

John's Epistle

How Long a Winter?

February 2nd is known, of course, as Groundhog Day, when Punxatawney Phil, famous around the world, comes out of his burrow to see--or not see--his shadow.

I have to admit that I always seem to forget the meaning of the signs: is it seeing--or not seeing--his shadow that indicates "six more weeks" of winter? (The answer is that seeing his shadow means six more weeks of winter, so don't bother reminding me! ;) The only reason I really look forward to Groundhog Day is that it reminds me of one of my favorite films. I love the movie so much I think I could watch it every Feb 2 for the rest of my life and not tire of it!

This week I learned another reason to remember Feb 2, one that holds a great deal more meaning to me personally. It's surprising to me that I never knew that Christian tradition has claimed Feb 2 as the remembrance of the day Mary and Joseph presented Jesus at the Temple in Jerusalem. Perhaps you remember the story: his parents bring him, along with their sacrifice of two doves, to have him blessed by Simeon, who had been in a vision that he would live to see the Christ born.

Upon seeing Jesus and recognizing that the promise has been fulfilled, Simeon sings a song of praise to God:

Sovereign Lord, as you have promised,
you now dismiss your servant in peace.
For my eyes have seen your salvation,
which you have prepared in the sight of all people, a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel. (Luke 2:29-32)

Cool.

But I learned something else about that day (the day of the presentation, not Feb 2). There is a detail that Luke includes in the story that has great meaning, one that could go unnoticed, just as I have for most of my life. Mary and Joseph brought two doves for the sacrifice because they were too poor to bring the sacrifice proper to the occasion, a lamb. Instead, they brought the substitute sacrifice, allowable under the law for the poorest among the people of Israel. (See Lev 12:8)

What occurs to me in learning this is that in bringing Jesus, these materially poor people, his parents, brought the richest of gifts, the Lamb of God. We often pity the poor, acting as if we are the ones who have something to offer to God. But in this story, the great gift comes from those who cannot offer what is "proper."

The United Methodist Church identified four areas of focus at our General Conference in 2008, one of which was ministry with the poor. That phrase, "with the poor," is significant, because it means that we engage in ministry together, sharing in the work of the gospel.

This idea requires a warming of our hearts to the idea that in God all things are possible. It means that the winter of our isolation from one another is ended, that God brings us together with people with whom, frankly, we may have very little in common, for a common purpose, Jesus the Christ.

How long will this winter last? I don't know, but I don't think Jesus saw his shadow.

Grace and peace,
Pastor John

UPHOLDING OUR CHURCH BY OUR ... PRAYERS PRESENCE

Prayers of healing and comfort for:

Jim & Barbara Baker (Jim & Rita Gay's friends)
Carsen Bang (Travis Crouse's son) recovering from surgery
Evelyn & David Bryant (Kay Brewer & Mike Moss' friends)
 who are both beginning cancer treatments this week
Ray Burgy (Jessica Jordan's grandfather) declining health
Carter Cusales (Richardson's friend) recovering from surgery
Debbie (Brock's family member) who is battling cancer
Terri Helmer family member's health and employment
Billy & Bobbie Lightfoot's 13 year old grandson (Ross &
 Paula Richardson's friends) recovering from heart surgery
Nancy Levy (friend of Sandi Smith) recovering from surgery
Katie Liston (Joan Douglass' great-niece) receiving treatment
 for lupus
David Mathews who is recovering at his mother's home
Dorothy McCarley (Bobby & Dorothy Brock's friend's sister)
 who is battling cancer
Janine McKee who had a fall and is still recovering
Chelsea Morrow (Susan's daughter-in-law) who is recovering
 from c-section complications
David Thomas (friend of Lesa Smith) recovering from heart
 attack.
Brian Wolff who is recovering from detached retina surgery
Zaiden Woods (Bonnie Hill's grandson) awaiting tests results
Bailey Young (Kelli Goolsby's 2nd cousin) recovering from
 surgeries
Jaun Zamora (Bianca's father) who has health concerns

Prayers of celebration:

The birth of **Macy Marie Morrow** on January 25! Congratulations to parents Wes & Chelsea and Grandma Susan!

Ongoing prayers for those dealing with cancer:

Amanda Ashlock (Craig & Nancy Bornstien's friend), **Adrian Andrews** (Jack Wakin's nephew), **Linda DiPonzio** (Ron Harris' sister), **Janie Downy** (Penny Wakin's mother), **Helena Fair** (Richard Fair's mother), **Anita Ferman**, **Phyllis Guller** (Rita Gay's friend), **Deanna Hedrick** (Jan Chisham's cousin), **Marvin Ingles** (Ross Richardson's friend), **Robin Love** (Karen McNaughton's friend), **Candy Mathews**, **Brenda Pinion** (Mike Pinion's aunt), **Jan Rhea** (friend of the Bovees), **Lou Snell** (Becky Burtner's aunt), **Jerry States** (David Sutter's cousin).

Other ongoing prayers:

Jack Mohler (Sandi Smith's father) receiving hospice care
David Stevenson who is having health concerns

Prayers of protection and safety for:

Armed forces throughout the world, especially for Grace folks who are deployed

Jim Eversole who is working in Afghanistan.

The following deployed in Afghanistan:

SPU Jeremy Bailey (Starners' great nephew) US Army
Byron Beck (Gloria Beck's stepson) US Army Reserves
MSG Dawn Cantele (Howard & Linda Burris' niece) US Army
PFC Bradley Herron (Chuck & Andi Schruhl's grandson)

Prayers for healthy pregnancy: **Erin Clayton**

If there is an emergency, please call the pastor on his cell phone: Rev. John Fleming at 214-384-1139.

January 1, 2011

Worship.....134
 8:30 am.....84
 11:00 am.....134
 No Sunday School.....

January 15, 2011

Worship.....229
 8:30 am.....77
 11:00 am.....152
 Sunday School.....118

January 8, 2011

Worship.....244
 8:30 am.....84
 11:00 am.....160
 Sunday School.....94

January 22, 2011

Worship.....241
 7:00 pm.....85
 10:30 pm.....156
 Sunday School.....122

January 29, 2011

Worship.....240
 8:30 am.....94
 11:00 am.....146
 No Sunday School

GIFTS

January Operating	Year-to-Date Operating
Required thru 1/31.....\$32,062	Required thru 1/31.....\$32,062
Received thru 1/31.....\$44,636	Received thru 1/31.....\$44,636

LEAP OF FAITH Campaign Pledges.....\$135,696
 Monies Received Toward Pledges.....\$127,410

SERVICE

OUR SERVICE THANKS TO...

...**Mike Jones & Bert Winn** for helping with Legal Clinic every month.
 ...**Bert Winn** for helping with minor repairs.
 ...**Gary Witt** for fixing the women's restroom fan.
 ...**Pamela Rylander** for keeping the landscaping looking great.
 ...**Super Seniors** for the folding & stuffing of the bulletins.
 ...**ALL** the behind the scenes Grace Angels!

Thank You!


Thank you for the prayers lifted for my father, Keith Lund. His surgery went well, and his recovery is speeding along! I know this is because all of the thoughts and prayers through the weeks. Also thank you so much for the meal provided to us on my return from my dad's hospital stay. It came at a much needed time & was very appreciated!

Gratefully, Amy Gardner

Dear Friends at Grace,

Thank you for all your prayers, calls, cards of sympathy and memorial gifts. We have been fortunate to spend the past four summers in Nebraska with my father. All of our children and grandchildren were able to visit there with us this past summer and all of our children were able to attend the memorial celebration of Dad's life.

Sincerely, Gary & Gayle Witt

			1 9:00 Ladies Bible Study 6:00 Faithweavers 6:00 Pastor's Bible Study 6:00 Youth Bible Study 7:00 Choir	2 9:00 Super Seniors 6:00 Legal Clinic 7:00 Created by God 6:15 Praise Band	3	4 8:00 UMM Breakfast
5 8:30 Disciple I 12:30 Disciple IV 5:00 Adult Bells 5:00 GUMY	6 7:00 Disciple III	7 5:30 WORSHIP COMMITTEE	8 9:00 Ladies Bible Study 6:00 Faithweavers 6:00 Pastor's Bible Study 6:00 Youth Bible Study 7:00 Choir	9 9:00 Super Seniors 6:15 Praise Band 7:00 UMW	10	11
12 8:30 Disciple I 12:30 Disciple IV 12:15 MISSION BOARD 1:30 Quilter's Corner 5:00 Adult Bells 5:00 GUMY 5:30 Confirmation	13 7:00 Disciple III	14	15 9:00 Ladies Bible Study 6:00 Faithweavers 6:00 Pastor's Bible Study 6:00 Youth Bible Study 7:00 Choir	16 9:00 Super Seniors Potluck 6:15 Praise Band	17	18
19 8:30 Disciple I 12:30 Disciple IV 5:00 Adult Bells 5:00 GUMY 5:30 Confirmation	20 7:00 Disciple III	21 6:30 AD COUNCIL	22 9:00 Ladies Bible Study ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICE 6:30 pm 6:00 Faithweavers 6:00 Pastor's Bible Study 6:00 Youth Bible Study 7:00 Choir	23 9:00 Super Seniors 6:15 Praise Band	24	25
26 8:30 Disciple I 12:30 Disciple IV 5:00 Adult Bells 5:00 GUMY 5:30 Confirmation	27 6:30 Stephen Ministry 7:00 Disciple III	28	29 9:00 Ladies Bible Study 6:00 Faithweavers 6:00 Pastor's Bible Study 6:00 Youth Bible Study 7:00 Choir			

Kids Korner

Thank you to...

Bill & Joan Douglass for having the ark in the play area weatherproofed.
Joe Davis, Bryan Kahl, Marsha Kahl and Cheryl Young for being table leaders for "Created by God," and **Koby Catellier** for providing lunch.
Mary Jones for providing childcare for Legal Clinic.

Sunday School

Our Live B.I.G. lessons for February focus on the stories Jesus told to help us know how to live.

The weekly topics are as follows:

- Feb 5 - The Talents (Matthew 25:14-29)
- Feb 12 - The Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37)
- Feb 19 - Lost and Found (Luke 15:8-10)
- Feb 26 - The Rich Fool (Luke 12:13-21)



Above: Haley Perkins, Carly Weaver, Officer Wade, Lauren Goolsby and Kaitlin Catellier delivered brownies to the police, thanking them for their service. **Below:** Harrison Dominick displays his artwork during Sunday School class.



Coming up!!

If you need **childcare for Wednesday** evening Bible Study and/or choir, please let Marianna know at 903.892.3681 by the Sunday before.

Valentine's for Wesley Village, Sunday, February 12, immediately following second service. We will have a light lunch then create our cards!

Sign Up for Children's Musical, "Dinner for Five ... Thousand" in the Narthex. Ages sixth grade and under are invited to take part!

Vacation Bible School will begin on Sunday, July 15-19 mark your calendar!

Happy Birthday!!

2-02	Oliver Krov	2-09	Hollis Jordan
2-03	Grace Ekl	2-13	Tanner Ford
2-07	Libby Lightfoot	2-20	Jakob Sims
2-07	Mason Hanson		
2-08	Addison Porter		
2-24	Landen Brand		
2-26	Peyton Rice		



Above: Ben Gardner shows the placemat he made for the Kairos Walk. **Below:** Joan Douglass blesses student, Sheila Finney in remembrance of Jesus' baptism.



GUMY

FEBRUARY 2012
Grace United Methodist Church
Youth Newsletter

ANNOUNCEMENTS



Noah's Ark Discovered?!?

Can it truly be? Last week I was on Facebook looking at some of the local news items, and what should pop up? An article about a man who says his team has found the remains of Noah's Ark! With all the rain we had been getting those past couple of days I thought it was ironically appropriate that this story should surface. And the news station may have ran the story for that same reason.

It seems that a man in Oklahoma through his research has finally found what biblical archaeologists have been looking for centuries! He has brought back wood fragments matching structure dimensions and carbon dated to the date that they think Noah built the ark. There were also trace remains from animals not indigenous to the area and that in the natural world would not, under normal circumstances, have ever met.

How did he accomplish what no other has been able to do? Not even CIA satellites have been able to accurately locate....? To sum up his answer, everyone has been looking on the wrong mountain. WOW! The wrong mountain? For centuries?!? If all the data turns out, that's pretty cool! If not it could be a total hoax, like many recent archaeological finds in the past decade. As amazing as I find these kinds of stories, in the back of my mind I begin to wonder...how important is it that we find Noah's Ark? Sure it may solidify the claims that the Bible is accurate and true, and it may also help some to come to believe in God and eventually in Christ...but does it help strengthen our faith?

If we look at Hebrews 11:1-3, there is a definition of faith. A definition that doesn't rely on the physical proof of something existing, in fact it sounds like believing in something you can't see is the nature of faith.

This makes me think about how God asks us to believe in many things we can't see. And how we can't see many of the things that make us stronger: faith, hope, love, grace...

So while the possible discovery of Noah's Ark excites me and peaks my curiosity, I am still able to realize that just because I can't see it doesn't cause my faith to waiver. Instead it makes me stronger, in spirit and in action!

Be Blessed & Be A Blessing!

THE GUMY WEEK @ GRACE



Sunday Worship: 8:30 a.m. Traditional
11:00 a.m. Blended
Sunday School: 9:50 - 10:50 a.m.
UMYF Sundays: 5:00 - 7:00 p.m.*
Mid-Week Bible Study: 6:00 - 7:00p.m.*
**Unless otherwise noted on the calendar*

THANK YOU!

A HUGE thank you needs to go out to the people of Grace! Thank you for your support in helping us raise the money we need for our summer mission trips. The Senior High Mission Team will go Guntersville, Alabama to help with tornado damage. Our Junior High Mission Team will head out to learn more about serving and being able to help others during the Mystery Ramble!

When all is well and done, we will have raised over \$6600! Thank you again to everyone who donated, those who bought and those who worked behind the scenes to make the auction happen!!



IT'S A GO!

With all the talk about mission trips, it's only logical that in order for us to go out and help others that we need to remember what it's like to support one another! And that's exactly what we'll be doing on February 10, we will go to Group Dynamix. We will head down to Carrollton for an awesome time of games & activities that focus on team-building & camaraderie!

You'll need to have your consent forms, your list of "what-to" and "what-not" to bring, and will need your money as soon as possible! The forms are available on the church website listed at the bottom of this page.

There are still spots open if you want to go! The cost is \$40 a person. Please let Allen know if you want to go or have any questions!!

GUYS & GIRLS NIGHT!


We'll be having a Girls & Guys Night on February 19th! We'll split up, with the guys & and girls each going to a different host home where they'll eat dinner and hang out!

We'll need drivers and host homes for that night! If you are able and want to help the youth prepare dinner at your home and let us hang out and chat...please let Allen know via phone, email, or Facebook!

Visit the Youth Page Online
<http://www.gracesherman.org/youth>
or on Facebook
Search for Grace Youth - Sherman, TX



February 2012

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 Wednesday Night Bible Study 6:00 p	2	3	4
5 Worship 8:30 & 11a Sunday School 9:50 a UMY 5 - 7p	6	7	8 Wednesday Night Bible Study 6:00 p	9	10 Leave for Group Dynamix— 5:30 pm	11 Return from Group Dynamix— 9:00 am
12 Worship 8:30 & 11a Sunday School 9:50 a UMY 5 - 7p	13	14	15 Wednesday Night Bible Study 6:00 p	16	17	18
19 Worship 8:30 & 11a Sunday School 9:50 a UMY 5 - 7p Guys & Girls Night	20	21	22 Wednesday Night Bible Study 6:00 p	23	24	25
26 Worship 8:30 & 11a Sunday School 9:50 a UMY 5 - 7p	27	28	29 Wednesday Night Bible Study 6:00 p			

February Birthdays!

Lauren Johnson - Feb. 24

February Snack Suppers

Feb. 5 - Davis & Bornstein

Feb. 12 - Walker &

Bandemir

Feb. 19 - Guys & Girls Night

Feb. 26 - Porter & Kahl

Allen's Contact Stuff!

Office: 903-892-3681

Cell: 903-271-7060

Email: allen@gracesherman.org

February Birthdays

1st..... Richard Fair	12th..... Bill Douglass
.....Allen Gardner Twila Harvey
..... Vickie Starner	14th..... Matthew Stevenson
3rd John Pulliam	15th..... Laura Dominick
7th Evelyn Low Thomas Jones
.....Stephen Sloan	17th..... Ron Swenson
8th Jerry Frazier	20th..... Jakob Sims
11th..... Roger Osterhout	24th..... Lauren Johnson
.....Jo Dawn Smith	27th..... Crystal May
	28th..... Gene McElroy



BLOOD MOBILE TO RETURN

The Texoma Regional Blood Center will be coming again on Sunday, February 5th, from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. to collect blood from those who are willing to give. On Sunday, November 20th, 2011, 32 people donated blood here at

Grace - a *great* response. We are hoping that each of you will give again, and that even more people will choose to give this priceless life-saving gift. If you think you might donate, please be sure to eat breakfast that Sunday morning (February 5th) and to bring with you a list of all your medications.

Thank You!

To the Grace Methodist Church Family,

The Wednesday Ladies' Bible Study members continue to receive blessing from you, week after week. We are so grateful for your warm hospitality and generous spirit in providing a wonderful place for us to meet. We are grateful for you each week as we gather, and hope that this monetary gift will provide a blessing to you in return.

In Christ Jesus, Marsha & 'friends'

Dear Friends,

On behalf of the Crisis Center I would like to take this opportunity to thank you, once again, for your generosity. Your donation is very much appreciated. This year we were able to help numerous women and children because of friends like you that continue to help us each year. Again, our heartfelt thanks for your contribution for our families. It definitely makes their Christmas merry!

Sincerely, Mary Dolezalek, Crises Center

Grace family,

Thank you all for the prayers, cards, food and warm wishes you poured out on me and my family. Thanks to your love I believe I am healing quickly. Thank you again for all the love you shared with us and I am grateful for you all.

Jan Sutter & family



NEW LENTEN STUDY TO BEGIN

"A Call to Live"

A Lenten Study of Hunger in Body & Soul
Following the Sufferings of Jesus Christ
Sunday Mornings @ 9:50 a.m.

Beginning February 26

Call the Church Office, (903) 892-3681, or email
info@gracesherman.org for more information.



UNITED METHODIST WOMEN

This month's meeting will be held at 7:00 p.m. on **February 9** in the church Narthex. The program "Call to Prayer & Self Denial: A Time for Change" will be presented by Nana Rylander. Janine McKee will be hostess. All women of

Grace are welcome to attend an evening of fellowship, food and an interesting program. Don't forget to bring your items for the Sherman Housing Authority: toilet tissue, paper towels, dishwashing liquid. Contact Virginia Bovee if you have questions at 903-815-8548.

LEGAL CLINIC FOR FEBRUARY

Legal Clinic will be at 6:00 p.m. on **February 2**.

Pathfinders Sunday School Class will help with serving food.



KEY CARE REQUESTED ITEMS FOR FEBRUARY

powered milk, canned milk and toilet paper



QUILTER'S CORNER

The Quilter's Corner will meet from 1:30 - 4:30 p.m. on Sunday, February 12 in the Community Room. Bring a project to work on and join the fun & fellowship. For more information call Susan Pinion at 903-893-2597 or Virginia Bovee at 903-815-8548.

Grace Notes

GRACE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
2800 CANYON CREEK SHERMAN, TX 75092
PHONE 903-892-3681 FAX 903-892-8254

Scheduled Sunday Worship Times: 8:30 & 11:00 a.m.
Sunday School for all ages: 9:50 a.m.

Welcome, NEW MEMBERS!



Darrin Wade joined Grace UMC on December 25, 2011.

Jessica Jordan joined Grace UMC on December 8, 2011 and **Mercer Zion Jordan** was baptized on January 22, 2012.



ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICE
6:30 P.M.
FEBRUARY 22

WORSHIP SERVICES

FEBRUARY 5 -

FREE FOR ALL

Isaiah 40:21-31 & 1 Corinthians 9:16-23

FEBRUARY 12 -

PRIDE AND JOY

2 Kings 5:1-14 & Mark 1:40-45

FEBRUARY 19 -

PERSISTENCE PAYS

2 Kings 2:1-12 & Mark 9:2-9

FEBRUARY 22 -

ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICE 6:30 P.M.

FEBRUARY 26 -

SOMETHING FOR NOTHING

PART ONE: "THE RAINBOW CONNECTION"

Genesis 9:8-17 & Mark 1:9-15