



**free grace**

presbyterian church

**August 2010**

**SUMMER LAZINESS?**

**PER**

What do you envision when you think of summer? Hot, sunny days spent relaxing on the beach, relaxing by the pool, relaxing by the air conditioner... For most of us that vision begins with relaxing somewhere.

The problem is reality. Reality is that summer seems to be even busier than the rest of the year. The normal routine takes a back seat. Even church attendance dips a bit.

August is shaping up to be a very busy month. A list of the major activities includes:

- Two missions teams arriving to serve with us in many events and projects.
- Hosting a free Family Fun Night at Roy's Hamburgers in Auburn.
- Giving free gourmet gift boxes to businesses in the church's

neighborhood to introduce ourselves.

- Free lunch in the church parking lot for those who work in the area around the church.
- Serving our city in the Bridging the Gap campaign.
- Video game night at the church to give you an opportunity to deepen relationships with friends who play.

We are not just trying to be busy. These are opportunities to build new relationships and deepen existing ones - and ultimately to invite people to worship God with us.

Trust me, I know it is easy to feel swamped and burnt out with so much happening. This is not the goal. So pray for energy and excitement for us all through these weeks. And pray that we would see God work in what we do to bring others to worship him.

**MY SINCERE APOLOGIES**

**KEN**

When you hear the name "Tiger Woods," what comes to mind? Images of clutch putts and fist pumps? Thoughts of purchasing a Buick? Or do you envision a spoiled brat cursing noisy fans for interrupting his focus?

Whatever your thoughts used to be, they've likely changed since his plunge from grace this year.

Tiger cheated on his wife, multiple times. His exposure began with a single-car accident on his own property. The incident made headlines

and the para-marital revelations began pouring forth. After the initial dust had settled, Tiger's wife had moved to Europe and Tiger had committed himself to inpatient therapy for sex addiction. Partway through his program, Tiger stepped up and delivered nearly fourteen minutes of personally agonizing apology.

With humility and candor Tiger set out to elucidate his remorse for all to see. It was the best apology I have seen from a public figure. Yet some received each word the way starving sharks receive a bucket of chum. The fury of analyses began before Tiger could descend from the dais. It wasn't pretty.

Some declared Tiger's apology insincere, unequivocally proven by the precision of the apology's delivery. If truly sorrowful, it was said, his elocution would contain "ers" and "uhs"; Tiger offered not a one. One commentator cynically

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considered his apology mere drama, deftly orchestrated to court his former sponsors.

The truth is, only Tiger and God know if he was truly sincere. The general public is neither able nor righteous enough to judge the veracity of his regret. Instead, we should focus on our responsibility as the receiver of an apology.

Because we lack omniscience, an attribute owned by God alone, we are unable to decipher a person's sincerity. When faced with a repentant person, then, we have two choices: Either offer our forgiveness, or else claim omniscience and demand something greater than God himself requires.

For those of us who lack God's ability to search the heart, forgiveness should reside comfortably on our tongues and eagerly await an opportunity to sooth words of repentance. To offer less is to damage relationships and prove we also need forgiveness.

## AUGUST HIGHLIGHTS

- 01-07 Clemson missions team
- 03 Family Fun Night  
5:00 - 7:00 PM @ Roy's Hamburgers and Golf
- 07-14 West Springfield missions team
- 11 Mom's Time Out  
2:00 - 5:00 PM @ the church
- 13 Friday Free Lunch  
11:30 - 1:00 PM @ the church parking lot
- 14 Bridging the Gap  
9:00 - 1:00 PM @ Lewiston High School
- 27 Video-Rama  
7:30 - 10:30 PM @ the church

## OBSERVATIONS ON THE FISCAL YEAR

The following are observations from our church treasurer on Fiscal Year 2010 (07/09 - 06/10).

### Achievements

- The church established a physical presence in the community by securing, renovating, and furnishing a sanctuary and offices. The terms are favorable and this was accomplished without the use of either debt or extraordinary fundraising.
- Jordan's Bridge fee income grew significantly in the fourth quarter. If sustained, the counseling service may achieve viable financial performance.
- Member donations exceeded expectations. A core group of members is giving regularly and generously.

### Challenges

- Purchases required to operate at the new location reduced cash on hand.

- Major funding was dependent on donors outside of Free Grace.

- A number of members were either unable to tithe or unaware of the importance of stewardship and tithing.

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## OBJECTIVES FOR THE COMING YEAR

Our goal as a church is always to glorify God. We seek to do this by living out our vision of broken people bound together in Christ. The circumstances we find ourselves in at any given time lead to a particular focus on how to best pursue those goals.

With where we are now, our primary objective over the coming year is to grow. We do not seek growth to justify our existence or to be successful. But we recognize that without growth it will be difficult to continue to live out our vision together as a church. We will be unable to meet our financial obligations. We will struggle to proclaim the gospel to Lewiston-Auburn together. We may find ourselves becoming stunted in our faith. Growth is not the goal but a means by which we are encouraged in our faith and strengthened to proclaim the gospel in life.

We also have several specific financial objectives for Fiscal Year 2011. We prayerfully ask God to work in these so that through our stewardship we are freed to serve him as he calls and to rejoice in his provision and care for his church. These financial objectives are:

- Establish a reserve cash position to offset seasonal and unanticipated fluctuations in giving.
- Enhance member giving via growth in new members and the education of existing members to offset anticipated reductions in MNA donors and gift balances.
- Increase billable hours delivered by Jordan's Bridge.