



PILGRIM'S PROGRESS



Volume 1, Issue 8

PILGRIM CHURCH A UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST CONGREGATION

October 1st, 2020

A GUT PUNCH FROM REALITY

By Pastor Paul Eknes-Tucker

I couldn't believe what I was seeing on the news the day that the death of Supreme Court Judge Ruth Bader Ginsburg was announced. I've never met her and yet the news took my breath away. You are reading this article days after the event and our initial shock. By now, the forces of replacing this articulate, thoughtful and insightful jurist will be at full tilt with the glee of replacing her with someone who they hope will help lead the high court away from noble and history-making expansion of American rights and values, and return us to valuing the powerful at the expense of the vulnerable.

process is being rushed to make sure the court is stacked. The Senate Republican leadership has already shouted from the roof-top that *"this time is different from 2016 because..."* The gleeful thrill that fate has handed this President a third Supreme Court nominee is palpable to an agenda of curbing progress toward a more just and equitable America. I mourn for the decisions, yet to be made, that will result from the values held by those who have the power to make this nomination in the way they are making it.



decisions, but we **VOTE**. Evil may twist a moment of fate into its own devices, but we will not be silent.

Powerful forces may have been moved into play, but we will resist those who use power for personal gain at the expense of the rest of us.

Be brave, my friends, for our voices are needed for just such a time as this.



"Give the new person a chance!"

I can hear them already saying. The problem is that whoever is named to replace Justice Ginsburg is already the product of a flawed process. The

It is just in moments like this that faith is important -- not because God can be manipulated to do things the way we want them -- but because faith is what propels us to move forward when the way is unclear and the future is murky. You and I as individuals may not have the power to stop bad

**EVERYBODY
VOTE**

Finding Hope...

By Teresa Moran

It springs eternal, right?

Thomas Merton wrote that hope is when you are about to go off the cliff and all of a sudden you find you're walking on air. Hope can't depend on good news. Thank goodness. Hope comes from somewhere else. I am reminded to be hopeful when I see a little purple violet having pushed its way through a crack in concrete steps to find the light of the sun. Hope comes from memory of hard times that were survived. It comes from identifying things that show us that love and kindness still exist, whether it's a child being adopted after being abandoned or a lost dog being rescued. *Can we find hope in today's news?* Today began with the beautiful eulogy, partly in a language I don't understand, but conveying the sadness yet comfort in the loss of one of our great humans. RBG was a reason for hope. *What would she say to us?* She faced obstacles just like all of us but she kept on going and is remembered as one who, against the odds, by herself, changed everything for our world. The

day ended with yet another police killing going without just consequences. *Where's the hope in that?* Hope may be that new voices are speaking up for the oppressed. Hope may be that



modern technology won't let us ignore the facts. Maybe hope is in the fact that young people are seeing things with new eyes and have the energy to act on what they perceive. *Bless them.* Support them even if you don't always understand their vocabulary.

**Make us messengers
of Hope.**



**Make us remember
the triumphs.**

Raise up prophets to make the future we desire become reality. Remember that as the light fades and the days are shorter, that too, is temporary. Come December, the light starts to return, and in Spring, violets will smile again at the warmth of the sun.

*Hope for transformation.
Stay awake.*



THE RESULTS ARE IN!!!

STAINED GLASS BY RON VANDER SCHAAF

CONGRATULATIONS TO TERESA MORAN

**WHO'S GUESS WAS THE CLOSEST TO THE ACTUAL
NUMBER OF TRIANGLES, WHICH IN FACT IS 67,
IN RON VANDER SCHAAF'S ART PIECE.
TERESA'S GUEST WAS 54. WAY TO GO TERESA!!!**

**KEEP AN EYE OUT FOR MORE EXCITING NEW
CONTESTS IN THE FUTURE
PILGRIM'S PROGRESS NEWSLETTERS**

Joe's Icebox Fruitcake

By Joe Griffin

Ingredients:

- 1 ~ 14.4 oz. Box of Graham Crackers
- 1 ~ 4.5 oz. Box of Raisins
- 1 ~ 16 oz. Bag of Chopped Pecans
- 2 ~ 14 oz. Cans of Eagle Brand Sweetened Condensed Milk

Ingredients:

Using a food processor, grind all the graham crackers into powder form and pour into a large mixing bowl. Add in all the raisins and pecans mixing it thoroughly so that pecans and raisins are well distributed. Add the two cans of milk and mix together until **ALL** the graham cracker powder is moist. In a sealable container such as Tupperware, line it with cling wrap using enough to overlap each side in order to easily fold over the top after filling it and packing it with the above mixture. Cover top with the excess cling wrap and pack it tightly. Place it in the freezer over night (or longer). Move to the refrigerator to thaw 24 hours prior to serving. Cut into 2 to 4 inch slices roughly 1/2 inch thick. Enjoy!!! They are rich but delicious!!!



Whatever Your Cross

By Tammy Webb

Whatever your cross,
Whatever your pain,
There will always be
Sunshine after the rain.

Perhaps you may stumble,
Perhaps even fall,
But God's always ready,
To answer your call.

He knows every heartache,
Sees every tear,
A word from His lips,
Can calm every fear.

Your sorrows may linger,
Throughout the night,
But suddenly vanish,
In dawn's early light.

The Savior is waiting,
Somewhere above,
To give you His grace,
And send you His love.

Whatever your cross,
Whatever your pain,
"God always sends a
rainbow after the rain!"

**TAKE
PRIDE
IN HOW FAR
YOU HAVE COME
HAVE
FAITH
IN HOW FAR
YOU CAN GO**

VOTING PRECINCT CHANGES

OLD PRECINCT:

**New Merkel Center Cahaba Heights
(Precinct 5070)**
4405 Dolly Ridge Road
Birmingham, AL 35243

**Pleasant Grove First Baptist Church
(Precinct 3030)**
724 4th Street
Pleasant Grove, AL 35127

**Center Point Community Center
(Precinct 4160)**
533 Sunhill Road NW
Birmingham, AL 35215

**East Pinson Valley Community Center
(Precinct 4060)**
3000 Jefferson State Parkway
Birmingham, AL 35215

**Bessemer City Hall
(Precinct 2360)**
1800 3rd Avenue North
Bessemer, AL 35020

**Virginia College
(Precinct 2320)**
488 Palisades Boulevard
Birmingham, AL 35209

**Shepherd Center East
(Precinct 1260)**
118 84th Street North
Birmingham, AL 35206

**Hillview Fire Station #1
(Precinct 1250)**
751 Heflin Avenue
Birmingham, AL 35214

**Birmingham Fire Station #12
(Precinct 1140)**
6449 1st Avenue North
Birmingham, AL 35212



NEW PRECINCT:

**Cahaba Heights Baptist Church
(Precinct 5070)**
3800 Crosshaven Road
Birmingham, AL 35243

**Bethel Baptist Church PG
(Precinct 3035)**
635 9th Way
Pleasant Grove, AL 35127

**Center Point Senior Center
(Precinct 4160)**
335 Polly Reed Road
Birmingham, AL 35127

**Center Point Community Center
(Precinct 4060)**
533 Sunhill Road NW
Birmingham, AL 35215

**Bessemer Recreation Center
(Precinct 2360)**
100 14th Street South
Bessemer, AL 35020

**George Ward Tennis Center
(Precinct 2320)**
331 16th Avenue South
Birmingham, AL 35205

**Robinson Elementary School
(Precinct 1120)**
8400 1st Avenue South
Birmingham, AL 35206

**Forestdale Fire Station
(Precinct 1250)**
1485 Forestdale Boulevard
Birmingham, AL 35214

**Woodlawn Public Library
(Precinct 1140)**
5709 1st Avenue North
Birmingham, AL 35212

What a Friend We Have in Jesus!

By Jim Ball



Thank God for friends! Friends who enrich our lives, who cause us to have a better quality of life, friends with whom we enjoy life and its activities, friends who want us to enjoy life, friends who are there for us in times of trouble and sorrow. Again, thank God for friends! And thank God for our Friend, Jesus Christ! He is a friend who enriches our lives, who causes us to have a better quality of life. He is there for us in times of trouble and sorrow.

In John 15:15 Jesus says, "...I have called you friends..." He is our greatest friend. In John 15:13 Jesus says, "Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends." And that is what Jesus did for us. He gave his life; so that, we all could be free.

Galatians 5:1 reads, It is for freedom that Christ has set us

free, free to live life with joy and happiness as we are. Luke 15:2 tells us that Jesus welcomes sinners and eats with them. ***He welcomes us All - not just a select group of sinners.*** All us sinners, no matter in what 'categories' man might place us.

He welcomes each and everyone in each one's own uniqueness.

Jesus is a friend who wants us to enjoy life and its activities! In Ecclesiastes 2:24-25 we read, 'A person can do nothing better than to eat and drink and find satisfaction in their own toil. This too, I see, is from the hand of God, for without him, who can eat or find enjoyment?'

Too many GLBT folks and others listen to condemning garbage about Jesus and believe it. They think this is what God is all about. They think that one has to give up fun and enjoyment to serve God. But it's the total opposite of what God is! God loves us all and wants us to abundantly enjoy life and its

activities as we are, in our own way! Jesus wants us to enjoy life with complete joy. We do this by following his commandments. John 15: 10-12 reads, 'If you keep my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commands and remain in his love. I have told you this; so that, my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete. My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you.'

Quoting Pastor J.R. Finney, "*Be Prepared to live life to its fullest while you wait for the end times. Be prepared to live without regrets of what could have been. Be prepared to step into opportunities that might come before you as well as the challenges life will throw at you.*" There is no better Friend to have for doing this than Jesus Christ.

It is our responsibility as followers of Christ to let everyone know that Jesus loves them that He is there in times of trouble and strife, to let them know that Jesus wants them, as they are, to enjoy life to its fullest with complete joy, complete joy that comes only from following him. So let us, with love, enjoy life and its activities to the fullest with Jesus as our Friend. Oh, what a friend we have in Jesus!

"Jesus wants us to enjoy life with complete joy!"

"Oh, what a friend we have in Jesus!"



For the month of October, instead of a basic recipe, we decided to give you a "RECIPE OF FUN" for the whole family. The photos are self explanatory or try some of your own ideas. GREAT FAMILY BUILDING ACTIVITIES! HOPE YOU HAVE FUN!

ISN'T IT STRANGE?

By Jennifer Lyles and Tammy Webb

Isn't it strange...

how a 20 dollar bill seems like such a large amount when you donate it to church, but such a small amount when you go shopping?

Isn't it strange...

how 2 hours seem so long when you're at church, but how short they seem when you're watching a good movie?

Isn't it strange...

that you can't find a word to say when you're praying but you have no trouble thinking what to talk about with a friend?

Isn't it strange...

how everyone wants front-row-tickets to concerts or games but they do everything possible to sit in the last row at Church?



Isn't it strange...

how we need to know about an event for Church 2-3 weeks in advance so we can include it in our agenda, but we can make adjustments for other events at a moment's notice?

Isn't it strange...

how difficult it is to learn a fact about God and share it with others; but how easy it is to learn, understand, extend and repeat gossip?

Isn't it strange...

how we believe everything that magazines and newspapers say but we question the words in the Bible?

Isn't it strange...

how everyone wants a place in heaven but... they don't want to believe, do, or say anything to get there?

**Isn't it strange?
Something to think
about, isn't it?**

EXCESSIVE SALVATION!

By Lauren Blankenship

My stepson, Noah, often tells me I'm one of the weirdest people he's ever met. He says it with a smile and I make him laugh, so I think it's actually a compliment. At least that's what I choose to believe!

One night, I was being particularly goofy while eating some of those waffle-shaped pretzels made by Snyder's. I was nibbling around the edges, trying to make shapes out of them (like a hashtag!). Noah was watching with a look that said "You are SO weird" but also "I am amused." Eventually, I had eaten so many pretzels my mouth was watering excessively from all the salt. I was laughing and mistakenly announced that I was experiencing "excessive salvation."

What I meant to say was that I had excessive salivation (excessive saliva).

My wife and I laughed about that all night and I found myself still thinking (and laughing) about it the next morning, but do you know what I've decided? I do actually have

excessive salvation, and it's available to all of us!

Salvation is the result of Christ's sacrifice for us to be reconciled to our Heavenly Father. It means you and I are delivered from sin and its eternal

All we have to do is accept Him and the loving relationship He wants to have with us.

How easy is that?!



And while the gift of excessive salvation requires very little on our part, I think it should inspire us and call us into action. So while the gift isn't something we can earn through "doing", I believe the excessive, extreme, limitless love of Christ, when it fills us to overflowing, makes it impossible to sit still! It calls out to be shared through our actions and words!

So let's do everything we do for Christ in excess, shall we? Over the top! Abundantly! Let's live, love, forgive, share, pray, worship, and serve excessively, in honor of our savior.

consequences. Abundant (or excessive, if you will) salvation, mercy, love and forgiveness are our "free gifts without purchase" from Jesus. Being the generous savior, He purchased them for us.

Something I've learned since hearing the Grace Message: *you don't have to crawl on your hands and knees, punish yourself, feel ashamed or unworthy, grovel and plead with God to receive these gifts.*

"By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another." John 13:35

MONTHLY QUOTE:

“The only limit to our realization of tomorrow will be our doubts of today. Let us move forward with strong and active faith.”

By Franklin D. Roosevelt



Out My Kitchen Window

By Jim Ball

Out my kitchen window I do see,
 God's creation He made for you and me.
 Trees so lovely and so grand,
 All made by God's loving hand.
 Trees in brilliant fall colors abound,
 Leaves falling, softly hitting the ground.
 The shapes, the colors, oh! the hues,
 Proclaim God's glory and his loving news!
 He is all around us, holding us tight,
 He does protect us with all His might!
 The trees of the forest joyfully sing,
 Tolling the righteousness and
 faithfulness of our King!
 So out my kitchen window, what do I see?
 I see God in His creation He
 made for you and me!

Bible Wordsearch

Wordsearch 183

Acts 10:9-19

The Large Sheet

E C M S H E E T S D R I B D F
 S R E P L H K K I M P U R E O
 U G A I Y A U I O G O D N P O
 O E N R O U M N N P T E W P R
 H A I I E T J I G D S N O O L
 E R N T K P U O N R S E D T L
 A T G N E N T T U A Y P N S I
 V H O C C V I I O R G O U L T
 E O I L I M S H L O N I O A S
 N O E S E R D M T E L E F R O
 V A I S E A T E N E S L Y G S
 N O G N I R E D N O W T A E H
 N I R E C N A R T G R E T E P
 N O M I S H O S T A Y I N G M
 C L L E F C P R A Y K N O W N

ANIMALS
 BIRDS
 CORNERS
 DOWN
 EARTH
 EATEN
 FELL
 FOUND
 GOD
 HEAVEN
 HOUSE
 HUNGRY
 IMPURE
 JOURNEY
 KINDS
 KNOWN
 LARGE
 MEAL
 MEANING
 CORNELIUS
 WONDERING
 NOON
 OPENED
 PETER
 PRAY
 REPTILES
 ROOF
 SHEET
 SIMON
 SPIRIT
 SPOKE
 STAYING
 STILL
 STOPPED
 THINKING
 TIMES
 TRANCE
 UNCLEAN
 VISION
 VOICE

After you find all the hidden words the left over letters spell out a Bible verse reading from the top left to the bottom right

_____ Psalm 57

MORE PUZZLES AT: <http://biblewordgames.com> COPYRIGHT 2010 ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

DID YOU KNOW:

“Leviathan” is a Hebrew name referring to some type of large water creature in Job 41:1-10. Some say it is a crocodile while others say it is a dragon. Read it and decide for yourself.

A Greek “talanton” (talent) weighed between 57 and 95 pounds.

Noah lived to be 950 years old, the third oldest man in the Bible. Can you name the other two?

Who Said That?

Match these Bible quotations with the person who said them. Put the letter of the correct person in the blank before the quotation.

- ____ 1. “Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.” (Matthew 5:5) A. Jesus
- ____ 2. “Are you the king of the Jews?” (John 18:33) B. Judas
- ____ 3. “Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.” (Luke 23:42) C. Thief on cross
- ____ 4. “What are you willing to give me if I hand him over to you?” (Matthew 26:15) D. Peter
- ____ 5. “Unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe it.” (John 20:25) E. Pilate
- ____ 6. “I do not know the man!” (Matthew 26:74) F. Thomas

A LITTLE TRIVIA:

What animal spoke like a man?

(The answer can be found in Numbers 22:28,30)

What animal is never mentioned in the Bible? *(You will have to do a little research for this one)*

PILGRIM BIRTHDAYS FOR THE MONTH OF OCTOBER



David Precise ~ October 4th
 Rebecca Owen ~ October 5th
 Candace Raymond ~ October 6th
 Dominique Cheney ~ October 15th
 Libba Owen ~ October 25th



PILGRIM ANNIVERSARIES FOR THE MONTH OF OCTOBER

Brian Bland & Eric Nelson ~ October 6th
 Teresa Moran & Jim Taylor ~ October 13th

IF WE HAVE MISSED YOUR BIRTHDAY, WE APOLOGIZE! PLEASE LET US KNOW & WE WILL GLADLY ADD IT!