

The Tie That Binds

GRACE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH



www.gracechurchsh.org

8375 Spring Hill Dr., Spring Hill, FL 34608

352-683-2082

PASTOR'S CORNER

by Rev. Chet Okopski

Have you ever noticed what a burden possessions can be? The more possessions we have, the more things we have to worry about, the more things we have to insure, the more things we have to take care of and repair. The lovely Ginny and I have been talking about this and attempting to simplify our lives by cutting down on the "stuff" we own. We are currently giving away and throwing away books, and extra kitchen supplies. We had three different sizes of roasting pans, which we needed when we had children at home. We gave away our giant stainless steel roasting pan last week. It took up a lot of space! We got rid of two or three chairs. Creating unused space in your home will make it feel less cluttered, and more airy and light. Sometimes we just have things because we've always had them, and we don't even want them or need them anymore.

I've been getting some tips lately about simplifying life from a magazine called "Real Simple: Life Made Easier." For example, there was this article about junk in your glove compartment. Solution: Get one of those plastic

recipe/coupon holders, and put all your insurance-registration-parking permits-etc. into it. Wow does this work great! The simple solutions are sometimes the hardest ones to see.

Living the Christ life should offer us some simplicity. And in turn, we should respond by rejoicing that we will find values and purpose in places where neither moth nor



rust corrupt. Last month in *Real Simple* (Aug. 09, p.126) there was an article by Tom Hodgkinson about how to live a less stressful life. He offered ten suggestions: *Banish the guilt*, *Choose the right role models*, *Sketch a flower*, *Go bumbling* "wandering around without purpose," *Play the ukulele* ("The twang of those strings means that I am not doing something useful") *Bring back Sundays*, *Lie in a field*, *Gaze at the clouds*, *Take a nap*, *Pretend to meditate*.

In living the Christ life, confession helps us to banish guilt. And, according to some experts like Dr. Paul Tournier, guilt is a major source of depression. I noted that this secular writer, Tom Hodgkinson, found real value in having a Sabbath day. He says: *“Take that ancient wisdom to heart and declare at least one day of the week as a do-nothing day. Don’t clean the house or do the laundry; don’t get in the car. Stay home and eat chocolate... Be kind to yourself.”*

Sometimes ancient wisdom is really great. Getting the concept of a “Sabbath” into your life can help simplify things for you. A day of rest and worship can clear the mind of many pressures that nag our day to day life. It’s hard to simplify if we don’t take time to think. We get so



used to our houses being filled with so much stuff that we simply walk around it, then we pile it into closets, then we shove it out into the garage... all the while we are feeling less and less good in our own homes. My question to me is always: “Do I

own my possessions, or do they own me?” Listen to the ancient wisdom of our Master: *“Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.”*

May God Richly Bless You!

Rev. Chet

REFLECTIONS

By Rev. Douglas Clark

STRANGE CHURCHES

I have always had an interest in churches since my conversion, and as a pastor always urged my people to be faithful in attendance, and when away on vacation to find a church where they could continue their worship. When I accepted a teaching assignment in Australia four decades ago, I had opportunity to put my preaching into practice.

Our plane landed in Tahiti a day before Christmas. When I located the Protestant Church, I discovered the time of worship on Sunday and made sure we were there early.

Christmas Sunday was bound to be full. As we approached, we witnessed the neatly dressed worshippers arriving, many on motor scooters. Although the service was in Tahitian, we loved the strong voices singing the familiar hymns of the season. We were greeted with smiles and made to feel welcome.

Our itinerary brought us next to American Samoa, and on New Year’s Eve to Apia in Western Samoa. Again we found a church and worshipped with the Samoans as they welcomed in the New Year of 1972. All worshippers were in good spirits, and we again heard in a different unfamiliar language, the preaching of the Word.

Tonga was next, and we had the most interesting experience of being seated in the front, along the side facing the throne occupied by the King of Tonga. Although he was wearing dark glasses, we had the feeling that he was staring at us all during the service. The king was noted for his huge size, and reports we had heard of his weight were obviously true. The sermon was in the national language, of course, but that did not prevent us from worshiping the same Lord.

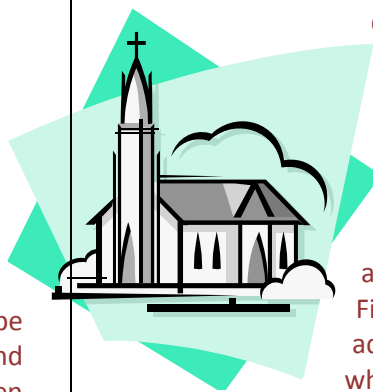
The following Sunday found us on the North Island of New Zealand, and as we drove south we kept watching for a church; for this time we knew we could understand the language. Just about church time, we saw a church on the side of a hill and pulled up into the parking lot. Several men were standing outside, and when asked said it was a Presbyterian Church and service was beginning shortly. Although not invited to attend, we went in and were seated. The sermon topic was “Should Christians Obey the Compulsory Car Seat Belt Law?” What a let down! No Christ, no gospel, no scripture. We came spiritually hungry and went away empty.

We found many churches of our denomination in Perth, Western Australia, and for several Sundays visited a

different one each week. We were again disappointed for we were accustomed to warm welcomes back home and spirited gospel messages, concluding with the invitation to receive Christ as Savior. No one spoke to us, although we were obviously visitors. Finally, I decided to make the advance, introduced myself, said where we were from, and gave the

name of the man whose place we were taking. The change was immediate. Smiles and words of welcome followed.

A year and a half later we returned home. This time we went via Africa, since we were already half-way around the world. In Rhodesia, now Zimbabwe, we visited a



missionary who was a former student. Services there were largely in English, as Rhodesia was a former British colony. I had the opportunity to preach there, and later attended a church in Nigeria.

Out of many other experiences, I would like to select two since space is running out. In Papua, New Guinea we visited a missionary translator friend, who took us on a night time walk through the thick underbrush to the prayer meeting of a group of believers. It was pitch dark, but we managed to reach the hut where the meeting was to be held. The crowded hut included a few men and several women and children. The women were bare-breasted, but no one paid any attention as it was part of their culture. We had a fine Bible study before stumbling back to our own hut.

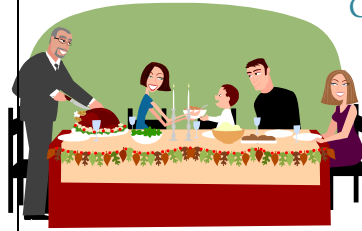


When in Manila, in the Philippines, I asked a taxi driver at the Holiday Inn where I was staying to take me to the International Baptist Church where many missionaries, tourists, and business men attended. The taxi drove me several miles before stopping in a poor neighborhood in front of a large building. As I entered, I knew I had made a mistake. All the people were Philipinos and the service was conducted in Tagalog. However, I received a warm welcome and the pastor spoke a few words in English to me assuring me they would take care of me after the service. Despite my misgivings about local food, a young couple drove me to a familiar place, KFC, before taking me to the Holiday Inn. In the evening I attended another church, but had less of a warm welcome.

Two lessons stand out in my mind. First, not all church welcome strangers. In one area I was suspected of being a CIA spy, and in North Carolina was warned by a student not to visit mountain churches as my motives would be suspect. Second, every one of these churches can trace their existence to the missionary effort of many who loved the Lord and took seriously the commission of bringing the Gospel to every creature. We owe a great debt to these pioneers and need to pray for and support these who have followed them. And next time, when on vacation, attend a church. You will be blessed.

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Wednesday Night Dinners Start September 9



Our Wednesday Night Activities and Dinners will start on September 9. The cost for the dinner is \$6.50- a really good deal. The menu for September is:

September 9 - Pot Roast, Mashed Potatoes, Gravy, Broccoli, Salad, Rolls, Dessert

September 16 - Lemon Pepper Chicken, Baked Potato, Carrots, Salad, Rolls, Dessert

September 23 - Pork Chops, Scalloped Potatoes, Sauerkraut, Vegetable, Applesauce, Salad, Dessert

September 30 - Meatloaf, Roasted Potatoes, Gravy, Vegetable, Salad, Biscuits, Dessert

GRACE CRAFTERS

Once again we are collecting jewelry, items for our Attic Treasure Tables, and crafts from



our home crafters. Please keep our November 7th Bazaar in mind whenever you find something we could use. We would appreciate your help. Donations can be brought to the office at anytime or to our craft room Thursdays from 9:30-11 A.M. in Building B. Thank you for your support. As always, our Bazaar money goes to Grace Presbyterian Women to support their mission ministry.

Children's Sunday School/

Children's Sunday School starts Sunday, September 13th in Building A. Our teachers are ready, the rooms are shiny and clean...so all we need are children to teach. Mark your calendar and plan on some fun times with lively Bible Study, great music, interesting crafts and some time in the kitchen too! We're going to put Bible truths to work where it counts - in our everyday life! Remember, classes will start on Sunday, September 13th at 9:30 a.m. in Building A. We'll be looking for you!



Mary Martha Reminder.....

The Mary/Martha Circle will have their first meeting September 15 at 1:00 p.m. in the library. We welcome you all back, and we are looking forward to another prosperous year. We have an exciting Bible Study, Joshua, led by Gladys Ledford. Any lady that would like to visit us, is welcome. As a Presbyterian Woman, you are automatically a member of the P.W. Association. So feel free to visit all our circles. Then pick one that is flexible for you. Hope to see you.

Leader, Pat Keister, 686-5087

Flexercise Is Still Going Strong!!

Well, here it is: Fall - again. It comes around about the same time every year, doesn't it? We won't be meeting in September this year, as my hubby and I will be "on the road again." We expect to return mid-to-late October, so watch the Sunday Bulletin for info as to when we'll restart, as I won't be here to place another article in *The Tie That Binds'* October issue. If our situation changes, I'll get word to Bobbie Jo in the office to have her put the info on the October Calendar insert of the newsletter.

In the meantime, the good news is that when a couple of our regulars moved away earlier this year or had other commitments, the Lord sent us some new people who are just as nice as the ones we were missing and the ones who're still here! (After all, this IS a ministry!)

Just a reminder: we'll still be meeting on Tuesdays at 10:00 - 11:00 a.m., and there's always room for more! I just don't see how we could ever "outgrow" the Fellowship Hall. Don't be afraid to drop by to "spy" on us; we're used to that, and we welcome all visitors. And, if you'd like to sit in for a bit just to try us out, that's ok, too. Whether it's for ten minutes or the whole hour, we'll be pleased to have you with us.

Over the years, our group has included men, women, visiting offspring and siblings, and even those who use walkers, canes or wheelchairs. We'll accommodate anyone with an interest in being more flexible or having more mobility. We've often created specialized "moves" for those with "special needs." Our regular moves come from a wide variety of backgrounds, including physical education, yoga, tai chi, Sit & Be Fit, Pliates, therapy, and just plain personal "need." Whatever is stiff, we move it. But we NEVER get down on the floor. We are strictly NO IMPACT and NO PAIN.

We still don't have any "requirements" other than a wish to join in. No memberships, no fees, no dress requirements, and you don't even have to be a Grace member to attend, so feel free to bring a friend to keep you company.

We do ask that you bring with you two things: a SMILE and a pair of athletic shoes to wear while we "work out." (Snicker, snicker) We spend roughly half of our time sitting in chairs, but we also get up and move around, too. Our goal is to work the whole body during each session, and we usually manage quite well. Except for the days when we need to pray for someone, or we get to giggling, sharing stories and/or jokes, etc. And sometimes one of us will need to leave a little early to get to a doctor or dentist appointment, or come in late for the same reason.

As you can see, we're a rough bunch to get along with!

In His Service, Elli Viets

Presbyterian Women Rummage Sale, October 17, 2009

The Presbyterian Women are having their Rummage Sale on October 17, 2009. We are asking for helpers to sort, set up, and price items to be sold. If you can give us a few hours, please call Sue Lightbody at 293-4655 or Barb Kingen at 596-1535.

Any and all donations will be appreciated: jewelry, tools, housewares, furniture, linens, clothing, shoes, 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 hours unloading cars on October 15 and 16.



In our present economy, this could be a wonderful Rummage Sale. 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.

A Special Thank You!

The Elders of Grace Church, and Pastors of our Church, give a special thank you to Valerie Moore and every single person who helped in the special Youth Presentation, especially our dedicated and wonderful parents! You are very special people and we appreciate you very much.



Choir News



The Chancel Choir has been on break for the summer.

Regular rehearsals have begun again on Wednesday evenings.

If you have any questions, please feel

free to call Choir President, Joyce Flint, who can be reached in the evening at 727-869-1152.

The Hands Serving Him Puppeteers

The Hands Serving Him Puppeteers would like to thank all of you who came to the puppet performance and dinner. We were able to make \$888 that will help us to get the Olins started with spreading the word of God in Africa using puppets. We will be traveling to John's Pass to the puppet store there to purchase the puppets to send. Puppets are a great way to spread God's word in a fun and enjoyable way.

The week after the puppet dinner, we went to the Shriner's Hospital in Tampa. We only had a few children come to see the performance because it was the weekend and the hospital sees most patients during the week. In any case, we had a good time performing songs from the show, and our kids even did the dance that they did in the black light. As a leader and a parent it was heartwarming to watch the interaction

between our children and the ones that had come to see the show.

We had such a great summer in preparation for the show, and it was over all too soon. Everyone is back in school and work, but we are in preparation for the next show around Christmas. God is working in wonderful ways with our church, and we are all excited about being a part of it. Anyone interested in joining our fun - we meet each Wednesday in the "A" building. If you would like more information, please feel free to call Val Moore at 352-688-4664.

"The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me to bring good news to the suffering and afflicted. He has sent me to comfort the broken-hearted, to announce liberty to captives and to open the eyes of the blind"

From a Sister in Christ:

Dear Friends at Grace,

Mildred (Meador) and I both enjoy the Church Newsletter so much; a lot of new names and some older ones, as well. Mildred and I are both pretty good, but slowing down naturally. It's been seven years since I moved and 5 years since my sister moved here. I'm using a walker now - will be 95 soon, but I get a ride to church each Sunday, and belong to one of five circles in the church. I think about my many friends there. The church family are in my prayers daily. Please say "Hello" for me to all my friends there.

In Christian Love,

Leona Anderson
3320 Spring St. #106
Davenport, IA 52807-2119

Children's Church Highlites

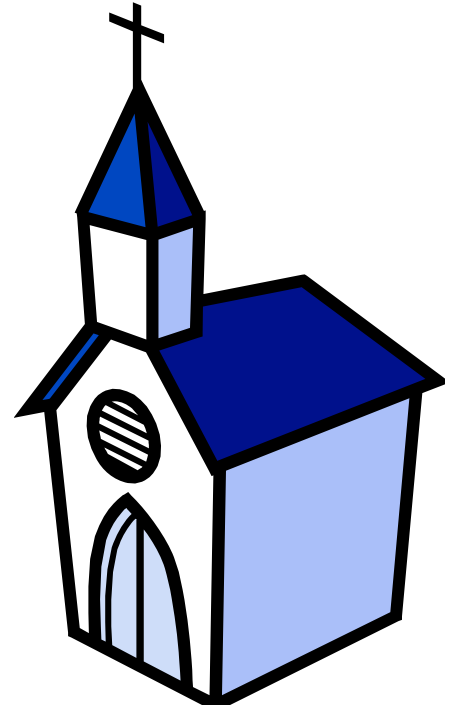
SEPTEMBER

Welcome to the fall program for Children's Church. We missed some of you this summer, but we hope you are ready to come back and worship with us now. Summer vacation is over, and we are ready to continue with the Book of Exodus where we read about Moses and the Israelites, and their fleeing Egypt and the bad Pharaoh. We will be with them when they cross the Red Sea, when God sends quail and manna, and provides water...and the big thing -

when Moses receives the Ten Commandments from God on the mountain. We will show DVD's and a movie about Moses. We will also play some games and answer questions about Moses and his people.

Hope to see you Sunday,

Ms. Pat., Ms
Michelle, and Ms. Iris



BIRTHDAYS

SEPTEMBER

- 1 – Mike Ruth
- 2 – Murray Hagen
- 2 – Robert Jensen
- 2 – Norma Weiland
- 3 – James Hennessey
- 3 – Carolyn Hunter
- 3 – Rosemary Parker
- 5 – Kenneth Gerstner
- 5 – Michael Hackney
- 5 – Margaret Hedeem
- 5 – Vivian Waldbusser
- 6 – Pauline Fontana

MORE to
FOLLOW!



September

2009

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		1 8 AM Yard Work 7 PM Christian Ed, Building "A"	2 7 Choir Rehearsal 7 Puppets	3 8 AM Yard Work 9:30 Grace Crafters 12:30 Holy Rollers	4	5
6 Communion 8:30 Casual Service 10:45 Traditional 11 Children's Church	7 Office Closed Labor Day	8 8 AM Yard Work 9 AM Quilters 10 E & O Meeting	9 1 PM Sarah Circle 5:15-6:15 Dinner 6:20 Prayer Meeting	10 8 Yard Work 9:30 Naomi Circle 9:30 Grace Crafters 12:30 Holy Rollers P/W Zephyrhills	11	12 P/W Leadership Training, St. Pete
13 5 Cents A Meal 8:30 Casual Service <u>9:30 Sunday School</u> 10:45 Traditional 11 Children's Church <u>Choir Returns</u>	14 10:30 Finance Com. 4 Worship Meeting	15 8 Yard Work 1 PM Dorcas Circle 1 PM Mary Martha	16 10 Bible Links 5:15-6:15 Dinner 6:20 Prayer Meeting 7 Bible Study 7 Choir Rehearsal 7 Puppets	17 8 AM Yard Work 9:30 Grace Crafters 12:30 Holy Rollers 7 PM Session	18	19
20 8:30 Casual Service 9:30 Sunday School 10:45 Traditional 11 Children's Church 3 Evergreen Woods	21	22 8 Yard Work 9 AM Quilters	23 5:15-6:15 Dinner 6:20 Prayer Meeting 7 Bible Study 7 Choir Rehearsal 7 Puppets	24 8 AM Yard Work 9:30 Grace Crafters 12:30 Holy Rollers	25	26
27 8:30 Casual Service 9:30 Sunday School 10:45 Traditional 11 Children's Church	28	29 8 Yard Work	30 5:15-6:15 Dinner 6:20 Prayer Meeting 7 Bible Study 7 Choir Rehearsal			

This Month's Volunteers

Church Office Volunteers

Barbara Harrower Ginny Okopski
Hazel Sandoff 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
Bob Harrower Betty Schielein
Hazel Sandhoff Don Sandhoff
Barb Harrower

Caring For Our Sanctuary

Lois Cunningham

CHURCH OFFICERS 2009

SESSION

Moderator: The Reverend Chet Okopski
Clerk of Session: Dee Bodel

2009

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

2010

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

2011

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

DEACONS

Moderator: Joyce Flint

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

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

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

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