

AMAZING GRACE INTERFAITH MINISTRY

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To: All Friends of Amazing Grace & News From The Heart Readers

THE GIFT IN THE STRUGGLE

One day a man saw a butterfly shuddering on the sidewalk, locked in a seemingly hopeless struggle to free itself from its now... useless cocoon. Feeling pity, he took a pocket knife, carefully cut away the cocoon and set the butterfly free. To his dismay, it lay on the sidewalk, convulsed weakly for a while and died. A biologist later told him, "That was the worst thing you could have done! A butterfly needs that struggle to develop the muscles to fly. By robbing him of the struggle, you made him too weak to live."

REVENGE IS A RAGING FIRE

Resentment is the cocaine of the emotions. It causes our blood to pump and our energy level to rise. But also, like cocaine, it demands increasingly larger, more frequent dosages. There is a dangerous point at which anger ceases to be an emotion and becomes a driving force. A person bent on revenge moves unknowingly further away from being able to forgive, for to be without the anger is to be without a source of energy.

That explains why the bitter complain to anyone who will listen. They want – they need – to have their fire fanned... and it can be spiritually fatal, too. It shrivels up the soul.

Hatred is the rabid dog that turns on its owner. Revenge is the raging fire that consumes the arsonist. Bitterness is the trap that snares the hunter. And mercy is the choice that can set them all free. – *Max Lucado*



***** SMILE GOD LOVES YOU *****



DRESS TO IMPRESS

I'm 82 and like to dress nicely whenever I go out. One morning, I donned a new peach-hued gold shirt and navy blue Bermudas. I thought I looked pretty sharp. While standing in line at the deli counter, an attractive young woman approached me and asked, "Do you mind if I take a picture?" Surprised and flattered, I replied, "Of course not." As I struck a casual pose and gave her a wide smile, she took a picture of my flashy four-wheel walker. "I've been looking for something like this for my grandfather," she said. "Thanks very much." – *Louis G.*





Love is by far the most important thing of all. It is the Golden Gate of Paradise. Pray for the understanding of love, and mediate upon it daily. It casts our fear. It is the fulfilling of the law. It covers a multitude of sins. Love is absolutely invincible.

There is no difficulty that enough love will not conquer; no disease that enough love will not heal; no door that enough love will not open; no gulf that enough love will not bridge; no wall that enough love will not throw down; no sin that enough love will not redeem.

It makes no difference how deeply seated may be the trouble, how hopeless the outlook, how muddled the tangle, how great the mistake; a sufficient realization of love will dissolve it all. If only you could love enough you would be happiest and most powerful being in the world.

– Emmet Fox

POINT TO PONDER

Every single person I know (without exception) has had moment where they feel like they don't know which way is up. But I think part of the work we as humans are here to do is learn to understand and have compassion for what is uncomfortable. Sandess and fear are part of life (ask Pixar), and we can't pretend they don't exist. In fact, they enrich our lives. – Sara Bareilles



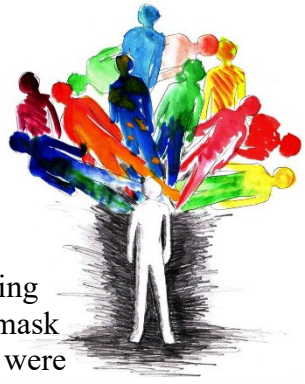
GOD IS CHEERING FOR YOU

God is for *you*. Not “may be,” not “has been,” not “was,” not “Would be,” but “God is!” He is for you. Today. At this hour. At this minute. As you read this sentence. No need to wait in line or come back tomorrow. He is with you. He could not be closer than he is at this second. His loyalty won't increase if you are better nor lessen if you are worse. He is for you. God is for *you*. Turn to the sidelines: that's God cheering your run. Look past the finish line: that's God applauding your steps. Listen for him in the bleachers, shouting your name. Too tired to continue? He'll carry you, Too discouraged to fight? He's picking you up. God is for *you*.

God is for *you*. Had He a calendar, our birthday would be circled. If he drove a car, your name would be on his bumper. If there's a tree in heaven, he's carved your name in the bark. We know he has a tattoo, and we know what it says. “I have written your name on my hand,” he declares. – Max Lucado

“Plant seeds every single day that you know who you are, you know what you're about, and you know what goals you've set for yourself.”

- Stephen Curry



THE AUTHENTIC ME

Wherever I go, there I am. The question is who's showing up? The people-pleaser, trying to say the right thing so you'll like me? The wise one, offering my opinion, trying to mask my insecurities? Or the authentic me? For a long time, I had no idea who I was. There were times when I built a protective wall around an old pain so that I could get on with my life. Eventually that wall kept me from being the person I wanted to be. The authentic me couldn't show up because the hurt me was hiding behind the wall.

I began to discover who I was – a spiritual being having a human experience, which includes painful experiences. Slowly, I started to accept myself, warts and all. Doing the deep personal work that lead to freedom was hard, but I'm worth the time and attention it takes to set myself free. Finally, I became secure enough to let those old walls crumble. I took off the mask I wore in order to be who others wanted me to be. While some were disappointed with my new-found authenticity that sense of freedom kept me going.

Each day is a treasure trove of feelings, ideas, challenges and joys. Accepting myself just as I am helps me navigate the possibilities in each moment. The more I know about myself, the more freedoms I have to accept life's offerings. The door is now wide open for you to start showing up in your life – the real you – not the person you thought you had to be or the person you believed yourself to be yesterday. You are free to be who you really are. Discovering what you like to do, the values important to you and the dreams calling to you is a magnificent, transformative undertaking.

Your life is waiting for you. Are you ready to embrace it?
- Rev. Jane Beach

IT'S UP TO YOU!



If you think you're a winner, you'll win.
If you dare to step out, you'll succeed.
Believe in your heart, have a purpose to start.
Aim to help fellow man in his need.
Thoughts of faith must replace every doubt.
Words of courage and you cannot fail.
If you stumble and fall, rise and stand ten feet tall,
You determine the course that you sail.
For in life as in death, you have nothing to fear.
Let your thinking be pure, it will make you secure,
Know that you can do it!

-Anonymous



AMAZING GRACE INTERFAITH MINISTRY

Thanks to everyone who donated to the Amazing Kids Connection for our September School Supply give-a-way! With so many beautiful backpacks and school supplies the children are all set up for a successful school year. To Calvary Presbyterian for the use of the church hall and to Olivet Presbyterian for school supplies and your wonderful volunteers who help out every month. Thank you to Ascension Church and Fr. John Shirley for their donation of 50 filled backpacks! To the Nicotra foundation and Siller Foundation for years of support. God is Good. He Does Provide. Grateful for Magen who works tirelessly for me. To all our readers for your support of this newsletter.



Prayers: for Fran & Dick, Rachel, Rob & Robbie, Gene & Linda, Alisha & Chris & Family, Rosalie, Susan L., Mike traveling, Morgan & Adam traveling, Mary & Willy, Briana, Ian & Renee, Mike Green, Emily and Adam, Pam & Lauren, Little Molly, Bob & I. All the children and teachers starting their new school year.

WHAT'S THE GOOD WORD?

When you see someone who seems sad or discouraged do you say a good word? Your encouragement may be exactly what that person needs. That's why, while waiting at an airport, professional speaker Jim Cathcart made an effort to help a young man. Cathcart was at a crowded food court where he noticed a busboy clearing away dishes and trash from the tables. His shoulders were slumped; he kept his head down and barely looked at anyone. Wanting to do something for the busboy, Cathcart said, "If you weren't doing what you are doing it wouldn't be five minutes before the trash was everywhere, and people would stop coming here. What you are doing is important, and I just wanted to say thanks for doing it." The busboy smiled. He stood taller and started making eye contact with people. Encourage those who could benefit from a kind word -0 and that just about everyone.

GO BE A BLESSING

We spend so much time worrying about things we often can't do anything about. We obsess about family and friends and wish they would change. We wake up stressing about things that haven't happened yet. We worry for the world, for the planet, for our children. Something powerful happens when we move from the place of need to get something, to being willing to give. The best place to start is being willing to listen. Listen to the experiences of others. Listen to their stories, their pain, their processes. Practice listening and not responding. Listen without attachment. Then when you are ready to move outside your comfort zone, a good question to ask yourself is, "How can I be of service for the highest good today? Please guide me to think the thoughts, speak the words and take the actions that will allow me to be love and to bring that love into service." You are needed. Some are needed to bring prayer and mediation, others are needed to give hugs, others are needed to serve in positions of influences. Some are needed to raise a family, to care for others, or to stand up and speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves. You are needed. Your gifts are needed. Your presence and services are needed. Your love and peace are needed. Ask yourself: "Where can I be a blessing today?"

Affirmation: "Wherever I go and whatever I do, I am a blessing."

Until we meet again may God hold you in the palm of His hand. - Many blessings Love Mary

**Our Zoom Services resume 9/13th and will be the first 2 Sundays of the month at 11AM
Meeting ID 86165970857 Password 918817**