

Reaching UP in our LOVE for God!
 Reaching IN in our LOVE for one another!
 Reaching OUT in our LOVE for the world!

O The OFFENSIVE Cross: Death By Love

by AJ Reynolds

Easter celebrations are always surrounded by bright colors, happy bunnies, and kids so hyped up on sugar they reach speeds up to 30 miles per hour! And why shouldn't it be a day filled with fun, this is the holiday that we celebrate new life, specifically Jesus' risen life from the dead giving us the opportunity for new life in Him. This is the holiday where we as Christians celebrate our "Good News". But what about the other "Holy Week" Holidays our faith celebrates? Growing up in church, I was familiar with Palm Sunday and even Good Friday, but somehow one important celebration slipped through the cracks of my faith: Maundy Thursday. On this night roughly 2000 years ago, the "Last Supper" took place and Jesus was



arrested in the garden of Gethsemane, beaten multiple times, and walked to be "sentenced" to death by His own creations. I realized that in my own life I had celebrated my new life on Easter without truly understanding the cost at which that new life came: I had celebrated the

joyous empty tomb without understanding the atoning, bloody, offensive cross.

On this Maundy Thursday, April 1, 2010, we will be hosting an in-depth study of how Jesus died, how Jesus conquered death, and what that means for us today.

Here's the bottom line: **this service IS NOT FOR YOU.** Nope, sorry. We are not hoping to just see all of you at this event. We are hoping to see you all with your neighbors, friends, family, enemies, long-lost cousins, old college roommates, the waitress that served you coffee once, and anyone else we may have missed. Bringing someone to **Death By Love** means bringing someone face to face with the gospel of Christ, the most important topic anyone could ponder. We will even have a chance for them to text us their questions which we will answer on the spot! Since we had such a great response last year, we're not sure where this event will be yet, so be sure to keep your eyes and ears on the lookout for locations and times soon!

2010 P² Prayer & Praise Conference!

The Quad City Prayer Center will be hosting their annual prayer conference this year at the River Center in Davenport, Iowa.

David Perkins, Pastor of Prayer at New Life Church in Colorado Springs, is returning as the guest presenter for the 2010 P² Prayer & Praise Conference! The conference begins Friday, March 5 from 7-9 p.m. and continues Saturday, March 6 from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

The price has been SIGNIFICANTLY reduced this year to only \$20 a person, which includes lunch and materials. To sign up for this awesome event, just contact AJ at worship@gefco.org and let him know you'd like to go!

What's happening?

Here's a quick rundown of the conference -

- * A Furnace Friday Night experience with musical praise led by The Furnace Midwest Band
- * Guest speaker, David Perkins
- * Keynotes from David Perkins, Scott and Brenda Shaffer, plus breakout sessions designed to help with your praise and prayer ministries.
- * The breakout sessions are as follows – "Unlocking Your Faith" (AM, Brenda Schaefer); "Unleashing Your Potential" (PM, Brenda Schaefer); "Practical Praise" (AM & PM, Nate Schaefer), "Purposeful Praise" (AM & PM, Scott Schaefer)
- * Catered lunch



Guys, you are invited to these churches to have breakfast during the Lenten season.

March 6 – Lorraine UMC

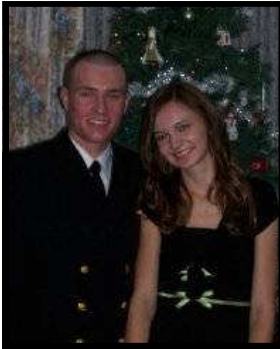
March 13 – 1st UMC

March 20 – Grace UMC

March 27 – Evangelical Free

Wedding Bells Are Ringing & Ringing & Ringing

A Bridal Shower for
Stephanie Benhart,



future bride of
Michael Johnson, son of
Mark & Teresa Johnson at
10:00 am Saturday, March 6

Ladies, please join us for a bridal shower to honor Stephanie Benhart, on Saturday, March 6 at 10:00 am at the church. The couple will be married on May 29 (*by invitation*). Stephanie and Michael are registered at Kohls, Target and Sears.

A Bridal Shower for
Dayna Sommers,



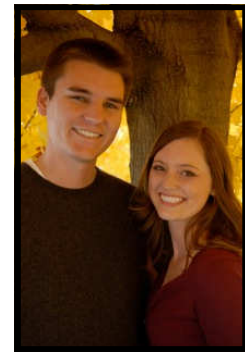
daughter of Terry &
Catherine & future bride of
Craig Ford,
son of Doug & Tracy Ford
at 10:00 am

Saturday, March 20

Ladies, please join us for a bridal shower to honor Dayna Sommers on Saturday, March 20 at 10 am. You may contribute to a group gift and register to attend through Sunday, March 14 in the designated envelope at the information center in the church foyer or in your ABF class. Make checks payable to Pam Reiling.

The couple will be married on June 12 (*by invitation*). Craig and Dayna are registered at Bed, Bath and Beyond, Target and Sears.

A Bridal Shower for
Amanda Pearson



daughter of Dan & Gina
Pearson & future bride of
Matt Wettersten, at 2:00 pm
Sunday, March 28

Ladies, please join us for a bridal shower to honor Amanda Pearson on Sunday, March 28 at 2:00 pm. You may contribute to a group gift and register to attend through Sunday, March 21 in the designated envelope at the information center or in the church foyer or in your ABF class.. Make checks payable to Deb Anderson

The couple will be married on June 19 (*by invitation*). Matt & Amanda are registered at Kohls, Target and Younkers.

Baby Shower



Bryan & Erin (Iwinski) Parker, daughter of Judy Iwinski, are expecting their first child, a baby girl, on May 20th. Ladies you are invited to a baby shower in their honor at 10:00 am Saturday, March 13. You may contribute to a group gift and/or register to attend the shower at the Information Center in

the foyer or in your ABF class through March 7. Checks can be made out to Shelle Iwinski. Bryan and Erin are registered at Target & Sears.

Blessed Expectations welcomes...

Mallory Ann Daniels to GEFC. She was born Wednesday, February 10 to Brian and Rebecca Daniels. Mallory weighed 7 lbs 1.6 oz and was 19 inches long. Make a point to introduce yourself to the Daniels family (Brian, Rebecca, Megan and Mallory).

Dining Out Together

Join us at Geneseo Pizza Hut on Friday, March 26 at 6:00 pm. We'll gather as a group and have supper together. The whole family is welcome to attend. Please remember that each family is responsible for the cost of their own food. This is a great way to get to know one another better. Hope to see you all there. Contact John or Peggy Terry if you have any questions.

Growing Pains

by Gary Dawson, Elder Chairman

When I read in Mark 2 about the healing of the paralytic who was lowered through the roof, I sometimes wonder how many of the people who surrounded that house in Capernaum were actually able to hear the words of life that Jesus spoke and how many were left to hear second hand accounts and testimonies from those who really did hear. Thankfully, the Holy Spirit has preserved those words for us. How those outside must have wished they were inside!

That house at Capernaum had exceeded its capacity. Some of our Adult Bible Fellowships (ABFs) can relate to that "crowded house" feeling. The Elder Board has worked with the Administrative Council to establish a Building Committee to determine what our space needs should be in the next ten years and how best to satisfy those needs. Six of our Brothers and Sisters have agreed to serve in this capacity: Craig Anderson, Lyn Bos, Rick Gilson, Debra Jones, Fred Kadel, and Chuck Taets. Please keep them in your prayers and bring to them any thoughts or concerns you may have about our current and future space



needs.

Also, please continue to pray for unity among our body as we work through some of the stresses that accompany the blessing of numerical growth. Special thanks are due to Jim Bos' ABF which is now meeting off site to relieve some of our space pressure.

In the near future we will be asking the congregation to provide some demographic information. This will help us better assess and respond to ministry needs and opportunities for GEFC. Our Connection Cards do

more than help us connect to new attendees and to capture information and prayer requests of regular attendees. The Administrative Council and Elders review the monthly reports that tabulate that data and use that information to identify growth trends and ministry needs so please help us by consistently taking that extra few moments to fill out those connection cards each week. We want people to know they are loved at GEFC. We are actively seeking ways to demonstrate that love

Overwhelmed

by Pam White



Overwhelmed – that is the word I would use to describe how I feel as I sit in our living room watching our daughter Nellie show her dad the piles of gifts she just received at the baby shower for her and Olivia. I am overwhelmed with gratitude. I am grateful to God that I am a part of a church that has done nothing but shown grace and love to our 17 year old daughter.

I think it would be fair to say that this past year has been one of the most painful years of our lives. I remember back to the first Sunday I walked through the doors of GEFC after learning that our daughter was pregnant. I knew how I felt, but I wasn't sure how the family of God would feel and how you would respond. Praise God you never did anything but love us and, more importantly, love Nellie. I know that every week throughout her pregnancy she dreaded walking into church, but I also know that every time she did, the love of Christ was demonstrated to her. God has used each of you to show His love, His mercy and His grace to her. He has used each of you to draw Nellie back to Himself. Ken and I are so grateful for each of you. Whether you have given her a hug, said a kind word, smiled at her, prayed for her, shared your "no longer needed" baby items with her, in whatever way you have affirmed her and helped her to feel loved, we thank you. We do need to say a special thank you to Catherine Sommers – you loved on Nellie in a way that few people could. You met her where she was and in exactly the way that she could receive your love easily – thank you so very much.

Nursery Team Learns CPR

by De Kosman, Wellness Director

On January 16, the nursery steering team learned CPR. Erica Venema, Stacey Cotty, Rebekah Reynolds and Erin McCallister showed proficiency with CPR and choking skills for adults, children and babies during the "Friends and Family CPR" course by the American Heart Association. Instructor, De Kosman, led the class. Wellness committee presented the idea to DeeAnn Kuster and she thought it was an excellent idea, so those of you that have children in the nursery can feel safe knowing that this core of women has CPR and choking knowledge and skills.





July 26-30

5:30-8:00 pm

If you would like to volunteer to help with our Vacation Bible School ministry this summer, please contact Christy Sancken at csancken@dist228.org or 944-0239. Don't miss this opportunity to minister to God's children! Also, if you are planning to help and are not yet CAP (Child Abuse Prevention) approved, please pick up the application in the church office to get the process started.

We are very excited about our curriculum this year from the Go Fish guys. You may check it out at gofishguys.com.



HOLY WEEK & WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Several things are being planned to help you focus your eyes on Jesus this year during Holy Week.

Thursday, April 1 - Death By Love
(time and location TBA)

Friday, April 2 - Good Friday
Communion service (time TBA)

Sunday, April 4

- 7:00 am Sunrise service
- 8:15 am Easter service
- 10:00 am Easter service

No Sunday School classes.

Changing of the Guard

by Debbie Rogers, Mission team

There was a changing of the guard at the last Missions meeting. Dave Walters has successfully led the mission team for the last several years and has done an excellent job. Chuck Donaldson has now assumed the role of Missions Coordinator and the team looks forward to serving with him.

We spent a significant amount of time at the last meeting bringing Chuck up to speed as we reviewed our missionaries, sharing their needs and specific prayer requests. Here is a quick recap:

CPC—pray for the upcoming volunteer training and for the baby bottle fundraising campaign to be a success.

Dan & Beth Cullett—due to ongoing health condition with Dan they will not be returning to the mission field in Thailand. They hope to continue on in some capacity of service with New Tribes Missions

Clyde & Rebecca Porter—Rebecca is leading four grace groups in the Dominican Republic. Clyde has taken a pick-up truck full of things to Haiti. He is looking for interested parties to go to Haiti to help in clean up efforts.

Bob & Joyce Werntz—will be returning to the US soon as Joyce assumes a new position recruiting. Bob will assume oversight of worship leaders.

Bruce & Marty Brumfield—have begun a new Awana club at a naval station. They are praying for traveling mercies during the winter months.

Kyle & Carrie Eipperle— will be teaching a training session for a mission conference.

Boniface & Sarah Toulassi—Boniface worked a conference for young people in Africa. Sarah recently had surgery and is

recovering.

David & Sasha Bliss—are transitioning their mission work from Poland to Bulgaria.

Earl & Jeanne McBride—are in the States looking for short-term mission teams and support.

Andy & Lea Ferrier— has had several recent contacts that have been given the Gospel and/or a Jewish New Testament.

This is just a partial list of our missionaries. If you want to put a face to a name just check out the bulletin board in the hallway. Please remember to prayer for these faithful servants.



Erica Venema and her family as they mourn the loss of her step-grandpa who passed away on February 8, 2010



&

Rick Worgess and his family as they mourn the loss of his wife Diane who passed away February 19, 2010



Spring Cleaning

Please mark your calendar for Saturday, April 24 from 8:00 am - Noon. The church is in need of some deep cleaning and we need your help!

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 Missions Team meeting 7 pm	2 Women's Book Club 10 am FPU 6pm	3 Awana 6:25 pm Jr. High 6:30 pm	4 Homework-Hangout 8 pm	5 Homeschool Group 1 pm Connected Together @ Svendsen's 7 pm	6 Benhart/Johnson Shower 10 am
PRAISE & PRAYER CONF.						
7 **PIP 7:45 am Sr. High Youth Group 6:30 pm	8 MOPS set up	9 FPU 6pm Elders Meeting 7 pm	10 MOPS 9 am Awana 6:25 pm Jr. High 6:30 pm	11 Women's Bible Study 9 am & 7 pm Homework - Hangout 8 pm	12 Jr/Sr High Winter Fest Concert	13 Parker (Iwinski) Baby Shower 10 am
14 ** PIP 7:45 am Sr. High Youth Group 6:30 pm 	15 Administrative Council Meeting 7 pm	16 FPU 6 pm MOPS Leader Training 6 pm	17 Prayer Shawl Ministry 9:30 am Awana 6:25 pm Jr. High 6:30 pm	18 Craft Night 6 pm Homework - Hangout 8 pm	19 Homeschool Group 1 pm	20 Sommers/Ford Shower 10 am
ASIST SUICIDE AWARENESS TRAINING						
21 ** PIP 7:45 am Challenge Fundraiser Lasagna Dinner 5:30 pm	22 MOPS set up	23 FPU 6 pm MOPS 6:30 pm Elders Meeting 7 pm	24 Awana 6:25 pm Jr. High 6:30 pm	25 Homework - Hangout 8 pm	26 Homeschool Group 1 pm Dining Out @ Pizza Hut 6 pm	27 Men's Lenten Breakfast 7 am
28 ** PIP 7:45 am Pearson/Wettersten Shower 2:00 pm	29	30	31 SPRING BREAK NO AWANA OR YOUTH GROUP			

Free News

MARCH 2010 Volume 15, Issue 3

A Christian Duty to Speak - part 2

by Jim Mason

Last month I made a Biblical case that we Christians have a duty to speak up for what is right in our society. That duty springs from the fact that we are to be salt and light and "shine like stars in the universe".

This month I'd like to consider the best ways to let your light shine in the world. We all know that we are to speak the truth in love. A question that arises is about what's the best way to do that. Here are some thoughts.

Pray first and keep praying. I think this quote is appropriate and puts things in perspective. *"You can do more than pray, after you have prayed. But you cannot do more than pray until you have prayed."*

While nothing else is as powerful as prayer, there are lots of instances where more is needed. Here's a word picture that might help. If you know there is a bridge in danger of collapse on a road and no sign for travelers to alert them to the situation, what should you do? Pray? Praying is good. Holding up a sign warning of the peril while praying is even better.

Prayer also helps us to avoid the trap of speaking the truth without maintaining the love. Christians are to be characterized by love. If we come off shrill or hateful we are not doing the will of the Father. We need to

avoid screaming AND understand that it is not loving to be silent as our society careens towards deceptive "bridges" that only look like they will hold.

Here is one example. The Health Care bill that is still on the way is a matter of great debate. (That is not what this example is about at all.) What isn't a matter of debate among those who value life is that there should not be an increase in abortions, and that those opposed to abortions should not have to fund them. The current bill (which is very much still in play) will definitely result in more abortions and require Christian taxpayers to fund them.

What to do? PRAY, then write or call each of your representatives with a respectful message voicing your opinions. Then pray some more and ask if the Lord would have you do more. Repeat until He says, "Rest and trust Me." He is perfectly trustworthy. There is no need to panic. Believers should always understand that the King of Kings has not lost His job. He is not panicked. He can direct the course of the most powerful governments with no strain. The Old Testament mentions that He whistles for leaders like we whistle for pet dogs. Those leaders obey our King. Isn't it good that our God is the Almighty God.

Now shine that light!

Lasagna Supper Rescheduled

Oops! We weren't quite ready for our awesome lasagna supper. So, we had to postpone our fundraising supper. It is now scheduled for Sunday, March 21.

- Location has changed and it will now be right here at GEFC
- We will start at 5:30 pm
- We will still provide:
 - Non-alcoholic drinks
 - Breadsticks
 - Salad
 - Lasagna
 - Dessert
 - A romantic comedy of some sort (suck it up, fellas!)
 - A chance to bid on some awesome items in a silent auction
 - A chance to hire out some really great kids with some really great talents
- Cost is \$25/couple

All proceeds will benefit the students attending Challenge 2010: UNDO! In Columbus, OH this summer.

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Sunday Worship Services

- Conventional Service - 8:15 am
- Contemporary Service - 10:45 am

Education - 9:30-10:30 am

Senior Pastor - Greg Chenoweth
Student Pastor - Michael Mauriello
Worship Director - AJ Reynolds

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