

Eighteen Thirty

A MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE GRACE COMMUNITY CHURCH

MAY 2016



EPHESIANS 2:4-5 ^{ESV}

BUT GOD, BEING RICH IN MERCY,
BECAUSE OF THE GREAT LOVE WITH
WHICH HE LOVED US, EVEN WHEN WE
WERE DEAD IN OUR TRESPASSES, MADE
US ALIVE TOGETHER WITH CHRIST—
BY GRACE YOU HAVE BEEN SAVED



inside this edition...

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- 3 | PRAISE SONG OF THE MONTH
- 4 | PRAYER & EVIDENCES OF GRACE
- 5 | MARRIAGE & PARENTING
- 6 | TEAM UPDATES
- 10 | PERSECUTION, PERSEVERANCE, & HOPE



► ARE YOU PRAYING FOR OUR NATION?

For an hour on Thursday May 5th we added to the prayers going on around the country for the annual National Day of Prayer. The most important thing we can do for our nation, its leaders and our culture is to continue to pray for them amidst the distress we all feel. Whether you gathered with us during this special time of prayer or not, let the prayers continue to rise up throughout the year.



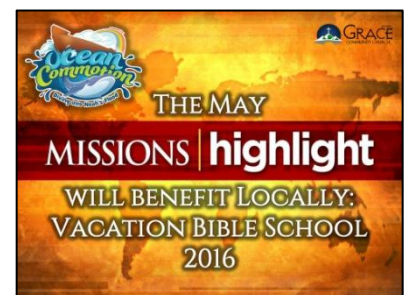
►► PENTECOST SUNDAY MAY 15...

...is a special day in the life of the church as it is not only Pentecost Sunday but we will be blessed to have EA National Minister Jim Barnes with us. Matt will be leading us in worship and Jim will be preaching and sharing with us the ministry of the EA. Afterwards we will enjoy a fellowship meal Family Gathering style and then John will be facilitating a member's meeting to take up a vote to join the EA. This is not a Sunday you will want to miss!



►►► OUR MISSIONS HIGHLIGHT...

...this month will benefit our Vacation Bible School 2016. Please read up about of plans, theme and ways you can help on page 6.



ELDERS UPDATE

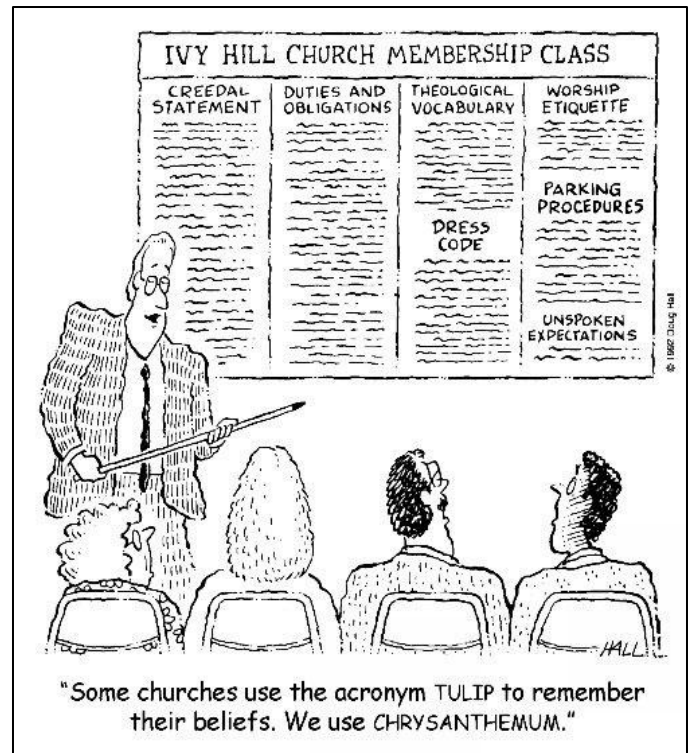
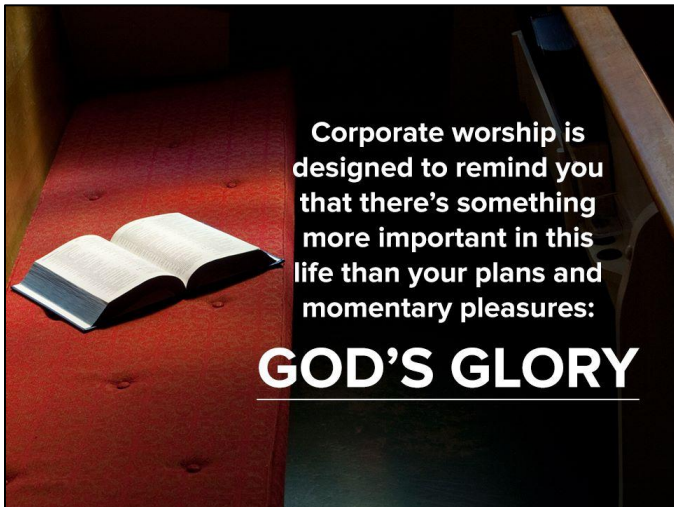
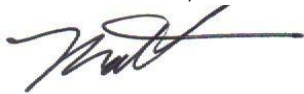
I want to thank you for all the suggestions you have been submitting for sermons upcoming this summer. If you have any further suggestions keep them coming.

I wanted to give you a quick rundown of what's been submitted so far with the thought it might stir up your thinking of any others you might want us to think about doing:

- The Names of God.
- The Doctrine of God, from the OT.
- Isaiah 6.
- Getting to know the God of the Bible.
- What does God's love really look like?
- Job.
- If God is in control does that mean He wants Obama as president?
- The Hymn How Firm A Foundation.
- Baptism, Why we do it and its significance.
- John the Baptist baptizing Jesus.
- Baptism of the Holy Spirit and His work in our lives.
- The Attributes of God.
- The 7 Churches of Revelation.
- Romans.

Again thanks to those of you who have taken time to submit these if there are any others please send me an email or place them in the suggestion box next to the church mailboxes. Thanks and the Elders and I are looking forward to digging in to your suggestions this summer!

For His Renown,



We promise our upcoming membership class (see below) won't be this bad (see above), but if you are indeed interested in taking the next step towards membership here at Grace Community Church please RSVP to Matt by Sunday May 15 so we can be prepared with refreshments and childcare on May 22.



He Will Hold Me Fast

Ada Habershon (1861-1918) and Matt Merker (2013)

When I fear my faith will fail,
Christ will hold me fast;
When the tempter would prevail,
He will hold me fast.
I could never keep my hold
Through life's fearful path;
For my love is often cold;
He must hold me fast.

He will hold me fast,
He will hold me fast;
For my Savior loves me so,
He will hold me fast.

Those He saves are His delight,
Christ will hold me fast;
Precious in his holy sight,
He will hold me fast.
He'll not let my soul be lost;
His promises shall last;
Bought by Him at such a cost,
He will hold me fast.

For my life He bled and died,
Christ will hold me fast;
Justice has been satisfied;
He will hold me fast.
Raised with Him to endless life,
He will hold me fast
'Till our faith is turned to sight,
When He comes at last!

#239 And Can It Be That I Should Gain

Charles Wesley (1738)

And can it be that I should gain
An int'rest in the Savior's blood?
Died He for me, who caused His pain?
For me, who Him to death pursued?

Amazing love! how can it be
That Thou, my God, should die for me?

Amazing love! how can it be
That Thou, my God, should die for me!
'Tis mystery all! Th' Immortal dies!
Who can explore His strange design?
In vain the firstborn seraph tries
To sound the depths of love divine!
'Tis mercy all! let earth adore,
Let angel minds inquire no more. [Refrain]

He left His Father's throne above,
So free, so infinite His grace;
Emptied Himself of all but love,
And bled for Adam's helpless race;
'Tis mercy all, immense and free;
For, O my God, it found out me. [Refrain]

Long my imprisoned spirit lay
Fast bound in sin and nature's night;
Thine eye diffused a quick'ning ray,
I woke, the dungeon flamed with light;
My chains fell off, my heart was free;
I rose, went forth and followed Thee. [Refrain]

No condemnation now I dread;
Jesus, and all in Him is mine!
Alive in Him, my living Head,
And clothed in righteousness divine,
Bold I approach th'eternal throne,
And claim the crown, through Christ my own.
[Refrain]

The first three stanzas of this hymn explore both the contrast between the glory of heaven that Christ came from and the suffering He endured on earth, and the mystery of the love that motivated Him to make that journey. In stanza four we are reminded how God brings us to salvation in language that reminds us of Peter's experience in Acts 12:6-11, where God sent an angel to open the prison doors and loose Peter's chains. The final stanza is a jubilant celebration of our new state in Christ and the privilege of communion with God that we enjoy.

**"While others
are congratulating
themselves, I
have to lie humbly
at the foot of
Christ's cross &
marvel that
I am saved at all"**

Charles Spurgeon





Please take the opportunity to lift these prayer requests up to the Lord all throughout this month.

- ⌘ Pray for Bill Bender, Bobby Shumaker and Winnie Lane who are residents at Goodwill Home.
- ⌘ Pray for the following church family & friends who have been experiencing health challenges recently:

Allison Broadwater	Donna Burton
Maggie Carey	Matthew Knauff
Esther Stanton	
- ⌘ Pray for the inactive members of our church that the Lord would lead them back into a time of regular fellowship.
- ⌘ Pray for wisdom, healing and restoration of broken marriages.
- ⌘ Pray for our soldiers who continue to defend our country both at home and abroad. Pray for marriages to endure long separations during deployments.
- ⌘ Pray for the primary elections going on currently across the country. Pray too for all those in positions of authority (especially the Supreme Court) that they would seek the wisdom of God in all matters so that we might live in a peaceful, quiet, godly and dignified way. (1 Tim 2:1-2)

Let us regularly give thanks for the ways that we see God's hand at work in our church community!

- ⌘ We give thanks for all the brave men and woman who gave their lives for the cause of freedom for our country.
- ⌘ We give thanks for John Carey filling the pulpit while Matt was out. Thank you for serving the church with your time and leadership.
- ⌘ We give thanks for those who had perfect attendance in worship this past month:

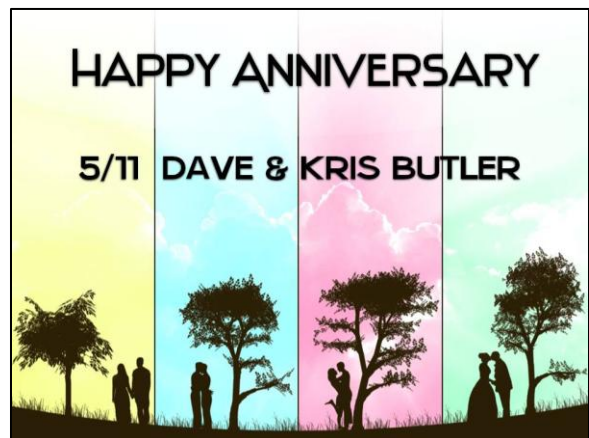
Helen Bender
 Brianna Broadwater
 Brayden Broadwater
 Jack Carey
 Helen Hetrick
 Jeff & Patty Rice
 Betty Jo Swauger
 Lori Wilt
 Piper Wilt
 George Yoder
 Caleb Moon

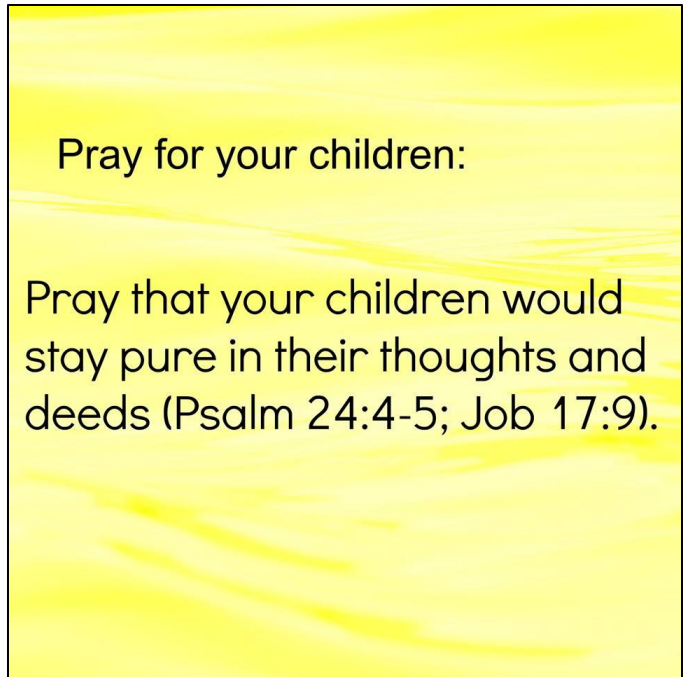
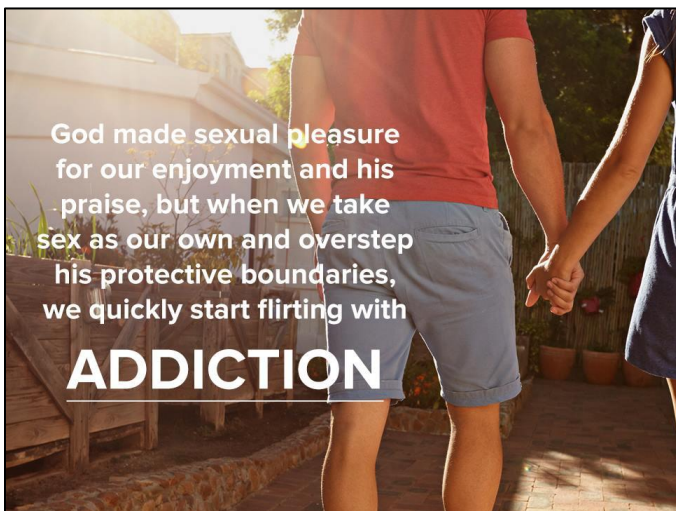
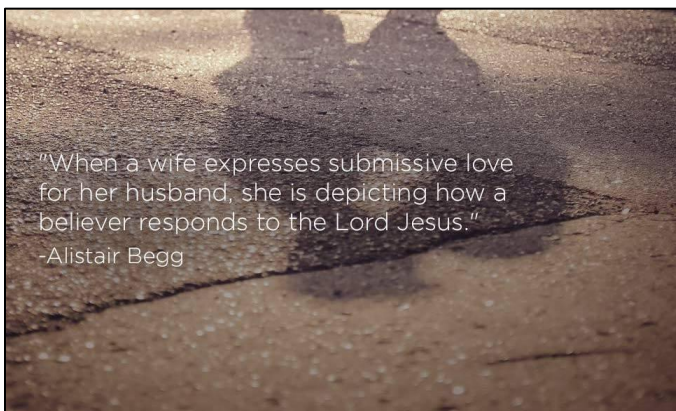
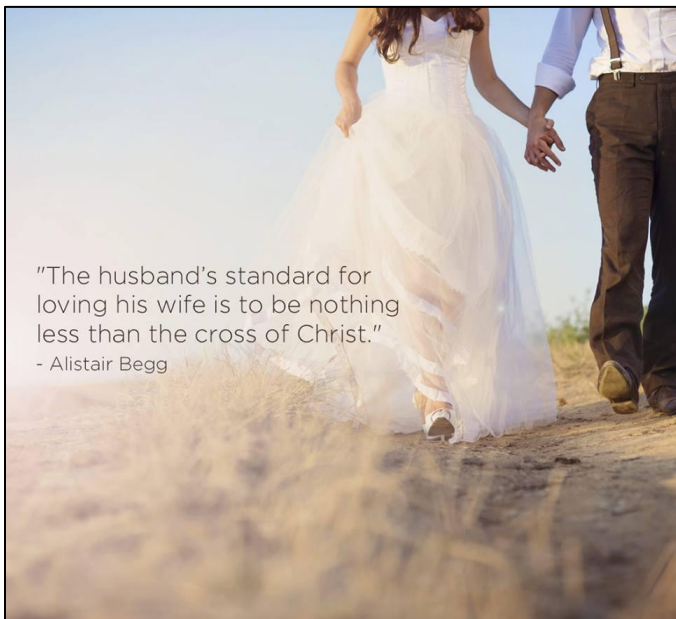
Franklin Broadwater
 Gracie Broadwater



Hyun Joo Moon
 Jim & Lillie Walker

- ⌘ A special thank you for all the kind words, cards and prayers this past month surrounding the death of my grandparents. Thank you for your patience and understanding while we needed to miss church.
 -Matt, Emily and Lincoln Widder





**CPYU
PARENT
PAGE**

ATTENTION PARENTS!

SEE MATT FOR A
DIGITAL OR HARD
COPY TODAY!

MAY 2016

IN THIS MONTH'S ISSUE:

- Safe or Brave?
- Youth Culture Hot Quote from Amandla Stenberg
- Top 10: Downloaded Songs
- Quick Stats:
 - Restaurant Visits
 - Video Game Spending
- Legal Sexting
- Helicopter Parenting
- Electronic Vaping Devices
- Digital Kids: Before You Post...
- From The Word: Matthew 15:8
- Helpful Resource: *Engaging the Soul of Youth Culture: Bridging Teen Worldviews and Christian Truth*

REVERENDFUN.COM COPYRIGHT BIBLE GATEWAY

Thanks to Mikel Rice 08-20-1998

DUE TO NEW LOCAL FIRE CODES WE ARE NO LONGER ALLOWED TO CONSIDER OURSELVES "ON FIRE FOR CHRIST"



VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL 2016



DIVE IN!

AGES 2-13

Ocean Commotion
(Diving into Noah's Flood)

ARE YOU READY FOR A BOATLOAD OF EXCITEMENT?
You won't want to miss a minute at Ocean Commotion, the most welcoming place around! At Ocean Commotion, kids will learn about how Noah stood for God during the time of the Great Flood as they enjoy songs, crafts, games, goodies, and dramas. Vacation Bible School at Ocean Commotion will be an ocean of fun, so contact us today! We're calling all divers to join us for an amazing water-filled adventure!

Location: Grace Community Church
140 Main Street
Grantsville, MD 21536

The adventure will last: July 11-15 & 17
The adventure runs from: 6:00pm - 8:30pm
For more information, call: 240-362-8074

www.grantsvillechurch.com

DO YOU HAVE ANY OF THE FOLLOWING ITEMS YOU CAN DONATE TO HELP WITH VBS 2016?

(THINGS YOU DON'T WANT BACK):

- paint of any type or color
- paintbrushes
- roller covers
- sheets of styrofoam
- dimensional lumber of any type
- screws
- pool noodles
- water guns
- traffic cones
- sidewalk chalk
- clean white bed sheets
- any black sheets of cloth material
- any blue sheets of cloth material



The Next VBS Team Meeting


SUNDAY JUNE 5
12:30PM-1:00PM

For more information about the VBS Team please contact either:

Allison Broadwater 240-362-8074
Matt Widder 717-496-3879

EDUCATION

GROWING TIN THE WORD

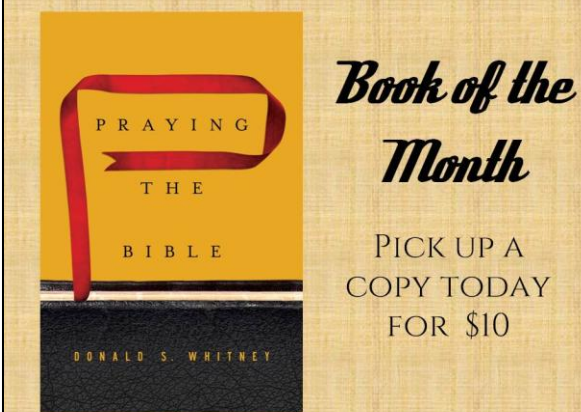


The Next Education Team Meeting

SUNDAY JUNE 5
NOON-12:30PM

For more information about the Education Team please contact either:

George Yoder 814-662-2079
Allison Broadwater 240-362-8074



PRAYING THE BIBLE

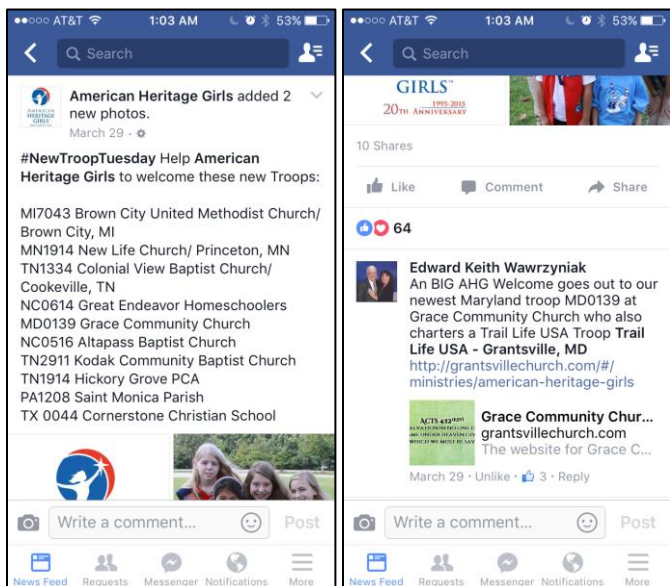
Book of the Month

PICK UP A COPY TODAY FOR \$10

DONALD S. WHITNEY

WAYS YOU CAN HELP WITH VBS THIS YEAR:

1. Pray...for leaders, preparations and for the kids who will be coming.
2. Donate...especially as this month VBS will benefit from any mission offering gifts...thank you for helping provide the seed money to get things moving.
3. Talk to Allison about ways your gifts, time or talents might be used for the ministry. From stuffing envelopes, to building sets, to decorating and painting there's a role for everyone!
4. Grab a flyer and registration form and recruit some students. Make it a point to put the info in the hands of the kids you know and see. If you don't have the paper on you, point them to our church's website where they can download the paperwork there...or ask them if we can send them the info and forms in the mail (make sure you get their address).
5. Donate any of the items on our wish list (see next column)



Not exactly an outdoorsy event but our Trail Life Guys watching an Easter video last month.

TRAIL LIFE TROOP MD-0139 YEARLY PLANNER 2016

(dates and plans subject to change)

MAY	Shootout at Bull Glade Hunting Camp (Fri/Sat)
MAY	Backpack outing
JUN 4	OCC Yard Sale
JUN 5	Trail Life Sunday at church
JUN 24-26	Fried Oreos Fundraiser at Grantsville Days
JUL 4	Trip to Nemascolin for Fireworks
JUL 23	Hiking at Swallow Falls
AUG 19-21	Campout at New Germany
SEPT	Backpacking Trip (Fri/Sat)
SEPT	Biking Trip
OCT 8	Old Bedford Village Mystery Event
NOV	OCC Packing Party
DEC 11	Troop Christmas Party

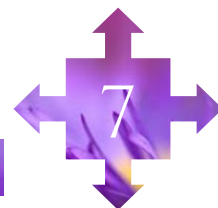
Our Trail Life program does have a facebook page with periodic updates. John also sends out weekly text messages of weekly meeting updates.



For more information about Trail Life please contact:
John Carey
301-876-0342
jcarey6821@gmail.com



For more information about American Heritage Girls please contact:
Shari Ross
240-321-4103
lukedemi@comcast.net



MISSIONS

GETTING THE GOSPEL OUT

Let's come prepared to give a special gift to support our new mission highlight for this month...VBS 2016. With your support we're able to: provide a meal each night to each child, a free t-shirt at the end of the week to each child, and to teach the Bible to about 100 kids this summer.

Let us give generously this month to support the gospel work that will happen this July for our kids and the kids of the community. Plan now to use the color rimmed envelopes in the pew rack and write VBS on the outside to help support this amazing community outreach. Also please include your name on the envelope if you'd like your gift to be credited toward your annual giving report for tax purposes.

Thanks for supporting our VBS with your gifts and especially with your prayers!



For more information about the Missions Team please contact either:

Matt Widder 717-496-3879
Patty Rice 240-362-6785

OCC

OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD

OCC ITEMS WE HAVE ON HAND: as of 04.17.16

January Combs - 18 Hair Access. - 34	February Stuffed Animals -27	March Wash Cloths - 66 Bar Soap - 24
April Toothbrushes - 23 Toothpaste - 10	May Flashlights - 19	June Toys - 6
July Notebooks - 24 Glue Sticks - 11	August Pencils - 122 Sharpeners - 15	September Crayons - 9 Colored Pencils - 5
October Books - 114 Coloring Books - 5	November Shipping - \$0.00	Other Items Erasers - 61 Pens - 10 Calculator - 1 Scissors - 4



Your Support Touches Many Lives in Many Special Ways!

Hospice of Garrett County, Inc. provides total in-home or home-like health care for terminally ill patients with six months or less to live if the disease follows its normal progression.

Hospice provides home health care, nurses, social workers, volunteer caregivers, dietary counseling, medical supplies, equipment, medications, and short-term or respite care as needed at no cost to the patient or family.

Following a patient's death, Hospice of Garrett County provides bereavement services and support to family members and caregivers for up to 12 months.

Your support and contributions help us offer these services throughout Garrett County. Your help is greatly appreciated.

Thank You

HOSPICE

Hospice of Garrett County
PO Box 271 • Oakland, MD 21550
301-334-5151
Fax: 301-334-5880
E-Mail: donahaggarthospice@verizon.net
www.hospiceofgarretcounty.org

How To Participate

Walkers will meet on Sunday, June 19, 2016 at 3 p.m. RAIN OR SHINE. Donations received will be collected on the day of the walk. Walkers will have the choice of walking event lengths, ranked from beginner to intermediate.

Prizes

Prizes awarded to those who have raised and turned in the most donations by the day of the walk.

Most Donations Raised:
\$2,000.00 in Gift Card!

Second Highest in Donations Raised:
\$1,000.00 in Gift Card!

Third Highest in Donations Raised:
\$250.00 in Gift Card!

Special drawings for extra prizes for all participants and a bonus for each walker who brings in \$50.00 in donations.

Waiver of Responsibility

As a willing participant in "Walk for Hospice," I hereby assume Hospice of Garrett County, Inc., its Board of Directors and Officers, Employees and Agents, as well as all other persons and entities sponsoring or participating in this event, Adventure Sports Center, Inc., Adventure Sports Center International, LLC (collectively "ASCI"), Eventright Inc., LLC (doing business as "Whip Research") ("Eventright"), The Board of County Commissioners of Garrett County, Maryland ("The County"), and the Board of Trustees of Garrett College ("The College"), from all liability or other claims or demands for damages arising directly or indirectly out of my participation, or that of my child, or any child for which I am responsible. I consent for emergency medical treatment or first aid for myself, or any child if the same is reasonably necessary.

Signature: _____
(Parent/Guardian must sign if participant is under age 18)

Date: _____

21st
2005-2016 ANNIVERSARY

Walk for
HOSPICE



NEW DATE & TIME!

Sunday - 3 p.m.
June 19, 2016
ASCI
250 Adventure Sports Way
McHenry, MD 21541
Memorial Flower Drop
Lots of Food & Raffles

If you would like to raise funds and walk for hospice please see Matt for a full size sponsor form or to sponsor a walker from our church please see Helen Hetrick.

When shopping for OCC... Please keep in mind the 3 different age groups and boy/girl designations: *for example:*

2-4 = LINCOLN & EMMA
5-9 = NATHAN & DEMI
10-14 = ALEX & GRACIE



For more information about the OCC Team please contact:

Andy & Jenny Knauff
301-895-3167





REAL LIVES TRANSFORMED

Let us continue to look at the lives transformed by Christ through Operation Christmas Child. This month we will be hearing about the story of a family in India who received life-changing encouragement through an Operation Christmas Child shoebox gift sent from a couple in North Carolina.

HOPE ARRIVES AT JUST THE RIGHT TIME

Brian and Esther Rex lost everything. Living in the coastal state of Kerala, India, the tsunami of December 26, 2004, destroyed their home and all their belongings. Not long before that disaster, their first son had died in childbirth, and Brian's family had disowned him because he became a Christian.

Hostile neighbors and even friends blamed each misfortune on their faith in Jesus Christ.

Still, Brian and Esther persevered. After living in a school for a few days immediately following the tsunami, a friend invited them to move to Bangalore, a 12-hour journey away. The new start sounded appealing, but it also meant learning a new language and a new culture.

Not quite a year after the move, Brian nearly gave up. With a bachelor's degree in economics, the most lucrative work he could find was doing day labor as a painter. It was Christmas and he had no money to buy a gift for his 2-year-old daughter Fabiana.

"I thought God had forsaken us," he said. "I just thought of killing myself."

He tried to read his Bible and pray to convince himself otherwise, but he said, "I just threw my Bible thinking, 'There's no one in the world to help us.'"

That's when there was a knock at their door. Esther's uncle who was a pastor came with his arms full of Operation Christmas Child shoebox gifts, inviting his niece to take one for Fabiana. Before leaving to deliver gifts to other families, he prayed with the Rexes.

Opening the box, they were filled with joy! Inside they found a pink outfit for Fabiana along with dolls, kid's books, notebooks, pencils, crayons, and clay. "Everything was perfect for her," Brian said.

But the shoebox was far more than just a collection of gifts. Given in Jesus' Name, it breathed new life in Brian. "Hopelessness went from me," he said. He started reading his Bible every day again and asked God to forgive him for giving up on his faith.



TWO FAMILIES CONNECTED IN CHRIST

Several months later during one of his daily times in Scripture, Brian read Luke 17 in which Jesus heals 10 lepers but only one returns to thank Him. Brian remembered that he had thanked God for the shoebox gift, but not the people who sent it. Going back through the shoebox, he found an address for William and Judy Deal. He brushed off his English and wrote them a letter—not even knowing what country "Lexington, NC" was in.

When it arrived at the Deal home, it wound up in a pile of junk mail because William thought it was a mass-produced letter made to look



personal. By God's providence, Judy opened it to find heartfelt thanks and an introduction to the Rex family. In closing, it said, "Please write us. You're the only friends God has sent us."

Two to three months later, a postman knocked on the Rexes' door and surprised them with mail. The Deals' letter was "as cold water to a weary soul" (Proverbs 25:25 NKJV). "We were comforted knowing that someone was there for us," Brian said.

The Rexes began sharing the details of their everyday life with the Deals. Having been disowned by Brian's family because of their faith, he said, "Nobody was there to tell us happy birthday, happy anniversary, or merry Christmas, so we shared everything with them."

Brian saw the new relationship as a gift from God. He likened it to Jesus telling Mary and John from the cross, "Behold your son...Behold your mother" (John 19:26-27 NKJV). So William and Judy became Dad and Mom and Grandpa and Grandma to the Rex family.

"It not only changed our lives, it changed their lives," Brian said referring to the Deals. "We both together share what God has done, so people can see shoeboxes in a different way."

William stressed the importance of the opportunities we have to impact others. "I can't go out like Billy Graham and evangelize the world," he said, "but focus on what you can do—fill a shoebox."



FACILITIES

GRANTING EXCELLENT RESOURCES

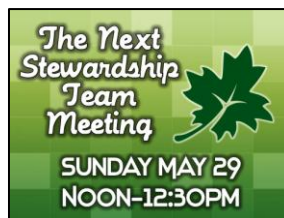


For more information about the Facilities Team please contact either:

Andy Knauff 301-895-3167
Franklin Broadwater 301-895-4355

STEWARDSHIP

GUIDING THE GIFTS



For more information about the Stewardship Team please contact either:

John Carey 301-876-0342
Joe Bender 814-662-4366

HOSPITALITY

GREETING AND GATHERING



MAY 1	Jenny Knauff & Betty Merrill
MAY 8	Ashley Kamp & Sara Preston
MAY 15	Lori Wilt & Misty Rollman
MAY 22	Allison Broadwater & Hyun Joo Moon
MAY 29	Patty Rice & Linda Beal

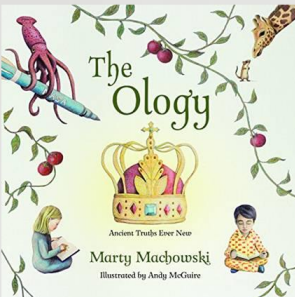
JUNE 5	Dolly Bender & Wilma Hutzel
JUNE 12	Theresa Brenneman & Sue Beachy
JUNE 19	Sherry Carey & Emily Widder
JUNE 26	Patty Rice & Linda Beal

JULY 3	Linda Upole & Rhonda Oates
JULY 10	Shari Ross & Jen Barlow
JULY 17	Barbara Yoder Lillie Walker & Linda Hoover
JULY 24	Helen Bender & Amanda Carey
JULY 31	Theresa Brenneman & Sue Beachy




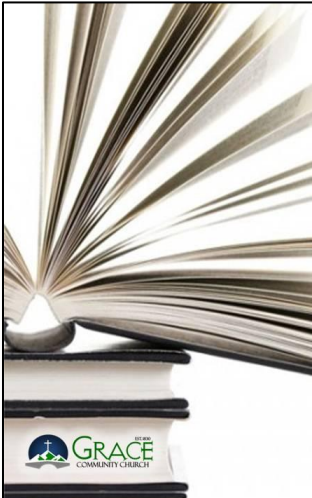
For more information about the Hospitality Team please contact either:

Allison Broadwater 240-362-8074
Wilma Hutzel 301-895-8118



We now have additional copies of "The Ology" ... Available on the Book Wall.

This would make for a great birthday gift to a child this year. Please see George Yoder If you have questions.





THE GRACE BOOK WALL

Resources to help you grow & spread the good news.

BOOKS, BOOKLETS, MUGS, TUMBLERS, HATS, UMBRELLAS AND MORE.

All proceeds benefit missions and the addition of more resources.





PERSECUTION, PERSEVERANCE, AND HOPE

by Nathan Busenitz *from thecripplegate.com*

Recent events suggest that our society is growing increasingly hostile to genuine Christianity. Consequently, more intense forms of persecution may be on the horizon for the American church.

In the face of that reality, believers can be encouraged by reflecting on the faithfulness exhibited by previous generations of Christians, and by resting in the promises of God. Hence the re-posting of today's article...

Fox's Book of Martyrs is a must read for every Christian. Written by John Fox over 350 years ago, it catalogs the lives of hundreds of believers who, throughout church history, were willing to give their lives for the cause of Christ. When it comes to contagious courage, I can think of no greater testimony than reading about those who embraced their Lord to the point of embracing death.

One such account concerns the lives of Jerome Russell and Alexander Kennedy, two English Protestants who took a daring stand for what they believed. Because of their biblically-sound doctrine, the pair was arrested and imprisoned.

Kennedy was only eighteen years old. After some time, the two men were brought before religious officials for questioning. Russell, being older, gave an articulate defense, using the Scriptures to support his belief in salvation through faith alone. Yet, in spite of the evidence, the men's accusers prevailed and Russell and Kennedy were deemed heretics.

In keeping with the jurisprudence of the times, they were condemned to death—their sentence to be carried out the following day. Early the next morning, Russell and Kennedy were led from their prison cells to the place of execution.

They could have denied their Lord, right then and there, and been spared. But when Kennedy, being but a young man, began to display signs of fear, Russell quickly encouraged him to stand firm:

"Brother, fear not; greater is He that is in us, than he that is in the world. The pain that we are to suffer is short, and shall be light; but our joy and consolation shall never have an end. Let us, therefore, strive to enter into our Master and Savior's joy, by the same straight way which He hath taken before us. Death cannot hurt us, for it is already destroyed by Him, for whose sake we are now going to suffer."

In this way, the two men came to boldly face execution without compromise. John Fox finishes the account with this:

"When they arrived at the fatal spot, they both kneeled down and prayed for some time; after which being fastened to the stake, and the fagots [kindling] lighted, they cheerfully resigned their souls into the hands of Him who gave them, in full hopes of an everlasting reward in the heavenly mansions."

How could these men calmly submit to being burned alive? Why did they willingly undergo severe suffering and death? The answer begins with the biblical doctrine of hope. By focusing on God and His unwavering faithfulness, they stood firm as a testimony to the truth. Here are two reasons why:

1. Hope sees death as a beginning, not an end.

For believers death is the beginning of eternity in heaven. Death is not termination but initiation—the start of an existence far better than anything we can imagine.

The apostle Paul knew this to be true. The book of 2 Timothy is the last letter he wrote before his execution—chapter 4 indicates that he realized his death was imminent (see v.6).

As he looked back on his life, he realized that his life was almost over (v.7). Yet, he now looked forward to something far greater: namely, the reward of Jesus Christ and an eternity spent together with Him (v.8).

Paul looked beyond the grave and saw his God. Because Christ had conquered death (1 Corinthians 15:20–28) there was nothing to fear.

It was John Owen, the great Puritan, who wrote on his deathbed: "I am yet in the land of the dying, but I hope soon to be in the land of the living."

Like Paul, he too understood that true life, in its fullest measure, begins where this life ends. In stark contrast, many in the contemporary church live as though this present life is better than the life to come. Tenaciously, they hold on to their short stay on this earth.

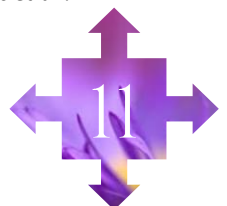
Some follow every health fad, taking whatever supplement will reduce the risk of a heart attack. Others avoid airplanes, fearful that their trip could end in an unexpected dive.

Our quest for longevity has affected our eating habits, our exercise routines, our travel plans, and even the type of sunscreen we buy. While there is nothing inherently sinful in enjoying the earthly life that God has given, Christians sometimes need to be reminded that the next life is far superior. Death is a doorway, not a dead end. And for God's children, death's door opens into heaven.

2. Hope sees the Shepherd through the shadows.

A second reason Christians need not fear death is because our Savior has already conquered death.

(continued on the next page)



PERSECUTION, PERSEVERANCE, AND HOPE

(continued from the previous page)

He is not asking us to go anywhere He has not already been. And, because He arose from the grave victorious (Acts 2:32-33), we can be confident that we also will be resurrected one day (1 Corinthians 15:20).

In Psalm 23:4, the writer says, "Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me." For David, whose life was often in danger, comfort came in looking to his Shepherd, even when thinking about death.

Just over 1,000 years later, an early Christian leader named Ignatius shared David's confident perspective. According to church tradition, Ignatius was arrested by the Roman government and executed because he professed Christ. Shortly before his death, he wrote the church of Rome, saying:

"I care for nothing, of visible or invisible things, so that I may but win Christ. Let fire and the cross, let the companies of wild beasts, let breaking of bones and tearing of limbs, let the grinding of the whole body, and all the malice of the devil, come upon me; be it so, only may I win Christ Jesus."

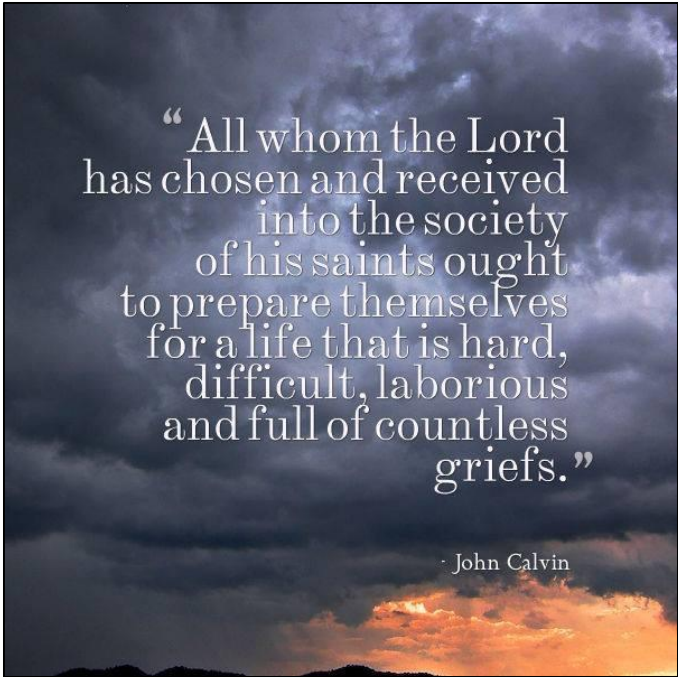
Even in being thrown to hungry animals and torn limb from limb, Ignatius' commitment to his Lord remained firm. He was willing to endure death because of the Master he sought to please, the Master he knew he would soon see face-to-face.

In considering death, these men focused on the One who was waiting to meet them there. They did not fear death, because they rested in the promises of their Savior.

What comes into your mind when you think about death? A biblical perspective thinks first about Christ. And for the soul that loves Jesus, nothing is more exciting than the thought of going to be with Him. We love Him because He first loved us (1 John 4:19), and not even death can separate us from that love (Romans 8:38-39).


Death is the doorway that brings us into the presence of Christ. That is why Paul could triumphantly tell the Philippians, "To live is Christ, and to die is gain." For those who know the Lord Jesus Christ, Paul's words summarize both our purpose in this life and our hope for the next.

Nathan Busenitz is a professor of theology at The Master's Seminary. You can find him on twitter @nbusenitz.



"All whom the Lord
has chosen and received
into the society
of his saints ought
to prepare themselves
for a life that is hard,
difficult, laborious
and full of countless
griefs."

· John Calvin



The ultimate
comfort in our
suffering comes not
from an explanation
of the trial, but the
revelation of God
himself.

C.J. MAHANEY





UPCOMING HYMNS

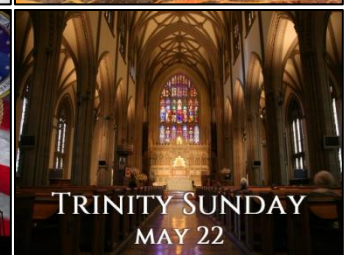
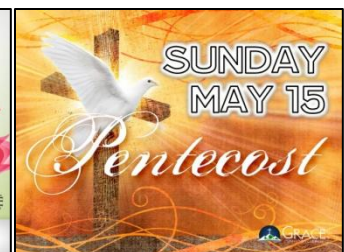
MAY 1	033-All Creatures of Our God and King 307-And Can It Be
MAY 8	054-We Love You and Praise You 453-It Is Well With My Soul
MAY 15	139-Breathe on Me, Breath of God 082-Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing
MAY 22	623-Doxology 003-Crown Him With Many Crowns
MAY 29	178-Thy Word 254-O How He Loves You and Me

UPCOMING RESPONSIVE READINGS

MAY 1	Psalm 67	Helen Bender
MAY 8	Psalm 91:1-7, 14-16	Johnny Carey
MAY 15	Acts 2:1-8, 12-24, 33-38, 41	Sue Beachy
MAY 22	Psalm 119:9-16, 97-104	Joe Bender
MAY 29	Psalm 121	TBA

UPCOMING SERMON TEXTS

MAY 1	Luke 1-24 / "Saving Sinners"
MAY 8	Titus 2 / Mother's Day
MAY 15	Pentecost / Jim Barnes Guest Preaching
MAY 22	Trinity Sunday / Athanasian Creed
MAY 29	Kid Sunday



2/7	49	3/6	52	4/3	40
2/14	SNOW	3/13	63	4/10	51
2/21	50	3/20	60	4/17	56
2/28	47	3/27	83	4/24	63



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Sunday Bible Study | 9:00am
Coffee Break | 10:00am
Sunday Worship | 10:30am

If you would like to be removed from the mailing list for this monthly Newsletter please e-mail:
pastormatt@grantsvillechurch.com

Submissions to be included for future monthly Newsletters are due by the 20th of each month at 2:00pm.

















05MAY¹⁶



EPHESIANS 2:4-5 ^{ESV}

BUT GOD, BEING RICH IN MERCY, BECAUSE OF THE GREAT LOVE WITH WHICH HE LOVED US, EVEN WHEN WE WERE DEAD IN OUR TRESPASSES, MADE US ALIVE TOGETHER WITH CHRIST—
BY GRACE YOU HAVE BEEN SAVED

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1 [18] Psalm 67 Bible Study 9:00am Worship 10:30am Health Ministry noon STEWARDSHIP TEAM MTG. NOON	2	3  NATIONAL TEACHERS DAY	4	5  ASCENSION DAY NATIONAL DAY OF PRAYER Prayer Service 7pm VBS TEAM MTG. 8PM	6  NATIONAL NURSES DAY	7  NATIONAL TOURISM DAY
8 [19] Psalm 91  MOTHER'S DAY V-E DAY 1945 Bible Study 9:00am Worship 10:30am	9	10	11  Happy Anniversary! Dave & Kris Butler ELDERS 7:00PM	12	13	14 OCC YARD SALE
15 [20] Acts 2/Jim Barnes Nat Min EA  PENTECOST Bible Study 9:00am Worship 10:30am FAMILY GATHERING NOON JOINT COUNCIL MTG. 1PM	16	17	18	19	20  Happy Birthday! Emma Rollman	21  ARMED FORCES DAY
22 [21] Psalm 119  TRINITY SUNDAY Bible Study 9:00am Worship & Communion 10:30am MEMBERSHIP CLASS NOON Happy Birthday! Layla Rollman	23	24  Happy Birthday! Andy Knauff	25 ELDERS 7:00PM	26  Happy Birthday! Misty Rollman	27	28  Happy Birthday! George Yoder
29 [22] Psalm 121 KID SUNDAY Bible Study 9:00am Worship 10:30am HOSPITALITY TEAM MTG. NOON STEWARDSHIP TEAM MTG. NOON	30  MEMORIAL DAY <i>No School</i>	31	6/1 Last Day of School 2hr. Early Dismissal	6/2	6/3	6/4