



# Grace and Peace

A Newsletter from Grace Methodist Church (*The Miracle Church*)  
5030 S. Memorial Drive, Homosassa, FL 34446 Phone:  
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[Grace Methodist Church where people gather to celebrate, serve, and grow in Christ.]

*Rejoice*  
IN THE *Lord* ALWAYS.  
I WILL SAY IT AGAIN:  
*Rejoice!*  
-PHILIPPIANS 4:4

## In This Issue

Message from Pastor Kip  
The Ways of the Kingdom, Jan Wise  
Stephen Ministry Moment  
Empathy, Karen Kline  
True Story, Karen Kline  
Mission Moment  
Grace Place: News from the Ladies of Grace  
Rummage Sale News  
Bible Studies, Prayer Groups & Other Meetings  
Special Events

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## MESSAGE FROM PASTOR KIP

The air was cool on the Withlacoochee Trail because it was well shaded. Before me lay a downhill run that seemed to run on forever! My bike started its downhill descent. I could feel the speed climbing upwards as quickly as the bike jetted downward. Half down the descent I could see it clearly, a very small flat section of the Trail. Just beyond this small section came the sudden upward turning of the Trail. When checking my Cycling App at the end of the ride, it would reveal my fastest speed as 21.8 mph! This speed was no doubt recorded during my downward flight. This speed on a three-wheel Catrike, was very exciting! Every little bump, twig, acorn or cluster of leaves sent a shuddering vibration through the rigid trike frame encouraging me to grip the hand controllers tighter than before. Yet this didn't last long. Immediately after entering the bottom flat section, the uphill climb started. Within seconds, the bike began to slow down, and I had to start downshifting into lower gears. The downshifting generated a faster pedal speed, with the same amount of leg energy necessary to maintain the climb. The bike continued to slow, and I continued to lower the gears and pedal faster to keep a decent pace. In this section of the Trail, between Floral City

and the Townsend State Park in Hernando County, both the inclining and the descending sections are gentle, yet extremely long. Thus, the opportunity for high speed and the struggle back up the hill. As I ride this route, it is on the incline, pedaling furiously to keep up some type of reasonable speed, I am reminded of how this experience is so much like life itself. Life is filled with constant uphill climbs and downhill runs. In the ups and downs of life we are facing challenges, fears, anxiety and other taxing emotions. On the downhill runs, life is great! Not a care in the world! What could possibly go wrong? Hebrews 2:18 NLT offers us the wonderful assurance of Jesus. "Since he (Jesus) himself has gone through suffering and testing, he is able to help us when we are being tested." If anyone knows about the "uphill climbs", it is Jesus. If I recall, it seems he hauled a cross on a severe "uphill" journey, just for you and I. John 16:33 NIV - "I have told you these things (his impending death and resurrection) so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world." Troubles are the makings of that long arduous climb uphill. Faith in His overcoming the world fuels the downhill runs. It is in that small flat section between the ups and downs where we find that small space of normalcy. This is where life is good, and we are at peace. Where life is neither the racing excitement of the downhill run nor the dramatic unknown of the uphill climbs. This is where I seek to find the richness of life in Christ - in the peacefulness of the flats! I hope you do as well! Blessings, Pastor Kip

## THE WAYS OF THE KINGDOM

Jan Wise

Have you ever gotten caught in a "what does this have to do with the Kingdom" situation?

I twisted the cover on the jar with all my "old lady" might, and the cover refused to move. In my head I started thinking, "What's wrong with these manufacturers! Don't they know that elderly people don't have the strength to open these "safety-sealed" jars? As my tongue prepared to voice my thoughts, I hesitated. This thought came to mind: "Walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh". Even with stubborn jar covers? Besides, I only intended to speak the truth about those inconsiderate manufacturers. "You were about to complain," came that still, small voice of the Holy Spirit's warning. "You mean I can't even voice a legitimate complaint?" my common-sense mind argued. So, I looked in my Bible and found Galatians 5:16-7. "So, I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. For the flesh desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the flesh. They are in conflict with each other, so that you are not to do whatever you want".

I do admit I rather enjoy complaining, especially about things that aren't right or don't suit my idea of the way people or things should be. But a jar cover and in the privacy of my own home where no one would hear me .... But God was listening, or he wouldn't be talking to me like this.

The situation reminded me of the time I had an upset with the hangers in my clothes closet, away from everybody's view or hearing. Tangled hangers forced me (they really did) to lose my temper, and I threw them in a pile on the floor. As I looked at the twisted pile, I thought (didn't even say it aloud), "Sure glad my Bible study class didn't see that"! In my head, I heard a small, kind voice. "But I did. Remember, I never leave you nor forsake you". I was ashamed, embarrassed and repentant then, as I was now, looking at the resistant jar lid.

It's hard for me to stop complaining. It's a very bad habit that draws me away from walking in the Spirit, especially if I get in with a group who seem to thrive on complaining. These verses help me, "Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you". (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18) If I can learn to rejoice, pray continually and give thanks in ALL circumstances, complaining will have to go. I can learn, and so can you, because what the Word of God commands, the Spirit will enable you to do!

## STEPHEN MINISTRY MOMENT

Several times a year we include an article in the Newsletter to show you how a Stephen Minister can walk beside you. This time we would like you to hear from some of the care receivers who have had a Stephen Minister.

"The care and support I received from my Stephen Minister was every bit as important to my recovery as the excellent medical care I received from the doctors and nurses. This is truly a life-giving ministry." **Tom**

"I've heard the phrase 'the peace of God that passes all understanding' many times in church. My Stephen Minister has helped me experience that peace in a very real, very heartfelt way." **Anne**

"Within five minutes of meeting my Stephen Minister, I knew she was right for me. She listens and cares, never judging or criticizing me. She has shown me God's unconditional love, something I had never fully experienced before." **Sarah**

"Life is chaotic right now and I don't know much for certain. But I do know that my Stephen Minister is there for me and praying for me. I've come to realize that (even though I don't always feel it) God is there too and really is a work in my life." **Earl**

"My Stephen Minister listens—*really* listens. I never realized how helpful and healing such a simple act can be." **Michelle**

"My Stephen Minister was there during the darkest of times—patiently listening and trying to understand my pain. Looking back, I can clearly see how my Stephen Minister kept me connected to God when I was falling away." **Nathan**

If you or someone you know would benefit from a caring, one on one, CONFIDENTIAL relationship with a Stephen Minister. Call Karen Kline or Carol MacKenzie....

## EMPATHY

Karen Kline

OK, you just read about a world disaster. You feel bad, and maybe you'll pray for those affected or send a check to a relief fund. Is this empathy? No. This reaction would be defined

as sympathy. A definition of sympathy being: "Concern for someone else without becoming involved in their life". Having sympathy in situations like this is appropriate.

You just heard that your neighbor found her husband dead in the driveway after doing a lot of yard work. You rush to her crying and tell her you know how she feels, and that you just don't know how you are going to survive the loss of your friend. Is this empathy? No. This type of reaction is called "overidentification" and is defined as taking over another person's feelings where you are just as overwhelmed as the person. This type of reaction benefits no one.

So then, what is empathy and why are we seeing this term used more frequently, and what does it mean for all of us? The Merriam Webster definition is: "The ability to understand and share the feelings of another, being aware of, being sensitive to and vicariously experiencing the feelings of another". Another definition is the one taught in Stephen Ministry: "Feeling another person's feelings as if they were your own without actually taking them on yourself". Being empathetic has many benefits to both you and the person you are with. The person hurting feels understood, valued, believed, encouraged, accepted, cared for and not alone. For you, the person empathizing, you benefit by having deeper relationships, personal growth, more confidence, less pressure and great joy.

Being a nurse, Stephen Minister, Stephen Leader and Facilitator of Memory Lane I have seen my own benefits of empathy expand in my life. Pray that this gives you thoughts for prayer and how your life could benefit by expanding your own capacity for empathy.

## **TRUE STORY**

Karen Kline

While we were at our daughter's home this summer my daughter and I were getting ready to head out to do some shopping on a Saturday morning when my daughter said "Mom I know we are running a few errands, but please don't forget to remind me that I have to clean the church today". How familiar is that statement? This was for the church we belonged to in New York that had people sign up for monthly cleaning commitments. During our month to clean, how many times did Neil, and I forget and then remembered at seven on a Saturday night! How thankful am I for all of you that sign up as teams to clean our church and never forget!

## **MISSION MOMENT**

Samaritan's Purse is one of the amazing missions we support here at Grace Methodist Church. In a recent article they highlighted the work they have been doing in the Sudan over the past 30 years. This work includes: providing food, water, medicine, and other relief; establishing wells and water points to provide villages with access to clean drinking water; distributing emergency food and cooking supplies; helping care for victims of trauma; providing literacy training at local churches; helping families improve their futures through livelihoods training, and conducting Biblical leadership training at the local and national levels. Franklin Graham has made many trips to Sudan and South Sudan over the years as victims of war and disasters

are being helped. Through their Livelihoods Program Samaritan's Purse has provided goats. These goats are being raised and bred by the people to help provide an income by selling their milk. It is quite obvious that Samaritan's Purse is making a difference in Sudan. Thank you for supporting this wonderful organization.

## **GRACE PLACE: NEWS FROM THE LADIES OF GRACE (L.O.G)**

**Sue Pagano**

Our pastors' messages always inspire. On August 25, the words of Psalm 100 reflected the joy that the Ladies of Grace are feeling as we prepare to host two wonderful events in September. We hope that as you attend these programs, you also will feel unbounding joy in Christian life.

**Holiday plans** are the focus of the next Ladies of Grace meeting on Sunday, September 22, following the service. Meetings are open to all interested women.

**Comfort & Care Meals** is adding **Care & Greet Treats** for visitors to our church.

**Craft & Chats** welcomes those who want to work on their individual projects while visiting with friends. They are also looking for ideas for group projects as the holidays approach.

### **Eirinn Abu Concert on September 8**

The September 8 concert by gifted musician Eirinn Abu is almost here! He will be performing in the sanctuary at 3pm. Doors open at 2:30pm. Copies of his albums, CDs and books will be on sale. Cookies and water will be available. Dress is casual.

Eirinn will be at the 10am service to say hello and give church members a preview of his music. He has been called the instrumental version of Josh Groban or Andrea Bocelli. He has collaborated with Dolly Parton on her recording of "I Will Always Love You", the Miami Sound Machine and toured with Lee Greenwood. Since 2010, he has recorded CDs of pop and Christian hits while leading Music for Life Ministries with his wife Brandy. He is a pastor, a melting pot of scriptural lessons with worldly life, as well as a Grammy member.

Thanks to sound tech Terry Cornelius and choir director Katherine Cornelius for handling setup and various musical details for the performance. Thanks, as well, to the Ladies of Grace for their many hours of ticket sales and provision of refreshments.

### **Ladies Retreat on Spiritual Gifts**

Exciting plans for the one-day retreat on "**Spiritual Gifts**" are in the works. The goal of the retreat is to break away from routine, relax, refresh and focus on our relationship with God for this full day. The program is designed to deepen understanding of the gifts that we each have received from God and how they can be used in our lives. The topic was chosen to highlight our group's signature scripture which is 1 Peter 4:10: "Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms". One of our mission goals is to provide spiritual growth opportunities for women of our church. It will be a wonderful event filled with fellowship, food and fun. Every registrant will receive a special gift bag, a gift book and some surprises. Tickets are still on sale during the fellowship hour. For confidential financial assistance, see Judy Chambliss or Sue Pagano.



## **Spiritual Gifts Ladies Retreat**

**Saturday, Sept. 14, 2024    Grace Methodist Church of Homosassa    9am-4pm**

\$20 fee includes welcome bag, event materials, lunch, snack breaks, crafts & more

Tickets are on sale before church each Sunday.

### **Speakers**

**Nancy Kennedy**                      **“How God Uses Our Brokenness for Good”**    Religion  
writer, Citrus County Chronicle, Grace Notes/ Devotions

**Elizabeth Cryst**                      **“Living as a Christian Woman in Today’s World”**    GMC  
leader and speaker



### **Comfort & Care Meals Adds Care & Greet Treats**

Contact June Kirschbaum if you know of someone who needs a meal or a cookie bag from Grace Methodist Church. Cookie bags will be offered to visitors, beginning in October. However, they might also be given to a member who needs a boost. June can be reached in these ways: (352)382-0424 or [junekirsch13@gmail.com](mailto:junekirsch13@gmail.com).

### **Crafts & Chats**

Thanks to the crafters who made wonderful bookmarks for our hymnals. They meet on the second Tuesday monthly at 10am-Noon. Currently, they are bringing their own projects to work on. If you have an idea for another group project, contact Diane Monce: (352)621-4941 or [dmonce414@gmail.com](mailto:dmonce414@gmail.com).

### **Welcome Program Expands Coverage and Invites New Members**

The Ladies of Grace are expanding the Welcome Program by manning (or “ladying”) an additional Welcome Station where visitors can fill out an information form and pick up a welcome packet. This will provide a relaxed place to discuss questions and gather data.

Just like the Welcome Table team, the Welcome Station team will take turns as hostesses on a rotating schedule. Depending on the number of volunteers, each person’s turn would come up once every month or two. The station would be open before each church service, 9:00-10:00am and after church from 11:00-11:15pm. If you are interested, contact Sue Pagano: (813-785-4166) or [paganoss@aol.com](mailto:paganoss@aol.com).

## ***RUMMAGE SALE NEWS!***

***Saturday, September 7<sup>th</sup> – DONATION DAY***  
***9:00 to noon – Fellowship Hall – in boxes if possible***

***NEEDED: people to unpack, sort and price items, and men w/cars to help move completed boxes to the garage***

***“EARLY BIRD SHOPPING” on donation days allowed! Bring your money – settle up with Sharon Miller***

\*\*\*\*\* **BAKE** \*\*\*\*\*

***SALE DONATIONS!***

***Thursday, October 24<sup>th</sup> 10:00 to noon – Fellowship Hall  
see Marie Witham/Dianne Swick with questions***

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***MAN CAVE ASSISTANCE!***

***Saturday, September 7<sup>th</sup> – 9:00 – noon -Church Garage  
sort and price incoming items see Andy Frederick –  
352-212-5272***

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**BIBLE STUDIES, PRAYER GROUPS & OTHER MEETINGS**

- MON 1:00 pm Memory Lane Support Group & Respite
- TUES 9:00 am Weight Accountability Group (men & women)
- WED 7:00 am Men's Prayer Group & Breakfast
- WED 5:00 pm Choir Practice (newcomers are welcome) led by Katherine Cornellius
- THR 10:00 am S.O.A.P. Bible Study led by Jan Wise
- THR 11:30 am Women's Lunch Bunch Bible Study led by Sharon Miller
- FRI 10:00 am Wise Bible Study led by Jan Wise  
(10-11 Prayer concerns, joys, & fellowship, 11-12 Bible Study)
- FRI 10:15 am Bible study led by Pastor Farmer, Meadowcrest Clubhouse

**SPECIAL EVENTS**

- Sept 7, 9 – noon Rummage Sale Donations & Man Cave Assistance
- Sept 8, 3 p.m. Elrinn Abu Concert
- Sept 11, 9 a.m. Grace Administrative Board Meeting
- Sept 14, 9 a.m.-4 p.m. First Annual Ladies' Retreat sponsored by Ladies of Grace (L.O.G.)
- Sept 29 Blood Drive
- Oct 3, 10 a.m. - noon Bake Sale Donations
- Oct 5, 9 – noon Rummage Sale Donations (Last Day to Donate)
- Oct 24, 10 - noon Bake Sale Donations
- Oct 25 – 26 Grace Rummage Sale
- Dec 8 Blood Drive

*We all have moments in which God has been evident in our lives.  
We would love to hear about them.  
Please consider submitting your testimony for the next newsletter.*

**Attention.....Please send articles for the October newsletter to Karen Stone at karen.stone3@yahoo.com by the 25<sup>th</sup> of September. Thank you for your contributions.**

Grace Methodist Church is a member of the



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METHODIST CHURCH