

The Tie That Binds

GRACE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH



www.gracechurchsh.org

8375 Spring Hill Dr., Spring Hill, FL 34608
352-683-2082

PASTOR'S CORNER

I heard a story the other day about one of our Ushers here at Grace Church. It was when my mother was alive and came to church one Sunday with my dad. My mother was almost completely deaf, and the Usher said to her: "Maybe you'd like this hearing device. You just put it on your ears and you'll be able to hear the sermon, though some folks say that they aren't worth hearing."

My mom looked up at him and said: "Sir, do you know who I am?" He said "No," and my mom, really angry said: "I am that preacher's mother!"

The usher didn't miss a beat. He looked at her and said: "Do you know who I am?" She said, "No." And he said "Good," and then left.

You see, that's a sharp Usher, as are all of our Ushers here at Grace Church. We have Greeters every Sunday, and good folks from the Evangelism Ministry to welcome people to worship, plus our Ushers to help make people feel welcome and comfortable during worship at our church. You can help too, by saying hello and introducing yourself to the person next to you in worship. Even people who haven't ever been to church know that Christians are supposed to exhibit a special kind of love. Be a part of God's team called "The Church." And help others come aboard.

All the current news from Grace is good news, except for the sisters and brothers that we have lost to the Church Heavenly.

Though it is grand that we have a home beyond the confines of this flesh, it's also hard to say good bye. This has always been the most difficult part of ministry for me.

I hope that you have a great month, and that you try out your church's Wednesday evening meals this month. If you haven't tried an Adult Bible Study, you may wish to try our Wednesday evening Bible Study in the Chapel at 7:00 pm. Also we have two Adult Bible Studies on Sunday morning during Sunday School. You don't have to know anything about the Bible to begin a Bible Study here at Grace Church. Just come in with a smile and a Bible. If you don't have a Bible, we'll have one you can use. But you still have to provide the smile.

Now that corny story at the beginning of my pastor's corner isn't true. But like Dr. Schuller taught me years ago at Pastor's School, "corn is good" he said. "I'm from Iowa," Dr. Schuller would say to us, "and we raise plenty of great healthy animals on corn. Never under-estimate the power of corn."

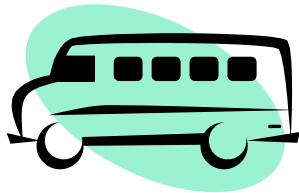
God Bless

Rev. Chet



MISSION REPORT ON THORNWELL HOME FOR CHILDREN

Wednesday, February 11, 2009, six GPC women, Cheryl Kopia, Paula Morton, Peggy Tolmie, Bonnie Kauffman, Pat Larson, and Joan Unger, set forth on a three day trip to Clinton, SC. Pat Keister, who was instrumental in getting our trip off the ground, was unable to go and was sorely missed.



The church van was loaded with the many items Thornwell requested on their needs list, plus additional items our members felt they might like. Here are the items we delivered to Thornwell: 7 quilts, 9 sets of sheets, 2 throws, 3 bags of toiletries like shampoos, soap, etc., 10 packs of tissues with 10 in each pack, 2 pillows, dish towels, mixer, bread machine, blender, 2 crock pots, 2 coffee pots, 3 small lamps, 1 toaster over, 2 clock radios, Valentine's bags for all the children, which we filled with Valentines, candy, pencils, erasers, etc.

After about a 12 hour drive, we arrived at Thornwell and settled into the Mayes-Dowdle Cottage, which was originally built in 1925 to house infants and preschool children. The cottage is now serving as a museum alumni office, and guest quarters. That evening we assembled around 90 Valentine's gift bags for the children.

On Thursday, we were given a tour of the 35 acre campus by Chandra Coleman, Director of Sponsorship. It is a good thing we were wearing walking shoes, because we walked over most of the campus, and even visited their farm that encompasses 450 acres of farm land, ponds, and pastures.

There are thirteen cottages that house the children from three states; Florida, Georgia, and South

Carolina, and we were allowed to visit two of

them; The Ferguson Cottage, and the

Georgia Beatie Cottage. Thursday

afternoon, we also visited the Child

Development Center, and observed the children

returning from their

school day and being tutored by the many student volunteers from the Presbyterian College, which is literally across the street from Thornwell. The Development Center is in the no longer used Thornwell elementary school. Due to lack of funding, all the Thornwell campus schools were closed and the children are presently going to the Clinton city schools. The children have been welcomed there



because their high test scores have helped to elevate the public school rankings, and brought in additional revenue. An FFA Curriculum is also incorporated into the Thornwell campus farm, so it is well utilized.



Thornwell was founded in 1875 by Dr. William Plumber Jacobs, who was the minister of the First Presbyterian Church in Clinton. His home, built in 1875, was the first building on this massive 35 acre campus, and it was there he brought ten children orphaned by the Civil War, and his own family, which had four children. Today there are around 59 historic stone buildings on this campus.

One of the most beautiful buildings we saw on our tour was the Hartness-Thornwell Memorial Presbyterian Church. This is where the children come to worship and attend youth activities. The beautiful stain glass windows visually show the children many of the Bible stories from the Old and New Testaments. The large window above the choir loft depicts the childhood and life of Jesus. These windows were all donated by loving friends of Thornwell.

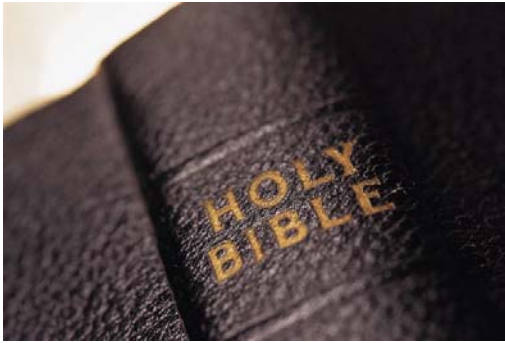
We were surprised to learn that Cyrus McCormick, inventor of the reaper, donated several cottages, built in 1899 and 1900, and they are still in use today as cottages for the children. Of course, they have been updated to today's standards, but still hold their turn of the century charm.

What impressed me even more than the massive 35 acre campus with its stately stone structures, were the people who work tirelessly for Thornwell. From the janitors, and family teachers, to the administrative personnel, we could all see their dedication and love for the work they do to serve God's call to help these scarred children from families in crisis.

We headed for home early Friday morning, and arrived around 6:00 pm, tired, but eager to share, with all who would listen, this amazing experience we six had shared in Clinton, SC.

We want to deeply thank the Deacons, Presbyterian Women, and the Elders of Grace Presbyterian Church for sponsoring our fuel expenses and giving us the opportunity to see and experience Thornwell Home for Children. We also want to thank the many donors of supplies and items needed by the Thornwell children. For us it is no longer just a name found on our annual budget, but a very vibrant ministry for children in need of a loving, Christian, stable home. After reading this report and seeing the video that we brought back to show you at one of our Wednesday night dinners, we hope you will feel the same too.

Paula Morton, Mission Co-Chair



We are continuing with our publishing of the Presbyterian Lectionary verses for daily Bible readings through Lent. Remember in this two year Lectionary we are reading "Year 1."

The Common Lectionary which many of us pastors use is a three year lectionary rather than a two year lectionary. The purpose of a Lectionary is to take the reader through the major themes of the Bible over a certain period of time. The standard 3 year Common Lectionary doesn't have the beautiful morning and evening verses in it. To give you a flavor of the Common Lectionary, we are also publishing the Common Lectionary verses for Holy Week out of the Presbyterian Calendar for Church Leaders.

The Church Year is an interesting part of Church life. It follows a cycle of events based on Jesus Christ, His life, His Death, and His Resurrection, starting with Christ's birth

which is called Advent. The Christian Year then moves from Advent to Epiphany, then to Transfiguration Sunday (just before Lent) Lent, Easter, The Ascension, and then Pentecost. It's spiritually interesting to let your life come into the flow of the Church Year. It's interesting to find out what all of these terms mean, and historically how the Church has celebrated various holidays over the centuries.

We have a wonderful Presbyterian Prayer Book that follows the Church Year with various prayers and readings, musical melodies for some of the Psalms, and great Psalm readings with personalized prayers at the end of each Psalm. We keep a few of these Prayer Books in the Church Office, and sell them at our cost, which is now \$25.00 per book (leather bound). If you have a hard time being systematic, then you may wish for a shorter more concise daily reading. Of course we offer the devotional "Daily Bread" at our Church. If you are internet savvy, you may prefer to look up your own. My most favorite historical daily devotional literature was written by The Rev. Charles Spurgeon. He was one of the greatest preachers to ever live. You will find his devotional writings (free) at the *Charles Spurgeon* web site. His daily devotionals are titled "Morning and Evening."

Good Reading.

Lent Bible Reading Schedule

DAY	Pslam	Year 1	Year 2
Tuesday	Morning: Ps 42;146 Evening: Ps 102;133	Deut. 6:16-25 Heb.2:1-10 John 1:19-28	Prov. 30:1-4; 24-33 Phil. 3:1-11 John 18:28-38
Ash Wednesday	Morning: Ps 5; 147:1-11 Evening: Ps 27; 51	Jonah 3:1-4:11 Heb. 12:1-14 Luke 18:9-14	Amos 5:6-15 Heb. 12:1-14 Luke 18:9-14
Thursday	Morning: Ps 27; 147:12-20 Evening: Ps 126;102	Deut. 7:6-11 Titus 1:1-16 John 1:29-34	Heb. 3:1-10 (11-15) 16-18 Phil. 3:12-21 John 17:1-8
Friday	Morning: Ps 22; 148 Evening: Ps 105; 130	Deut 7:12-16 Titus 2:1-15 John 1:35-42	Ezek. 18:1-4, 25-32 Phil. 4:1-9 John 17:9-19
Saturday	Morning: Ps 43: 149 Evening: Ps 31; 143	Deut. 7:17-26 Titus 3:1-15 John 1:43-51	Ezek. 39:21-29 Phil. 4:10-20 John 17:20-26
1st Week in Lent Sunday	Morning: Ps 84; 150 Evening: Ps 42;32	Jer. 9:23-24 I Cor 1:18-31 Mark 2:18-22	Dan. 9:3-10 Heb. 2:10-18 John 12:44-50
Monday	Morning: Ps 119:73-80; 145 Evening: Ps 121;6	Deut 8:1-20 Heb. 2:11-18 John 2:1-12	Gen. 37:1-11 I Cor. 1:1-19 Mark 1:1-13
Tuesday	Morning: Ps 34; 146 Evening: Ps 25; 91	Deut.9(1-3)4-12 Heb. 3:1-11 John 2:13-22	Gen. 37:12-24 I Cor. 1:20-31 Mark 1:14-28
Wednesday	Morning: Ps 5; 147:1-11 Evening: Ps 27; 51	Deut. 9:13-21 Heb. 3:12-19	Gen. 37:25-36 I Cor. 2:1-11

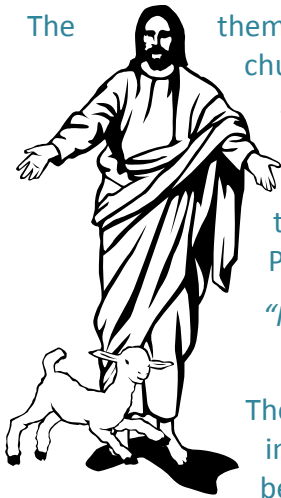
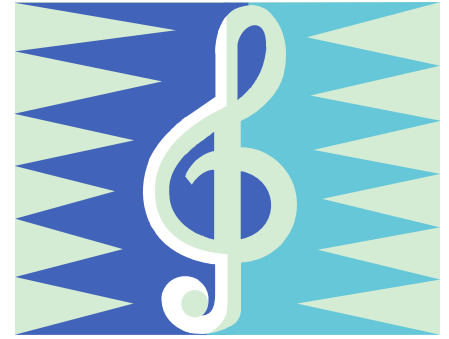
		John 2:23-3:15	Mark 1:29-45
Thursday	Morning: Ps 27; 147:12-20 Evening: Ps 126; 102	Deut. 9:23 – 10:5 Heb. 4:11-16 John 3:22-36	Gen. 39:1-23 I Cor. 2:14-3:15 Mark 2:1-12
Friday	Morning: Ps 22; 148 Evening: Ps 105; 130	Deut. 10:12-22 Heb. 4:11-16 John 3:22-36	Gen. 40:1-23 I Cor. 3:16-23 Mark 2:13-22
Saturday	Morning: Ps 43; 149 Evening: Ps 31; 1743	Deut. 11:18-28 Heb. 5:1-10 John 4:1-26	Gen. 41:1-13 I Cor. 4:1-7 Mark 2:20-36
2nd Week in Lent			
Sunday	Morning: Ps 84; 150 Evening: Ps 42; 32	Jer.1:1-10 I Cor. 3:11-23 Mark 3:31-4:9	Gen. 41:14-45 Rom. 6:3-14 John 5:19-24
Monday	Morning: Ps 119:73-80; 145 Evening: Ps 121; 6	Jer. 1:11-19 Rom. 1:1-15 John 4:27-42	Gen. 41:46-57 I Cor. 4:8-20 (21) Mark 3:7-19a
Tuesday	Morning: Ps 34; 146 Evening: Ps 25; 91	Jer. 2:1-13, 29-32 Rom 1:16-25 John 4:43-54	Gen 42:1-17 I Cor 5:1-8 Mark 3:19b-35
Wednesday	Morning: Ps 5; 147:1-11 Evening: Ps 24;51	Jer 3:6-18 Rom 1:26-27, 28-2:11 John 5:1-18	Gen 42:18-28 I Cor 5:9-6:11 Mark 4:1-20
Thursday	Morning: Ps 27; 147:12-20 Evening: Ps 126; 102	Jer 4:9-10, 19-28 Rom 2:12-24 John 5:19-29	Gen 42:29-38 I Cor 6:12-20 Mark 4:21-34
Friday	Morning: Ps 22;148 Evening: Ps 105; 130	Jer 5:1-9 Rom 2:25-3:18 John 5:30-47	Gen 43:1-15 I Cor 7:1-9 Mark 4:35-41
Saturday	Morning: Ps 43; 149 Evening: Ps 31; 143	Jer 5: 20-31 Rom 3:19-31 John 7:1-13	Gen 43:16-34 I Cor 7:10-24 Mark 5:1-20
3rd Week in Lent			
Sunday	Morning: Ps 84; 150 Evening: Ps 42; 32	Jer 6:9-15 I Cor 6:12-20 Mark 5:1-20	Gen 44:1-17 Rom 8:1-10 John 5:25-29
Monday	Morning: Ps 119: 73-80; 145 Evening: Ps 121; 6	Jer 7:1-15 Rom 4:1-12 John 7:14-36	Gen 44:18-34 I Cor 7:25-31 Mark 5:21-43
Tuesday	Morning: Ps 34; 146 Evening: Ps 25; 91	Jer 7:21-34 Rom 4:13-25 John 7:37-52	Gen 45:1-15 I Cor 7:32-40 Mark 6:1-13
Wednesday	Morning: Ps 5; 147:1-11 Evening: Ps 27; 51	Jer 8:4-7, 18-9:6 Rom 5:1-11 John 8:12-20	Gen 45:16-28 I Cor 8:1-13 Mark 6:13-29
Thursday	Morning: Ps 27; 147:12-20 Evening: Ps 126; 102	Jer 10:11-24 Rom 5:12-21 John 8:21-32	Gen 46:1-7, 28-34 I Cor 9:1-15 Mark 6:30-46
Friday	Morning: Ps 22; 148 Evening: Ps 105; 130	Jer 11:1-8, 14-17 Rom 6:1-11 John 8:33-47	Gen 47:1-26 I Cor 9:16-27 Mark 6:47-56
Saturday	Morning: Ps 43; 149 Evening: Ps 31; 143	Jer 13:1-11 Rom 6:12-23 John 8:47-59	Gen 47:27-48:7 I Cor 10:1-13 Mark 7:1-23

4th Week in Lent			
Sunday	Morning: Ps 84; 150 Evening: Ps 31; 143	Jer 14:1-9 (10-16) Gal 4:21-5:1 Mark 8:11-21	Gen 48:8-22 Rom 8:11-25 John 6:27-40
Monday	Morning: Ps 119:73-80; 145 Evening: Ps 121; 6	Jer 16: (1-9) 10-21 Rom 7:1-12 John 6: 1-15	Gen 49:1-28 I Cor 10:14-11:1 Mark 7:24-37
Tuesday	Morning: Ps 34; 146 Evening: Ps 121; 6	Jer 17:19-27 Rom 7:13-25 John 6:16-27	Gen 49:29-50:14 I Cor 11:2-34 Mark 8:1-10
Wednesday	Morning: Ps 5; 147:1-11 Evening: Ps 27; 51	Jer 18:1-11 Rom 8:1-11 John 6:27-40	Gen 50:15-26 I Cor 12:1-11 Mark 8:11-26
Thursday	Morning: Ps 27; 147:12-20 Evening: Ps. 126; 102	Jer 22:13-23 Rom 8:12-27 John 6:41-51	Ex 1:6-22 I Cor 12:12-26 Mark 8:27-9:1
Friday	Morning: Ps 22; 148 Evening: Ps 105; 130	Jer 23:1-8 Rom 8:28-39 John 6:52-59	Ex 2:1-22 I Cor 12:27-13:1 Mark 9:2-13
Saturday	Morning: Ps 43; 149 Evening: Ps 31; 143	Jer 23:9-15 Rom 9:1-18 John 6:60-71	Ex 2:23-3:15 I Cor 13:1-13 Mark 9:14-29
5th Week in Lent			
Sunday	Morning: Ps 84; 150 Evening: Ps 42; 32	Jer 23:16-32 I Cor 9:19-27 Mark 8:31-9:1	Ex 3:16-4:12 Rom 12:1-21 John 8:46-59
Monday	Morning: Ps 119:73-80; 145 Evening: Ps 121; 6	Jer 24:1-10 Rom 9:19-33 John 9:1-17	Ex 4:10-20 (21-26) 27-31 I Cor 14:1-19 Mark 9:30-41
Tuesday	Morning: Ps 34; 146 Evening: Ps 25; 91	Jer 25:8-17 Rom 10:1-13 John 9:18-41	Ex 5:1-6:1 I Cor 14:20-33a, 39-40 Mark 9:42-50
Wednesday	Morning: Ps 5; 147:1-11 Evening: Ps 27; 51	Jer 25:30-38 Rom 10:14-21 John 10:1-18	Ex 7:8-24 II Cor 2:14-3:6 Mark 10:1-16
Thursday	Morning: Ps 27; 147:12-20 Evening: Ps 126; 102	Jer 26:1-16 (17-24) Rom 11:1-12 John 10:19-42	Ex 7:25-8:19 II Cor 3:7-18 Mark 10:17-31
Friday	Morning: Ps 22; 148 Evening: Ps 105; 130	Jer 29:1 (2-3) 4-14 Rom 11:13-24 John 11:1-27 or 12:1-10	Ex 9:13-35 II Cor 4:1-12 Mark 10:32-45
Saturday	Morning: Ps 43; 149 Evening: Ps 31; 143	Jer 31:27-34 Rom 11:25-36 John 11:28-44 or 12:37-50	Ex 10:21-11:8 II Cor 4:13-18 Mark 10:46-52
Holy Week Palm Sunday	Morning: Ps 84; 150 Evening: Ps 42; 32	Zech 9:9-12 I Tim: 6:12-16 or Zech 12:9-11; 13:1, 7-9 Matt 21:12-17	Zech 9:9-12 I Tim: 6:12-16 or Zech 12:9-11; 13:1, 7-9 Luke 19:41-48
Monday	Isa. 42:1-9; Ps. 36:5-11; Heb. 9:11-15; John 12:1-11		
Tuesday	Isa. 49:1-7; Ps. 71:1-14; I Cor 1:18-31; John 12:20-36		
Wednesday	Isa. 50:4-9a; Ps 70; Heb 12:1-3; John 13:21-32		
Maundy Thursday	Exod 12:1-4 (5-10) 11-14; Ps 116:1-2, 12-19; I Cor 11:23-26; John 13:1-17, 31b-35		
Good Friday	Isa 52:13-53:12; Ps 22; Heb 10:16-25 or Heb 4:14-16, 5:7-9; John 18:1-19; 42		

News from Rev. Sheffield...

“Variations On A Theme”

You most often see that phrase in connection with music. A master musician will take a musical theme, and then just improvise upon it and produce many ways in which the theme can be played. Often these improvisations will be played only once and never written down. We are richly blessed at Grace Church because we have a musician who does wonderful improvisations. Jackie Major sits at the organ console and her fingers glide over the keys, but the music is from within her as she takes the notes and lets them live in several different forms that she composes even as we are hearing them. We may never hear them again in exactly that form. That is what improvisation is all about!



The theme is “transformation”! That is what I believe Lent is all about. No matter what we in the church may come up with as the “big idea” to guide our thinking and praying for the Lenten Season, the theme is transformation. I believe that if we are alert enough we might just detect God at work among us, improvising upon the themes of our lives and using them to transform negative themes into themes of glory! Listen with your mind and heart to the theme that St. Paul is improvising upon when he talks about transformation. You will find it in Philippians 3:21.

“He will transform the body of our humiliation that it may be conformed to the body of his glory by the power that also enables him to make all things subject to himself.”

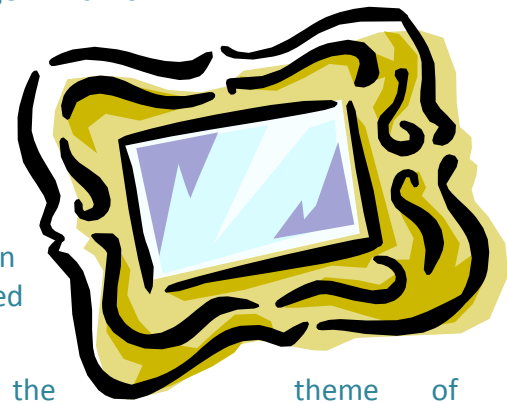
There are a number of variations on this theme. Paul’s point is that God is playing a divine improvisation through his Son, Jesus! It is the transformation of our lives from unredeemed to being made into the image of Christ. It is different for each of us. All such transformations have a common theme but its application in each life is different. That’s divine improvisation! Christ centered improvisation is similar to a potter taking a rude unformed hunk of clay and transforming it into a thing of beauty and usefulness.

A Bible study group was focusing on the book of Malachi. The verse they were dealing with was this: “...he will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver.” (3:3) One member of the group really wanted to know what that statement said about the nature of God, so she actually went to watch a silversmith engage in his work.

The silversmith held a piece of silver over the fire until it glowed. Then he explained that in refining silver one needed to hold the silver in the hottest part of the fire in order to burn away all impurities. He went on to explain that he had to keep his eyes on the silver the entire time it was in the fire. If the silver were left a moment too long it would be destroyed!

The woman was silent for a moment. Then she asked, “How do you know when the silver is fully refined?” He replied, “Oh, that’s easy. I know it is fully refined when I can see my image in it!”

Paul affirms that our Lord refines us in the course of his improvisations on the theme of transformation. Our impurities are burned away until he can see his own image in us, turning the body of our humiliation into the body of his glory.



The theme of transformation has at its base the notion that as God’s creations we have a built in ability to be resilient when we are called by God to respond to the highest we can be, no matter what our circumstance at the moment. Resilient people possess three characteristics: 1. A staunch acceptance of reality. 2. A deep belief in

God, buttressed by strongly held values, that life is not only meaningful but redeemable. 3. An uncanny ability to improvise!

No matter what comes, these people bounce back from any circumstance. They are transformed and they are transformers. Through them God brings to others the power of divine improvisation. Paul was one of them. He taught others the power of divine improvisation, the power to have their lives changed from our body of humiliation to the body of his glory.



During our Lenten journey this year, it is my prayer that we can find new ways to be transformers together as we improvise upon the themes redemption, change, hope, and joy.

Let the music of your soul be heard, and be transformed by the renewal of your mind and heart.

May God lead you in pathways of peace.
Rev. Charles Sheffield

REFLECTIONS

By Rev. Douglas Clark

ROLE MODELS

One of the challenges in producing an article every month for the church paper is to delete any errors. If even one word is misspelled, every copy, unless corrected, will be flawed. Sometimes after producing what I think is a perfect copy, my wife reads it and discovers the mistakes I have made.

Our culture is one in which we speak of examples to follow, heroes, successful persons to emulate: “Our heroes have feet of clay”, “No man is a hero to his valet”. This is not to deny that there are some wonderful people of whom we can be justly proud. I think of the Heisman trophy winner quarterback of the University of Florida football team. A close up of him following his team becoming national champions revealed that on his eyelids were inscribed “John” and “3:16”. I heard a television commentator say “Whenever I come away from talking with him I feel I am a better person.” He is a great example, but I am sure would never claim to be perfect.



Another sports figure highly acclaimed is Coach Tony Dungy, an outstanding confessing Christian man of great respect to all who know him. A reporter said “As great a football coach as he was, he was an even better man.” Perfect? Not if we believe God’s word: “For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God.” (Rom. 3:23)

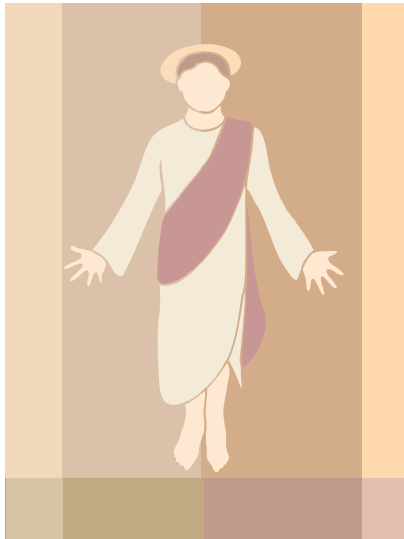
We are all sinners, but if believers, sinners saved by grace. If you ever had the curiosity to look inside such scandal magazines as *National Enquirer* or *Globe* you will find every week depressing stories of scandalous behavior and failings of the so called stars and celebrities that so many wrongly follow as examples.

Are we then without anyone to look up to and never be disappointed? What about Bible characters like David, Solomon, Abraham, Job, Jonah, Peter, Paul, John and others? Sorry, but great as they may have been an examination of their lives reveals imperfections and weaknesses. There is one, however, of whom Pilate said “I find no fault in this man” (Lk. 23:4) and whose life, both inwardly and outwardly was lived in perfect harmony to the will of God. As Martin Luther penned in a hymn “Dost ask who that may be? Christ Jesus it is he.”

One of the most heartbreaking studies indicates that one out of three Christians believe Jesus sinned. They are absolutely wrong, ignorant of the Scriptures and the implications of their beliefs. He was the spotless Lamb of God, who died to take away the sin of the world. To claim otherwise is a sin against the Holy Spirit.

As we follow him, look to him as our example, we discover his unquestioned love for us. Never forget the hymn of childhood, "Jesus loves me this I know, for the Bible tells me so." His love was so great he took upon himself our likeness, came into the world, born of the virgin Mary, and died at Calvary, shedding his blood that we might be redeemed.

I often wonder if those who preach a Gospel consisting only of His love have read the rest of the Bible? If we refuse to believe, we are condemned. (John 3:36) "Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, but whoever rejects the Son will not see life for God's wrath is upon him." Preachers who ignore this are like the New York City preacher of whom it was claimed "He was a mild mannered preacher, preaching a mild message to a mild mannered congregation, and exhorting them to be more mild." Biblical preaching must include preaching the whole counsel of God. One of the most famous west coast churches has a weekly telecast. When the choir sang "My hope is built on nothing less than Jesus love and righteousness." Do you catch the error here? It is "Jesus BLOOD and righteousness". I wrote the church, asking why the original way had been dropped. The reply came, "Some might be offended by it." Can you believe such surrender to political correctness as to reject the very basis of our redemption from sin and eternal life?



Jesus cared for the weak and suffering, healing the blind, the deaf, the leper, and the demon-possessed and all manner of illness. He brought the dead to life. He fed the hungry multitudes. He forgave a woman guilty of the scarlet sin, saying go and sin no more. Jesus blessed the children, taught many truths in his sermon on the mount.

As we look for an ideal, a perfect example of right living, there is none other than Jesus. That's difficult, you claim. Yes it is, but through the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit we may be able to rise above much of our human weaknesses and show his love to others, give to help the blind and less fortunate, pray, witness, and grow in the grace and knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Begin a daily reading of the Bible. In it you will find more about Jesus, and become more like him. Ignore the critics who would denigrate the Savior to their own level, and acknowledge that he is indeed the king of kings and the Lord of Lords, that he is the bread of life, the source of peace of soul, the hope of glory.

He is the second person of the Trinity and the one before whom someday every knee will bow and every tongue confess that he is Lord.

Art and Fellowship

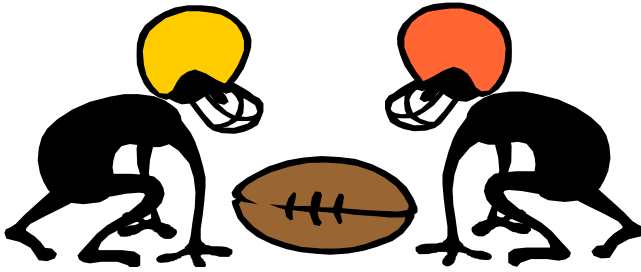
The congregation of Grace Presbyterian Church is proposing a "Fine Art" exhibit in Fellowship Hall. The date we are looking at is March 15, 2009.

Anyone interested in showing their works, ie. paintings (watercolor, acrylics, oils, pastels, etc.), jewelry, sculptures, or other art medium, please contact Collette MacDonald at 352-796-2491. This is a fellowship event only, not a sale.

Grace Crafter's Spring Sale

On March 8, 2009, we crafters, are having a sale in Fellowship Hall between first and second worship services and for 20 minutes after second service. We'll have some Easter Crafts, Spring flowers, and other good things.

ENDING FOOTBALL SEASON



I thought I'd share with you all some of our football slang for things that happen in Church, from Cal and Rose Samra:

- Draft Choice:* Sitting in a pew near the door.
Draw Play: What kids do on our prayer cards.
Fumble: Singing the wrong verse of the hymn.
Sudden death: The pastor preaches past when the Methodists get out, so that they get to the restaurants first.
Backfield in motion: The Ushers running around and making noise in the lobby while worship is going on in the sanctuary.
Stay in the pocket: What happens to a lot of the money that should be going into the offering plate.
Blitz: The stampede for the side doors after the Benediction.
Extra Point: Telling the minister that he looks like he's lost a little weight.

By Rev. Chet

NAOMI CIRCLE

Nancy opened with prayer. Seventeen members were present. We welcomed Millie Mergler, a new member. Dia Stoner led our Bible lesson. We should love one another and forgive as our Lord does.

Red roses were given to shut-ins in memory of Georgia Boewe.

Hope to see you Thursday, March 12th.

Laura Haug

Presbyterian Women

Rummage Sale, March 21, 2009

The Presbyterian Women are having their Rummage Sale on March 21, 2009. We are asking for helpers to sort, set up, and price items to be sold. If you can give us a few hours, call Sue Lightbody at 666-1611.

Any and all donations will be appreciated: jewelry, tools, housewares, furniture, linens, clothing (Men's, women's, babies, and children), this and that, books, CD's, DVD's, games, and toys. If you can not bring your donations to the church, call the office at 683-2082, and we will get someone to pick them up. We also need men to spend a couple of hours unloading cars on March 19 and 20.

In our present economy, this could be our best Rummage Sale ever as people are looking more and more for bargains. So make this a time to clean out your garage and attic, and support your Presbyterian Women.

Sarah Circle

The gathering held on February 11th was lead by Lynn Vandervoort as Pat Larson was on a trip to the Thornwell Home for Children in South Carolina.

Libby Henderson read devotions from Philippians 2:14. Do all things without complaining or arguing. Truly a thought for today's times.

We discussed the Least Coin collection. Its ministry is to collect money for different charities each year. People from all over the world participate.

Anyone interested in attending this year's Presbyterian Women's meeting to be held in Clearwater on February 21st must sign up by February 17th.

Marian Palamaro, Secretary

MARY MARTHA CIRCLE

We met as a group of eleven and enjoyed wonderful snacks prepared by Gladys Ledford and Betty Rice. Prayers were said for those in need, and the opening reading by our leader. A report was given by Cheryl Kopia of the trip to Thornwell Home. Reports were given and Bible study. Items were brought in for Mary's House in Brooksville. Peggy Tolmie will deliver them. Thank you ladies. Betty Bertschinger gave devotions. We closed with a special reading by our leader.

Submitted by,

Pat Keister



EASTER EGG HUNT

One of the most successful community outreach programs is our annual Easter Egg Hunt and Pancake Breakfast, which we'll hold this year on Saturday, April 11th. Please help us make this year's hunt truly a blessing by your donations of plastic eggs and individually wrapped candy. The eggs are in the stores now so it's time to buy them and bring them to church. You can bring them to the office or leave them in Fellowship Hall. The Easter Bunny's helpers will collect and fill them. In past years, we've had more than 2,000 eggs and about 100 kids hunting for them. We hope you will help us with the eggs and candy so that we can share them with our community and the awesome news of Jesus' Resurrection. Thank you all in advance for your generous donations! Don't forget to mark your calendars and invite your neighbors, friends, and family. We always have a great time, and the Easter Bunny and a special clown are an added bonus! If you have any questions, please call Val Moore at 352-688-4664.

What An Exciting Team....for you to join. A chance to share your stewardship for Grace Church with the E&O Committee (Evangelism and Outreach). You already know us. You will recognize some of the duties we perform when you see us wear those blue sashes on Sunday morning, pass out mugs and greet you with a smile. Will you join us? We would like to give you more information so you can become a part of this growing committee. Ask anyone you see with the blue sash on how to join, come to an E&O meeting at 10 AM the 2nd Tuesday each month in the conference room in the office or contact Ray Lanzilotta at 352-200-7354 or Dia Stoner at 727-868-3515. We look forward to seeing you.



The sympathy of the entire congregation is extended to the family and friends of the following who went home to with be with our Lord:



Mrs. Georgia Boewe,
February 1, 2009

Mrs. Roberta Schell,
February 6, 2009

Mr. James Schwietert,
February 18, 2009

A Prayer From Billy Graham:

"Heavenly Father,

We come before you today to ask your forgiveness and to seek your direction and guidance.

We know Your Word says, "Woe to those who call evil good," but that is exactly what we have done.

We have lost our spiritual equilibrium and reversed our values.

We have exploited the poor and called it the lottery.

We have rewarded laziness and called it welfare.

We have killed our unborn and called it choice.

We have shot abortionists and called it justifiable.

We have neglected to discipline our children and called it building self esteem.

We have abused power and called it politics.

We have coveted our neighbor's possessions and called it ambition.

We have polluted the air with profanity and pornography and called it freedom of expression.

We have ridiculed the time-honored values of our fore fathers and called it enlightenment.

Search us. Oh God, and know our hearts today; cleanse us from every sin and set us free.

Amen!



Children's Church Highlites

In comes the month of March.
Wow!

St. Patrick Day Celebrations
and Easter Celebrations. That
begins with Ash Wednesday,
the beginning of Lent.

What is Ash Wednesday?
What is Lent? What is Easter?

If you do not have the answers
to these questions, you need to
come visit us in Children's
Church.

During the month of March,
we will be learning about Jesus
healing the blind man, about Jesus teaching the Ten
Commandments, about Jesus clearing the market
place and then he explains why God sent him, and he
then notices a widow's giving.

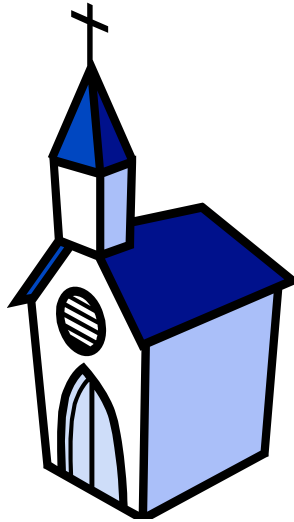
We also will be doing crafts, and the children will be
given a family packet to bring home for you to go
over with them as a family.

We hope you enjoy doing these things with each
other.

I can't wait until April.

We have a new helper in Children Church. Her
name is Ms. Iris. We are so glad to have her join us.
Now we have Ms. Pat, Ms. Michelle, and Ms. Iris.
Our youth helpers are Christine and Alexis. See you
in church.

God Bless, Ms. Pat



ABOUT WEARING PURPLE

MATTHEW 6:25-34

*I THINK WE SHOULD WEAR A LITTLE PURPLE
BEFORE WE GET OLD,
HAVE AN EXTRAVAGANT AMOUNT OF
CHOCOLATE ON OUR ICE CREAM ONCE IN A
WHILE,
SAY "NO" TO PEOPLE WHO WANT TO SELL US
THINGS THAT WE DON'T NEED...
AND SAY GOOD BYE TO THOSE WHO CRITICIZE
OTHERS.*

*I THINK I SHOULD WEAR A LITTLE PURPLE
BEFORE I GET OLD,
HAVE SOME BEAT UP COMFORTABLE SHOES
THAT LOOK TERRIBLE IN CHURCH, BUT FEEL
GREAT,
AND WEAR A TIE THAT DOESN'T MATCH
ANYTHING
THAT MY KIDS GAVE ME WHEN THEY WERE
SMALL.*

*I THINK WE SHOULD HUNKER DOWN AROUND
JESUS AND TAKE REAL SERIOUSLY THE THINGS
HE SAID
AND TRY TO LIVE THEM
ONE SAYING AT A TIME,
SAVORING OUR MOMENTS OF GRACE.*

*I WILL QUIT WORRYING NOW
BECAUSE TOMORROW WON'T COME FOR ME IF I
CONTINUE TO FRET.
I'LL GIVE MORE MONEY TO CHURCH AND TO THE
SCOUTS AND TO THOSE LESS FORTUNATE THAN
ME
TO SHOW GOD I'M SERIOUS ABOUT LOVE.*

*I THINK THAT I SHALL WEAR A LITTLE PURPLE
TOMORROW
EVEN IF PEOPLE THINK THAT I'M COLOR BLIND
OR HAVE NO FASHION SENSE AT ALL,
FOR IF I WAIT TOO LONG TO QUIT WORRYING
ABOUT WHAT OTHER PEOPLE THINK OF ME,
IT WILL BE TOO LATE FOR ME TO CHANGE,
TOO LATE FOR ME TO ENJOY THE ONE LIFE THAT
GOD HAS GIVEN ME TO LIVE TODAY.*

TIMES FOR WORSHIP

CASUAL DRESS SERVICE	8:30 AM
SUNDAY SCHOOL	9:30 AM
TRADITIONAL WORSHIP	10:45 AM

This Month's Volunteers

CHURCH OFFICE VOLUNTEERS

Barbara Harrower
Ginny Okopski Hazel Sandhoff
Charline Lanman
Marjorie Halloran Kay Jensen
Betty Bertschinger

FINANCIAL AIDES

Barbara Harrower Helen Dakers
Marjorie Halloran Roberta Jarvinen
Lois Cunningham
Ione Plis, Honorary Aide

FOLDING THE NEWSLETTER

Lynne Crawford Kay Jensen
Hazel Sandhoff Don Sandhoff
Peggy Tolmie Barb Harrower
Roberta Jarvinen

USHERS

Gary Kingen Marjorie Halloran
Don Halloran Kay Jensen
Ray Lanzilotta John Ross
Carol Ross Ralph Ambrose
Joan Sarnowski

ELDERS - South Door

Dee Bodell

ELDERS - Middle Door

Jack Bartell

ELDERS - North Door

Ralph Ambrose

Caring for the Sanctuary

Lois Cunningham

GREETERS

1
1st Tom Foster
2nd Renee Clarke and Nola Knox

8
1st Cheryl Kopia
2nd Betty Katke & Earl Knox

15
1st Barb Kingen
2nd Betty Schielein & Barb Kingen

22
1st Eileen Jaeger
2nd Ray & Dia Stoner

29
1st Barb Kingen
2nd Toni & Rufus Hunter

CHURCH OFFICERS 2009

SESSION

Moderator: The Reverend Chet Okopski

Clerk of Session: Dee Bodell

2009

Bill Ambrose
Dee Bodell
Betty Katke
Wayne Keister
Dean Moore
Russell Schick

Helen Dakers
Rufus Hunter
Nola Kay Knox
Cheryl Kopia
Bill Larkin
John Romaine

2010

Jack Bartell
Cheryl Carter
Lois Cunningham
Len Davis
Ken Gerstner
Paula Morton
Barbara Vogel

DEACONS

Moderator: Joyce Flint

Ralph Ambrose
Mildred Bartell
Sharon Courter
Pat Hawken
Sue Lightbody
Pat Schick
Thelma Volzer

2011

Don Halloran
Janice Johnson
Bonnie Kauffman
Ray Lanzilotta
Jerry Larson
Larry Ottos
Virginia Ritzenthaler

Linda Ausenbaugh
Jackie Boewe
Joyce Flint
Nancy Hammel
Roberta Jarvinen
Nancy Maxwell
Len Newkirk



MARCH

- 1- Jean Clymer
- 1 - Elaine Crannell
- 1 - Russell Cressman
- 2 - Helen Furner
- 2 - Patricia Hornor
- 2 - Janet Remington
- 3 - Trudy Gustafson
- 3 - Ginny Okopski
- 3 - Sandra Termin
- 3 - Virginia Vrastil
- 5 - Emma Leone
- 6 - Robert Buswell
- 6 - Suzane McGrath
- 6 - Robert Osmun
- 7 - Jackie Bunker
- 7 - Margaret Debernardi
- 7 - Shirley Johnson
- 8 - Bill Gerham
- 9 - Helen Myers
- 9 - Suzanne Swahn
- 10 - William Gorringer
- 10 - Eric Tennie
- 10 - Richard Viets
- 12 - Beatrice Felten
- 13 - Manetta Erikson
- 13 - Ann Hartung
- 13 - Beau Timberlake, Jr.
- 14 - Dorothy Hannan
- 14 - Mike Jordan
- 15 - Darwin Crocker
- 15 - Edith Zapke
- 16 - Joyce Crocker
- 16 - Matthew Leach
- 16 - Charles Peelle

- 17 - Nola Knox
- 18 - Sam Hui Ambrose
- 18 - Catoya Houston
- 19 - Libby Henderson
- 19 - Joseph Mergler
- 19 - Carol Willison
- 20 - Donna Larkin
- 21 - Betty Schielein
- 22 - Nancy Maxwell
- 24 - Jessica Bielan
- 24 - Gertrude Mackay
- 25 - Lisa Bielan
- 26 - Mary Hawkins
- 27 - Lyle Glassmyer
- 27 - Robert St. John
- 28 - Wayne Keister
- 28 - Valerie Watson
- 29 - Loretta Stewart
- 30 - Ralph Ambrose
- 30 - Betty Bertschinger
- 30 - Dean Moore
- 30 - Elli Viets
- 31 - Nancy Duncan
- 31 - Bill Loy
- 31 - Pauline Staton



APRIL

- 1 - Mildred Bartell
- 1 - Cheryl Carter
- 1 - Ruth Miller
- 1 - Caitlyn Vandyk
- 2 - Jane Peck
- 2 - James Wright
- 3 - Sharon Courter
- 3 - Amy Sanchez
- 4 - Edward Kirkstra

- 4 - Helen MacColl
- 5 - Jayne Norcross
- 5 - Debra Pilla
- 5 - Kim Stewart
- 5 - Lois Virtue
- 6 - Jane Andersen
- 6 - Frances Stone



March 2009

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1 Communion 8:30 Casual Service 9:30 Sunday School 10:45 Traditional 11 Children's Church	2 10:30 Worship 1 PM P/W Co-Team	3 8 AM Yard Work 10 AM Flexercise 10 Memorial Mtg.	4 8-12 Bike Ministry 10 Bible Links 5:30-6:15 Dinner 6:20 PM Prayer Mtg 7 PM Bible Study 7 PM Puppets 7 PM Choir	5 8 Yard Work 9:30 Crafters 12:30 Holy Rollers	6 10 AM Bells Family Camp Out	7 <i>Change your Clocks!</i>
8 <i>Daylight Savings</i> Crafter's Sale 5 Cents A Meal 8:30 Casual Service 9:30 Sunday School 10:45 Traditional 11 Children's Church	9 1:00 P/W Gathering Mission Haven 7 PM Christian Ed - in Building "A"	10 8 AM Yard Work 9 AM Quilters 10 AM Flexercise 10 AM E & O	11 8-12 Bike Ministry 1 Sarah Circle 5:30-6:15 Dinner 6:20 PM Prayer Mtg 7 PM Bible Study 7 PM Puppets 7 PM Choir	12 8 Yard Work 9:30 Crafters 9:30 Naomi Circle 12:30 Holy Rollers 7 PM Deacon's Mtg.	13 10 AM Bells	14 Art Show Set Up
15 Art Show 8:30 Casual Service 9:30 Sunday School 10:45 Traditional 11 Children's Church 2 Evergreen Woods	16 10:30 Finance Comm	17 8 AM Yard Work 10 AM Flexercise 1 PM Dorcas Circle 1 PM Mary Martha	18 8-12 Bike Ministry 10 Bible Links 5:30-6:15 Dinner 6:20 PM Prayer Mtg 7 PM Bible Study 7 PM Puppets 7 PM Choir	19 8 Yard Work 9:30 Crafters 12:30 Holy Rollers 7 PM Session Mtg Set up for Rummage Sale	20 Set up for Rummage Sale	21 Rummage Sale 8 AM-12 Noon
22 8:30 Casual Service 9:30 Sunday School 10:45 Traditional 11 Children's Church	23	24 8 AM Yard Work 9 AM Quilters 10 AM Flexercise	25 8-12 Bike Ministry 5:30-6:15 Dinner 6:20 PM Prayer Mtg 7 PM Bible Study 7 PM Puppets 7 PM Choir	26 8 Yard Work 9:30 Crafters 12:30 Holy Rollers	27 10 AM Bells	28
29 Puppets 8:30 Casual Service 9:30 Sunday School 10:45 Traditional 11 Children's Church	30	31 8 AM Yard Work 10 AM Flexercise	Sunday, April 5 Palm Sunday			

