

Gray Weekly News



Week Leading to Sunday, August 28, 2022

God is a God of laughter

www.joyfulnoiseletter.com

Methodist Pastor Karl R. Kraft of Dover, DE, found this passage in Catherine Marshall's book, *A Man Called Peter*, a biography of her husband, the great Presbyterian preacher Peter Marshall, Chaplain of the U.S. Senate, from one of his sermons:

"God is a God of laughter, as well as prayer, a God of singing, as well as of tears. God is at home in the play of His children. He loves to hear us laugh. We do not honor God by our long faces, our austerity. We must try to make the distinction between worship and work and play less sharp. If you can't take God into your recreation, there is something wrong with the way you play. If God, for you, does not smile there is something wrong with your idea of God."

Catherine Marshall added this comment: "Jesus Himself demonstrated to us, at times like the wedding feast in Cana, that Christianity can be fun, that fun can be Christian, and that it is the King's joy to share our good times."

Frederick Buechner, Presbyterian theologian and author said this about joy and happiness: "There is not one of us whose life has not already been touched somewhere with joy, so that in order to make it real to us, to show it forth, it should be enough for Jesus simply to remind us of it, to make us remember the joyous moments of our own lives."

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Twelfth Sunday After Pentecost



Romans 12:1-8

Psalm 138

Matthew 16:13-19

“I Believe in the Church”

News and Notes

THIS WEEK

Sunday, August 28

Please join us on Sundays at 11 am. If you are unable to come in person, you can watch our livestream at graymemorialumc.org/facebook.com or graymemorialumc.org/youtube, at 11 am or any time after that at graymemorialumc.org/



If you have prayer requests, please contact Norma Adams, Jennifer Skinner or Gail Teems.

You may also call the church office at 850/385-6441 or send a text to 850/933-8469.

Prayer Requests

Jeri Motes, friend of Norma
Sam and Norma Adams
Annette Rhodes' mother, who is nearing the end of life
Nancy Gibbons, Pastor Beth's mother, diagnosed with breast cancer
Sylvia Morrow
Toni's friend Bekah
Patsy and Betty
Jack, Randy, Jim & Jane Workman
Joyce and Bob
Juan's sister Norma
A family that needs healing
Donna West, having health issues

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"Yet this is not easy because, ironically enough, these are likely to be precisely the moments that we do not associate with religion. We tend to think that joy is not only not properly religious but that it is even the opposite of religion. We tend to think that religion is sitting stiff and antiseptic and a little bored.

"We need to be reminded that at its heart Christianity is joy and that laughter and freedom and the reaching out of arms are the essence of it. We need to be reminded, too, that joy is not the same as happiness. Happiness is man-made – a happy home, a happy marriage, a happy relationship with our friends and within our jobs. We work for these things, and if we are careful and wise and lucky, we can usually achieve them.

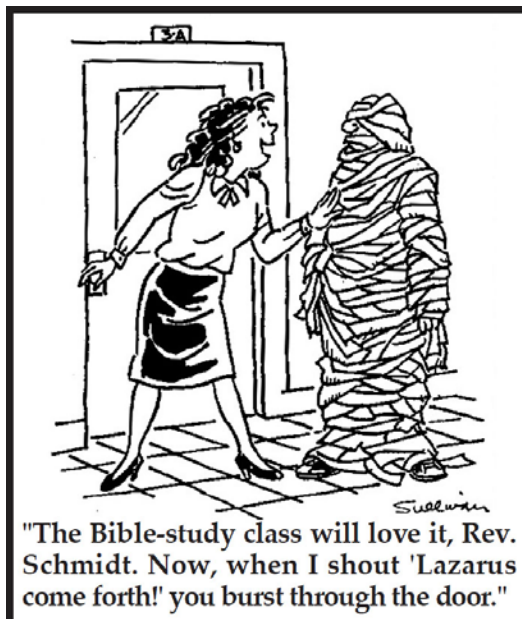
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"But we never take credit for our moments of joy because we know that they are not man-made and that we are never really responsible for them. They come when they come. They are always sudden and quick and unrepeatable. The unspeakable joy sometimes of just being alive. The miracle sometimes of being just who we are with the blue sky and the green grass, the faces of our friends and the waves of the ocean, being just what they are.

The joy of release, of being suddenly well when before we were sick, of being forgiven when before we were ashamed and afraid, of finding ourselves loved when we were lost and alone. The joy of love, which is the joy of the flesh as well as the spirit.

Joy is always all-encompassing; there is nothing of us left over to hate with or to be afraid with, to feel guilty with or to be selfish about. Joy is where the whole being is pointed in one direction, and it is something that by its nature a man never hoards but always wants to share. The second thing is that joy is a mystery because it can happen anywhere, anytime, even under the most unpromising circumstances, even in the midst of suffering, with tears in its eyes. Even nailed to a tree.

"What Jesus is saying is that men are made for joy and that anyone who is truly joyous has a right to say that he is doing God's will on this earth. Where you have known joy, you have known Him."



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EVENTS THIS WEEK

Tuesday, August 23	7 pm	Board of Trustees Meets via Zoom
	All Day	Florida Primary Election – Gray Memorial host two precincts for voting.
Wednesday, August 24	7 pm	Bible Study with Todd Clark via Zoom
Thursday, August 25	10 am 5:30 pm	Bible Study with John Rogers Choir Practice
Sunday, August 28	11 am	Worship Service

Next month:

Saturday, September 10	8 am to 12 noon	Church Work Day
	4-7 pm	Town & Country Neighborhood Fall Block Party
Sunday, September 11	4 pm	Charge Conference with District Supt. Wayne Wiatt – Open to All