

*Religion that is pure and undefiled before God, the Father, is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unstained from the world.
James 1:27 (ESV)*

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CELEBRATING
100
YEARS

*Enter to Worship
Depart to Serve
Together*

Dear Fellow Recipients of His Grace,

"Grace, grace - God's grace. Grace that is greater than all my sin!" This beautiful hymn lyric really sums up the message of the Gospel. Good News. That is what the term "Gospel" means. And grace that is greater than MY sin is good news for sure! Did you know that God's grace is good news for you, too? I bet you did. If not, I hope you do now!

But, I have another question for you. Did you know that the Good News of the grace of God in Christ Jesus is still just as good today as it was when you first believed? The feeling and understanding that come with first believing on the Lord Jesus for salvation from sin is wonderful! Lovely. Freeing. Like a weight has been lifted from your heart and mind. Martin Luther, after wrestling for many years with his own sin and doubt, always trying to earn the favor of God, was finally freed from his spiritual prison when the Lord showed him in the Word that Christ justifies those who put faith in Him. Do you remember when the shackles fell off you - when you first had faith in Jesus? I remember the freedom in my heart when I knew Jesus had cleansed me of my sin.

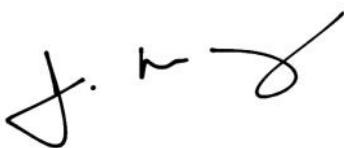
But there is something that happens to us as we live as Christians for a time. We tend to forget how much grace that God gave us in Christ. So, we stop believing that God's grace is sufficient to cover us. We try. We fail. We fall, and we beat ourselves up. We create ways to try to earn God's favor, only to feel defeated and unsuccessful. It is almost as though we believe that Jesus's grace is greater than all our sin - great enough to save wretched, depraved sinners, but not great enough to keep saving us.

But that is not true. The Scriptures teach us that we were saved, are being saved, and will be saved. By grace we were saved from our sin - made new in Jesus; path changed eternally, hell to heaven; sins removed as far as the east is from the west. By grace we are being saved - sanctified; being conformed to the image of Jesus. By grace we will be saved - finally glorified in eternity with the Lord. ALL by GRACE. "Grace, grace - God's grace. Grace that is greater than all my sin!"

And so, we need to hear the Gospel. Not just when we are children. Not just in Confirmation. Not just before we profess faith in Jesus. Not just on Sundays even. Everyday. Our spiritual growth as Christians is not marked by how much we out-grow our need of the grace of God, but as Tullian Tchividjian says, "Spiritual growth is marked by a growing realization of just how much grace you need." Our souls need the grace of God. To save us initially from sin. To make us more like Jesus. To bring us eventually into full consummation with Him in heaven.

So, remind yourself of the Gospel in the morning. Tell your neighbor about the Gospel in the afternoon. Tell your spouse that you love her and God does, too. Teach your children about the grace of God. O follower of Jesus, lay your head down on your pillow at night knowing you are a recipient of His grace - "Grace that is greater than all your sin!" AND, you never out-grow your need to hear that Good News!

Grace to You,



Pastor Jeff McCarty

February Birthdays

- 9 Ethel Glass
- 13 Andrea Belt, Sharon Badger
- 14 Valerie Embry
- 21 Jack Glass
- 22 Odessa Korfhage
- 23 Alvie Thrasher
- 24 Richard Gardner
- 26 Cheyenne Hutchison

February Anniversaries

- 9 Jack & Ethel Glass

Prayer and Praises

CHURCH FAMILY MEMBERS

- Wanda Reynolds
- Ken Bagshaw
- Katie Buchanan & family
- Beloved SJC Golden Members
- Our widows

EXTENDED CHURCH FAMILY

- Gail, friend of Sheila Badger
- Phyllis Jones, Jeff McCarty's grandmother
- Miley Hodge
- Lee Stone

THE MILITARY

- The Badger Family
- Our Military

MISSION & COMMUNITY

- Vincent & Lauren Kuo
- The LORD sends workers for His harvest
- Those apart from Christ, the poor, and hurting in our neighborhood

OUR LEADERS

- Our Pastor, Church Staff and council members
- The President, National and Local Political Leaders

ASH
WEDNESDAY

February 18

Fish Dinner, 6 PM
Service, 7 PM

Church Council

From Mark Hampton, Council President

I hope by now each of you has had an opportunity to look at the St. James 2015 calendar and realize that we are a church with a plan and a future. Pastor Jeff has been making valuable use of his extended hours and planned for significant events in the year ahead. The initiative to produce this annual calendar with significant events came directly from your feedback that we, the Council and Pastor, needed to do a better job of communicating what was going to be happening in the life of St. James. On behalf of Pastor Jeff and the Council, I hope you find the 2015 calendar helpful and will consider inviting friends and family to participate in the life of St. James.

I am writing this after just attending the Evangelical Association (EA) seminar that we co-hosted with Bethel-St. Paul, "New Life for Old Churches". Members of your church family who attended were myself, Carol and Norman Hampton, Sandra Spaulding, and Pastor Jeff and Jessica. I believe I speak for all who attended that the material presented was uplifting, affirming and encouraging. What a joy it was to hear that a church with a similar history as our own was able to renew its ministry and thrive. It was also encouraging to hear that the challenges we have faced over the past few years were actually signs that we are moving toward being the church that Jesus expects us to be. You should expect to hear more about this in the days ahead.

From a business/operational standpoint we are on sound footing. The Council continually looks for ways to ensure that we are good stewards by reducing operating costs and seeking the most cost effective options to support our ministries. As we begin this new year I ask that each of us consider the blessings that God has given us and prayerfully consider how we should be supporting the work of Jesus' church.

Finally, I want to ensure that everyone knows of the progress being made by the Music / Worship Minister search team. To date this committee has compiled drafts of a job description, job posting, and preliminary screening questions. The committee will be meeting again on February 8, to finalize the job posting and determine where to post the position. Please continue praying that God will make His will and person or persons known in this area.

My thanks for your support and prayers in 2014 and your ongoing support through prayer and finances in 2015.

Bible Study for Lent: Re~Confirmation

Wednesdays, February 25 ~ March 25

Soup & Bread at 6pm, followed by our study

Adult Handbells - 7 PM

Chancel Choir - 8 PM

Community Pancake Brunch

Every Saturday at 11:00 am, beginning January 31

We will be providing a FREE pancake breakfast for the community every Saturday. They will be fed not only physically, but spiritually. If you are interested in helping out, please see Bob Buchanan or Norman Hampton.



Boy Scout Sunday

Sunday, February 8

Troop 2 will participate in our worship service, and conclude with a Flag Retirement on the front lawn. Please plan to join us!

Inquirer's Class

For those exploring membership at St. James

February 1, 15, & 22 after worship

We will meet in the office building conference room. If you are interested in attending, please contact the church office.

Basics Conference for Men

Parkside Church, Cleveland, OH

Registration Fee:

\$140, includes most meals

Lodging: \$109/night for 2 nights

Sign-up deadline: February 15

For more information, please contact the church office!

Ladies Guild Yard Sale

Saturday, March 14

Start saving your items now! Setup will be Friday, September 13. If you have any items you wish to donate, you may bring them to the Fellowship Hall on that day.



St. James Church

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