

THE FAMILY OF GRACE UMC

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Non-Profit
Organization
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Piqua, OH
Permit #293



Our Purpose

Connect - Transform - Serve

“The mission of the Family of Grace Church is to connect people to Jesus Christ, transforming them into fully devoted followers and empowering them to serve.”

OUR CORE VALUES (THAT SHAPE OUR MINISTRY):

- We believe that lost people matter to God, therefore they ought to matter to the church.
- We believe that individual lives and, therefore, churches are transformed primarily by anointed teaching, preaching, and worship.
- We believe the church is a trauma center for hurting, wounded people.
- We believe that the church should be culturally relevant while remaining doctrinally pure.
- We believe that the pursuit of full devotion to Christ fulfills the biblical concept of holiness and is normal for every believer.
- We believe that life change happens best in small groups.
- We believe that excellence honors God and inspires people to personal stewardship regarding time, talent and resources.

Volume 6,
Issue 3
March 2006

2006 Lenten Sermon Series
“Just Tell Me A Bible Story!”



With the arrival of March, we begin our journey toward Easter. For this year’s Lenten season, Pastors Dennis Miller and Jon Ferguson combine for an exciting new teaching series to simply “tell us a story from the Bible.”



The Family of Grace UMC

Grace Notes

- March 1 Ash Wednesday 7 pm @ Greene Street UMC**
- Message: “Ahab: The Danger of Unsundered Territory”
- Scripture: 1 Kings 22:1-4, 29-37 Speaker: D. Miller
- March 5 First Sunday of Lent**
- Message: Samson: The Man Who Didn’t Live Beyond Himself
- Scripture: Judges 13-16 Speaker: J. Ferguson
- March 12 Second Sunday of Lent**
- Message: Abigail: The Woman Who Married the Wrong Man
- Scripture: 1 Samuel 25 Speaker: D. Miller
- March 19 Third Sunday of Lent**
- Message: “Jacob: Living With A Limp”
- Scripture: Genesis 32:22-32 Speaker: D. Miller
- March 26 Fourth Sunday of Lent**
- Message: “Confessions of an Ex-Cross Maker”
- Scripture: Luke 23:33-34 Speaker: D. Miller



“Is There Truth?”

By Pastor Dennis Miller

Have you ever heard or said something like this: “Hey, what’s right for you isn’t right for me! What’s wrong for you isn’t wrong for me! Don’t shove your values or beliefs down my throat!”

America and the Church have become a battleground of ideologies. Crusading armies of thought continuously clash over a variety of philosophies, ethics, and principles. The question, “Is there truth?” or “What is truth?” is one of the most poignant questions of our age. Is there such a thing as ultimate reality or are we simply bobbing in a sea of cultural, moral, and spiritual relativism? (*I am defining relativism as the belief system of “anything goes”. The view that truth is dependent upon individual experience.*)

My inquiry is not a new one. The question, “Is there truth?” was asked at one of the crucial points of the New Testament. Historian Will Durant, writing about this event, called this the “great moment in human history” when Christ met Caesar. Turn with me in the Scriptures to John Chapter 18. Jesus is in Pilate’s interrogation room. The issue: Jesus’ claim of divine kingship. “Are you the King of the Jews?” Listen to His Majesty’s response. **“You say correctly I am a king. For this cause I was born into the world to bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears my voice.” (John 18:37)** Hearing this Pilate said cynically, “What is truth?”

To Pilate, all truth was relative. In his Roman political mind, truth was whatever the majority demanded or whatever helped advance his

own personal power and political goals.

The question remains today, “Is there truth? Is there ultimate reality?” It’s the great question of the skeptics. Yet, Jesus was not saying, “It’s true I am a good moral example. It’s true I am a religious leader in a diverse arena of religions.” Or even, “It’s true I am the Son of God.” He was saying something much more profound. He was saying, **“I am the Truth.”**

Jesus was not politically correct then, nor would He be today. According to recent Gallup and Barna polls, the view of absolute truth is held only by 29 to 31% of the American population. Our culture has been sucked into the value system of pragmatism. We have turned the Ten Commandments into the Ten Suggestions! The world and the Church have become cynical exactly like Pilate, “Is there truth?” “Naw, there is no truth!”

My argument is simply this: In holding to a position of relativism, one is committing intellectual suicide. Philosopher Michael Horner has written, “If ethics were culturally relative, one could not condemn as immoral what another culture approves, even if that is racism, infanticide, or wholesale genocide.” In taking relativism to its logical conclusion, you would then have to deduce that the Nuremberg war trials were a farce! Yet, all decent and rational people know that the detestable crimes of the Nazis against innocent Jews were undoubtedly immoral. Certainly, there are absolutes! There is a right. There is a wrong. Hideous injustices, such as rape, incest, apartheid, racism, (etc.) are always

Update on the Women’s Retreat

Our 2006 Women’s Retreat will be held Friday evening, March 24th through Saturday afternoon, March 25th at Hueston Woods Conference and Retreat Center. We have 79 women signed up and ready to go. Please pray for our time away from every day life and that we will return renewed and refreshed.

New Orleans Mission Trip

Imagine what your life would be like if all your earthly possessions were badly damaged or destroyed by a natural disaster...your car, your favorite chair, priceless family pictures and memoirs—everything. Worse yet, six months later you still haven’t finished cleaning and repairing your home. Perhaps you don’t have the money or physical ability to complete the task. Perhaps you’ve been living far away for many months, waiting for the chance to return home. You often wonder if you will wake up one day and find out that it was all a bad dream.

This isn’t just a nightmare for thousands of people on the Gulf Coast; it is a daily reality.

But to the poor, O LORD, you are a refuge from the storm. To the needy in distress, you are a shelter from the rain and the heat. —Isaiah 25:4

Are you ready to serve God by helping the hurricane victims in New Orleans? Join Pastors Dennis and Jon and your friends from The Family of Grace for an incredible trip to the Big Easy to restore houses that were damaged by Hurricane Katrina.

You’ll meet the people who you serve and you’ll better understand the challenges they face. You’ll have a profound impact on the lives of families. You’ll grow closer to Jesus as you put your own comfort aside to help those in desperate need.

Dates: July 16-22, 2006

Location: Metairie, Louisiana (approximately 20 miles west of New Orleans)

Travel: Depart from Grace Church at 6:30 AM on Sunday, July 16 (we’ll have a worship service on the way). Travel via charter bus to Metairie. Depart Friday evening (July 21) and return to Piqua before noon on Saturday.

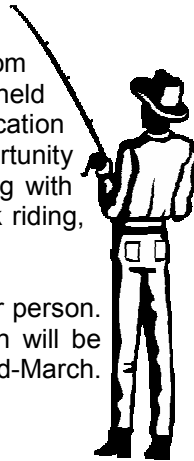
Cost: \$150 (includes everything except 3-4 meals during travel)
**Financial assistance is available. Contact Pastor Jon for information.

Registration: Watch for registration packets with comprehensive details in the Sunday bulletin and the church foyer during March!

Looking Forward to the 2006 Men's Retreat May 19-20

On behalf of the Men's Ministry, Pastor Dennis, George Broaddrick, & Tom Kister would like to invite all men to our 2006 Men's Retreat, which will be held from Friday evening, May 19th through Saturday afternoon, May 20th. Our location will be at Marmon Valley Farm near Bellefontaine, Ohio. This is a terrific opportunity to experience great fellowship, new friendships and have a lot of fun. Along with Bible teachings around the campfire, this year's retreat will feature horseback riding, fishing, a wagon trail ride, and a Chuckwagon Cookout!

The cost for the entire retreat, including lodging, meals, and snacks is \$65 per person. Scholarships are available for those who need assistance. More information will be available in the near future, and formal registration will take place in mid-March. Please mark your calendar now and plan to join dozens of other men!



Join the Joyful Noise Sunday School Class

as they begin a new study entitled "Footsteps of Goliath". This is an in-depth archaeological documentary in search of the most famous giant known to man. Did Goliath really exist and did young David actually slay him with a simple sling shot? Come find out what professional scientists, archaeologists, and theologians now know. It is an amazing discovery!

Then in mid March - in preparation for Easter - we will begin a six week series entitled "Walk as Jesus Walked". These are the newest faith lessons from Bible scholar Ray Vander Laan. The topics include:

1. The Passion of Elijah
2. Paul's Journey to Rome
3. An Unlikely Disciple
4. Why Christians Suffer
5. Don't Forget Us

These are exciting and informative lessons that you won't want to miss!
Warm fellowship, coffee, and doughnuts weekly at 9:45 am in Room 202.

Jana Warren
Leader

Pastor's article continued from page 2

wrong no matter majority vote or Supreme Court decision!

There is divine truth. Whether we are willing to submit to its authority or not. It's called the law of love. It's found fully in the incarnate Word of God: The Lord Jesus Christ (*John 1:14*). I believe God desires to raise up a group of counter-cultural United Methodist clergy and laity who are willing to stand for the truth of God. *Whatever happened to the prophetic pulpit?* I am deeply saddened that too many pastors today are driven by their paycheck, parsonage, pension, prestige, and pride. They have neglected their holy calling and are no longer a voice proclaiming the promises of God. And what about our laity? Many have been anesthetized by faddish ideologies themselves or have found contentment in pondering at the pool of mediocrity. God have mercy on us all!

Jesus said, "**Thy word is truth**" (*1 John 17:17*). The apostle Paul exhorts Christians to "**buckle the belt of truth around your waist**" (*Ephesians 6:14*) and to take up the "**sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God**" (*Ephesians 6:17*). Praise God, it's not a butter-knife!

Let us therefore "speak the truth in love," not as Bible-bigots, but Bible believers! Not haughty in spirit, but humble, broken, and poured out. Let us compassionately, yet unashamedly, lead men and women to the truth of Jesus.

Amazingly, the ironic thing about Pilate's question was that his answer stood before him. The Anointed One, who revealed Himself as, "**the Way, the Truth, and the Life,**" (*John 14:6*) was truth manifested in the flesh!

Today in a world that says, "Go with the flow", Jesus says "Follow Me." In doing so, we once again hear the voice of our Master calling, "You shall know the truth, and the truth shall set you free." (*John 8:32*)

Does anybody want to be free?

"Before You Say 'I Do'" Seminar to be Held in April

All couples planning to be married at Grace Church in 2006 are required to attend a one-day pre-marital seminar entitled, "Before You Say 'I Do'" which will be offered on Saturday, April 1st from 9AM to 3PM. The seminar will be led by Pastor Miller and other church members.



Topics covered are communication skills, problem solving, expectations, sex and intimacy, the covenant of marriage, and money matters. Lunch will be provided. Please contact the church office by March 19th if interested.





Couple's Club "Soup-Off"

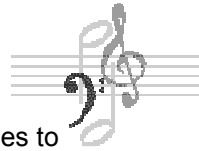


Attention all couples!!! March is "Soup-Off" month so come prepared to taste several different types of soups. If you have a good recipe for soup that you'd like to share (no one is to know who made what), please call Pat Broadrick at 937-492-8728 or Sally Kilburn at 937-497-8889. For the rest of those attending, to top off our "Soup Tasting" we'll need pop and, of course, desserts. After finding out who makes the best soup we'll have some great entertainment, so come prepared to have a terrific time. We'll see you on Saturday, March 18th at 6:30 pm here at the church.

2006 Miami County Multiple Sclerosis Walk

On Sunday, April 23rd the MS Walk will return to the Troy Memorial Stadium for its 10th year. This walk helps to fund research and to give help to those in our area who are affected by MS. Several people in our own congregation either have MS or have a family member who has this incurable disease. If you would like to have more information about "The Walk", "The Disease" or how to help, please contact Judy Harris at 773-3096.

Celebration Worship Choir



Just a reminder that March 8th at 8 pm in the choir room is the next practice for the Celebration Worship Choir. Come prepared to sing praises to our Lord and have a lot of fun! We will be singing for Palm Sunday (April 9th) and Mother's Day (May 14th). Practices will be every Wednesday at 8 pm until May 10th. No experience necessary.

Soup Kitchen Update



Thanks to all the wonderful people who helped us in the month of January to serve 1,189 meals. Also, thanks to all who donated food and money to help us to better serve the less fortunate of our community, of which the numbers are rising.

God Bless You,
Wilma Earls



Student Ministry



March 5

GroundZero Presents...Dead Serious Issues, Part 2

Suicide...there's hardly a more painful word in our dictionary. It's one of the leading causes of teen death. Join us tonight to hear a special speaker tell about how suicide impacted his family's life. If you have friends who have considered suicide, or if you've ever considered it, don't miss this important night.

Also, tonight we'll celebrate (with an awesome pizza party) our massive victory over other local youth groups—we brought more people to *Dead Serious...About Life* than any other youth group! We'll also give you the chance to whoop your friends in an awesome tug-of-war game!

6:30-8:30 PM @ Grace

March 12

GroundZero Presents...Dead Serious Issues, Part 3

Let's talk about sex (and babies!). What's it like to be a teenage mom or dad? We'll hear from someone who knows firsthand what teen pregnancy is all about and how it changes your life, whether you are a teen mom or dad. Also, get your fingers loosened up for some crazy finger-blaster medic!

6:30-8:30 PM @ Grace

March 19

GroundZero Presents...Dead Serious Issues, Part 4

It stinks to go through hard times, doesn't it? It's harder to be a teenager today than it has ever been. Many teens who struggle with deep pain turn to harmful things like cutting themselves to deal with the pain. Whether you've ever tried this or not, you don't want to miss GroundZero tonight as we talk about ways to make it through really hard times. Plus, we'll play a really cool new game tonight!

6:30-8:30 PM @ Grace

March 26

GroundZero Presents...The Dating Game Show

Ready to laugh so hard that you lose the smoothie that you downed in the Café (OK, maybe not quite that hard)? Bring your friends for a hilarious GroundZero edition of the classic *Dating Game Show* and MTV's *Singled Out*. You'll play along with your friends and with a few special guest characters and compete for prizes!

From the Office of Caring...

Sometimes as I sit in my office and ponder life I find myself asking God, "What now, God? What direction do you want me to take this ministry?" For you see, there is much, much more to the care ministry than a hospital visit or visit to a nursing home. There are people who don't know where to turn when trouble strikes. Yes, people in the church find themselves not knowing where to turn. We are here to guide and help in a spiritual way. It is from this prayerful pondering that I have had a heart for those women who find themselves in a place of singleness from death of their husbands after being married many years. Widows are a unique group of women who have in many cases been long-term caregivers to their husbands and now have experienced the loss of her husband. After years of care and now loss, where do we turn? How do we fit in as a single woman now?

On **Monday, March 6th**, at 12:00 noon, we are hosting the first meeting for widowed women. This meeting and luncheon is open to all women. Women from other walks of life are welcome. After lunch together we will discuss the possible ministry opportunities for us as a group, so please come with your thoughts. This will be a conversation among all of us.

Here are the details:

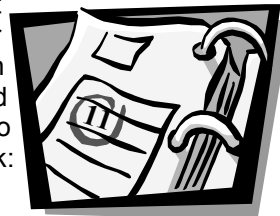
When: Monday, March 6th, 12:00 noon
Where: Conference Room
Who: Widows
Bring: Something to share for lunch. We'll have a carry-in together.
Agenda: Introductions, lunch and conversation with Pastor Mary.
Time Frame: 1 ½ hours (there is no hurry.)
RSVP: The church office (773-8232)

Hoping to see you on March 6th:
Pastor Mary Haldeman



Men's Breakfast

Attention, gentlemen! Are you up for some hot breakfast complete with the fellowship of your brothers in Christ? On Saturday, March 11th, the men of Grace come together again to share an early breakfast and listen to a testimony by Glenn Orebaugh. We ask for a \$3 donation to cover the cost of the food. For more details, contact George Broaddrick: 492-8728 or Tom Kister: 773-9640.



Thank-you to the Family of Grace

Dear Family of Grace:

We want to thank all of our church family and friends for their acts of kindness during our illnesses. All the prayers, telephone calls, visits and food brought in were so very welcome. It meant so much to us and will never be forgotten.

Dale & Joy Walker

Children's Ministry News

Power House March Scripture Verses:

"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life." John 3:16

"I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you." Psalm 119:11

Power House March Lessons and Activities:

March 1st - Attending Greene St. UMC for Ash Wednesday Services. We will be having activities with the children while the adults have services in the Sanctuary. Beginning at 7 pm.

March 8th - "Return of Lazarus"

March 15th - **Bring a friend to Power House - Fun Filled Olympics**

March 22nd - "Last Supper"

March 29th - "At the Scene of the Grave"



All children who are 1st - 6th grade are welcome to come to **Power House** on Wednesdays at 6:30 pm - **AND THEN - LOOK AHEAD TO APRIL!!**

Wednesday, April 5th - **1st and 2nd graders ONLY! Pizza Party!!!!!!**

Friday, April 7th - **Overnighter for 3rd - 6th Graders! (Bring your friends!)**




Ladies' Hobby Night

All ladies are welcome to come join us for a relaxing evening of crafting and fellowship in the Conference room from 6pm - 10pm on the 1st Friday of the month (March 3rd this month). If you have questions, please call Sharon Jennings at 778-0499.



March 2006

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 Ash Wed. Service @ Greene St. UMC 7pm	2 After School Break "ASB" 2:15pm Trustees 7 pm	3 Appreciation Breakfast @ Piqua HS Ladies' Hobby Night 6pm	4
5 GroundZero 6:30 pm Kid's Chimes @ both Sunday Morning Worship Services	6	7 Worship Team B 7:30 pm Prayer Team 6 am "ASB" 2:15	8 Drama Team 7 pm Powerhouse 6:30 pm Kid's Choir/Chimes 8pm Lose It For Life 6:30 pm Adult Choir 7 pm Celebration Choir 8 pm	9 "ASB" 2:15pm	10	11 Men's Prayer Breakfast 7:00 am
12 GroundZero 6:30 pm	13	14 Worship Team A 7:30 pm Prayer Team 6 am "ASB" 2:15pm	15 Powerhouse 6:30 pm Kid's Choir/Chimes 8pm Lose It For Life 6:30 pm Adult Choir 7 pm Celebration Choir 8 pm	16 "ASB" 2:15pm	17 	18 Couples' Club 6:30 pm –"Soup Off"
19 GroundZero 6:30 pm	20	21 Worship Team B 7:30 pm Prayer Team 6 am "ASB" 2:15pm	22 Powerhouse 6:30 pm Kid's Choir/Chimes 8pm Lose It For Life 6:30 pm Adult Choir 7 pm Celebration Choir 8 pm	23 "ASB" 2:15pm Missions Team 7pm Newsletter info due	24 Women's Retreat Begins at Hueston Woods	25 Women Return from Retreat
26 GroundZero 6:30 pm	27 Worship Team A 7:30 pm	28 Prayer Team 6 am "ASB" 2:15pm Newsletter Assembly	29 Powerhouse 6:30 pm Kid's Choir/Chimes 8pm Lose It For Life 6:30 pm Adult Choir 7 pm Celebration Choir 8 pm	30 "ASB" 2:15pm	31 Spring Banquet @ Bethany Center	