

KOINONIA

“The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship (Koinonia) of the Holy Spirit be with you all.”
2 Corinthians 13:14

NORWIN ALLIANCE CHURCH

March 2018

From the Pastor’s Desk

Grace Upon Grace

“Grace upon grace” is one Bible description of Jesus’ relationship with us. The cross and resurrection show us this amazing grace as “the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.”

Grace is one blessing after another. Other Bible paraphrases express John 1:16 as:

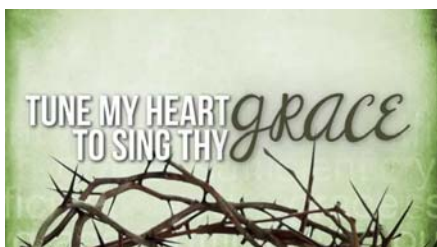
“Blessing upon blessing”	Living Bible
“Favor upon favor, gift upon gift”	Amplified
“One gracious blessing after another”	New Living

Christian author Paul Tripp has some edifying comments on God’s grace:

- Grace frees us from being sin kidnapped
- Grace frees you from faking what you don’t have
- Grace rescues you from pride and self-salvation
- Grace motivates to love and obey God

Throughout this Easter season, sing some of these old hymns praising God for his grace:

“Marvelous Grace of Our Loving Lord”
“Amazing Pity, Grace Unknown”
“Wonderful Grace of Jesus Reaches Me”
“Mercy there was Great, Grace was Free”
“Tune My Heart to Sing Thy Grace”
“He Rules the World with Truth and Grace”



Passion Week Schedule of Events

Sunday, March 25th

8:30 am Worship Service
9:45 am Sunday School
10:45 am Baptismal Service

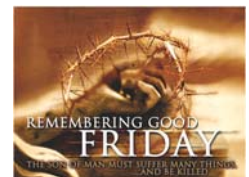


Wednesday, March 28th

Noon Community Mid-Week Lenten Service at the First United Church of Christ, on Main Street in Irwin
6:30 pm Youth
6:45 pm NO AWANA
7:00 pm Adult Bible Study

Friday, March 30th

Good Friday
7:00 pm Good Friday Service at NAC



Easter Sunday Activities

7:00 am Sunrise Service
7:30 am Continental Breakfast
8:30 am Morning Worship Service
9:45 am Sunday School for all ages
10:45 am Morning Worship Service

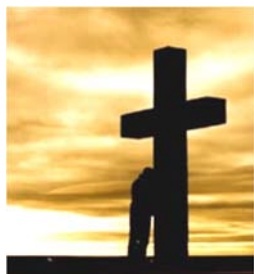


For our youth group retreat!

The youth group is heading back to Ligonier Camp & Conference Center on August 3-5, 2018 for another dynamic retreat for our middle and high school students! *Leaning* will be filled with team-building activities, outdoor fun, connection with Jesus around His Word, worship in music, and special prayer time together - all in the beautiful setting of the Laurel Highlands.

To help defray the cost for each student, we are having a Spaghetti Luncheon on **Sunday, March 18**, after the second service. The students and leaders are preparing this delicious meal for you, and we all get the chance to eat and talk together!

Will you please come and be a part? We will have a donation box at the luncheon for you to give towards this effort to bring our teens closer to Jesus and to one another.



Leaning 2018

"My help comes from the LORD, who made heaven and earth."

Psalm 121:2



Daylight Savings Time

Please be sure to turn your clocks **AHEAD** one hour before retiring for the night on Saturday, **March 10th**. Daylight Savings will begin at 2:00 am Sunday, **March 11th**.

CONNECTION SERVICE

Sunday, March 11, 2018

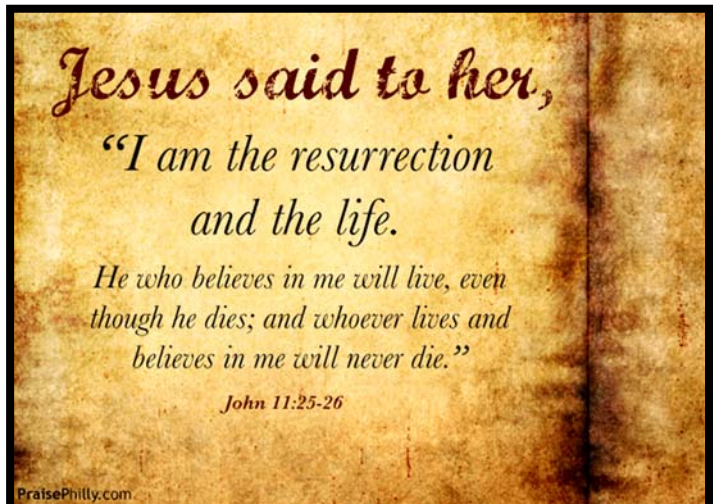
6:30 pm

*"Respectable Sins:
When we think our sins are better than yours"*



Speaker: Joe Cox

Worship: Norwin Alliance Worship Team



Crowd Danger

Do not ever follow the crowd, even if the crowd appears to be following Jesus. Follow Jesus only. Let me give you a biblical example.

On Palm Sunday, "Most of the crowd spread their cloaks on the road, and others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. And the crowds that went before him and that followed him were shouting, *'Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!'* And when he entered Jerusalem, the whole city was stirred up, saying, *'Who is this?'* And the crowds said, *'This is the prophet Jesus, from Nazareth of Galilee.'*" (Matthew 21:8-11)

Do you see what happened? The crowds laid out a "red carpet" for Jesus and praised Him. They were hailing Him as the one who would come and sit on the throne of David and take over the world. They saw Him as the Messiah who would overthrow the Romans and be an earthly king; this is what they wanted. But they were shortsighted. He must be the crucified Savior before He becomes the earthly King. Without the Cross, none of us would be in his coming earthly kingdom.

And so, JUST FIVE DAYS LATER, here is what the crowds shouted to Pilate: "They all said, 'Let him be crucified! and he said 'Why, what evil has he done?' But they shouted all the more, 'Let him be crucified!'" (Matthew 27:22-23)

What??? The crowds of Palm Sunday quickly turned into the people of crucifixion Friday. The crowd was fickle; the crowd was evil in their thinking and actions, even though they "appeared" to be right in the beginning. Their hearts were in the wrong place. And compromise soon turned to devastating wickedness.

Will you follow the crowd? Even if the crowd "appears" to be Christian? Or will you follow Jesus only - by listening to His Word and His Holy Spirit and refusing to compromise? Be wary. He is the Only Way. And His way is the Way of the Cross, not the way of the crowd.

- Shelli



VIGNETTES by VIRGINIA

Thousands of people enjoyed watching the national competition of Olympics in February. Most athletes begin at a very early age; practicing, learning many skills, team requirements and personal commitment with devotion to hours and years of energy, frustration, observation, stress, persuasion, dedication, sacrifice, proficiency, intelligence, accommodation, HONOR, PAIN - - - you can add to the list.

One of the largest concerns directed to our attention was the need for security and safety for athletes and the THOUSANDS of coaches, supporters, tourists and sponsors who attended the Olympics at PyeongChang, South Korea, a country that is next door to danger. The U.S.A. has military stationed in South Korea, thankfully. Are you aware of the threats and tortures that a Christian endures in North Korea? A North Korean Christian must worship in secret; Bibles must be hidden; radio broadcasts are forbidden. It is rather sad that children are taught to spy on their family IF their parents, or others, are Christian. A person who is a Christian prays with their eyes open to avoid suspicion among children and neighbors. Anyone caught with even a few pages of the bible can be thrown into prison camp to suffer.

In today's history, people around the world are so willing to suffer, often give their life, to serve the Lord and be a testimony for Jesus. That seems a little strange in the United States even though our society has changed quite a bit recently; we can testify since "government" have allowed many changes without looking into God's Word for direction. Our armour in Ephesians 6:10-18 gives protection, safety and guidance.

The Bible has verses for the athlete: "*Run to receive a prize*" I Corinthians 9:24; "*Run with patience*" Hebrews 12:1; "*A strong man runs a race*" Psalm 19:5.

Other verses: I Peter 2:11, 17; 3:7; Hebrews 12:1-2; and Isaiah 40:31. Look to find more - - - depending on the version you use. WARNING: Satan tries to defeat you. As a Christian, as a believer in Jesus, you are already on the winning team! ! Yea! !

Encourage others. Pray for one another. A word we often use in church here - - - FELLOWSHIP.

Remember the thousands of Christians AROUND THE WORLD who really suffer for the Lord. **PRAY** for them. To name a few countries where believers struggle daily according to **THE VOICE OF THE MARTYRS:** China, North Korea, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Sudan, Egypt, Libya, Morocco, Kuwait, Yemen, Chad, Cuba, parts of Mexico, Columbia.

**Keen-Agers**

(50 and over group)

Thursday, March 22nd

11:30 am - 2:00 pm

Lunch and Entertainment



March is GREEN month for St. Patrick's Day. Wear your green if you are of Irish descent, or if you just like wearing green to celebrate the month of March.

Lunch Menu ~ Chicken and Biscuits, Side Dishes, Green Desserts.

Entertainment ~ Cathasaigh, Folk Singer

Food Bank Collection for the Salvation Army sponsored by the First Presbyterian Church in Irwin. Please bring any non-perishable items to our meeting.

All Senior 50 and over are invited to join us for our meeting.

Please bring a covered dish and your table service.

Hope to see you all at our meeting in March. We are looking forward to having a great afternoon together.

Sincerely, *Joe and Pat Beyer* (Co-Presidents)