

The *Celebration!* Connection

Celebration Lutheran Church

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From the Pastor

Two terminally ill men shared a hospital room. Over time, they became close friends. Everyday they spoke for hours on end about their lives. They talked about their families, their children, their vacations, their high times and low times, their favorite times and their times of service in the military.

One man's illness forced him to lie on his back all the time. His name was George. The other man, named Sam, whose bed was near the window in the room, was allowed to sit up each day to take his medication. Every day, when he took his medication, he looked out the window and described what he saw to his roommate.

He described a grand park, full of trees and pathways. People walking here and there and around the large pond at the center of the park. Great old oak trees rose from the landscape and towered over the other trees and shrubbery. Just beyond the pond the foothills of the mountains etched across the horizon.

"Wonderful!" said George, as he imagined the awe-inspiring view.

Every day, Sam described what he saw in great detail and George longed for this daily hour to arrive. One day, Sam described a small parade passing through the park. "I see families waking together and laughing. And, look, here come a band marching through the park with floats and clowns and all kinds of merriment trailing behind it."

Though George couldn't hear the parade, he could see it in his mind's eye. What a joy, he thought to himself.

Another time, Sam described a young couple reclining on a blanket near the pond. The young man played the guitar and sang, then stopped, leaned in, and kissed the young woman. Though neither Sam nor George could hear the serenade, they spoke about the moment in hushed excitement that night before they fell asleep.

One morning, when the nurse came in to give Sam his medicine, she found him lying lifeless in his bed. He had died in the night. She walked over to George who was still sleeping, woke him gently, and told him about his friend. After a few moments of shared grief, the nurse called for the attendants to remove Sam's body.

For two days, George didn't eat out for the weight of his sorrow. On the third day, the nurse visited him with a light lunch and urged him to eat. George obliged, and as he took a sip of his coffee, he asked the nurse if she would move his bed next to the window. She did so and after straightening his things she left the room. Though his heart was heavy, George wanted to catch a glimpse of the park that Sam had described to him every day.

He knew he would have to endure severe pain, but he had to prop himself up.... he HAD to see.

After several pain-filled moments, struggling to raise his body high enough to see out the window, George was able to strain his neck and peer outside.

To his utter shock the window faced a brick wall.

Confused, George called for the nurse. When he arrived, he explained to her how every day, when Sam sat up to take his medication, he described the beautiful park and everything that was happening inside of it. How they had spoken for hours on end about what lay beyond the window – remembering their lives before their illnesses. How those short moments had awakened hope in him once again.

“What compelled Sam to describe such beauty and joy to me every day?” George asked the nurse. “Why would he do such a thing?”

“I don't know, George,” the nurse said with emotion filling her throat. “Sam was blind.”

This story is about beauty, because when we strip life down to the core, we are left with those things that matter most. Beauty gives us the power to inspire. Beauty gives up the power to sustain life – maybe even save it. Beauty goes beyond the terrible circumstances of life and offers hope.

Worshipping together as a community, singing the hymns of our youth, hearing the old stories that we grew up hearing in Sunday School, that brings joy, comfort and yes, beauty into our lives and the lives of those around us.

Maybe you feel that Sunday is your only day off and that you don't need to be in church. Well, I'd like you to consider that maybe, just maybe, you need to be there for someone else. Maybe, you feel like you're not “being fed” as you'd like in church. Well, maybe, just maybe your presence is just the thing to feed others.

Be Sam to everyone in your life. Envision beauty and joy every day – even if it seems like all you're looking at is a brick wall.

See all of you in church – it's a beautiful thing!

Pastor Fogle

The story is from the book “The Beauty Chasers” by Timothy Willard, Zondervan Publishing, copyright 2022





September Ministry of the Month

Samaritas Gift Cards For Christmas

As we have done for a number of years now, we're asking the congregation to provide gift cards for the refugee children being fostered through Samaritas.

Why now, instead of during the month of December? For the simple reason that in December there will be multiple support opportunities for you, and, hopefully, by making this ask of you now, it will be a bit less stressful on your pocketbooks!

So, while you're shopping at your local Meijer's, Target, or Walmart, would you please pick up a \$25 gift card for these young people so that they can receive a Christmas toy or two that they may not normally be able to get?

Your donations can be placed in the box located between the chairs in the welcome area (as of September 1st). Or, if you prefer, you could just slip \$25 cash into the box and I will purchase the gift cards for you.

If you have any questions, please see me.

Thank you for your support of this ministry!

Pastor Fogle

OOPS!

We recently discovered that the Christmas gift meant for our Treasurer, Mary Valente, had been misplaced and was never given to her at that time. We rectified that oversight and the following is a thank you card to the congregation.

August 10, 2024

Dear Friends,

Hallmark and the shopping channels offer "Christmas in July" entertainment and shopping. One Wednesday last month when I arrived to work in the Finance Office, I had a Christmas card waiting. What a surprise! Thank you for your kindness and generosity. It is my pleasure and also a blessing to serve this congregation. May each of you be blessed for your welcome and generosity.

Sincerely,

Mary Valente



Good News in the Garden

Team member, Diane Yagerlener donated her wining of a \$500 English Gardens garden design for the benefit of Celebration. Keep watching for changes to be made in the front near the parking lot. Brandon, the designer will have the layout plan for the team to execute very soon.



Adult Forum to Resume

We'll be meeting as usual by Zoom on Wednesday evenings. Jane and I would love to have some new folks join the weekly conversations we have while studying the Bible. This time we'll be studying the book of James using a study guide by Margaret Feinberg. Please contact Jane Alder or George Evalt if you have any questions or wish to join us.

Look for dates and updates in the weekly Sunday newsletters.

George Evalt

Kits for Kids

By the time you read this the 500 school kits will have been built and delivered to Hamilton school in time for the first day of school on August 27. Thanks for the purchases you made and the help you gave in the building and delivery of the kits to Hamilton.



Live Streaming Sponsors for September

September's live streaming are being sponsored by:

September 1: Steve and Andrea Kolhoff

As of this writing, the remaining Sundays in September are still available for sponsorship .

A Note of Thanks!

Thanks to member Diane Yagerlener, a retired dietician, for her educational presentation at the WELCA annual summer retreat. She had so much good information for us, that we can't remember it all. And some of the good information hasn't been shared yet, so we are asking her to return to give us a review and to present the information she didn't have time to present.

We will be sure to let you all know when it will take place hoping that you will be able to also gain some of this valuable information.



"Finding Your Roots"

Right here at
Celebration!

You may be surprised to learn that two of our member have discovered that they have a common ancestor - They are *cousins!*

This discovery was made during coffee hour when Ed Klosterhaus and Steve Prinz were having a social conversation. How about that?



You May Provide the Flowers on Sunday

Please sign up to sponsor a vase of flowers for the altar. The cost is now \$25 each. We can have up to two vases each week. These vases are sponsored memory or celebration of a person or event.

September 1

Vase 1: Trudy Buelow

Vase 2: Available for Sponsorship

September 8

Vase 1: Tim and Debby Hoepner in celebration of Reagan Troncoso's birthday

Vase 2: Mike and Linda Bierbaum in celebration of their anniversary

Still Available

September 15

September 22

September 29

Food Panty

We are joining the *First United Methodist Church Food Pantry* in Garden City with our food item donations. This begins immediately, so please bring in your donations as soon as possible. If you would like to make a monetary donation, please make checks out to *First United Methodist Church* and write "Food Pantry" on the memo line.

We Are Praying FOR YOU!

Every Sunday, we lift up in prayer the members of this congregation on a rotating basis. This month we will be lifting up:

September 1

Trudy Buelow

Jon and Karen Call

Catherine Carter

Robert and Janet Clisch

September 8

Beth and Tom Codd

Rono and Margi Danakili

Judy Dauss

Matt, Adrienne, Reagan, and Nolan Dent

September 15

Brian and Sandi Doyle

Gregg and Diane Droste

Bill and Patty Erwin

George and Sally Evalt

September 22

Dave, Cheryl, Ashley, and Amber Evancho

Gary and Linda Evanko

Jon, Gwen, Elizabeth, Sara Fair

Gary and Lori Fernyhough

September 29

Laurel Fick

Patti Fitzer

Larry and Marge Flores

Pastor Jim and Heather Fogle





WOMENS MONTHLY BIBLE STUDY

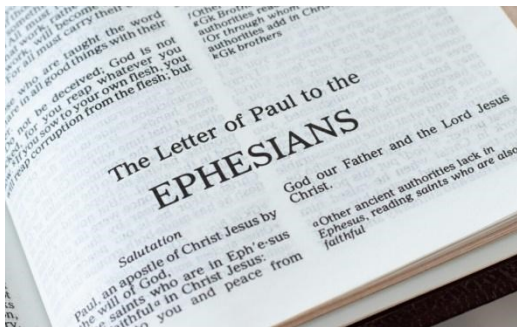
In September, we are starting a new three-part Bible study entitled **Receiving grace: A study of Ephesians.**

What is grace? In the gospels, Jesus never offers a definition or even uses the word. It is Paul who brings the term "grace" into Christian life and thought. It appears most often in his letter to the Romans (18 times), but he never defines it or tells us what he believes it means.

"Grace" appears 12 times in the letter to the Ephesians--the second most often of any epistle. We are going to study Ephesians to try to wrap our heads around what grace means to Paul, and how we might receive grace as God's gift in our daily lives.

Session one: Is grace real? We often focus on how we fall short and deserve God's judgment. What if, instead, we remember God's continual gift of grace? God invites us to lead lives of love and wholeness. What is grace, exactly?

The women's Bible study group will meet on **Wednesday, September 18 at 1:00 pm.** All women are invited to join in the fellowship and this interesting conversation on grace.



October 12 at 5:00 – 8:00 pm

Bratwurst and Knockwurst
Roasted Chicken
Sauerkraut
German Potato Salad
German Chocolate Cake
Beverages (including beer)

Music

Adults: \$15.00
Children 6 and over \$6.00
Children 5 and under – free

Tickets will be available after worship services later in September.



Days for Girls

Please continue to support Days for Girls by donating the following items for the kits:

- 100% cotton flannel and quilting fabric
- Girls underwear, brief style only, 100% cotton (Sizes 8, 10, 12 or 14)
- Travel size bars of soap (like motels use)

Please place donated items in the basket under the mailboxes.

September Birthdays

- 2 Diane Droste
Marge Ross
- 7 Sally Evalt
- 10 Stewart Israel
- 12 Reagan Troncoso
- 15 Kim Shollack
Anna Livingston
- 16 Andrew Brown
- 18 Ruth Klosterhaus
- 20 Marion Jones
- 21 S. Bud Johnson
Gail Christophersen
- 27 Andrea Kolhoff



Parable of the pufflings

As summer ends on a remote island off Iceland, parent puffins — black and white seabirds with rainbow beaks — stop bringing fish to their chicks. These “pufflings,” whose first few weeks were lived in burrows in cliffs, now must launch into a wind current to glide out over the sea and find their own food. Some babies, however, mistake a lit-up house or gas station for moonlight on the water and, as locals say, “fall out of the sky.” Because pufflings can’t yet take off from land and fly, if left alone they starve.

So for generations, during “puffling season” people on this island have stayed up late to rescue baby birds. On his *Animal* podcast, reporter Sam Anderson tells how, with an islander’s help, he picks up a puffling one night, placing it in a box for morning release over the ocean. As the frightened, confused bird squeals and scratches to get free, Anderson supposes it thinks this is the worst night of its life. In fact, it is the best: It’s being saved.

We humans often get confused, pulled in wrong directions. We’re misled and land in trouble from which we cannot save ourselves. Scared and confused, we believe we’re irredeemably trapped in the worst of circumstances. We can’t perceive that, even now, we are being protected and rescued, that God is working to give back to us the fullness of life we cannot attain for ourselves.

Hang on, beloved one. Though you can’t sense it at this moment, you are held in God’s care, soon to be lifted on the wind of the Holy Spirit, who will carry you into better days.

September Anniversaries

- 3 Emily and Jeff
Yandura
- 8 Mike and Linda Bierbaum
Tim and Amy Kramer
- 23 Greg and Gloria Tapper
- 27 Tim and Debby Hoepner
- 30 Rick and Jodi Reed



September Daily Devotionals

Sunday, September 1
Deuteronomy 4:1-2, 6-9
Psalm 15
James 1:17-27
Mark 7:1-8, 14-15, 21-23

Monday, September 2
Psalm 106:1-6, 13-23, 47-48
Deuteronomy 4:9-14
1 Timothy 4:6-16

Tuesday, September 3
Psalm 106:1-6, 13-23, 47-48
Deuteronomy 4:15-20
1 Peter 2:19-25

Wednesday, September 4
Psalm 106:1-6, 13-23, 47-48
Deuteronomy 4:21-40
Mark 7:9-23

Thursday, September 5
Psalm 146
Isaiah 30:27-33
Romans 2:1-11

Friday, September 6
Psalm 146
Isaiah 32:1-8
Romans 2:12-16

Saturday, September 7
Psalm 146
Isaiah 33:1-9
Matthew 15:21-31

Sunday, September 8
Isaiah 35:4-7a
Psalm 146
James 2:1-10 [11-13] 14-17
Mark 7:24-37

Monday, September 9
Isaiah 38:10-20
Joshua 6:1-21
Hebrews 11:29—12:2

Wednesday, September 11
Isaiah 38:10-20
Judges 15:9-20
Matthew 17:14-21

Thursday, September 12
Psalm 116:1-9
Joshua 2:1-14
Hebrews 11:17-22

Friday, September 11
Psalm 116:1-9
Joshua 2:15-24
James 2:17-26

Saturday, September 12
Psalm 116:1-9
Joshua 6:22-27
Matthew 21:23-32

Sunday, September 15
Isaiah 50:4-9a
Psalm 116:1-9
James 3:1-12
Mark 8:27-38

Monday, September 16
Psalm 119:169-176
1 Kings 13:1-10
Romans 3:9-20

Tuesday, September 17
Psalm 119:169-176
1 Kings 13:11-25
Colossians 3:1-11

Wednesday, September 18
Psalm 119:169-176
Isaiah 10:12-20
John 7:25-36

Thursday, September 19
Psalm 54
Judges 6:1-10
1 Corinthians 2:1-5

Saturday, September 21
Psalm 54
2 Kings 17:5-18
Matthew 23:29-39

Sunday, September 22
Jeremiah 11:18-20 or
Wisdom 1:16—2:1, 12-22
Psalm 54
James 3:13—4:3, 7-8a
Mark 9:30-37

Monday, September 23
Psalm 139:1-18
2 Kings 5:1-14
James 4:8-17

Tuesday, September 24
Psalm 139:1-18
2 Kings 11:21—12:16
James 5:1-6

Wednesday, September 25
Psalm 139:1-18
Jeremiah 1:4-10
John 8:21-38

Thursday, September 26
Psalm 19:7-14
Exodus 18:13-27
Acts 4:13-31

Friday, September 27
Psalm 19:7-14
Deuteronomy 1:1-18
Acts 12:20-25

Saturday, September 28
Psalm 19:7-14
Deuteronomy 27:1-10
Matthew 5:13-20

Sunday, September 29
Numbers 11:4-6, 10-16, 24-29
Psalm 19:7-14
James 5:13-20