas Story
- Nov 27th Elizabeth



WHOEVER
CAN BE TRUSTED WITH
A LITTLE CAN ALSO BE
TRUSTED
WITH A LOT, AND
WHOEVER
IS DISHONEST
WITH A LITTLE IS
DISHONEST
WITH A LOT.

LUKE 16:10, NCV

Come Decorate the Church!!

Join us on **Saturday, November 26th** to get Grace ready for Christmas! Come at **9:00am** and bring your coffee! We will have donuts available for a snack to compliment your coffee.



Praise God From Whom All Blessings Flow



Now they were bringing even infants to him that he might touch them. And when the disciples saw it, they rebuked them. But Jesus called them to him, saying, "Let the children come to me, and do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of God. Truly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child shall not enter it."

Luke 18:15-17

One of the blessings God gives us is the blessing of children. We have created many lapghans for our children. Some of which have gone to members of the congregation for added blessings of great grand babies, others to the nursery at our local hospitals and some to the Christian Care Center. We are indeed blessed with our children.

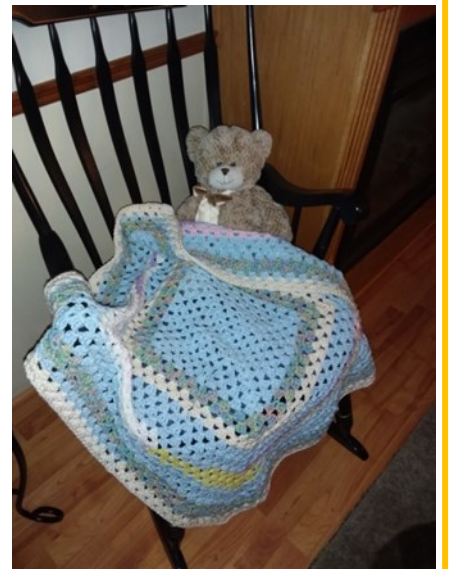
People were bringing babies to Jesus for him to place his hands on them. When the disciples saw this they rebuked them, But Jesus called the children to him and said:

"LET THE LITTLE CHILDREN COME TO ME, AND DO NOT HINDER THEM FOR THE KINGDOM OF GOD BELONGS TO SUCH AS THESE. TRULY I TELL YOU, ANYONE WHO WILL NOT RECEIVE THE KINGDOM OF GOD LIKE A LITTLE CHILD WILL NEVER ENTER IT."

Please let your Prayer Shawl Committee know if you have knowledge of a child who is in need of the encouragement of God's love.

God Bless, The Prayer Shawl Committee:

Molly Bod, Mary Arnold, Alice Crotty, Connie Deatherage, Gail Edelman, Peggy Ernest, Jill Fraser, Jean Howse-Henke, Lois Schielke, Judy Scott, Shirley Robertson





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:

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

****Thanksgiving Pot Luck following service on 11/20*

MONDAYS:

- 6:30 PM ~ Royal Highlands Small Group
- 6:30 PM ~ Royal Harbor Small Group (11/14 & 11/28)

TUESDAYS:

- 8:00 AM ~ Men's Bible Study & Breakfast @ Perkins
- 10:00 AM ~ Session Meeting (11/15)

WEDNESDAYS:

- 9:45 AM ~ Women's Bible Study *(No meeting on 11/23)
- 2:30 PM ~ Villages Small Group
- 4:30 PM ~ Choir Rehearsal

THURSDAYS:

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

FRIDAYS:

- 8:30 AM ~ Last Friday Women's Breakfast (11/25) ~ *Wolfy's*

SATURDAYS:

- 11/12 @ 10:00am ~ ShoeBox Packing Party
- 11/19 @ 10:00am ~ A Time To Pray Service
- 11/26 @ 9:00am ~ Decorate the Church for Christmas