

January
2008

GRACE SPOTLIGHTER

PREACHING TO PAIN DURING CHRISTMAS

“Preach to pain,” the sainted Dr. Deffner used to say to the seminarians, “and you’ll always have active listeners.” That reminds me of another piece of advice once given, to wit, any sermon that could not work as a funeral sermon is worthless. Both are good rules of thumb for us preachers, especially forgotten at times like Christmas.

We need to remember that Christian joy is not giddiness and generic feelings of happiness or good will toward the world. It is not simply gratitude that we have nice families who like us and a day off work. In fact, I would say that Christian joy is better captured by the mood of Silent Night than it is by Jingle Bells. It is solemn and serious. It runs deep. It knows suffering and sorrow and fear.

“Shepherds quake at the sight” of God laid into a manger in infant weakness. So should we at the thought of it. It is not all glitter and eggnog and new toys. There is something deeply troubling in the sorrows of Mary and the hardships endured by her Son already during His first night on earth.

Those who have mourned for years are more conflicted and troubled at Christmas than most any other time of the year. They don’t know how to feel. They are hurt, and yet, they are at peace. Can we say their joy is... painful?

If so, then it is a righteous pain. For the faithful are disappointed with the world, outraged at its injustices, weary of its failures and disease. At Christmas they glimpse anew the love of God that has entered into our brokenness to restore and recreate us. The good work that has been begun in them is not yet complete. They are waiting. They are eager for the end. They are full of fear and love of God and awed by the magnitude and consistency of grace. Faith is always disaffected with the world, always eager for the new creation and, on this side of glory, it always hurts.

So, dear Christian, know that your suffering is not without purpose or benefit. Our Lord suffered; so shall we, as we bear

our own crosses and one another’s burdens. Be encouraged, for this suffering is not in vain. It draws you closer to Christ and to your fellow suffering saints. And lift up your heads. Cling to the hope of the Day when what you long for will be delivered in full.

If you’re wondering why this is a Christmas theme in January, that’s because Christmas actually runs from Dec. 25th to the Epiphany of Our Lord, Jan. 6th. So, keep those trees, candles and crèches out, and have a Merry Christmas!

- Pastor Seaver

PREACHING CHEER FOR THE NEW YEAR

We never enter a new year without catching predictions from various quarters—everything from political conjecture, to psychic prognosticators, to ordinary people on the street asked their opinions. One headline indicates a majority of people expect gloom and doom.

Frankly, none of these forecasts are worth a hill of beans even if we had the power to see the future—and who hasn’t imagined the “advantage” if they could only get the paper a day in advance.

We could have the scoop on every story [yet such knowledge would create a perpetual state of alarm]. We could have a safe day’s jump ahead of the next catastrophe [but temporal safety falls short of eternal salvation]. Or we could have a fail safe way to bet at the pari-mutuel window [but, ah, we’d simply be induced to greater greed.]

And all to what eternal benefit? None.

Control of events rests in the hand of Almighty God. Gloom and ruin occur when we take matters into our own grasp. Even if we could see the future, soon enough our sinful nature would distort it also to wicked purpose.

You can know enough of the future from Holy Scripture. Let it suffice as the Lord himself said in Genesis 8, “As long



as the earth endures, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night will never cease.” Count on it! Times and seasons, created by God in the beginning will never stop until the end of history.

But what then? Graciously, God does not have us rely on conjecture, prognostications, inferences or opinions from the street. He rests us in Christ, our Savior, who is the same yesterday, today, and forever.

And as to the future, he tells us, “In the future you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One and coming on the clouds of heaven.” Such is doom for the wicked and the hypocrite, for the covetous and conceited, as indeed Jesus spoke this to the unbelieving High Priest.

But for you who are the baptized, the adopted and united with Christ, who humbly believe in Him through daily repentance and remorse, the future holds no fear. The apostle Paul affirmed “We are more than conquerors through him who loved us.” No disaster or darkness—no gloom and doom. “For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

That is the ground of our Christian optimism for the new year. The future is Christ’s, the hope of glory (Col. 1:27) — Happy New Year!

- Pastor Reed

Parents and Language Development

Peter Fredrich, Principal

When the deaf/mute man was brought to Jesus, He touched the man's ears and tongue and the man could hear and speak. Jesus not only healed the man's ears and tongue, but he also healed his brain.

No one is born talking. We are born ready to learn language. If we do not learn language, parts of our brain do not develop. Jesus' healing of the deaf man included teaching his brain how to recognize and process spoken language. The brains of our children are hard-wired to learn language. A newborn infant will turn to the sound of his parent's voice but ignore other familiar sounds. Already, the child knows that the spoken word is significant. If only my teenage students would listen with such intensity!

With infants, we know talking to them is crucial. Babies need to hear language in order to decode, practice, and use it. As children get older, it becomes easier to be less intentional about developing language. This is unfortunate because language development is key to success in school and healthy emotional development.

Many children who have difficulty learning to read have a language delay. Children need to have a language development that is equivalent to a first-grader about mid-year. If a child's language is delayed in any way, this will affect his progress in reading. Reading is about more than decoding words on a page. Children bring their own experiences and understanding to their reading. Children who have had a variety of experiences and opportunities to talk about them will have better comprehension when reading. Also, the more stories a child has heard, the better he will be able to use that knowledge to understand what he is reading or predict what will happen.

Even math depends on language. Young children are learning language and older children are using language to learn. Good language skills help a child understand the teacher, other students, and the assignment, as well as how to use information to solve an arithmetic problem.

Language is an important part of relating to peers. Children with good language development can negotiate with classmates. They are also better able to tell another child what they want or what they don't like. They are more likely to use words rather than physical means to express themselves. Children learn lan-

guage from other children, but if they are too far behind their peers, frustration results.

For most children, language development happens naturally, but for even the healthy child, this process can be enhanced. Any effort spent on language development will not only improve learning and social skills, but because it involves communication, it will also strengthen your relationship with your child.

Here are some tips to help you child's language development:

- Regular medical check-ups are essential for your children to make sure that there is not a hearing problem.
- Engage in regular conversations with your children.
- Singing in worship services and language go hand in hand.
- Watch for "teachable" moments that can open up the possibility of learning something new.
- If you are tired at the end of a long day, just open a book and read it aloud.

It is significant that God uses language. We have the written Word of God, which contains the spoken word of our Father and His Son. God has developed our language skills even as He has blessed us with faith. Everything from the wiring in an infant's brain, to the set up of a healthy family, to the structure of the church and methods of imparting God's word, all work to develop language. We are blessed, as parents to participate in this process.

January marks the beginning of our basketball season. The players are excited and the coaches are enthusiastic.

Teamwork, good sportsmanship, and an improvement of skills will be stressed. We truly hope and pray for a season of safety and friendly competition. Terry McNally, Craig Harrison, Rob Feinauer, Jim Heading, and Mike Clare will direct and coach the teams. We thank them for their many hours of dedicated service. The Grizzlies will play most Monday and Friday evenings. Our first league game will match the Grizzlies away at the Cougars of Zion, Bay City on Friday, January 4, 2008. The complete season's schedule is posted on our web site and on the school bulletin board.

The middle of January marks the end of our second quarter marking period. The last day of the quarter is January 18th, with the students receiving report cards to take home the following Friday, January 25th.

JUNIOR HIGH HIGHLIGHTS

Religion for the month of January will return to our study of the life and times of Jesus Christ as recorded in the New Testament. We are **all** His disciples, and we often need to be reminded that we need to seek to extend His kingdom here in Auburn. Our students have so much looked forward to this month's science. We have one more chapter to complete our study of the plant kingdom. Then we will enter an exploration of the animal kingdom. This group includes those without backbones, invertebrates, and those with a backbone, vertebrates. As part of this study, toward the end of January, we will dissect six different animals: an earthworm, a starfish, a crayfish, a grasshopper, a perch, and a frog. Our studies of world geography have moved to Europe. Many of the students in the classroom have ancestors with European background. We will look at the land and people, their culture and life styles. Eighth grade algebra continues to work with solving linear equations. The seventh grade will soon be introduced to algebra. On an easier scale, they too will learn to solve linear equations with one variable. Emphasis in English will be a comprehensive study of nouns and their uses.



Katie and Emily received their MVP and 110% Awards for Volleyball 2007

5 & 6 Grade Happenings

Happy New Year to all of you! Our class spent much of the month of December preparing for Christmas. We made cards and ornaments for family and residents of Plainview Senior Neighborhood. We spent time during devotions discovering the origin of many of our holiday traditions in Christian history. We practiced (and practiced...) our Christmas program, "Let's Go To Bethlehem" so we could get it just right to pre-



Singing at Plainview Neighborhood with the K thru 4th graders.

sent to all of you! We hope our message of love, and deliverance was heard loud and clear by all who attended. Many of the students volunteered to perform pre-service music, Bailey Heading, Laura Clare, Abbie Hockemeyer, and Melissa Vennix are the musically talented ladies participating from the 5th and 6th grades. All the students did a fine job on their individual parts; includ-



**Our Three Wise Men
Travis, Dylan & Matt**

ing Matt Feinauer, Dylan Jean, and Travis McNally our three wise men.

The New Year holds much in store for our class. In January we will study changes in matter for science and visit a water treatment plant. We will continue to study the Old Testament in Religion class. Social Studies is taking us back to colonial times. Fractions, decimals and percents have us busy in math. We will read historical fiction books in our literature circle groups and continue our daily writing in Writer's Workshop. We hope your New Year is bright with the light of the Savior!

Mrs. VanSickle &
the 5th and 6th grade



Happy New Year

Can you believe it? It's 2008 already! The school year is just flying by. Instead of explaining what Room 4 will be up to this January, I'd like to talk about how we ended 2007.

December was a busy month for us. We had Hollyland Mall, the book fair, our Christmas program, went caroling at Plainview, and had a classroom party to celebrate the birth of our Savior.

Students enjoyed the Hollyland Mall on Tuesday, December 11. They had an opportunity to

shop for gifts for their family. Thank you to everyone who made that day possible, whether by selling your crafts, wrapping up gifts, or donating boxes.

Students also enjoyed



Rayferd purchasing a present from a vendor at the Hollyland Mall.

shopping at the book fair. We would like to thank Lynn Schmidt for organizing that. Students' purchases consisted of books, posters, pens, and triangular-shaped scented highlighters.

On Wednesday, December 19, grades K-6 went to the Plainview Senior Neighborhood. They spent a portion of the morning singing Christmas carols, and passing out cards. The residents really loved the students' add-ons to "Rudolf the Red-Nosed Reindeer." Students had a lot of fun and would like to say

thank you to Mrs. Vansickle for inviting us and thank you to the residents of the Plainview Senior Neighborhood for the special gifts you made us. The students did a spectacular job on their Christmas program. Hunter, Rayferd, and Michael were the little angels. Spencer, Evan, Colton, and Casey played the shepherds, and all the students did a beautiful job with their recitations and songs. They had a lot to memorize in a short amount of time. Their hard



**Our Three Shepherds
Evan, Casey, & Spenser**

work and dedication really showed.

What better way is there to end the year than with a party? And that's exactly what Room 4 did! Karla Weiss and Michele Mantei planned a nice party for our room. Students made crafts, opened gifts, and played games. I would like to thank all students and their families for the wonderful gifts I received.

I hope you all had a Merry Christmas, and I look forward to the brand new year we begin with Christ in our hearts.

-Ms. Schroeder

Grades K, 1 & 2

Happy New Year! What a busy December we had!!! After a few days off during the Christmas holidays, we are ready to learn again!

December was full of Christmas program practice and decorating our classroom for Christmas. We hope you were able to join us for our Christmas program, even though it had to be postponed due to the weather. We enjoyed bringing the message of Christ at Christmas to you!

We also enjoyed bringing the Christmas message to our friends at Plainview Senior Neighborhood. The people there were very nice. We sang to them and read them the Christmas story from the Bible. They made us cookies and ornaments! What a wonderful time we had!!!

In Kindergarten, we continue learning! We can hardly believe how much we have learned so far. Did you know that we have been in school for more than 80 days now!

We are learning to read larger numbers. We have completed one math book and now are moving into our second math book. We are also reading more words and writing sentences!

In 1st grade the work is also becoming



Molly, Cameron, Raven and Eden Show off the Christmas ornaments



ing more challenging. We are reading more by ourselves and our math is getting harder. We have story problems in math. Those are very challenging! Miss Rudick still helps us with our story problems. We know our addition and subtraction facts

fairly well now. We are beginning to learn the difference between even and odd numbers. We are writing more sentences and different types of sentences. We are also learning to make predictions when we read and use context clues to help us figure out the meanings of unfamiliar words.

2nd grade continues to work more independently. However, there are many new things to learn in 2nd grade. We are now learning about nouns and verbs. We are also learning different vowel sounds and combinations. There are many letter combinations to learn when learning to read. We have also begun to write paragraphs! Miss Rudick has decided that we are doing so well at writing sentences, that we can now move on to paragraphs. Sometimes we wish we were in Kindergarten again, when she wrote the sentences on the board and all we had to do was copy the sentences!

As you can tell, our class has been very busy and full of energy! We are all very excited about learning. We pray that you are also excited about learning new things. We pray that the message of the Christmas season stays with you all year long. We also pray that you take the time to worship our Lord and Savior at every opportunity.

Unpaid bills as of Nov 20, 2007

VENDOR	Amount	SEP.	OCT	NOV.	DEC.
Valley Tuition	student tuition				
	10,255.00				
Missions	Missions	3,306.00	3,378.00	3,378.00	3,378.00
Mileage Reimb	Pastors mileage				
	300.00				
Universal Build	Cleaning service		606.00	1,212.00	606.00
Concordia Publishing			59.50		90.00
Straley Press				105.50	
I K O N	copier contract			471.68	454.60
Waste management	trash service				85.12
Church Extension Fund	mortgage				2,628.00
Michigan Dist LCMS	teacher conference				180.00
Concordia Plan	Employee benefits				1,341.24
Fowler Organ	Organ maintenance				322.05
City of Auburn Tax	Storm drain taxes				235.66
		10,555.00	3,306.00	4,043.50	5,167.18
				9,320.67	32,392.35



Given in Memory

- Gerald Zielinski**
By
Don Wackerly
- Audrey Vogel**
By
Kim & Betty Herbolzheimer
John & Iris Dominowski
- Kenneth Mehl**
By
Ruth Roth
- Pastor McCain**
By
Jeff & Cathy Sugden
- Bill Koehler**
By
Vi Koehler Family
- Alice Eisenman**
By
Rose McNally

GRACE GRIZZLIES

BASKETBALL SCHEDULE

Mondays are A Teams only

Friday, January 4 at Zion, Bay City

Monday, January 7 at Trinity, Monitor

Friday, January 11 home against St. Paul

Monday, January 14 at St. John, Amelith

Friday, January 18 at St. John, Midland

Monday, January 21 at Zion, Beaver

Friday, January 25 Bye

Monday, January 28 home against Zion, Bay City

Friday, February 1 home against Trinity, Monitor

Monday, February 4 away at St. Paul

Friday, February 8 home against St. John, Amelith

Monday, February 11 home against St. John, Midland

Friday, February 15 home against Zion, Beaver

Monday, February 18 Bye

***Make-up dates February 20 & 21**
Friday games begin at 5:30 p.m.
Monday games begin at 6:00 p.m.

"B" Tourn. at Zion, Beaver Feb. 14, 16, 17
"A" Tournament at Zion, Bay City Feb. 28 & 29, March 1, 2



IT'S A WONDERFUL WHITE WINTERLAND!!!

Auburn's 'Neighbors' are quick to help,

By TOM GILCHRIST

Jim Zoller, the retired engineer, and Lee Krueger, the retired wood-shop teacher, could earn plenty of money at odd jobs.

But the two buddies in the city of Auburn rake in warm fuzzies instead of cold cash.

"I'm gonna get old someday and I'd like somebody to help me out when I do," said Zoller, 60, one of 15 members of the "Neighbors Helping Neighbors" group in Auburn.

The volunteers fix faucets, hoe gardens, maintain snowblowers, jump-start cars and fix motion-detector lights - among many tasks - in helping Auburn-area residents.

They work for free.

"Most of the people we help out are widows," Zoller said. "If I'm not around when I'm older, I hope that maybe somebody will be helping my widow out, too.

"It does give you a warm, fuzzy feeling to help someone out like that."

Leona Giolda feels grateful to have the "Neighbors Helping Neighbors" group in Auburn, population 2,050.

"I think they're wonderful," said Giolda, a senior citizen who began relying on the group's generosity when her hot water wouldn't stop running one day.

"I had seen this ("Neighbors Helping Neighbors") flier either at Pat & Jerry's restaurant or in my church vestibule, so I took down the phone number and called it," Giolda said.

Volunteers came and installed new faucets in Giolda's bathroom, and - at her request - in a second bathroom. They've also cleaned out her eaves troughs and modified and installed a new door at her house.

"Neighbors Helping Neighbors" member Cherye Krueger, wife of member Lee Krueger, said the group's members possess mechanical skills.

"The men in the group are not just any ordinary group of guys," Cherye Krueger said. "All of these guys are handy-man, Mr.-Fix-It-Upper type people."

Some of the group's members have built their own homes, Lee Krueger said.

Their generosity also has produced a deep sense of appreciation, and many repeat clients.

"I don't know what I'd do without 'em," said Hattie Adamski, 95, who has lived at her home on East Elm Street since 1933.

Zoller and Krueger came to Adamski's home on Monday to make sure her toilet operated properly following repairs by Zoller several days ago.

"I always ask if I can pay 'em, but they don't want money, so I just thank 'em," Adamski said.

The "Neighbors Helping Neighbors" group formed several years ago and consists mostly of retirees.

"Our biggest problem is we have more volunteers than we have work," Lee Krueger said.

Wanita L. Smith, 79, of Auburn, said the volunteers jump at the chance to lend a hand.

"I no more than call (Lee Krueger) and he's in my driveway, wanting to know what I want done," Smith said.

Because volunteers belong to the "Neighbors Helping Neighbors" organization, they know each other's specialties, said group member Pat Hogan, 72, an Auburn retiree who has built three homes and once worked setting up lumber yards around the country.

"One of our members, Bruce Lance, is pretty good in the automotive area, though he's pretty good at other jobs, too," Hogan said. "Between everybody who's involved, somebody has had experience doing one thing or another."

Not all tasks require great skill. Some folks just need a sidewalk shoveled, or an adhesive sticker affixed to a license plate.

"Fixing things is a pretty neat way to help someone, and some of the stuff is so simple," Zoller said.

"One lady had no power in her kitchen, and she had checked the fuse box and all that.

January

Grace Church Calendar

1		2 6:30 am Men's Bible Study 7:00 Worship	3 7:00 Senior Choir	4	5 8:00 Women's Bible Study
6 8:00 (H.C.) & 10:30 Worship 9:30 YOUTH MEETING & Sunday School YOUTH POP CAN PICK-UP	7 7:30 Men's Bible Study	8 3:30 Bd of Stewardship 7:00 Bd of Evangelism 7:00 Ladies of Grace Don Rauschenberger on "Identity Theft"	9 6:30 am Men's Bible 7:00 Worship	10 7:00 Senior Choir	11 8:00 Women's Bible Study
13 8:00 & 10:30 (H.C.) Worship 9:30 Sunday School	14 7:30 Men's Bible Study	15 9:00 -3:00 Ladies Quilting Connie Gengler's 7:30 School Board 7:00 Bd of Elders	16 6:30 am Men's Bible Study 7:00 Worship	17 7:00 Senior Choir	18 End of 2nd quarter
20 8:00 (H.C.) & 10:30 Worship 9:30 Sunday School	21 7:30 Men's Bible Study	22	23 6:30 am Men's Bible Study	24 7:00 Senior Choir	25
27 8:00 & 10:30 (H.C.) Worship	28 7:00 Executive Board	29	30 6:30 am Men's Bible Study 7:00 Worship	31 7:00 Senior Choir	26 8:00 Women's Bible Study

Grace Lutheran Church and School
303 W. Ruth Street
Auburn, Michigan 48611

Rev. David H. Reed, Pastor
Mr. Peter Fredrich, Principal

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January

January Birthdays & Anniversaries

Birthdays

1 Joel Herbolsheimer, 1 Logan LeBeau, 1 Margaret Petrosky, 2 Casey Kent, 4 Larry Keidel, 6 Kaly Kraatz, 7 Diondra Heading, 8 Sara Katenhus, 9 Walter Barber, 9 Dorothy Greenleaf, 9 Julie Walter, 10 Donald Rauschenberger Jr, 10 David Seaver, 10 William Seaver, 10 Mirinda Taglauer, 11 Pamela Kent, 11 Ethel Smith, 12 Kelly Arnold, 12 Dustin Wegener, 13 Kevin Feinauer, 13 Wesley Meyer, 15 Wanita Smith, 16 Kristina Leach, 16 Nicole Meyer, Jessica Rolfe, 17 Bridgitte Feinauer, 17 Jessica Wegener, 18 Gene Bartz, 18 Scott Bickham, 18 Molly Mantei, 20 James Mantei, 21 GeriAnne Schmidt, 21 Donald Pfannes, 23 Corey Arnold, 23 Paul Wood, 25 Jeanette Harper, 25 Edyth Ousterhout, 25 James Prah, 25 Sheryl Seaver, 25 Debra Stieve, 26 Eric Bejcek, 26 Joshua Mularz, 26 Elaine Prah, 27 Chase Horneber, 28 Kathleen Pickelman, 30 Debra Garcia, 30 Nolan Pfundt, 31 Mark Horneber, 31 Richard Klimaszewski

Anniversaries

1 Dave and Kelly Arnold, 22 Doug & Kim Bejcek, 26 Gene & Angie Meyer