

Messenger



A reflection for this
year month of
January, 2024

A Letter From The Pastor

Tom Brodbeck

Each year I choose a verse for my personal meditation theme for the new year. Perhaps you do the same. If not, please consider adopting that idea for yourself.

My verse (actually 1½ verses) for 2024 really spoke to me as I led the fall study of the book of Hebrews. It isn't a new verse for me, but it really struck me in a new way:

Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. (Hebrews 12:1-2a)

Two thoughts really resonate. The first is the call to fix our eyes on Jesus. It is so easy to be distracted by all that goes on around us. Like Peter walking on the water, as long as our eyes are on Him, we are fine.

The second great thought is that "great cloud of witnesses" – those saints who have run the race before us and now cheer us on to the finish line. I want to spend time reflecting on their encouragement and example.

This will be an amazing year. Among many milestones, we as a congregation will celebrate 25 years in this facility at 1801 St. Paris Pike. I was not a part of that transition. Many of you were. But together we are a part of this leg of the race. 25 years and counting. Let's keep running for many, many more!

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January Outreach Corner



Outreach Breakfast Break: Sunday, January 7 at 9:15am, during the Sunday school hour Nathan Boggs from Laurel Mission will be here to present to us about his work in SE Kentucky and how you can help support all that they are doing for their local community. Nathan will also deliver the message during service that day and we hope you can be here and meet this wonderful man of God and gain a better understanding of his servant heart and why we enjoy supporting Laurel Mission.

Habitat for Humanity Annual Home for Holidays: During the month of January, we will be collecting our spare change to support the Habitat for Humanity's annual Home for the Holidays campaign. Please pick up a blue bank, fill it with your spare change, and return to Grace by Sunday, February 4, 2024. See Sandy Thompson for more information.



Reading the New Testament in 2024

“Because we believe that the single best way for a person to grow in their faith is the daily reading of Scripture, we want to see every person associated with this congregation read the entire New Testament in 2024,” says Pastor Tom Brodbeck as he announced an idea conceived by the Grace Culture Crew (our ministry team focused on the culture of discipleship in our church).

We will follow a specific reading guide known as the “5X5X5” model. This approach was created by The Navigators, an international disciple-making ministry, and has been recommended to our congregation for about 10 years. It consists of a daily reading for Monday-Friday each week, allowing two days of reflection on the weekend. Since there are 260 chapters in the New Testament, this is a very achievable goal for all of us.

But our reading challenge doesn't stop there! Each week as you come to worship, you are invited to contribute a penny for each chapter you read. Did you read all five chapters? Then put five pennies into the specially designated bank in the narthex. If you read all 260 chapters, it will amount to a \$2.60 contribution.

Those pennies will be gathered and donated to Springfield City Youth Mission, a local Christian nonprofit, and used to purchase Bibles for their summer reading program Camp Boost. We have already contacted the leaders of this ministry and pledged we will purchase all the Bibles they need for the summer – a commitment of about \$1600.

So by reading the Word of God for yourself, you will also be helping to place the Word of God into the hands of elementary-aged school children in our community. Let's encourage each other to read and grow in G.R.A.C.E.

From the Desk of the Executive Director:

Greetings and Happy New Year everyone! I pray you had a wonderful Christmas season. As we begin this new year, I will have completed my first full year as your Executive Director. I must tell you that I have learned many new things and have truly enjoyed using my gifts and talents to help serve my congregation and most importantly help our Pastor balance the workload. We are truly blessed with our Grace staff, which I think most of you already know.

I have some exciting news to share. I have been officially accepted to the Trinity School for Ministry to begin the Lutheran Diaconate Diploma. It is a two-year online program and upon completion I will be ordained as an NALC Deacon. I will be an extension of our bishop, however, it is not an ordination of sacrament, so I will not be performing communion, baptisms, or weddings but will be better equipped to assist our Pastor in more ways than I do now. I still need to be approved through the candidacy process in March of 2024 and if that goes well, will begin classes in August.

I look forward to seeing what new challenges and work the Lord has in store for me and for our church as we navigate through 2024, Pastor Tom's sabbatical, the 25th anniversary in this building, and many new things on the horizon.

Sandy Thompson

Adult Sunday School



Starting Sunday, January 14, the Adult Sunday School class will study the life of Joseph, the Old Testament patriarch and owner of the coat-of-many-colors. We will use one of the Right Now Media resources to guide our learning. Titled "When Life is a Rollercoaster," this six-part series will continue through February 18.

In it, Andrew Ollerton peels back the layers of Joseph's astonishing life as told in Genesis, encouraging us to live the dream even when life's a nightmare. Learn from Joseph how to triumph over temptation and how to flourish when you feel stuck. Be inspired by the power of forgiving the unforgivable, stewarding influence for the greater good, finishing strong, and leaving a legacy that lasts.

The class begins at 9:15 a.m. each Sunday, and will meet in the Grace Fellowship Hall. Pastor Brodbeck will be the facilitator.

Young At Heart

WHAT'S HAPPENING YOU ASK?

Young At Heart, A Ministry, Ages 55 and up, Recently had an awesome time listening to the Cedarville University Christmas concert. Fifteen of us fellowshiped together to sing and listen to beautiful Christmas music and musicians. We also saw a vocal/guitar Duo. We also went and sang Christmas carols at a local Senior Home. We were well received.

January will bring an opportunity to see a basson musician and enjoy the La Comedia Dinner Theatre listening to 50's and 60's music from the "Wonderettes". Sign up now. Get out and enjoy life with others

- Roger

YOU ARE WELCOME AT THIS CHURCH!

We are always looking for ways to identify visitors and possible new members. In January you will see a card in the pews that has this statement and a red rose on it. Please take a look at this card which invites visitors to put the rose on their garment to assist us in recognizing them as a visitor. If you see a rose on someone's garment don't hesitate to approach them and confirm they filled out the card and gave it to an usher or put it in the offering plate. If they completed the card but didn't turn it in, just offer to handle it for them and simply take it to the Welcome Center.

Blessings!

Janet Rice
Director of Lay Ministry

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