



August Newsletter

Grace Community Church

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I had read the gospels many times, but one day as I was reading through the Gospel of Mark I started to notice something I'd not seen before. It seemed like every miracle Mark wrote about was happening on the Sabbath. The Pharisees and Synagogue leaders were furious with Jesus. How dare he break the law of God by doing "work" on the Sabbath? It looked like Jesus was deliberately starting a fight with them. He knew how upset they would be.

Now, the Old Testament law never stated that healing someone on the Sabbath was wrong. The scribes and Pharisees had decided that healing was "work". All kinds of things were work, including writing something down.

Jesus, however, was not just trying to stir up trouble. He was trying to get them to understand that God's greatest concern is for His children. He declared to them that man was not made for the Sabbath, but rather the Sabbath was made for man. In other words, they had taken what was to be a joyful blessing for human kind, a day of restoration and fellowship and worship and family and turned it into a day of burned, restriction, rules and outward religion.

They were so "religious," so focused on their rules that they could not allow themselves to rejoice that wonderful people were being healed! How sad.

There is a wonderful old story which you may know, about a lighthouse that rescued people from shipwrecks off a very dangerous coast. Many lives were saved.

As time went on, the people started updating the lighthouse. They put in a nice eating area, carpeting, meeting rooms and a recreation area. The lighthouse membership grew.

Then, people started complaining about how wet the carpet got when people were pulled in from the sea. The classes to train rescuers got smaller and smaller. But the membership grew, the donations for upkeep of all the wonderful new facilities grew and everybody felt so proud of the beautiful lighthouse and all its activities. And no one seemed to notice that the rescue boats were not longer being used.

God's priority is people. Jesus pointed out to them that when David was on the run from King Saul, a priest gave the sacred bread, which the law said only the priests could eat, to David and his men.

On two occasions Jesus said to the Pharisees, "Now go and learn the meaning of the scripture: I want you to show mercy, not offer religious sacrifices." (Matthew 9:13)

He is not saying that worship is wrong, that having a nice place to worship and fellowship is wrong, but He is saying that God's priority is the mercy, care and love that we show towards people. May we truly be a lighthouse of God's healing and redeeming love. In fact, I find the Lighthouse story exciting because I know you, the family of Grace Community, will choose being a rescuing Lighthouse over a country club Lighthouse in a New York minute.

What a blessing it is to be your Pastor

SETTING AT THE GATE (THE ELDERS REPORT)

Now that the smoke from all the fireworks has cleared away and one can see the skies beautiful blue hue again it is time to settle in and get to work!!!!

That is if you can find the energy while getting through the hot "Dog Days" of summer during August. (Wonder where that saying came from?) Some folks, the Norton's, Decker's, Abend's (?) and of course, all our "Snow Angels" are away enjoying cooler mountain climes!! Does that sound like I'm a bit jealous, well of course I am!! But then, we are all Thankful for the people that invented Air Conditioning for our homes, RIGHT??

Speaking of our folks being away brings us to another topic, one of appreciation. When you look at those that have been or are presently away you will notice two of those are Elders. We are thankful GOD has called this particular Group together to be Elders among our Congregation. It usually takes all of us to Administer fully and when two are away Pastor John really gets to bear a heavy load. We are giving you the background here to show you how grateful we are to have good GODLY men in our Congregation that are willing to "step up" when asked! One such MAN is ART JENCKS who has accepted our invitation to give us a hand while George and Darrell are away. ART has joined us in Several duties as needed and we would ask each of you to give ART a "pat on the back" and Thank him for a job WELL DONE!!! We Elders are extremely grateful to ART !

Being grateful is a "catchy" thing as we look around, think of the Pastor's wife Patty and the Pastor for opening their home on Wednesday evenings to any of the Congregation that wanted to stop by and visit and partake in a bowl or two of Ice cream.

While we are patting people o the back let us think of Nada and her crew for the 5 Day Club or in other tones, Vacation Bible School!! GREAT JOB!! And it is always a big treat to watch the Children put on a skit for us older folk and that Skit was led by our new Missionary Joe Noland!!

Until next month we will be Setting at the Gate dispensing our Blessings!



Sanctuary Decoration Committee Meeting - Thursday, August 3rd at 6:00

John Tuff and Friends at Beyond the Sea Thursdays, August 10th at 6:00

Tuesdays, Praying Together 6:00

Saturday, August 26th Men's Breakfast

Saturday, September 2nd Ring of Fire at the Tuff's Home. Details to follow.

Tuesday 9/12 10:00 Bible Study resumes

Tuesdays 9/12, 9/26, 10/10, 10/24, 11/7 and 11/21 Ladies Bible Study - "Women of the Bible". 7:00 pm.

Editor's Note: The Elder's Gate article focuses greatly on appreciation. I would like to take this moment to say thank you to both Basil and Sharon Mays for all of the things they do every day for each one of us. These are two special people who I'm sure also get tired. If you see them, please give them a hug of thanks for their servanthood.

Last Call

We are planning to print the directory this month. If you have any changes in email, address or phone number please contact the church office with your information.

To help people develop a thriving relationship with Jesus Christ by serving God and serving others...This is the Mission of GCC.