

Grace Notes

February 2013

Monthly Newsletter of Grace Baptist Church



PASTOR RANDY'S NOTE...

WHERE ARE YOUR FRIENDS?

I want to ask what might be considered a weird question: How many non-Christian or unchurched friends do you have?

If you are like me, probably not many. And that is pretty typical of any of us who have been involved in the church very long. We tend to have most, if not all, of our friendships within the church family. It makes sense because these are the people who share our common values, the things that are important to us – our relationship to Jesus.

That being said, it makes it much more difficult to share the Gospel. The most significant was to share about our faith is in relationship with others. We have to “earn” the right to be heard, and that right only comes through developing deep, close relationships.

Not only could we impact their lives, but they could also impact ours. God can use anyone, even non-Christian, unchurched friends to help us deepen our relationship with Jesus. But if we are not in friendships with these folks, that impact will never take place.

You might be thinking at this point, “Why bother? It seems like a lot of work, and I have my Christian friends.” There are a few answers for that question but the only one that matters is this: It is what Jesus did; and I believe it is what He wants us to do. Not only did Jesus spend time with his disciples (I liken them to the church), but he also spent time with tax collectors, and thieves, and robbers, and ??? (you fill in the blank of unchurched types).

I want to be perfectly clear. I am not saying we should go out and make new friendships just to get a notch in our spiritual soul-winning belts. That amounts to nothing more than just using people. Any kind of a friendship needs to be built on mutual caring, trust, and love, not manipulation. It is not my job to convince, convict, or convert others to follow Jesus. That’s the Holy Spirit’s job. However, it is my job to share my life with other people. And if in sharing my life with non-Christian, unchurched friends, God uses that to lead another person to Christ, then I will rejoice with all the angels in heaven. However if that person never comes to Christ, God has used that person to make me a better follower of Jesus.

My prayer for myself in 2013 has been and continues to be, “God lead me into friendships with unchurched, non-Christian people so we can share our lives with each other, and so that I become a better follower of Jesus. Amen.”

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FEBRUARY COMMUNION SERVERS:
Paul Young
Kaleen Stepnioski
Ed Vulgan
Betsy Vulgan



MODERATOR'S MUSINGS

I seldom have the luxury of having had a board meeting prior to the time I am writing the *Musings*. In January the third Tuesday fell on the 15th, earlier in the month than usual. This was the first meeting for our four new members of the board and we spent some time reflecting on the orientation retreat and insights we gained there. We have agreed to “tithe” our meeting times- to spend at least ten percent of our anticipated meeting time praying. This includes our individual concerns that don’t always get mentioned. We also shared our spiritual gifts to learn how God has given us diversity that makes us strong and flexible to tackle issues and bring vision to Grace.

The Lay Ministers have been confirming the members of their ministries and a list of the elected and appointed leadership for 2013 is available in the entryway. Six of the nine Board of Ministries members are Lay Ministers with oversight of an area of the church’s business. These include: Finance, which includes budget, treasurers and giving; Administration, which oversees the physical building and equipment; Church Life, which includes worship, social activities, music and greeting; Education which includes youth ministries, Children’s Church, camping, Sunday School, and Bible studies; Outreach which includes our missional and service efforts, non-local missions, summer barbecue and Santa breakfast; and Spiritual Life which includes ministry to shut-ins, prayer chains, regular prayer and concern for each person in the congregation.

As each of these ministries plan their activities and events, they share their plans at the Board meetings. This allows coordination of times, locations and resources. The question arose at the January meeting as to when a plan should be brought to the Board or simply handled at the ministry level. While there will always be some “gray” areas, the general guidelines are: 1) If the activity or event is preplanned and on the church calendar, it is already anticipated by the other ministries and usually does not need to be brought to the Board; and 2) If large resources must be brought to bear, in terms of space, time and people, it does need to be discussed at the Board. Sometimes coordination is merely a matter of informing the Board, but at times the Board as a whole needs to “weigh in” as to whether the activity or event meshes with Grace’s overall vision and direction from the Lord.

The Board is striving to concern itself largely with “Grace’s overall vision and direction from the Lord” and less with the need to argue over “the color of carpeting” as we facetiously speak of mundane matters that occasionally consume us. Please keep the Board and its individual functions and ministries in your prayers.

With you in His work,
Sharon Owen, Church Moderator

YOUTH NEWS FROM SHAWN

Another great month down and a great start to this New Year. First off let me just say I love the Grace Baptist Church kids and young adults; they continue to surprise me every day.

One Wednesday night as I am walking around hanging with the youth group one of the newer group attendees came up to me and said, “Hey Shawn, guess what?” “What?,” I asked. “The other day my dad out of nowhere on my way here told me he was proud of me.” “Really, for what?,” I asked. “He was proud that I wanted to go to the youth group on Wednesdays and stuff.”

This is an awesome story and one I can relate to with the relationship I had with my own father at his age. Both of this young man’s parents used to actively go to church when they lived in California, but over time and moving up here they have kind of fell out of it. My prayers go out to this young man and all the youth out in the world to be able to continue to keep talking to his or her parents about their experiences at youth and at the church and hopefully bring them to regular attendance. It’s interesting to me how much power a story or sharing an event can have on those who don’t believe or attend a church. There are so many people out in the world and all around us who are lost and empty, living their lives looking for something that they can’t see or touch but they are empty inside without. We all have an opportunity to fill these holes that are within them with our stories of how GOD has touched our lives and constant invitations to church on Sunday. These people are hungry and thirsty for something and it is up to each of us to show them what they are hungry and or thirsty for—a relationship with GOD. By walking alongside them eventually the walls they have up will come down and GOD will fill their emptiness and give them the opportunity to live their lives to the fullest for GOD, to be filled with the living water. As Jesus described it to the Samaritan woman in John 4:13-14:

Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks the water I give him will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life.

Since February is the month of Love I challenge everyone to show the love they have for GOD by talking to somebody new about the GOD who loves them and invite them to learn more. This can be done over coffee or could be by bringing them to a Sunday service. The power of love can break through any barrier and or conflict and could open up an opportunity to share the word of GOD to those who might otherwise not want to listen, help those who are thirsty be satisfied- not for a day or two- but for eternity.

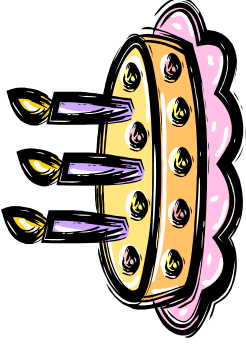
FEBRUARY 2013

Fellowship Fund offering is received the first Sunday of the month.


Sun Mon Tue Wed Thu Fri Sat

“If you’re not close enough to get hurt, you’re not close enough to make a difference in someone’s life.”
-John Lastinger

February Birthdays
 9 Beth Jones
 24 Sandy Danielson
 25 Betsy Vulgan



February Anniversaries
 28 John & Shannon Hastings



3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
COMMUNION 9:30 am Sunday School 10:30 am Fellowship 11:00 am Worship Celebration 6:00 pm Bible Study @ Young's	9:30 am Sunday School 10:30 am Fellowship 11:00 am Worship Celebration 6:00 pm Bible Study @ Young's Church Youth Come Home	11:00 am Deaconesses' Meeting	6:30 pm Bible Study & Youth Meeting	6:30 pm Grace Singers' Rehearsal 7:00 pm Walleye Club	6:00-9:00 pm Youth Open House 6:00-9:00 pm Hispanic Church Bible Study	9:30 am Outreach Meeting Elementary & Middle School Winter Camp	9:30 am Sunday School 10:30 am Fellowship 11:00 am Worship Celebration 6:00 pm Bible Study @ Church Youth Come Home	9:30 am Sunday School 10:30 am Fellowship 11:00 am Worship Celebration 6:00 pm Bible Study @ Young's Church	11:00 am Roberta Stephens Circle Meeting	6:30 pm Bible Study & Youth Meeting	6:30 pm Bible Study & Youth Meeting	6:30 pm Grace Singers' Rehearsal HAPPY VALENTINES!	2:00 pm Meals For Minds @ Bridger School 2:00 pm Food Sorting @ MUM 7:00 pm Packing Food @ MUM	9:00 am-12:00 pm MUM's Food Distribution 10:00 am Girlfriends' Birthday Breakfast @ Village Inn	9:30 am Sunday School 10:30 am Fellowship 11:00 am Worship Celebration 6:00 pm Bible Study @ Young's Church	MARCH GRACE NOTES' ARTICLES DUE	11:00 am Roberta Stephens Circle Meeting	6:30 pm Bible Study & Youth Meeting	6:30 pm Grace Singers' Rehearsal	6:00-9:00 pm Hispanic Church Bible Study 6:00 pm High School Winter Camp	9:30 am Sunday School 10:30 am Fellowship 11:00 am Worship Celebration 6:00 pm Bible Study @ Young's Church Youth Come Home	9:30 am Sunday School 10:30 am Fellowship 11:00 am Worship Celebration 6:00 pm Bible Study @ Young's Church Youth Come Home	6:30 pm Bible Study & Youth Meeting	6:30 pm Grace Singers' Rehearsal	High School Winter Camp

NOTES FROM YOUR MUSIC/WORSHIP MINISTER AND LAY MINISTER OF CHURCH LIFE, JUDY YOUNG



wor•ship *n.* (honor, dignity, worship: see WORTH & SHIP) 1. Reverence or devotion for a deity; religious homage 2. Extreme devotion or intense love or admiration of any kind 3. Something worshiped

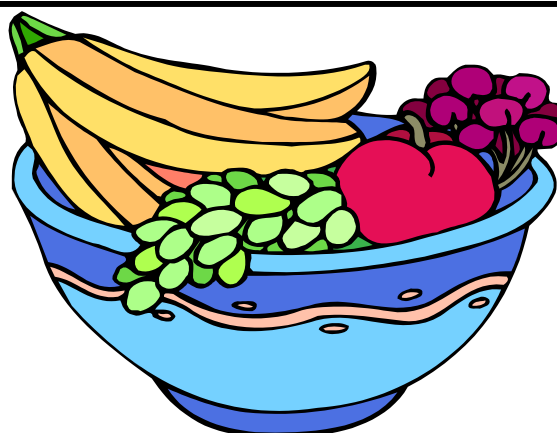
The question, “What do you seek?” was recently asked of our congregation. When you come to Sunday morning “worship” what do you want from Jesus? Are you looking for relief from something? Most of us come seeking on Sundays. We are hungry for God’s Word, thirsty for His Living Water; we desire healing from the Great Physician of our spiritual and physical ailments, and direction from the Holy Spirit in our confusion. God can provide all of these things on Sunday morning when we fellowship together. Encouragement comes from our fellow believers with a kind word, smile, or big hug.

But we also need to come to worship with the expectation of giving. We need to enter into His house with the idea we will give back something of ourselves in worship to Him. Is God “worth” it? You bet! His entire plan of salvation was created out of His deep love for you and me. Let’s come wanting to give back in praise and worship to Him. Enter the worship and praise time with the thought of totally centering your thoughts and heart on Christ and God. Quietly wait for Him and leave your burdens at His feet and rest in His arms. Praise Him for all He has done and will continue to do in your life as you seek after Him. I can guarantee you will come away with the sense of being in His very presence.

*“I waited patiently for the LORD; He turned to me and heard my cry. He lifted me out of the slimy pit, out of the mud and mire; He set my feet on a rock and gave me a firm place to stand. He put a **new song** in my mouth, a **hymn of praise** to our God. Many will see and fear and put their trust in the LORD.”* Psalm 40:1-3

SUNDAY FELLOWSHIP TIME

We are in need of volunteers to help provide snacks for Sunday morning fellowship time. We will need two people to bring snacks each Sunday. If no one signs up on a certain Sunday then we will not have snacks that day. If you are willing to bring snacks, the sign up sheet can be found on the refrigerator. Thanks!



OUTREACH

Your Outreach Committee met for our first meeting of 2013 on January 12. We reviewed ongoing projects, annual events, and debriefed on the 2012 Santa Breakfast. The members of the committee are: Shannon Hastings, Diana Hiatt, Lorretta Mason, and Betsy Vulgan. At our February meeting, we will begin the project plan for the 2013 Community BBQ (scheduled for August 24) as well as brainstorming ideas for new areas of outreach for this year. If you have ideas you would like us to consider, please send them to me via email hbilynskyj@hotmail.com or leave a message on our home phone 503-384-2595.

If you're looking for a place to serve two of our ongoing projects can always use extra hands: **Meals for Minds**, 3rd Friday of the month, 1:00 pm at Bridger Elementary School, 7910 SE Market, Portland, OR 97215; and **Open Heart Pantry**, 3rd Friday and Saturday of the month, Montavilla United Methodist Church, 232 SE 80th Avenue Portland, OR 97215. **Donations to the food barrel in our church entryway can be made anytime.**

The new Bridger Backpack Program will be getting underway soon. This weekly project will supply food to 20-25 families from Bridger Elementary School to help them with their nutritional needs for the weekend when the children aren't in school. Grace received a grant from American Home Mission Societies to help fund this program during 2013. Grace will be working closely with SUN and the Bridger PTA. Pastor Randy and Sharon Owen are taking the lead on getting this project up and running. As soon as we have more details we'll publish the weekly schedule so you can help with this amazing program.

Don't forget when we talk about Outreach this includes **MISSIONS**. This month we are collecting the **American for Christ Offering**. Our goal is \$2,000 - your donation can be given anytime during February.

Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age. Matthew 28:18-20

Please be in prayer for the Outreach Committee as well as praying about where God wants you to serve this year. How will you help fulfill the Great Commission?

In His love and service,
Helen Pearson, Lay Minister for Outreach

MONTAVILLA UNITED METHODIST FOOD PANTRY

The list of food MUM would like to have provided is: canned fruit, canned corn, canned green beans, chili, soup, canned meats, tuna fish, peanut butter, jam/jelly, spaghetti sauce, canned beans, box meals, macaroni and cheese, pasta/noodles, cereal (hot and cold), Hamburger Helper, Tuna Helper, egg cartons, plastic vegetable bags, and paper grocery bags.



As you shop for food it is better to buy in bulk (6-20 identical items), rather than one can of this and one box of that.

We will be emphasizing food collection on Sunday, February 10. Come and give a gift to those in need.

Thanks again for your willingness to help with this ministry.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Just a quick reminder, this is the month for winter camp. Hopefully you have registered your kids for a weekend of fun in the snow and a time to get challenged about living closer to God. Here is a reminder when each camp is: **Elementary Winter Camp (3rd-5th grade) & Middle School:** February 8-10 and **High School:** February 22-24.

Speaking of camp, the CE Committee is working on setting up different fundraisers for the kids and youth to participate in to earn scholarships this year to go to camp with as little expense as possible to each family. If you have any ideas for good fundraisers for our young people to participate in, please share them with one of the CE Committee members: Terri Becker, Theresa Benson, Molly Tompkins, Georgia Young, Shawn Brannan, and myself. Our goal is to have the first fundraiser sometime in the month of March.

With that said, I thought I would give you heads up as to when the summer camps are scheduled considering it will be upon us before we know it. Summer Camp dates are as follows: **High School and Elementary Camp:** July 29-August 2; **Middle School:** August 12-16; and **Primary Camp:** August 12-14. Please plan accordingly so your kids and their friends can go to camp.

Love in Christ,
Beth Jones, Lay Minister of Education

BOILER CAPITAL FUNDS

Thank you to all who continue to give to the Boiler Fund. Progress was made on the loan balance in 2012, but we have a long way to go; so your Boiler Fund Committee needs to get BUSY!!

We are trying to think “outside the box” for some creative fundraising ideas. Someone has suggested to us to turn in old gold & silver jewelry and coins. We have spoken with a trustworthy company, Liberty Coin & Currency, and they are willing to work with us on this endeavor. We would collect items from the church family and take it to them as one large grouping. As an individual, you would need to put a value on your items before turning them in to us. We would provide a receipt to you for tax purposes. You would have the convenience of not having to take your items in, and Grace would raise funds for the boiler loan. More details to come on this venture.

We are also looking at raising funds through Burgerville and various restaurants throughout the coming year.

Larry Martin, Paul and Judy Young





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*All we do inside these
walls prepares us to do
God's work outside.*

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN FEBRUARY

8-10 Elementary & Middle School Winter Camp @ Camp

Arrah Wanna

16 Girlfriends' Birthday Breakfast @ Village Inn

22-24 High School Winter Camp @ Camp Arrah Wanna

STAFF EMAILS

Pastor

Randy Pearson

pastorrandy@graceportland.com

Secretary

Beth Jones

grace@graceportland.com

Youth Minister

Shawn Brannan

shawn@graceportland.com

Worship/Music Minister

Judy Young

judy@graceportland.com

Vision Statement

God's vision for Grace Baptist Church is to engage in Christ-centered discipleship and worship to equip you for, and support you in, ministry in the Montavilla neighborhood and the communities where you work and live; while cultivating trusting, loving, accepting relationships.