



Tidings

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IT TAKES GRACE...

John 14:6...
 Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life."
 1 Peter: 1:3...
 "Praise God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is so good, and by raising Jesus from death, He has given us new life and a hope that lives on."
 I've spent a fair amount of time in graveyards. The privilege of last words spoken before dirt is shoveled back into a hole, over a casket. Sometimes it has been folks I barely knew – a part of being the preacher from "that church" when someone who used to be a member there passes on. Sometimes it has been for church members who have been closer than my own family members. And, after more than a few years of being a preacher, I get to be "the family preacher" who has a part in burying their own. A graveyard is a logical place to go looking for history – for the last day to finally be etched on stone. And there's not many stones that have to be re-etched because somebody died...and then they "do a Lazarus."
 Dates on tombstones rarely need to be changed. A graveyard is a logical place to look for historical accuracy...
 A graveyard, though, is a

strange place to go looking for hope.
 As it turns out, though, the very center of hope for human beings is actually in a graveyard. Where there's a borrowed tomb (that as it turns out, was only needed for a weekend).
 Hope...because after a horrific death by scourge and crucifixion on Friday, Jesus walked out of the tomb on Sunday. Walking out of His grave, Jesus defeated death. As the days went forward, His words would ring in their ears: "I am the way. I am the truth. I am the life." Chances are there are new graves for us to stand by this year. Graves that were not there last year. Loved ones, who because of what God did in Christ Jesus, we can whisper over their graves, "See you soon." ("Soon," as reckoned on an eternal calendar.)
 It doesn't have to be a side-stepping, "They are in a better place." No. Because of Jesus, this is the certain reality of God's Word: "Praise God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is so good, and by raising Jesus from death, He has given us new life and a *hope that lives on.*"
 A "living hope." Because

of Easter, hope is not an "it." Hope is a "He."
 When Jesus says, "I am the resurrection and the life; the one who believes in me will live, even though they die," it is guaranteed by Easter. Jesus crushed death. And because He conquered death, He conquered "dying moments" of life, if we accept His finished work in our lives. And that means He is bigger than whatever is bigger than me. His resurrection makes our im-possibles possible. What we are unable to do, do-able. Whatever is un-bearable, bearable. Hope for hopelessness... A trade that started with an empty tomb.
 And it continues, from an empty tomb, into lives focused on Him and His purposes for us.
 How about because of Easter, we choose to worship God as if we aim to please Him, not us? How about we choose to live, for Him and His purposes, knowing He's got all the stuff we worry about in life covered?

Blessings,
 RevLon

Special Dates of Interest

- National Day of Prayer, May 4, 2017
- Mother's Day, May 14, 2017
- Armed Forces Day, May 20, 2017
- Ascension, May 25, 2017
- Memorial Day, May 29, 2017

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HOLY LAND EXPERIENCE...AND OPPORTUNITY

Most of you know that Mike and I were blessed to take a trip to the Holy Land in February, 2016. Several people have asked us since then to do a presentation of our trip, so we have finally set a date. Come and join us in the Fellowship Hall on Wednesday,

May 3 after the fellowship dinner. We look forward to sharing our experience with you. If anyone is interested in going to the Holy Land we will be returning March 5-14, 2018 and would love to have company. We are going with a group headed by the pastor of the

Henderson First United Methodist Church, Jim Wofford and his wife Pam. If you are interested in a trip to the Holy Land, just let us know and we will be happy to give you the details!



“Creation is an ongoing process, and when we create a perfect world where love and compassion are shared by all, suffering will cease.”

Beginning...and beginning again

During the coming weeks, as you or loved ones celebrate graduation, remember it isn't a closed door, an end or a farewell. Instead, it's an entryway threshold, a beginning, a hello — and one of many such opportunities that mark life.

“God wants us to know that life is a series of beginnings, not endings, just

as graduations are not terminations but commencements,” writes Bernie Siegel. “Creation is an ongoing process, and when we create a perfect world where love and compassion are shared by all, suffering will cease.”

Of course, we can “create a perfect world” only by letting God guide our actions. So, dear graduates,

may you partner with God to meet suffering with love, kindness and compassion through all the new beginnings of your life!



YOUTH NEWS

Youth News: Please come celebrate our graduating senior Olivia Thomas at our annual Grill Masters/Sweet Treats meal and competition May 10 at 5:15. We will have a time after the meal around 6 to remem-

ber all the great memories of Olivia's blessing our church family. This is also a fundraiser for our youth program so we appreciate all the support you give. Hope to

see you there!

D'evil. Fr.noun 'Of Evil.'

2 John 1:10-11 – If anyone comes to your meeting and does not teach the truth, don't invite that person into your home or give any kind of encouragement. Anyone who does encourage such people becomes a partner in their evil work.

In my travels I encounter many who do not believe that Jesus is God. They believe he was created, he was a prophet, he was a good man, a small 'g' god, etc., but not the Son. They, unlike I, do not believe in the Triune God: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. Some believe that if they are good enough they will go to Heaven, however, there is no hell, and therefore, everything is good. Some believe we are created in the image of God, therefore we can become God. Some say we all worship the same God, and that God comes as all things to all people. As a chaplain of a correctional institution I serve people of different faiths with differing views of God. However, I do not encourage any belief other than that of Christ Jesus, the Living Word. I find that I have to be strong in the Word to be strong in my defense. God's Word needs no defense, however, I need to know scripture to fend off 'the Deluder' Satan and his minions. Which brings me to last month's *On the Inside*. The 219th and 221st General Assemblies of PCUSA removed the *Book of Order* ordination barriers and amended the marriage covenant. Both acts of man. I pray that God will lead us back to His Word on these subjects. I also pray that He gives me the wisdom to comprehend the teachings of Paul. In a discussion about Paul during my CLP

classes, one woman said she only followed the 'red letters' in the Bible. That cleared everything; only believe what you want to believe and disregard the rest. Helps to explain why the woman leading the distinguished professors at seminary walked with a staff shaped like a snake. Don't go chasing rabbits, Pete. Back to the point. Do I follow the The WORD or do I eliminate the following:

[Genesis 1:27](#)— God did not "create" as an original purpose same gender sexual relationships

[Genesis 19:4-13](#) — Sodom's sins of greed, hatred and sexual perversion (as told Ezekiel 16:49) is one of the most widely referenced and hotly debated texts concerning homosexuality. The main point is that pride (in one's sins) will invariably draw God's wrath.

[Leviticus 5:3](#)—God addresses situational moral sins. Sexual contact between males was defiling. God charged the priests and Levites to deal with it as object lessons of his holiness.

[Leviticus 18:22;24-30](#) —Contrary to biblical revisionists who say this scripture does not foresee "committed, monogamous gay relationships," Leviticus 18:22 is a sweeping condemnation of all homosexual unions whether forced or consensual.

[Leviticus 20:13](#) —God allows opportunity for repentance, but when it is refused he imposes the death sentence.

[Judges 2:11-13](#) —The religion of the Canaanites involved child murders (sacrifice), self-mutilation, ritual prostitution and homosexuality. Most pro-homosexual religionists say God does not have a problem with their sexual preference, but this indicates that God considered it "evil."

[1Kings 14:22-24](#) —This passage highlights the rise of "tolerance" and evil it brings when sin is promoted through government.

[1Kings 15:11-13](#) — Out of 13 other Canaanite-adopted practices, the practice of sodomy-influenced religion in Israel was treated as a specific threat to the security, health and religious integrity of God's people.

[1Kings 22:43;46](#) — Jehoshaphat shows how secular leaders can cause blessings to come upon the land by refusing to allow laws and policies which hurt and damage the well being of the nation at large.

[Ezekiel 16:49,50](#)—Sodom's sin of pride exacerbated their offensiveness to God.

[Daniel 11:37](#)— A reference to the sexual nature of the antichrist as envisioned by Daniel

[Matthew 19:1-8](#) —Jesus issues a sweeping

condemnation of all sexual relationships outside of the male/female model established in Gen 1:27, which he specifically cited.

[Romans 1:18-32](#) —For the first time there is a specific mention of female homosexuality as a depraved condition brought on by a sinful nature.

[1Cor 6:9-11](#)—Former homosexuals are listed along with other ex-sinners who have been changed by the power of Christ. Paul celebrated their freedom in Christ Jesus. With a completely different tone in comparison to the volume of harsh, negative reaction to the unrepentant, scripture here ends with the tremendous hope and goodness of God.

[Galatians 5:19](#) — Paul drew from sources familiar to him and forged them with New Testament teachings of God's grace to forgive and cleanse. In the letter to the Galatians, he teaches that sinful human nature is always considered an enemy to God.

[Colossians 3:5-7](#) — Paul issues instructions on overcoming/controlling sin. Believers are to mortify or deaden themselves and exercise self control over such actions. Scripture clearly instructs that we are to hold our bodies in check and refuse to participate in sexual immorality. This passage further emphasizes that no one should expect to escape the "wrath of God" except they repent.

[Titus 1:16](#) — When one accepts what God has pronounced abominable and rejects the created model a process of hardening and mental perversion begins to take root in the mind. Such is the danger of justifying sin.

[Jude 1:4,7,19](#) — Repentance is the major action a sinner must take to be accepted into the family of God.

[Rev 21:27](#)—The Word of God firmly establishes once and for all the sinfulness of homosexuality, but also provides a wide opportunity for repentance and redemption through Jesus Christ

If we eliminate all but the red letters we still need to deal with Matthew 19. I believe Jesus is the Way, the Truth, and the Life. He is the Word. In the beginning the Word already existed. He is God. If we deny Him before man, He will deny us before the Father.

On the Inside,
Rev. Pete

“AN ACHIEVEMENT, CELEBRATION AND TRANSITION”

May is when we normally celebrate our graduating seniors. Our Grill Masters was birthed out of that celebration and now we've added the Sweet Treats prize as well. It's a milestone that for a lot of us here is a distant memory. But for Olivia Thomas it's just over the horizon and I know she's excited and prepared for what lies ahead of her.

I have the privilege of working with young people usually from their middle school to high school years. But I've known Olivia for most of her life. And what a blessing to watch her grow up as she's gone through all those stages to now. We've shared a lot of life here from VBS to Great Escape to Fall/Winter Retreats to Mission Trips to Chrysalis and much more. It's been one of those journeys that you know they're in it for the right reasons, and that's been the case for Olivia. Her heart is tender and her attitude is humble and she has a great work ethic that she has shared on so many occasions with our group.

So, Olivia, wherever your path takes you please know that each step you've taken so far God has been preparing you for what lies ahead. Hopefully you've noticed that, but if not then reflect and see where He's shown up. At this stage of life, you're going to start realizing that time will start to accelerate and it's a phenomenon you haven't noticed yet. But enjoy your time and make the most of what comes your way. Some things will happen to build your character. That's another way of saying disappointments and failures are still going to be learning experiences as well as successes. You already know that though. Whenever you can, pay for some random person's meal anonymously, trust me you'll enjoy it. Being generous works on a part of

us that God meant for us to develop, being generous and cheerful about it. Humility is a trait that reminds us that God has made us all in His image so we don't feel like less or more than anyone else, just the unique one a kind you He intended you to be. Live life to the fullest and make the most of what comes your way because life is going to go by quick and I know that you'll do your best to soak in as much as you can! Keep growing deep in your faith of God and don't allow the world to distract you from that precious relationship. God made you to be you and don't let anyone change what God has designed you to be!

Thanks for all the memories and blessings you gave! You have blessed my life and I will look forward to hearing and seeing how God is continuing to mold you into the woman He's created you to be. It's hard to believe you're all grown up and moving on but what a privilege to have shared life with you here. And remember that no matter where life takes you that you have a family here at First Pres that will be yours forever. May the peace of Christ be yours now and forever!

Romans 12: 1-2, 9-16, “And so, dear brothers and sisters, I plead with you to give your bodies to God because of all he has done for you. Let them be a living and holy sacrifice—the kind he will

find acceptable. This is truly the way to worship him. Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God's will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect.

Don't just pretend to love others. Really love them. Hate what is wrong. Hold tightly to what is good. Love each other with genuine affection, and take delight in honoring each other. Never be lazy, but work hard and serve the Lord enthusiastically. Rejoice in our confident hope. Be patient in trouble, and keep on praying.

When God's people are in need, be ready to help them. Always be eager to practice hospitality.

Bless those who persecute you. Don't curse them; pray that God will bless them. Be happy with those who are happy, and weep with those who weep. Live in harmony with each other. Don't be too proud to enjoy the company of ordinary people. And don't think you know it all!”

Congratulations Olivia, we love you and are so proud of you!

In Christ's Love,
Rob

Romans 12

May Birthdays & Anniversaries

2nd	Merry Brooks	26th	Joyce George
4th	Tem Major		Michael Milam
8th	Chesley Wilson	27th	Madison Duncan
14th	Rob & Denise Wilson (A)	28th	Alan Johnson
15th	Calvin Griffith	29th	Pat Bonney
16th	Emily Fischels		
	Rick & Susanna Lee (A)		
	Linda Shanks		
	Steve Arnold		
18th	John Ewing		
19th	Monty Crawford		
25th	Chrissy Barker		
	Julia Griffith		



THE NAVIGATORS ARE COMING!

The Navigators, a world-wide college campus ministry, will once again be coming through Madisonville. Ninety to a hundred students from campuses in four mid-western states will be spend-

ing the night in our building on May 23 as they make their annual trek to Jacksonville, Florida for a summer of training and practicing evangelism. Be in prayer for their safe travel

and the experiences they will have.

“Ninety to a hundred students from campuses in four mid-western states will be...”

THREE GREAT BANQUET WEEKENDS REMAIN

The Great Banquet/Chrysalis/YES spring season will close out this month, but not before the remaining three weekends happen:

- May 4-7: Women’s Great Banquet #177
- May 12-13: Western Kentucky Correctional Center #17
- May 18-21: Women’s Great Banquet #178



VBS IS COMING SOON

June 14-16, 2017

May 2017

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	1 9:30AM Norma Siria Circle 6PM GB Team Meetings	2 7PM Session Meeting	3 5:15PM Fellowship Meal 6:00PM Activities 7:00 Choir Rehearsal	4 Women's Great Banquet #177	5	6
7	8 6PM GB Team Meetings	9 Presbytery Meeting in Murray, KY	10 5:15PM GrillMaster's CookOff	11	12	13
14 	15 6PM GB Team Meetings	16	17 Last Day of School – No Activities	18	19 Women's Great Banquet #178	20
21	22	23 Navigators	24	25	26	27
28	29 	30	31			