



GRACE NOTES



Volume 12, Issue 2

February 2023

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FEBRUARY PASTOR'S PEN

"Remember When?"

Someone gave me an article entitled, I remember when. I want to share the article with you. So here goes!

Do you remember when?

- the only hazard presented by insecticides was running into flypaper.
- a marriage outlasted all three wedding present toasters?
- a drug problem was trying to get a prescription filled on a Sunday.
- bicycles and chickens came fully assembled.
- paperbacks had more passion on the cover than in the contents.
- a whole family could go to the movies for what it now costs for a bag of popcorn

Once hanging on my office wall in a framed setting are the words; "God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, courage to change those things I can, and wisdom to know the difference."

Change is all about us and sometimes it can be frightening. Some people find change challenging and even exciting! Some find change puzzling as they wonder how they will adjust. Times change and people change with the times. Very few things remain as they once were. How many of us have returned to the places of our childhood and marveled at all the changes that have taken place? A lot of changes that have taken place over the years have been for our benefit. Think for a moment of all the changes that have taken place in the field of medicine, transportation, and housing! How many of us would want to live as our ancestors did a hundred years ago?

There is a movement within society and even within some church circles that proclaims that God has changed. He no longer has rules only suggestions. He is no longer a jealous God when it comes to worship just so long as you believe in something nice. That Jesus went to the synagogue to worship as his custom was on the Sabbath is no longer an example for others to follow. Salvation is given to everyone so forget any mention in the Bible of false prophets. Sin is a word that is intolerant of other lifestyles so let's drop it from our religious vocabulary. Hey, we could go on but I think you get the point!

Allow me to share with you Hebrews 13:8. "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever." Look at 1 Peter 1:23, "All flesh is like grass and all its glory like the flower of grass. The grass withers and the flower falls, but the word of the Lord endures forever." God has not changed but for some people, their perception of Him has changed. Rather than find it frustrating that there are still rules and expectations to live by should we not celebrate that in the Lord there is stability.

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Jesus Christ

is the same yesterday
and today and forever.

Hebrews 13:8

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Children of God as we enter the New Year let us celebrate that the Lord of creation, the God of the prophets, the Savior who died and rose again, and the light of the early church is the very same God we worship today. God has not changed when it comes to the expectations He has for his children and neither has his love for his children changed.

One of Your Loving Pastors,
Pastor John Fraser



CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

By Elder Linda Pool

I GIVE YOU MY HEART

Lord, I give You my heart,
I give You my soul,
I live for You alone.
Every breath that I take,
Every moment I'm awake,
Lord, have Your way in me.

-Rueben Morgan

How badly do you want to be free in Christ? It usually takes getting fed up with the world's empty promises, tired of Satan's traps, or sick of our own stupid reactions before we really want to be free. Until that point, we stay bound by our stray affections.

Satan deceives us into thinking that we should only give God part of our heart, as if that way we could get the best of both worlds, our own selfishness and God's goodness. The truth is that the very thing we refuse to surrender imprisons us. We never experience the freedom of walking with God and enjoying His presence until we let go.

If God is trying to wrestle you to the ground to give in, know that whatever you let go of is nothing compared to knowing Him. His love and peace are so much more real, more stable, and more lasting; you won't believe you didn't give in sooner.

God always finds more for us to surrender---hidden attachments and unhealthy desires. By giving them all to Him, they lose their power to control us. Little by little He sets us free to love and worship Him. That's a freedom worth surrendering for.

Blessed are they who keep his statutes and seek Him with all their heart. PSALM 119:2

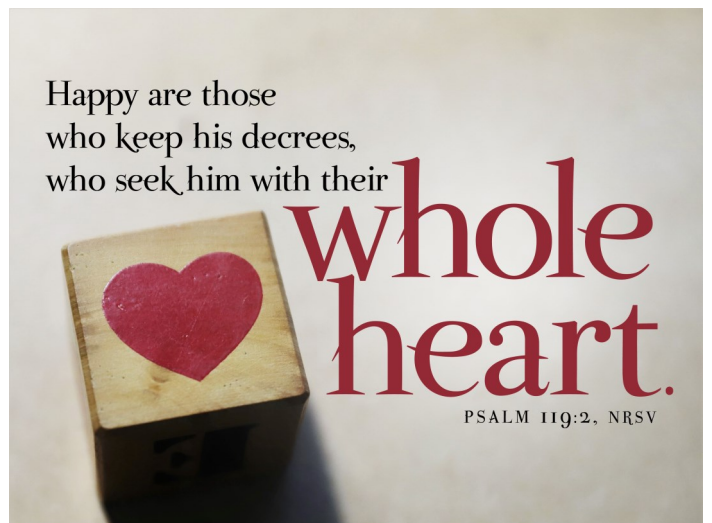
PRAYER: Ask God to show you what you may be hanging on to instead of Him. Then ask for the faith in His goodness, power, and love to be able to give it up and be set free.

From : *Songs 4 Worship presents "Open the Eyes of My Heart"*
Daily Devotions from the Greatest Praise and Worship Songs of All Time

Happy are those
who keep his decrees,
who seek him with their

whole
heart.

PSALM 119:2, NRSV



*This article by Pastor Greg Laurie points out something that without it, we can't possibly effectively tell others about Jesus. We should be asking our Lord to break our hearts for the same thing that breaks His!
Please read the last paragraph very carefully.*

An Essential for Evangelism

My heart is filled with bitter sorrow and unending grief for my people, my Jewish brothers and sisters. I would be willing to be forever cursed—cut off from Christ!—if that would save them. - (Romans 9:2–3)

General William Booth, the founder of the Salvation Army, once said that if he had his way, he wished part of the final training for Christians going into the work of evangelism would be for them to dangle over Hell for twenty-four hours. It wasn't so they would fear it for themselves, because they had the hope of Heaven. Rather, it was so they could see the reality of what awaits those who do not know Jesus Christ.

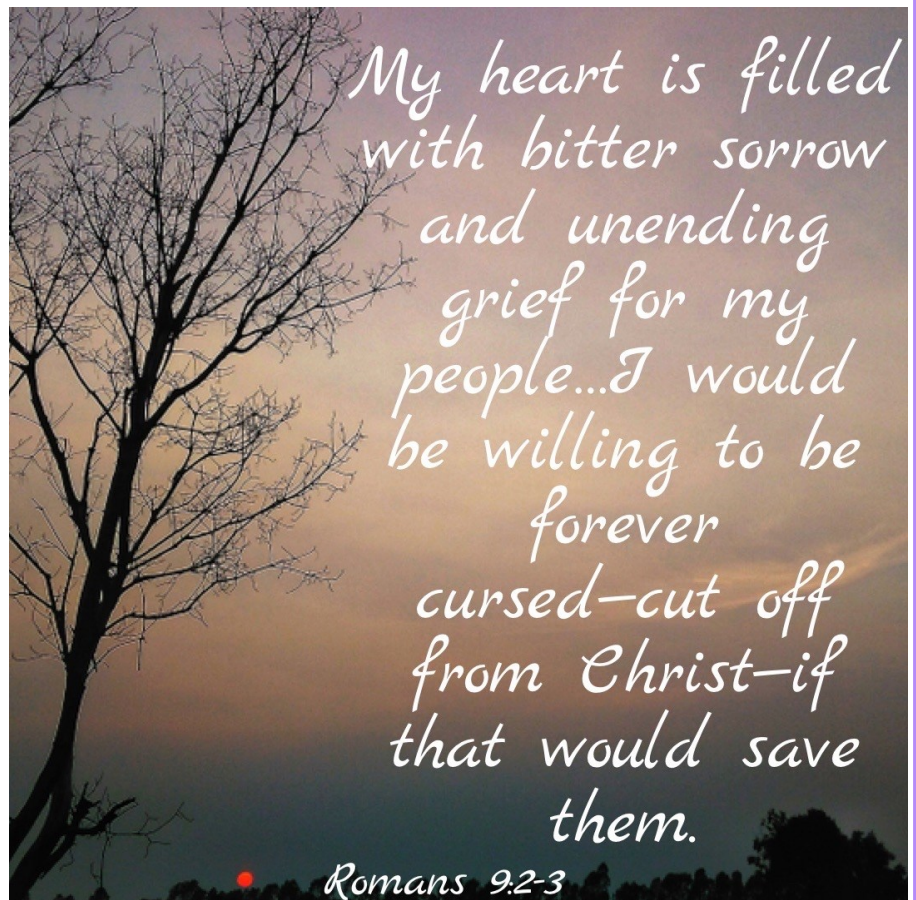
In Romans 9, Paul identified something that is essential for effective evangelism. He wrote, “With Christ as my witness, I speak with utter truthfulness. My conscience and the Holy Spirit confirm it. My heart is filled with bitter sorrow and unending grief for my people, my Jewish brothers and sisters. I would be willing to be forever cursed—cut off from Christ!—if that would save them” (verses 1–3).

In fact, if we are lacking this quality, then everything else really is of no consequence. Paul had a God-given burden for those who did not know Jesus Christ. He cared. It burned inside of him. And in his case, it was for his own kinsmen, the Jews.

Do you have a God-given burden for those who don't know Jesus Christ? And if you don't, do you want one? Be careful. If you ask God to give you this burden, you may be surprised at how quickly He answers you. The results could be life changing.

As I have said so many times, God is not looking for ability; He is looking for availability. In time He will help you in your ability. He will help you in your technique. He will help you in all those things. But what you need to start with is a God-given burden for the lost. **Pastor Greg Laurie, www.harvest.org**

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Who are the Mission Partners of Grace EPC?

It's been awhile since we've talked about who our Mission Partners are....so we thought we would share our list of Local Mission Partners, as well as our Global Mission Partners! These are organizations that we support financially and sometimes we do special projects to help them out!

LOCAL MISSION PARTNERS

ACCESS-LIFE MINISTRIES – We at Access-Life are all about “bridging the gap” between individuals and families affected by disabilities and Christ honoring churches, organizations and people through wholesome and fun events and activities! We love seeing someone with a disability do something they never thought was possible, a parent of a child with special needs get a chance to catch their breath and be renewed and even siblings of folks with disabilities receive a little special attention – all in Jesus’ name. To learn more, visit access-life.org/

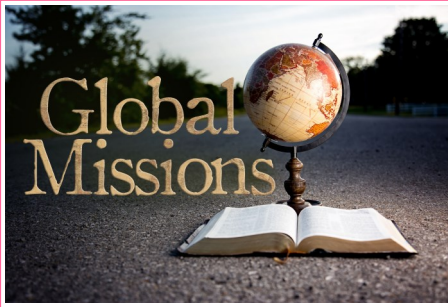
CARE FOR PASTORS – This ministry to those who minister provides confidential encouragement and counselling for ministers and their families to help them persevere in their ministry. To learn more, visit careforpastors.org

CHRISTIAN CARE CENTER – This Leesburg agency meets local needs with faith-based assistance centers for men, women, family and pregnancy care, benevolence, and clothing. They have a food pantry, a Fresh Start Program, a community medical center and a shelter for women and children called the Samaritan Inn. Grace EPC assists with financial aid and donations of clothing, food, plastic bags, and egg cartons. To learn more, visit christiancarecenter.org

GOOD NEWS JAIL MINISTRY – Chaplains and volunteers minister to inmates and prison staff, sharing the love of Christ with all who care to hear. Evangelistic services, Bible studies, individual mentoring and life skills classes attempt to break patterns of crime and destructive lifestyles. To learn more, visit goodnewsjail.org

LOGOS CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP – This ministry reaches out to veterans and homeless families living in the Ocala Florida forest. We donate flashlights, blankets, socks, boots, warm clothing and other items needed for their special outreach projects. To learn more, visit logoschristian.org

PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY - With prayers and creative needlework Grace EPC members craft shawls, quilts, lapghans and preemie baby items for people needing a healing touch due to illness, pain, grief or isolation. Each item is a prayer-filled gift of love, a tangible reminder of the love of Christ for those facing trying times in their lives.



INTERNATIONAL MISSION PARTNERS

CASTRO'S MEXICAN MINISTRY – We encourage the ministry of the Reverend Mercedes Romero Castro and the growth of the Congregacion Puerta de Salvacion (Door of Salvation Church) in Cuautla, Mexico with financial support.

CLOTHED IN HOPE – This non-profit mission empowers vulnerable women in Lusaka, Zambia. They learn sewing and life skills in order to support their families. We give monetary donations to this mission begun by the granddaughter of a church family. To learn more, visit clothedinhope.org

EPC WORLD OUTREACH – This mission sending agency of the EPC focuses on glorifying God by starting disciple-making movements among least-reached people groups, especially Muslims. To learn more, visit epcwo.org

ETHIOPIA ACT – Mission to reduce the impact of poverty and disease, especially HIV Aids, on the most vulnerable people of Addis Abba, Ethiopia, transforming communities by the power of the gospel to regain health, hope and life. To learn more, visit ethiopiaact.org

WORLD VISION: SUPPORT A CHILD – We participate in this Christian humanitarian organization dedicated to working with children, families, and their communities worldwide to reach their full potential by tackling the causes of poverty and injustice. Our sponsored child lives in Guatemala. To learn more, visit worldvision.org

WYCLIFFE BIBLE TRANSLATORS – Believing that people best understand the Bible in their own language, Wycliffe coordinates Bible translation projects in the written word and audio recordings. Approximately 1,600 world languages still need translation. To learn more, visit wycliffe.org

Don't forget, if you want to see updates with our Mission Partners, you can always check the Missions board located in the lobby. It changes weekly, so you won't want to miss checking it out!

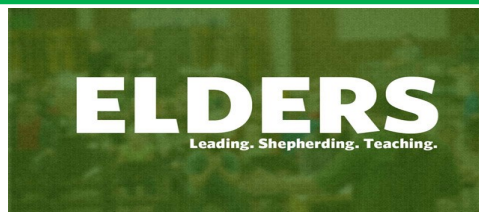




Ann Dorst—2nd
Jon Arnold—5th
Jackie Nicklas—5th
Dave Ghen—7th
Larry Hochhalter—9th
Debbie Beahm—10th
Peggy Ernest—11th
Al Rode—11th
Rose Hoxie—13th



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



Pastor John Fraser
Pastor Rick Rosenkrans
Bill Frakes (2024)
Jack Homoney (2023)
Wally Klee, Sr. (2023)
Marvin Pool (2023)
Shelby Reed (2024)
Al Rode, Jr. (2023)
Judy Scott (2025)
Jim Teets (2024)



Last
Friday
Women's
Breakfast

February 24th at 8:30am
at Wolfy's in Leesburg



Baby Bottle
Boomerang
is Here!!

Make sure you pick up your Baby Bottle if you haven't already! Please be sure to bring them back by **March 5th!**



Prayer Time with Pastor John

February 2nd & 16th
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, February 16th at 11:30am
at Cheesers in Clermont

***We are going to meet at 11:00am in the back lot of Perkins (Leesburg on 27), and carpool to Cheesers. Please let Sue know if you are attending by Sunday, February 12

It is now late January and again I am starting with a blank page staring at me. It is usually at this time that I am looking at whatever I can find that will prompt a thought with which I can start and then hopefully expand on. This process includes a lot of prayer as I ask Him for help. So, now I think back several weeks to one of our Tuesday morning breakfasts. The question was asked, what did we look forward to in 2023? That was then followed by a question about what we hope for regarding our church. I stated that I prayed that we would have an additional one million dollars in our building fund. Then someone asked why I thought that a new building was in God's plan for us. This took a moment, but I remember several things that have occurred during the past few years that show me that our church is traveling on the path laid by the Father. First, two churches became one with very little fall out. Then, with the assistance of a church member the property on US 27 was donated to us. Then there was the pandemic during which many churches either folded or lost significant attendance, while we came through not only intact but are now seeing our attendance grow. Lastly, we were able to purchase our current facility with cash due to our own giving plus a significant gift for that purpose followed by an accommodation by the seller. In addition, consider the leadership that He brought to us. When Pastor Ken had to leave, we got Pastor Gary from the Presbytery. He was replaced by Pastor Dave who took us through the previously mentioned merger. When Pastor Dave needed help Pastors John and Rick appeared. Then we also had another Pastor John to lead the choir and when he left Peggy took that over. I am pointing this out because the church never went looking for any of these folks, they found us, liked us and were here when their services were needed! Either we are the luckiest Church, or we had some Divine help. Now, I am a firm believer that when following God's path, He will help. So, if anyone thinks we are going in the wrong direction, I would like to hear that and especially the reasoning.

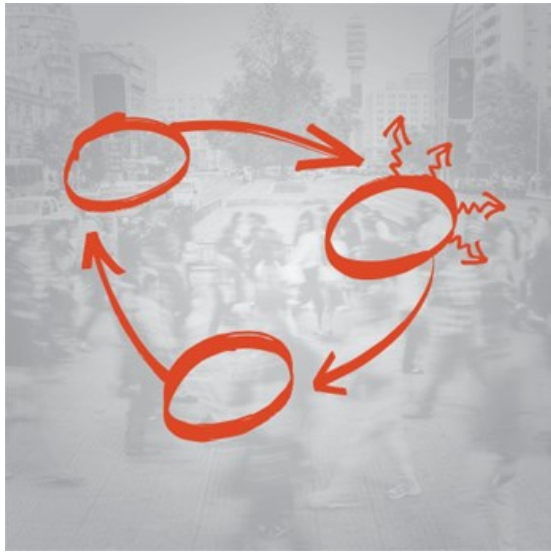
Did you know that Presbyterians have been passing the offering plate during worship services for over 140 years? I didn't either. But, while the article that I read was pointing out how mechanisms for giving have changed over the years, it showed me how hard it is for us to break old habits. It also indicates to me that there is some necessity for the practice. In our case there is usually as much support received that way as from all others.

Now as always, the subject is giving. When I look around, it seems to me that most of us feel like we don't have enough and spend much of our time trying to accumulate more and the rest of our time trying to figure out how to keep it. Giving away what we have is directly opposed to this idea, but that's why it's so powerful. Which brings me to the last point. Thankfully the economy of God doesn't work the way ours does. When we use what He has provided, when we're faithful with it instead of holding onto it with all our might, God reproduces it. I read somewhere that no one has ever starved because they tithed too much. God just doesn't work that way. When we trust God with our money, giving it away instead of holding onto it for fear He won't provide, He does provide. Not only that, He will go above and beyond what we have done. God won't be out-given. When we're generous with the things we count on to keep us safe, we're placing our wellbeing and our faith in the hands of the only one who can truly take care of us. It's never been about the money. It's always been about the faith!

Please think about this as you prayerfully consider your support of our continued growth.

Dave Hoffmeyer ~ Stewardship & Finance





3 Circles Sunday School Series

The gospel of Jesus Christ is the most profound reality of life. But sharing it with someone can be as simple as three circles. Discover how you can share the gospel with anyone. Join us in Sunday school for this six-part series starting **Sunday, February 26th at 9:00am**



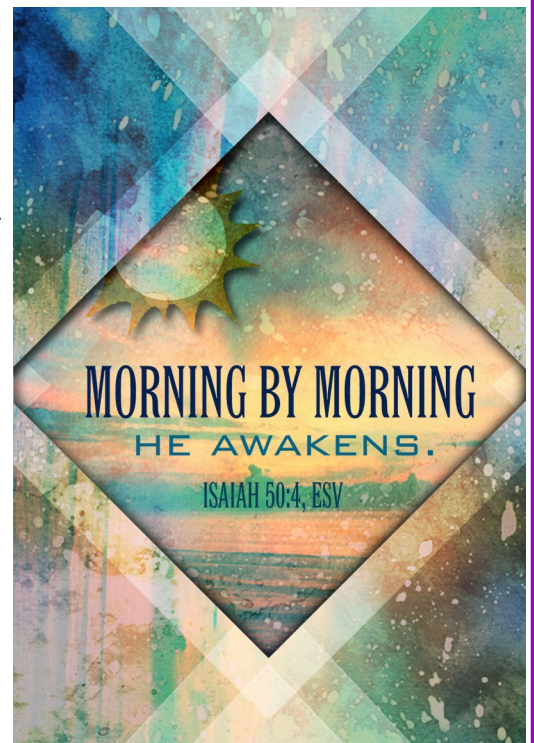
My Morning Resolve with My Lord...

I will choose this day to live a simple, sincere, and serene life, repelling promptly every thought of discontent, anxiety, discouragement, impurity, and self-seeking. I choose to cultivate cheerfulness, magnanimity, charity, and the habit of holy silence while exercising economy in expenditure, generosity in giving, carefulness in conversation, diligence in appointed service, fidelity to trust, and a childlike faith in God.

In particular, I will choose today to be faithful in those habits of prayer, work, study, physical exercise, eating wisely, and sleep which I believe the Holy Spirit has shown me to be right.

I cannot in my own strength do this, nor even with a hope of success attempt it, so I look to You, O Lord my Father, in Jesus my Savior, and ask for the gift of the Holy Spirit to guide me again today.

Thank You Lord of all! AMEN



February 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			<p>1</p> <p>9:45am Women's Bible Study 2:30pm Villages Small Group 3:30pm Choir Rehearsal</p>	<p>2</p> <p>1:00pm Prayer Time with Pastor John Ann Dorst Birthday</p>	<p>3</p>	<p>4</p>
<p>5</p> <p>Communion Sunday 9:00am Sunday School 9:45am Coffee & Fellowship 10:30am Worship Jon Arnold Birthday Jackie Nicklas Birthday</p>	<p>6</p> <p>10:00am GriefShare 6:30pm Royal Highlands Small Group</p>	<p>7</p> <p>8:00am Perkins Men's Bible Study Dave Ghen Birthday</p>	<p>8</p> <p>9:45am Women's Bible Study 2:30pm Villages Small Group 3:30pm Choir Rehearsal</p>	<p>9</p> <p>10:00am Finance Committee Meeting 10:30am Plantation Small Group Larry Hochhalter Birthday Jack & Carol Homoney Anniversary</p>	<p>10</p> <p>Debbie Beahm Birthday</p>	<p>11</p> <p>Peggy Ernest Birthday Al Rode Birthday</p>
<p>12</p> <p>9:00am Sunday School 9:45am Coffee & Fellowship 10:30am Worship</p>	<p>13</p> <p>10:00am GriefShare 6:30pm Royal Highlands Small Group Rose Hoxie Birthday</p>	<p>14</p> <p>8:00am Perkins Men's Bible Study</p>	<p>15</p> <p>2:30pm Villages Small Group 3:30pm Choir Rehearsal</p>	<p>16</p> <p>11:30am Widow's Luncheon 1:00pm Prayer Time with Pastor John</p>	<p>17</p> <p>Presbytery Meeting at Tampa Covenant Church All visitors are welcome!</p>	<p>18</p> <p>Presbytery Meeting at Tampa Covenant Church All visitors are welcome!</p>
<p>19</p> <p>9:00am Sunday School 9:45am Coffee & Fellowship 10:30am Worship Annual Congregational Meeting following Worship Service</p>	<p>20</p> <p>10:00am GriefShare 6:30pm Royal Highlands Small Group</p>	<p>21</p> <p>8:00am Perkins Men's Bible Study 10:00am Session Meeting</p>	<p>22</p> <p>9:45am Women's Bible Study 2:30pm Villages Small Group 3:30pm Choir Rehearsal</p>	<p>23</p> <p>10:30am Plantation Small Group</p>	<p>24</p> <p>8:30am Women's Breakfast 4:00 Movies with a Message Pat & Caren Byrnes Anniversary</p>	<p>25</p>
<p>26</p> <p>9:00am Sunday School 9:45am Coffee & Fellowship 10:30am Worship</p>	<p>27</p> <p>10:00am GriefShare 6:30pm Royal Highlands Small Group 6:30pm Royal Harbor Small Group</p>	<p>28</p> <p>8:00am Perkins Men's Bible Study</p>				



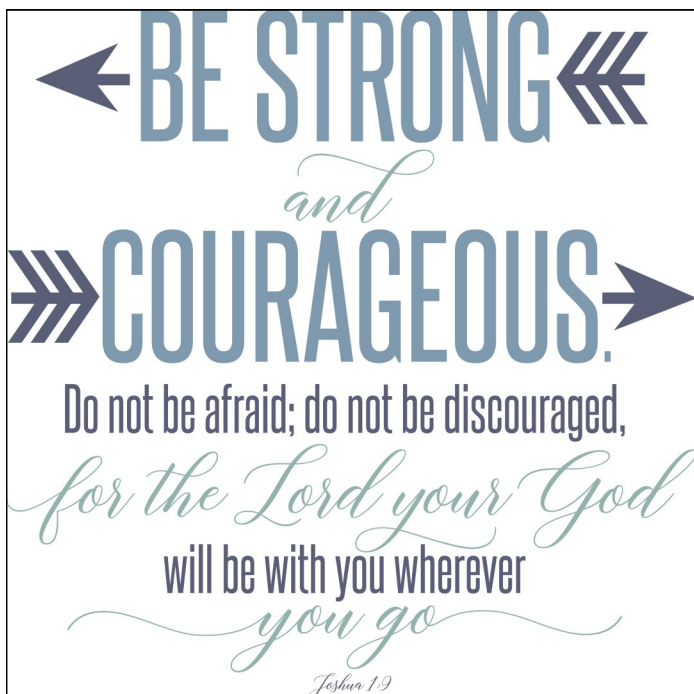
Movies with a Message!

Join us on **Friday, February 24th at 4:00pm** for Movies with a Message.

We've had a change of our planned movie title....please stay tuned for an update on which title we will be watching!

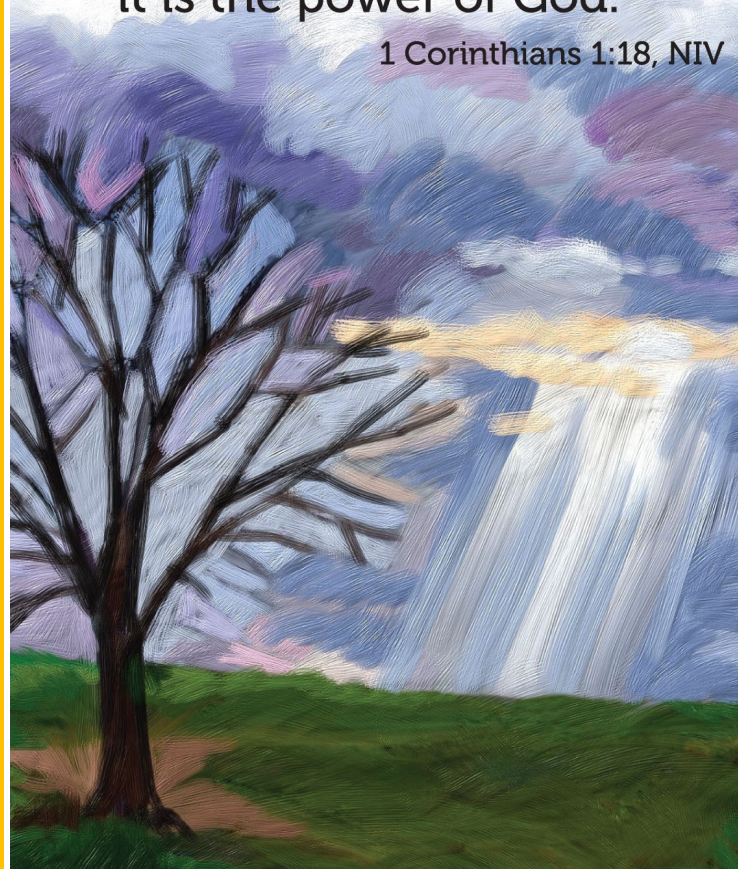
February Sermon Schedule

- Feb 5th When God Calls
Feb 12th Show Me the Spirit
Feb 19th The Walls Came Tumbling Down
Feb 26th It's All About Grace



For the message of the cross
is foolishness to those
who are perishing,
but to us who are being saved
it is the power of God.

1 Corinthians 1:18, NIV





KNIT. CROCHET. PRAY.

Gifts of Love

February is just around the corner. It is a month when we usually celebrate love with candy and flowers. God celebrated love with the gift of his Son, Jesus Christ!

“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life”

Many are in need of assurance of that love, especially when we need healing, and we as a Prayer Shawl Committee endeavor to spread that love with our lovely lapghans, quilts, shawls, mats, and pocket prayers. Our committee members with their needles, yarn, thread and fabric work to make that possible by giving our lapghans to those in need of that assurance.

Aiden, Rose Hoxies's grandson, was very happy to get his Snowman quilt. He loves to wrap himself in his quilt even though it is a Snowman Quilt it warms him because it assures him of God's love for him

In case you didn't know...our “Gifts of Love” are for the whole community, members and non members Please contact a member of the Prayer Shawl Committee if you know of someone in need of “Gifts of Love”. Cards may be found in the back of the chairs in the sanctuary . Please fill one out if you would like to share a “Gift of Love” with someone in need.

Happy Valentines Day

Blessings from your 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

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
- ***11:30 AM ~ Congregational Meeting (2/19)

MONDAYS:

- 10:00 AM ~ GriefShare (1/9—4/3)
- 6:30 PM ~ Royal Highlands Small Group
- 6:30 PM ~ Royal Harbor Small Group (2/13 & 2/27)

TUESDAYS:

- 8:00 AM ~ Men's Bible Study & Breakfast @ Perkins
- 10:00 AM ~ Session Meeting (2/21)

WEDNESDAYS:

- 9:45 AM ~ Women's Bible Study
- 2:30 PM ~ Villages Small Group
- 3:30 PM ~ Choir Rehearsal

THURSDAYS:

- 10:00 AM ~ Stewardship & Finance Committee Meeting (2/9)
- 10:30 AM ~ Plantation Small Group (2/9 & 2/23)
- 11:30 AM ~ Widow's Luncheon (2/16)
- 1:00 PM ~ Prayer Time with Pastor John (2/2 & 2/16)

FRIDAYS:

- 8:30 AM ~ Last Friday Women's Breakfast (2/24)
- 4:00 PM ~ Movies with a Message (2/24)

SATURDAYS: