



GRACE

HAPPENINGS

A WORD FROM PASTOR STEVE:

Do you have a favorite picture that you could look at for hours? Some hold family pictures as treasured pieces and they are. There is nothing like looking back at family pictures seeing how the children have grown and changed. There are sweet times of looking at family pictures and remembering those who are no longer with us and we remember them with a smile, a laugh or possibly a tear or two. Maybe some have that special family painting that has been passed down through the generations. And regardless of its monetary value, it is a cherished and treasured heirloom that speaks loudly of family heritage and legacy. The pictures on the walls in our homes each hold their own special reason to hang in their place of honor and whether it's family, a favorite artist or a family heirloom, each picture shares its own message and memory with us and gives us the opportunity to share those things with others.

One wall of our home shares the message of the cross in pictures. I don't think we deliberately set out to do that, but it happened. There's nothing chronological or sequential about the pictures that are there. There are pictures painted by a couple of our favorite artists. There are gifts given by special friends and there are those pictures that spoke so loudly to us when we saw them that we purchased them. And each of them shares a story about Jesus; from a picture painted by Stephen Sawyer of Jesus holding a lamb to another one painted by him of the face of Jesus as He wore the crown of thorns.

My favorite picture is on that wall. It is one that I've spent quite a bit of time looking at and it gives me pause each time I look at it.



We've just celebrated Christmas, the birth of Jesus into a sin cursed world for the redemption of that world.

"And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth" (John 1:14). Jesus; in a womb, born into this world covered in vernix, crying to take in his first breath of air, fingers and toes counted by Joseph and Mary, quickly cleaned up and cuddled by His mom, soft words spoken as He is held close, and certainly thanks given by Mary and Joseph as they knew better than anyone who knew them or would meet them that as Mark Lowry has so eloquently penned, "and when you kiss your little baby, you have kissed the face of God."

Look at the picture. That baby grew into a toddler who probably followed his earthly dad, Joseph, around the carpenter shop. He probably played with the wood scraps and tried to build things like Joseph did. He probably pounded a few nails as He toddled around the shop. Most likely, He missed on occasion and hit His fingers with that hammer, or was cut by the sharp edge of the nails Joseph may have used and would have been consoled and cared for by Mary.

Look at the picture. That toddler grew into a man who "increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men" (Luke 2:52). That toddler grew into a man who would know what it was to live life just like us. He would experience hunger and thirst. He would work and sweat. He would experience the death of one friend and the betrayal of another. He would see the devastation of sin in people and families. He would experience the hypocrisy of those who claimed to love God and help the hopeless to meet God. He would know the sting of false accusations and the adoration of those who loved Him.

Look at the picture. It's far too easy to keep Jesus in Bethlehem. When we do that we keep the picture clean and calm, and isn't that how we like things? It's a nice setting we

JANUARY 2018

Worship

John 4:23 - "But an hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers shall worship the Father in spirit and truth; for such people the Father seeks to be His worshipers."

use to decorate our homes each year; a nativity scene with Mary, Joseph, the baby Jesus, some shepherds, an angel, some animals, and yes, (even though not biblically correct) the wise men.

Look at the picture. The shadow is a cross and there are three spikes lying on the floor. "Call Him Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins." Joseph and Mary received the news and were obedient, but did they know what lie ahead for their baby born in Bethlehem? Did Joseph even have a hint that the sound of the nails he pounded in his work shop would one day be the same sound of nails being driven into his "Son's" hands and feet? Could Mary, when patching up a cut that Jesus received in Joseph's workshop, even begin to imagine one day watching Jesus suffer wounds that she couldn't bandage? Could either imagine that wood and nails, which now brought them an income, would one day be the tools used to crucify their beloved Jesus?

Look at the picture.

Three spikes.
A cross.
A Savior.

REMEMBER OUR SHUT-INS

Pray for our shut-ins, send a card, make a phone call, pay a visit (call first), pick up groceries / medicines. Addresses and phone numbers are in the church directory

Wilma Davidson
Julie Lindsey
Russ Hearton
Roland Brooks
Charlie Brewer

Carol Sarver
John Gay
Gerry Gladfelter
Wanda Buttrey

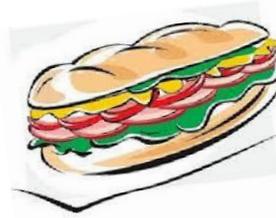
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Sunday: 8:15 Contemporary Worship
9:30 Sunday School
10:45 Traditional Worship
6:30 Against the Flow Youth
6:30 Evening Worship Service
Wednesday: 7:00 Bible Study & Prayer for Adults /
Pioneer Clubs / Against the Flow Youth

Rev. Steve Warner
Senior Pastor

Rev. Jon Barrett
Assistant Pastor



ORDER YOUR SANDWICHES/SUBS TO SUPPORT MISSION TRIPS/PROJECTS

Enjoy a Stuffed Sub or Pretzel Sandwich for only \$4.50—a variety of meats and cheeses available

Orders Due: Sunday, January 7
Pick Up: Wednesday, January 17
Order forms are in your Mailbox
Extra Forms available at Usher Stands

"Living Loved - The Journey Continues" Women's Bible Study Saturday, January 20 9:00-11:00 a.m.

All women and senior high aged young ladies are encouraged to attend as the journey continues! Contact Jayne Warner with questions.

SANCTITY OF HUMAN LIFE SUNDAY JANUARY 21

A day to celebrate God's gift of life, commemorate the many lives lost to abortion, and commit to protecting human life at every stage.

Allison Shipley from Human Life Services will be speaking during both morning services. Allison heads up the Post-Abortion Ministry in York.



"Post-Abortion Recovery

Have you had an abortion? Do you feel alone?

Three out of 10 women will have an abortion by age 45 . . . You Are Not Alone!

Not many individuals remain unchanged after choosing this pregnancy option. In fact, abortion affects everyone - fathers, grandparents, future siblings, even friends. Many women report that they feel they are a different person than before their abortion.

Do you find that you struggle with...

- Irritability
- Anger
- Difficulty concentrating
- Flashbacks
- Feelings of intense grief or depression
- Anxiety attacks
- Self-destructive behaviors

Some of these reactions may be immediate. Some occur many years after the abortion. There is hope. Whether you had an abortion last week or thirty years ago, we are here for you, if you want to talk.

How do I make an appointment? Call Human Life Services now at 717-846-2384.

Perhaps you know someone else whose life has been touched by abortion.”

Watch for the “Baby Bottle Boomerang” fundraising campaign coming soon to support HLS. Take a baby bottle from the boxes on the front pew, fill with change, bills, checks payable to HLS and return to the box no later than Sunday, January 28.

Because of your generous support, HLS is able to provide:

- Free pregnancy testing
- Free obstetrical ultrasounds
- Confidential counseling about pregnancy options
- Prenatal and parenting education
- Maternity and baby clothes
- Post-abortion recovery counseling

MONTHLY COMMUNION SERVICE
SUNDAY, JANUARY 21
6:30 P.M.



Be in prayer for this youth outreach ministry
Friday, January 26
7:00 – 9:00 p.m.
All teens are invited to attend this outreach
and bring along your friends!

"CONDUIT FOR CHRIST"

Webster defines "conduit" as a natural or artificial channel through which something (like a liquid) is conveyed.

The human face is capable of making ten thousand expressions. My favorite expression is a smile. Not that I always smile, but the smiles from other folks. Some are the "natural", loving kind that are conduits of a joyful soul and are a blessing when they become tangible to my mind and heart.

Some are the "artificial" smiles, that send a message of "I'm okay, just don't ask...". These are not conduits of happiness and thankfulness.

At GBC, on any given Sunday, Wednesday evening, or whenever, we are subject to at least nine thousand expressions. We do have some sweet people that can glow with a tangible smile; one that is capable of being realized by the mind, or heart/soul, of the person receiving it, as being a conduit of the love of CHRIST.

What message flows from your face most of the time? Are you a tangible conduit of HIS love to the flawed people around you, so they may know that they can receive GOD'S love despite their imperfections? (Our Daily Bread, 11-30-17).

"While we were still sinners, CHRIST died for us"
Romans 5:8.

That is enough reason for your face to always be a "Conduit for CHRIST!"

SMALL GROUP OPPORTUNITIES

The Loop Connect Group meets the first Friday of each month at 7:00 p.m. in Marsha's home and is attended by couples, as well as individuals. The December meeting consisted of sharing a delicious meal together, November Blessings and past Christmas memories. The evening continued as Ed and Megan Wright led games that made everyone think, work together and laugh. What a special way to start the month of December.
~Submitted by Jeanie McCleary

Couples wrapping gifts with two hands tied together



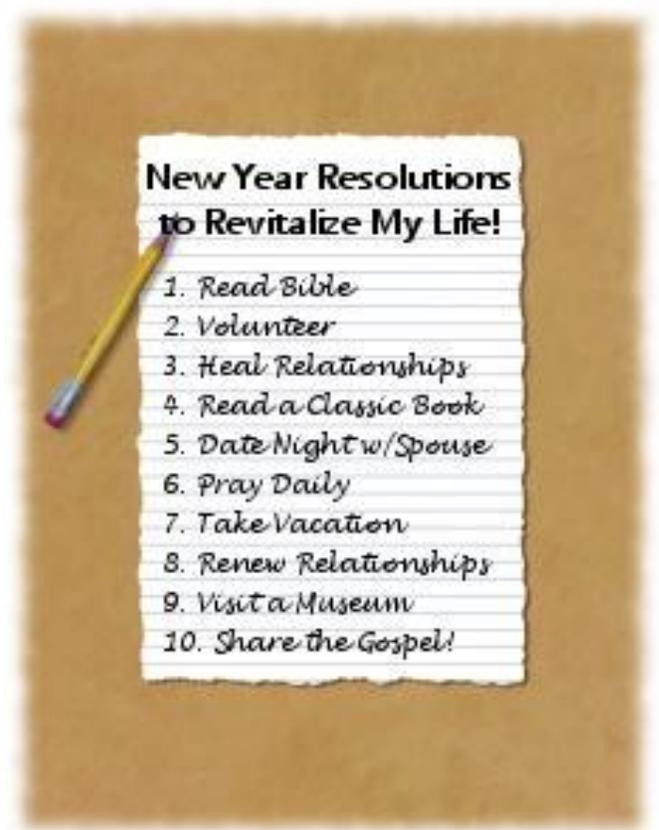
Marsha Loop also hosts in her home Empty Nesters Plus for ladies to spend time together sharing, learning (guest speakers) getting to know each other and praying. This meeting is usually held the first Tuesday of each month at 1:00 (will not be held in January). The December meeting was about the same with a scrumptious meal (contributions by good cooks in our congregation), sharing Christmas memories (most were memories of family time) and the Wrights again leading games.

Older, Wiser, Loving Seniors is another opportunity for individuals and couples 55 and over to come together for fellowship, good eating, special speakers and trips. The OWLS usually meet the third Tuesday of the month at noon (no meeting in January). Watch your weekly bulletin for OWLS activities.

Men's Prayer Meeting gathers Thursday mornings at 10:00 at Lloyd Marchant's home for a time of Bible study and prayer.

Bible study on the book of Romans is held at 7:00 at church on the second and fourth Mondays of each month. Frank Collins leads this study.

Feel free to join any of these ministry opportunities as your schedule allows!



For Christians, if God is central in the New Year's resolution, it has a better chance for success. God gave human beings free will, and He never oversteps that freedom to make choices. God's Word certainly has made clear which choices are better than others, but God never forces His people to comply.

