



Lovilia Circuit Writer



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✠ PASTOR'S COLUMN ✠

While trying to decide what to write about, I stopped to listen to Lynn and Becky's "Why Do I Talk about Jesus" that was playing on the CD player. Why do we talk about Jesus? Is it because, as the song proclaims, that 'He's the only answer in this world for us;' that 'his love is the only love that will see us through;' and that 'as many as receive Him have the right to become children of God?' Is it because God's grace made visible in Jesus bubbles up inside of us so that we can not do otherwise but praise Him?

Talk about Jesus that is from the heart can come from our lips only when we have experienced His love and grace in our own life. A

gift that incredible and life-changing must be shared. So, maybe the question we need to ask at the very center of who we are is - why don't we talk about Jesus? Is it at the top of or even on our list of conversation topics? Or do we save it up for Sunday morning or Wednesday evening and then tuck it away until next week? We're quick to talk about our children and grandchildren and even about what happened this week on our favorite television program but, talk about our Lord, especially with folks who don't go to our church, that's way too far out of our comfort zone. But, if we don't talk about Christ and let His love shine through what we say and do, then how will others know? How will they fill that empty space within them that only God can fill? Maybe,

What's So Amazing about Grace?

By Philip Yancey

READER'S CORNER

just maybe, we need to talk about Him more.

Almost every pastor, and most believers,

would have a favorite author or book that they feel, should be in the hands of all the faithful. In the last couple of years, I have discovered one who, I think, belongs on the shelf of everyone who seriously pursues faith in Christ. His name is Philip Yancey and the book for this month is the aptly titled, *What's So Amazing about Grace?*

Throughout this book, Yancey insists that the one thing that separates Christianity from other religions - apart from Jesus Himself - is grace, the willingness to forgive without thought of anything in return. The ability to forgive is a divine gift, given to us by our Lord Christ, and absolutely essential in a world that regularly practices un-grace. We see around us the effects of cruelty and unforgiveness; what then are Christians called to do, if not to break the awful

cycle of violence and troubles, oftentimes expressed in the name of God?

(Reader's Corner Continued)

What I find so compelling about Yancey is the way he reminds us of the radical nature of our faith. Grace is scandalous, shocking. It is offered to unfaithful spouses, racists and child abusers. It survives amidst the atrocities of the holocaust and the brutality of the klan. It purposely seeks out those who have been judged hopeless and beyond redemption, and it is a necessity that all of us must take advantage of. Yancey repeatedly reminds us of how truly amazing this grace is, and the examples he provides are powerful testaments of how God and Christ continue to shower grace upon an ungrateful world.

Yancey concludes his book with an inspiring story of Jessye Norman, the opera singer. She was invited to sing at Wembley Stadium in London, a soccer venue. For twelve hours, the sounds of Guns 'n Roses and other heavy metal bands fueled a crowd high on booze and drugs. Finally, her time comes to sing, and as she patiently endures the taunts of the fans, her rich voice, without accompaniment, carries throughout the stadium. By the end of the hymn, several thousand hard-rock fans have joined in, so moved are they by this magical moment. Yancey's own last words are fitting here:

"Jessye Norman later confessed she had no idea what power descended on Wemberley Stadium that night. I think I know. The world thirsts for grace. When grace descends, the world falls silent before it."

This Article was Written by: Pastor Kevin

LUMC News

Birthdays & Anniversaries

APRIL

- 1 Iola Gladfelder
- 2 Jimmy Hobart
- 5 Lola Ivins
- 7 Fred Kraber
- 9 Ralph Bryant
- 12 Helen Baker
- 14 Marty Major, Marilyn Kraber, Travis Weldon
- 16 Ron Conner
- 17 Judy Conner
- 18 Lorena Bowman
- 19 James Hobart
- 20 Curtis and Frieda Davis (A)

FINANCES

Our income for March was \$1,769.50 and \$2,076.51 is needed to meet our budget for the year.

UMW Notes

April 10th at Sigourney will be our Annual Day Apart. This day is a spiritual retreat to begin Holy week. I will be going if any want a ride.

Are you saving Campbell labels and coupons for Bidwell Riverside in Des Moines? A jar is by the coat rack to put them in. Last year, the center used them to get a new van. It took 1,500,000 labels.

We will have a work day at the Center in July. If interested, contact me as the date has not yet been set for this. Copies of the eligible labels are available in the rack.

Next meeting is April 6 at 1:30 PM. The evening group will meet at 7 PM.

Our chicken noodle supper will be Wednesday, April 26. Please plan to help and make the event a success.

Our Mother/Daughter Brunch is being planned for Saturday, May 13 at 10:00 AM. Put this date on your calendar.

YOUTH GROUP

- On Sunday, April 9th, our young people will be available from 1:00 – 5:00 PM to older folks who need help with outdoor spring cleaning. If you would like your yard raked or debris cleaned up, etc., please contact Connie Barnes (946-7333) or sign up on the sheet at the church on April 2nd. *There is NO charge.* We would just like to help.
- On Friday evening, April 7th, our Lovilia youth will go skating in Oskaloosa at the Spinning Wheels Skate Center. We will leave from the church at 5:30PM and return home by 9:30PM. The cost will be \$5.00 per person (because we are a church group, they will throw in the skates free of charge). Consent slips will be sent home at the March 29th meeting or are available from Pastor Jill. Any parents who would like to go are certainly welcome.

TRUSTEES

Our trustees have been exploring a variety of possibilities for dealing with our church basement. If you have ideas or suggestions, contact one of our trustees (list below) soon. Updates will appear in future newsletters. Bill Barnes (chair), John Hastings, Kevin Maughan, Bill Conner, Ed Weldon, Phil Lundstrom, Merrill Baker, Judy Conner, Calvin Chamberlain.

Parish News

...:HOLY WEEK AND EASTER:..
...:SERVICES:..

Maunday Thursday - April 13

On Thursday, April 13th, come to Bussey at 7:00PM and experience "Beyond the Shadows," a special service of Holy Communion.

Good Friday - April 14

Our parish will gather for worship at the Hamilton Church on Friday, April 14th at 7:00PM to watch the drama "I Was There."

Sunrise Services - April 16th

At 6:30AM on April 16th, you have a choice of worshipping at Bussey or Lovilia for the Sunrise Service "He Is Not Here." Breakfast will be served at Bussey and Lovilia following the services at approximately 7:00AM.

LOVILIA CHICKEN NOODLE SUPPER

Come to the Lovilia Community Building for the Lovilia Church Chicken Noodle Supper on Wednesday, April 26th from 5:00-7:00PM. There will be good company and a whole lot of good food including homemade chicken and noodles and pies that will melt in your mouth. See you there!

BIBLE STUDY ON REVELATION

Our Bible Study on Revelation continues every Sunday evening (except Easter) at 6:00PM at the Lovilia Church. it's not too late to join us.

UNITED METHODIST MEN

- On Saturday, April 1st at 7:00AM the ladies are invited to come for a breakfast of pancakes (Ward is our expert pancake maker), eggs, sausage, juice and coffee and a special presentation by Dale Barnhill on his work trip to the New Orleans area. Come and be a part of the fun and fellowship.

- The first pallette of wood has been ordered and work will begin on the PET mobiles in the very near future. Watch your bulletins for more information. Thank you to all who have contributed so far in this most worthwhile project.

PARISH YOUTH

If you are (or know of) a young person in 7th through 12th grade, we want you to be a part of our parish youth group. We need your input and your talents. What do you want the youth group to be? Now is the time to fashion a youth group that will meet your needs and use your gifts to serve the Lord. We are compiling a list of youth and we do not want to leave anyone out. Call Kim Williams or Pastor Jill if you are interested or know of someone who might be.



Keep Shirley Hugen's family and friends in your prayers as well as Warren Jones, Donnie Tucker, John

Waters, Ralph Bryant, Thelma Smith, Lyle Hugen, Lois Walter, Lois Mahon, Janice Klobnak, Curtis Davis, Dale Allison, Levi Miller and Kevin Maughan.

Beyond the Local Church

District Conference

On Saturday, May 6th the District Conference will be held in Ottumwa. This is a way of gearing up for Annual Conference in June and finding out what issues will be at the center of discussion and will affect our churches.

HABITAT HOUSE AT ANNUAL CONFERENCE

This year the hammers will be heard in Ames during Annual Conference. The Bishop has challenged United Methodists in Iowa to build a Habitat for Humanity house the week of conference. Churches can send money for materials and/or workers. Since we have the very best builders/carpenters in the whole state right here in our parish, maybe we can take a group to Ames to work for a day or two. If you are interested, contact pastor Jill or one of our representatives to conference Rick Hoy and Goldie Kraber.

DISTRICT DAY APART

Monday, April 10th will be the Spring Ottumwa District Day Apart from 9:30-2:30PM in Sigourney. Rev. Kevin Gingrich will be the featured speaker on the topic of "Harvest Peace."

JUBILEE CONFERENCE

This is the last call for the Spring Jubilee Conference for Mature and Senior Adults being held in Branson, Mo. from April 24-26. There will be special speakers, great music (including Presley's Country Jubilee). For more information, call 1-800-616-8863

Mission Minute

It is exciting to know that our parish men will begin work on the PET mobiles in the near future. Imagine what it will be like for folks who have had to depend on others for their entire life to be able to get around for themselves. What a wonderful way for the men to make use of the gifts God has given them!

Now for some prayer requests from some of our missionaries around the world:

From Nepal - At Christmas time in one of the villages 45 Hindus gave their hearts to Jesus and are now being disciplined by some of the local preachers. Pray for their growth in the faith and their willingness to share it with others. Pray for the fifteen year old young man who came to Christ and, because of it, his parents tied him up, beat him and burned his Bible. He is now staying with missionaries. Pray that his faith will remain strong and that his parents will be touched by the message of Christ's love. praise God that the churches in Nepal are continuing to grow in spite of the political turmoil.

From Ireland - Pray for the strong outreach ministry going on in Ireland. Basketball is the venue being used to reach young people in the cities and smaller communities.

From India - Pray for the safety of believers in the villages. For many in this country, being a Christian is very dangerous.

Finally, from Afghanistan - Pray for the man who became a Christian a number of years ago and now faces death because he gave up Islam.

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