



FOCUS

OCTOBER 2022 - MMXXII ISSUE X

735 RIDGE LAKE BOULEVARD | MEMPHIS, TENNESSEE 38120

What Grace Can Give by Pastor Jim Fleming

“I will pour out on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Spirit of grace and of supplication, so that they will look on Me whom they have pierced; and they will mourn for Him, as one mourns for an only son, and they will weep bitterly over Him like the bitter weeping over a first-born” (Zechariah 12:10).

I was discussing religious issues with a Jew who fancied himself an enlightened soul. Our conversation soon confirmed his opinion that he and I did not occupy the same circle. I asked if I could pray for him. He agreed, on the condition that I did not pray “in Jesus’ name.” Apparently, his “enlightenment” did not include a very bright view of Jesus.

He is one from the larger company of most Jews whose views of Jesus range from disinterest and disdain to passionate hatred. Against the backdrop of this prevailing opinion, Zechariah 12:10 describes an astounding future event. There will come a day when Israel will experience a complete change of heart, a reversal of views so profound it defies human understanding. God will be the only explanation. Pouring out His Spirit of grace upon Israel will make all the difference in the world.

Here is how it will play out. Just prior to Jesus’ second coming, cold hearts will begin warming. By the time He becomes clearly visible, this brokenness will have come to a full boil. It will overflow in a torrent of tears. The hearts of Israel will be so utterly broken, their heartache can only be compared to that of parents who have lost an only son. Behold the face of Jesus! The One whom they rejected and consigned to death; the One now resplendent in glory; He is God’s anointed Messiah.



Now here is a truly remarkable and surprising insight. Did you catch it? We conceive of God’s grace as something which fills us with joy. (It is, to be sure.) But in the day Zechariah sees, the most abject sorrow is produced by grace. God’s grace does produce joy, but sometimes it produces brokenness.

Remember the Sermon on the Mount? *“Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted”* (Matthew 5:4). One of the best things we can do is to grieve over the things that break God’s heart. When we lose that brokenness, when we become comfortable with sin, when we feel enlightened and proud of something for which God says we should be ashamed, we need grace!

Sometimes all that stands between us and seeing what a mess we have made of things, how wrong headed we have been, how off-track we have slipped, is God’s grace. Don’t ask Him to replace those tears, thank Him for

them. Thank God for those moments when He removes our natural complacency and comfort with sin, allowing us to share His profound sorrow and loathing for what we have done, or thought, or become.

Are you feeling sad and broken over something you have experienced that dishonors God? Praise God for such works of grace! The grace of such great sorrow is a prelude to change. Thank Him for it and allow the pain to work itself into the very pores of your spirit. Those grace-filled tears can wash away sin’s dullness and stir a longing to live for the Lord with pure abandon.

THE SHEPHERD'S STAFF

Gracing the Path by Ken Eriksen, Transition Committee Chairman, Vice Chairman of the Session

If you have a dog, you inevitably have walked your dog. If your dog is like my Molly, she takes me for sniffer-walks; she walks, stops, and sniffs anything and everything! One of our favorite places to walk is the wooded trails at Lucius Burch State Natural Area. The shade provides respite from the blazing sun. But after a rain, especially a gully washer, some trails become swamped and are not that passable. (Molly thinks otherwise!). To avoid getting muddy, trail users find ways around the muddy spots. After a while, a new path emerges. However, the path is no longer straight; it's more circuitous. Ideally, it would be great to fill in the low muddy spots to keep a straighter path rather than make new paths to avoid a messy situation!

Going back to Nehemiah, as we have seen him in previous Shepherd's Staff posts, he encountered muddy situations on the pathway of [rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem](#). He faced [challenges from those outside](#) the city who were taunting the Israelites, wanting to stop the work, and he encountered a mess on the inside among and between the Israelites. Nehemiah approached the internal discord with grace to keep focused on the path ahead.

From the fifth chapter of his book, Nehemiah learned that fellow Israelites were being charged interest by other Israelites for money borrowed to buy food during a famine.



This was wrong and needed to be addressed. Nehemiah chose a direct pathway to confront those committing such grievances against fellow Israelites. He brought together the “nobles and officials,” telling them their actions against fellow Israelites were wrong. Those nobles and officials were mired in the mud, knowing they had done wrong to their fellow brothers and sisters. Nehemiah told the nobles and officials to “return to them this very day their fields, their vineyards, their olive orchards, and their houses, and the percentage of money, grain, wine, and oil that you have been exacting from them” (Nehemiah 5:11).

The nobles and officials agreed and said, “we will restore these and require nothing from them. We will do as you say.” After this, they said “Amen” and “praised God” (Nehemiah 5:12-13).

Nehemiah exercised a grace strategy on behalf of the affected Israelites to set straight a hurt against them. The nobles and officials confessed, repented, and worshipped God. Through this the people were unified and continued rebuilding the wall of Jerusalem.

Grace restoration is not new but is something we need continual reminding and teaching on. Pastors Jim, Ken, Jake, and Taylor led us through a “[Graces of Reconciliation](#)” sermon series this summer. During the last sermon, Pastor Jim challenged us to practice speaking grace between and among one another, directing our attention to [A Commitment to Speak Grace](#) card for our use.

Have you shown grace to others in the last month? Way to go! Can't wait to hear about it on October 23.

A Celebration of Grace Sunday, October 23

9:30–10:30 a.m., Sanctuary

We will recall moments when we have used words of grace. It will be a time to say “Amen” and “praise God” as the Israelites did when they experienced restored relationships.

CHURCH-WIDE



\$8/adult
\$4/child (3–10 years old)
\$40 family max
\$9/take-home meal



Midweek Fellowship Meals

Wednesdays, October 5–
November 16 (No Meal October 12)
5:00–6:00 p.m., Fellowship Hall

The food is prepared by John Dawson and Jimmy Garrison and is served by faithful volunteers. Each individual has a choice between an entree and side item or the weekly soup and salad bar. A dessert is served with every meal.

Visitors and guests are always welcome and reservations are not necessary. Find our weekly menu at www.firstevan.org/midweek-menu. We take cash, checks, or Venmo @fcmemphis.

CHURCH-WIDE (CONTINUED)

NEW ON STAFF



Anies Kunda

Young Adults Intern

I'm thankful for this opportunity to serve First Evan as the Young Adults intern. I believe it's not only my job to work in the church doing ministry, but take it to every location possible. I'm a sophomore at the University of Memphis studying architecture, and God has given me many opportunities to share the gospel on campus with friends and peers. I've attended First Evan for nearly 15 years since early childhood, and have seen it change and grow through periods of conflict and calm. I'm excited to see where this position will take me, and how this church will continue to grow throughout my time here.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS



Jordan and Sarah Carroll

358 N. Highland
Memphis, TN 38127



Elisabeth Collier

1596 Blackberry Cove
Germantown, TN 38138



Dave and Ashley Garner

6239 Heather Drive
Memphis, TN 38119



Cliff and Linda Reyle

9658 Dove Meadow Cove
Germantown, TN 38139



**Pre-register today for
the prize drawings held
on October 29
at 1:30 p.m.!**



www.firstevan.org/fallfunfest

Fall Fun Fest

Saturday, October 29

11:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m., East Lawn

Invite your family, friends, and neighbors to a day of fall fun and fellowship. This FREE event will have a photo booth, inflatables for all ages, yard games, board games, a petting zoo, trunk or treat, prize drawings, a dunk tank, pulled pork nachos, hot dogs, corn on the cob, candy, costumes, and a Moon Pie eating contest! All are welcome!

Volunteer Opportunities:

- Candy Drive (Drop off Oct. 2-29)
- Trunk or Treat Decorated Cars (28)
- Candy Distributors (56)
- Parking Lot Attendees (6)
- Floaters/Greeters (10)
- Clean-up (6)



DISCOVER
FIRST EVAN

Discover First Evan

Sunday, November 6

4:00-6:00 p.m., Chapel

This class is offered to those interested in learning more about First Evan or desiring membership. Attending the class in no way obligates you to join, but it is the first step toward membership. Questions can be directed to Jacki Stieferman at jstieferman@firstevan.org. Sign up at www.firstevan.org/dfe.

CHURCH-WIDE (CONTINUED)



Chúc Mừng Kỷ Niệm

That means, “Happy Anniversary” in Vietnamese. (Or at least, so says Google Translate). Even if the translation is a little off, we do want to wish our Vietnamese sister church, The Ever-Living Word Evangelical Church, a happy TENTH anniversary.

Starting out as a home fellowship, they began meeting at First Evan in the summer of 2012 and have shared the building with us ever since. Many of you will remember how they have often blessed our services during Missions Conference and the holiday season with their beautiful music.

Last November, they were able to call a full-time pastor, Pastor Mike Nhu. Prior to that, Hickman Ewing and Taylor Park would often fill their pulpit through a translator, and both attest to the passionate hearts for Christ these dear brothers and sisters have. *Chúc mừng kỷ niệm, Ever-Living Word Church!*



Join the Welcome Team!

Interested in being part of our team to welcome others as you would Christ? Contact Steven Yeo at syeo@firstevan.org.

RECREATION & FELLOWSHIP



Canvas Art Class

The fall Canvas participants created some beautiful works of art this semester and learned a lot in the process! Thank you to Brian Brock for leading.

Pickleball Party

We held a luncheon thanking our pickleball players for being so faithful in coming all these years.



ADULTS

SAVE THE DATE Senior Holiday Luncheon

Sunday, November 20
12:00 p.m., Fellowship Hall
Everyone 65 and older is invited to this annual luncheon with musical entertainment to get you in the holiday mood.



Fall Soccer

We kicked off the season with some fun games and smiles all around!

FEC KIDS

Child Dedication

Sunday, November 27

10:45 a.m., Sanctuary

If you are interested in dedicating your child, please sign up by Sunday, November 6 at www.firstevan.org/childdedication.



Emma Josephine Raspberry, daughter of Matt and Deidre, was dedicated on Sunday, September 18.

FEC Kids Midweek

Wednesdays, 6:15-7:30 p.m.*

Preschool, C-Wing | K-5th Grade, Gym
Interested in joining us? It's not too late: www.firstevan.org/feckids-midweek.

- OCT 5 Silly Hat Night
- OCT 12 No Midweek/Fall Break
- OCT 19 Service Project Night
- OCT 26 Costume Night



YOUNG ADULTS

Break Book Study

Thursdays, Now-November 10

7:00 p.m., The Hall's House

Break is a ministry for those post high school to mid 20's. We are currently studying *The Knowledge of The Holy* by A.W. Tozer. Books will be provided. Email Kassie Sanborn at ksanborn@firstevan.org for the address and/or the details.



Break Camping Trip

Friday-Sunday, October 7-9

Cost: \$35, Sylamore Creek Camping Mountain View, Arkansas

Register by Tuesday, October 4 at www.firstevan.org/break. Contact Kassie Sanborn at ksanborn@firstevan.org for details.

A LOOK AT OCTOBER

- OCT 2 God is Good to Give Grace (Psalm 51)
- OCT 9 God Gave Solomon Wisdom (1 Kings 2-3)
- OCT 16 Solomon Built the Temple (1 Kings 6-9)
- OCT 23 Solomon's Sin Divided the Kingdom (1 Kings 10-12)
- OCT 30 God is Good to Give Mercy (Luke 18)

Big Picture Question:

What is mercy?

Mercy is when God does not give us the punishment we deserve.

Memory Verse:

The LORD passed before him and proclaimed, "The LORD, the LORD, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness, keeping steadfast love for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, but who will by no means clear the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children and the children's children, to the third and the fourth generation."
Exodus 34:6-7

STUDENTS



Student Ministries Midweek

Wednesdays, 6:15-8:00 p.m.

Impact (6th-8th grade), E226
Common Ground

(9th-12th grade), E202

Midweek is a place for students to meet together and have the opportunity to grow in their relationship with Jesus, their friends, and their adult small group leaders. Each week we meet to connect with one another through food, worship, teaching, and small group time.



Break Candy & Costumes

Sunday, October 30, 6:30 p.m.

The Hall's House

Contact Kassie Sanborn at ksanborn@firstevan.org for the address and/or details.

GLOBAL MISSIONS



Carrying on the Work – 1 Corinthians 16:10

by Jan Carrier

Global Missions Team Member

One of the joys of a missionary is to find a “Timothy” in their midst. **David Stevens** found his “Timothy” in **Désiré Beadoum** who lives in Chad. After Désiré completed the Thompson Study Bible training, David saw a man with exceptional giftedness to teach the Word and equip church leaders. Désiré co-taught with David in Senegal, Niger, and the Ivory Coast.

The problem was that Désiré had only a little formal training. Eighty-five percent of the churches in the world are led by men and women who have little formal training in theology. Knowing that 8 out of 10 nationals that come to the USA for education never return, David encouraged Désiré to attend Evangelical Theological Seminary in Cameroon. The hurdle was that Désiré had a wife and seven children. How could a pastor with a family save enough funds to afford formal training?

This is where you, First Evan, have been the answer, thanks to your giving to the **Missions Fund**. The Global Missions Team has allocated several thousand dollars from the **Missions Fund** to assist David’s “Timothy.” Désiré is completing the second year of his formal education for his M.Div. degree. This will better equip him in his pastoral duties in Chad and becoming one of the primary trainers in French-speaking countries in Africa for the Thompson Study Bible. In the next few years David hopes to pass on his role of training future teachers to Désiré. Thank you, First Evan!



Unforgettable!

In-Life Pluska English Camp, Czech Republic, July 16–23, 2022

by Tori Martin, Missions Assistant

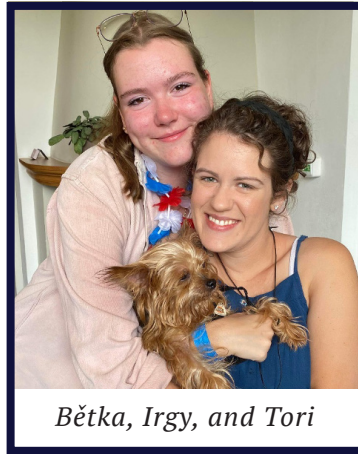
Czech Republic has amazing architecture and a wealth of history, including church history. An important aspect of Czech history is their recent break from Communism in 1989. Many of the people we met at English camp were children of those who grew up in Communism or were very young when Communism fell.

Growing up under Communism in Czech Republic, the consensus tends to be: all forms of organized religion are bad and only a tool for control as the Soviet Union displayed from 1948–1989 by infiltrating the Catholic Orthodox churches for that purpose specifically—*control*.

As a result, this scarred country wanted nothing to do with religion. But *our Jesus* tugged at the hearts of many, showing His love was not a form of control, but the ultimate and true form of freedom (Galatians 5:1). In-Life, the Christian organization we served with that week, is a result of that “tugging”. I met so many that completely understood the freedom Jesus gives by taking our penalty on the cross.

One of these that understood this freedom was my friend Bětka (bee-yet-kuh). She is 17 years old and completing her last year of high school. She is a professional ballroom dancer, a Ukulele player, and an exceptional hiker! I had the honor of getting to know her that week. The Holy Spirit leading in her life and her desire to know Jesus was evident in every conversation, smile, and hug she gave. I watched her become more confident and become someone those in her small group looked up to. She has been reading through the Bible and she told me a couple of weeks ago that she finished Matthew and asked me what my favorite part of the Bible was...so she could choose what to read next!

Here is what Bětka said about English Camp:



Bětka, Irgy, and Tori

“For me, English camp was really an unforgettable experience. Of course, I learned a lot in English, but the most important things English camp gave me were the community and friends that are still helping me grow as a person. For me, it was really inspiring to see that many people loving and worshipping Jesus Christ. My relationship with Jesus grew so much stronger during the camp. It’s such a blessing that we all could be there and enjoy a good time together with our Heavenly Father.”

–Bětka Homutová



Monthly Meet & Greet's

Saturday, October 1

4:00 p.m., Zoom

Mark and Rhonda Miller

Pioneers, North Carolina

We would love for you to join as we fellowship with and encourage our Missionaries and National Partners! Times and days will vary. Below is the zoom info we will use for the meetings. Please stay tuned to social media and emails to get the latest update on who we will be meeting with and when.

[Click here to join meetings.](#) Meeting ID: 824 2619 1429; Passcode: 518957.

MEN



Men's Fish Fry

On Tuesday, September 20, Bill Morris, Former Sheriff of Shelby County (1964–70) and Former Mayor of Shelby County (1978–94), shared how Christ worked in his life. Thank you to all our volunteers who helped make this night a success! Watch the recording: www.firstevan.org/mens-media.

WORSHIP

Lessons and Carols Music Preview

Sunday, October 23
1:15 p.m., Sanctuary

Calling all singers for the Sunday, December 11 (9:00 and 10:45 a.m.) Lessons and Carols services. We will have lunch in the Chapel at 12:15 p.m., followed by a preview of the music in the Sanctuary. RSVP for lunch to Katelynn Bernardini at kbernardini@firstevan.org or 901-682-8452.

WOMEN



Girls' Getaway 2022 "Rooted"

We had a great time at our annual Girls' Getaway in Florence, Alabama this past weekend! There was much laughter, time for relaxation and fellowship, good food, and solid Bible teaching from Erica Wiggernhorn. It was a sweet picture of cross-generational community.



Sharing Spiritual Conversations

Wednesdays, Now–November 16
6:15–8:00 p.m., E111

Men of First Evan and visitors gathered for three Wednesdays to share stories of their evangelism encounters. We come together to discuss how to prepare hearts to seek, share, and invite the lost to repent and trust in the only Savior and King, Jesus Christ. God is moving the hearts of our men to live out the Great Commission together! People are encouraged to find kindred spirits, have honest discussions, and be exhorted to labor together. May the Lord bring more laborers and allow us to see the fruit of the harvest! All glory to God!

There is no commitment or curriculum. Come and go as life allows. Contact Steven Yeo with questions at syeo@firstevan.org.



CARE



ACT II Widows Fellowship

Monday, October 3, 10:00 a.m.
Memphis Botanic Gardens

ACT II is a group for widows that meets the first Monday of each month in the Chapel for prayer and fellowship (unless there is an outing). This month, we will attend the Alice in Wonderland exhibit at the Botanic Gardens at 10:00 a.m., followed by lunch at Fratelli's Garden Cafe. For more information about this ministry or to RSVP, contact [Cathy Graham](mailto:CathyGraham) at 901-685-1028 or 901-299-1426 (cell).

He Cares Ministry

We are looking for someone to restart and coordinate our He Cares Ministry. We also need one or two retired nurses on campus for this gathering. This is a special ministry designed to meet the needs of our seniors desiring more fellowship. We meet monthly from 10:00 a.m.–1:30 p.m. for a day of arts/crafts, devotional/prayer time, communion, and lunch. Every "Dear One" is assigned at least one caregiver that stays with them throughout the day. This is also a ministry for the caregivers of the "Dear Ones" who can have a day to run errands, shop, or just take a nap. If interested in volunteering, please contact Jim Henry at jhenry@firstevan.org or 901-490-5825.

SAVE THE DATE

Women's Christmas Dinner
A Night of Christmas
Celebration with
Hannah Kerr

Thursday, December 8
6:00 p.m., Memphis Hilton

Ticket Sales begin
Sunday, November 13
8:30 a.m., Fellowship Hall

Cost: \$20/seat (\$200/table)

OCTOBER 2022

SATURDAY

| SUNDAY | MONDAY | TUESDAY | WEDNESDAY | THURSDAY | FRIDAY | SATURDAY |
|--|--|--|---|---|---|---|
| <p>Communion 2</p> <p>FEC Prayer Focus 5:00-5:30 p.m., Zoom</p> | <p>ACT II Widows Fellowship 3 10:00 a.m., Botanic Gardens</p> <p>Men's Bible Study 6:30-8:00 p.m., E143</p> | <p>Heart to Heart with Luncheon 4 9:30-12:30 p.m., F-Hall</p> | <p>Midweek Fellowship Meal 5 5:00 p.m., Fellowship Hall</p> <p>Midweek 6:15-8:00 p.m.</p> | | <p>Break Camping Trip 7 >>></p> | <p>1</p> <p>Global Missions Meet & Greet Mark and Rhonda Miller Pioneers, North Carolina 4:00 p.m., Zoom</p> |
| <p>>>></p> <p>FEC Prayer Focus 9 5:00-5:30 p.m., Zoom</p> | <p>Men's Bible Study 10 6:30-8:00 p.m., E143</p> | <p>No Heart to Heart due to Fall Break 11</p> | <p>No Midweek due to Fall Break 12</p> | <p>Break Book Study 13 7:00 p.m., The Hall's House</p> | | |
| <p>FEC Prayer Focus 16 5:00-5:30 p.m., Zoom</p> | <p>Men's Bible Study 17 6:30-8:00 p.m., E143</p> | <p>Heart to Heart 18 9:30-11:30 a.m., F-Hall</p> | <p>Midweek Fellowship Meal 19 5:00 p.m., Fellowship Hall</p> <p>Midweek 6:15-8:00 p.m.</p> | <p>Break Book Study 20 7:00 p.m., The Hall's House</p> | | |
| <p>Grace Celebration 23 9:30-10:30 a.m., Sanctuary</p> <p>FEC Prayer Focus 5:00-5:30 p.m., Zoom</p> | <p>Men's Bible Study 24 6:30-8:00 p.m., E143</p> | <p>Heart to Heart 25 9:30-11:30 a.m., F-Hall</p> | <p>Midweek Fellowship Meal 26 5:00 p.m., Fellowship Hall</p> <p>Midweek 6:15-8:00 p.m.</p> | <p>Break Book Study 27 7:00 p.m., The Hall's House</p> | <p>Break 28</p> | <p>Fall Fun Fest 29 11:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m. First Evan East Lawn</p> |
| <p>Break Candy & Costumes 30 6:30 p.m., The Hall's House</p> <p>FEC Prayer Focus 5:00-5:30 p.m., Zoom</p> | <p>Men's Bible Study 31 6:30-8:00 p.m., E143</p> | | | | | |