

NEWSLINE

Great Smoky Mountains Church of Christ

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Grace That Amazes

Grace. *Amazing* Grace. God's grace is amazing. It amazes us that He extends grace to us at all. It is by grace that we receive grace. None of us deserve it. It is a gift. But it is not without a price. Grace originates in the heart of God...a heart that never stops loving, even when we walk away from Him. He waits with outstretched hands...nail-pierced hands. He wants to forgive us and fill us with an infinite measure of His love.

The apostle Paul says that God "lavishes" His grace on us. One drop of grace is far more than we deserve. But He pours His grace out in such abundance that our cups run over. We drink of the fountain of His redemptive love every day. Forgiveness is there for the asking. Access is never denied to a penitent and surrendered heart.

What does God's grace include? That's probably like asking how one would describe God. His grace is as big as He is...as comprehensive as His love, and as limitless as His power. It includes forgiveness from every evil thought, desire, or action. It includes healing for hurts done to others, for failures to act with compassion, for shortcomings and transgressions. It includes cleansing and restoration.

The riches of God's grace are "immeasurable" (Ephesians 2:7). Just look again at the cross, standing against the stygian darkness. A cross flowing with the love of God for the most despicable, detestable, and repulsive members of society. A cross that reaches deep into the heart of humanity and pierces our pride and leaves us bare and broken. A cross that ultimately lifts us up with our Savior to a new life, cleansed and free.

God's grace is amazing! He didn't have to do it. He doesn't owe it to us. He came down to us because of the compelling demands of love. His love opened the door of heaven and let His own Son walk out into the midst of robbers, thieves, murderers, and rapists. He came into a world filled with religious arrogance but which knew nothing of the heart of God. He came to us to show us the way home.

Amazing grace! A *sweet* grace. A grace that saves through faith as we take His hand in ours and walk with Him in light. A grace that leads us home to a loving Father Who will never abandon us or leave us alone.

— Al Behel

Guest Speaker: Herb Byrd will be our speaker this morning. Al is with the West Hobbs Street Church in Athens, AL for a meeting today through Wednesday. We appreciate Herb and Sybil for their good work. Mark Haynes will be our speaker tonight.

Mark Your Calendars: October 4-6—Brad Harrub will be with us for a weekend series on Creation/Evolution and related topics. This is an opportunity to reach out to our community.

International Dinner Planned: We will have an international dinner fellowship following worship on Sunday night, February 24. Please plan to attend and bring your favorite international dish. Sign-up sheet is in the lobby.

Libby and Larry Gilley, friends of **Dwight Grizzell**, needs our prayers. Libby has a recurrence of breast cancer which has metastasized in her abdomen. The Gilleys have been close friends of Dwight's for many years. They live in Chattanooga.

Rick sends greeting from Malaysia. You can email him and let him at the following: rickcliatt@hotmail.com.

Other Prayer Needs

Jan Messick received good news regarding her PET scan—NO TRACE OF CANCER LEFT. Keep praying!

Sue Hayes' sister-in-law, **Jane Huffard**, battling Leukemia.

Helen Costner, sister of Polly Pack—continuing to improve

Betty Langdon, Ginny Cliett's sister, is now in rehab following shoulder surgery.

Rose Parker, daughter-in-law of Ray and Faye Parker from Hatton, Alabama is suffering from leukemia. Ray and Faye will be spending time in Pigeon Forge.

Deb Elkins is home following knee replacement surgery on recently. Keep her in prayer.

Jennifer Fulk, 39 year old daughter of Billy and Barbara Helms (frequent visitors from Milton, FL) cancer recurrence.

Afghanistan—Bryan Darilek, Major, U.S. Army, in a 9 month deployment. He is the son-in-law of Rick and Ginny Cliett and husband of Laura. Woody Chambers, cousin of Rick Cliett, is also deployed.

Judy Lassetter had gallbladder surgery recently and is doing well. Ken and Judy are now living near Atlanta.

Regen Morris, 11 year old student at Phi Beta Phi (son of Dan and Tisha Morris) is in St. Jude's in Memphis with brain cancer.

Kenny Jones fell and needed nine staples in back of his head.

Sunday Adult Bible Class
The Holy Spirit

Next Book of The Month Meeting—Feb. 26, 7-9 pm
Book: Amos

Times of Services

Sunday A.M.
Bible Study 9:30 AM
Worship 10:30 AM
Sunday P.M. 6:00 PM
Wednesday 7:00 PM

Our Known Sick

Dez Anderson—MS and several other health problems. She has been having increasing difficulty in recent weeks. Please keep her in prayer. Cards are appropriate and encouraging.

Johnny Bryan—continues to need our prayers.

Debby Bryan—battling cancer.

Clara Mayberry—at home.

Christopher Howell, 23 year-old son of Phil and Terrie Howell and grandson of the Littletons, - spinal cord injuries- auto accident.

Brenda Scott's sister, **Arania Blount**, is improving following stomach surgery in Dayton, OH.

Coleen Thomason's mother is in Ben Atchley Veteran's Home.

Angie Daimwood is in Memory Care, Rm. 401, Wellington Place.

Regina Elkins, daughter-in-law of Dan and Sheryle, is recovering at home following surgery for a brain aneurysm.

Bill England received good news this week: NO BONE CANCER! We rejoice with Bill and Pat and will keep praying.

Bottles of Love—pick up your baby bottle in foyer today and fill with silver or GREEN. Money allows ladies of congregation to assist 20 newborns in need every month at local hospital. Return bottles by Sunday, March 17.

Building Fund

Loan balance as of 12/31/12 is **\$1,229,282.76**. Extra contributions to reduce the loan debt are needed and appreciated. Envelopes are available in the pew.

Nursery

Located across main foyer. Closed circuit TV allows viewing and participation in worship.

CDs and DVDs of Sermons are available free at sound booth. Also available on the website at: www.greatsmokymountainschurchofchrist.com.