



GRACE COMMUNITY CHURCH NEWSLETTER FEBRUARY 2025

“You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden.”

Matthew 5:14

A VIEW FROM THE PARSONAGE

Senior Pastor Frank Sawicki

As I prepare to teach on the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus' sermon unfurled as a sweeping declaration of the character, influence, and actions of a citizen of the kingdom of heaven, articulated with perfect intent by the King himself.

Weekly Events

- Sundays: Class 101
Join us at 10am on Sunday for our introductory Bible Study
- Tuesdays: Class 202
Join us as we deep dive into the book of Book of Isaiah every Tuesday at 6pm
- Thursdays: Small Groups
Men's and Women's Small Groups meet Thursdays at 6pm

No doubt when Jesus' freshly minted disciples seated themselves at his feet on that mountainside 2,000 years ago, they had no idea what he was about to utter. I suspect they had their own expectation of what it would mean to be in the inner circle of the king prophesied to sit on David's throne, a vision that probably did not include poverty of any kind, or mourning, or meekness, or hunger and thirst. Nor did it likely include showing mercy, trading outward purity for inward purity, making peace, or enduring persecution. I suspect their visions of walking closely with Jesus involved being the strongest rather than the weakest, the greatest rather than the least, the first

rather than the last. Jesus' sermon would have completely toppled their eager hopes to reign and rule with him in power, popularity, and ease.

But as I became reacquainted with the sermon, considered for the first time in its entirety, I found that it toppled my own expectations as well. Rather than provide

me with a checklist of righteous behaviors, it asked of me the unthinkable: an impossible righteousness, one that exceeded the most righteous human example I could imagine. Not only did Jesus mean for me to obey outwardly, he meant for me to obey inwardly as well. In his kingdom there would be no walking the line, no asking, “How close can I get to sin without sinning?” In his kingdom, motive mattered as much as action. Here was no moralism. Here was a righteousness only possible by means of a changed heart. As Frank Thielman has put it, “In short, the Sermon shows us what life should look like for a heart that has been melted and transformed by the gospel of grace, while also making clear the true nature of God’s standards of righteousness—high standards which mean that our right standing with God is ultimately dependent on the grace of the One who tells us of them.” We must have a changed heart rather than a checklist. Put your faith in Jesus first and the rest will follow.

February Events

- 2/14 **Kids Movie Night** – Leave your kids k-5th grade and we will watch them while you enjoy Valentine’s evening 4pm-7pm
- 2/16 **Monthly Board Meeting** – 1pm Grace Community Hall ALL ARE WELCOME
- 2/21 **Game Night** – Spend an evening at the Sawicki’s playing board games and having dinner.
- 2/22 **North Country Youth Group** – 6pm-8pm Ages 12-18 games, food, music, live worship, and encouragement.
- 2/27 **Dinner and The Chosen** – Bring your favorite dish while we start Season 2 of The Chosen

CHURCH BOARD UPDATE

- January Meeting was our annual family meeting. It was very well attended thank you all who stayed and gave input on the direction of the church for this year!
- John Kennedy and Vera Stanwood were elected to the board and Katie Sawicki was reelected as Secretary.
- Bob Rice, John Kennedy, Frankie and Dean were affirmed as Elders or spiritual leaders of the church.
- NEKLS lease agreement was approved for another year at \$400/month.
- Board approved to have Chris Savenie renovate the bathroom.
- NEXT Board Meeting is February 16th at 1pm

ALL ARE WELCOME!

BIBLE STUDY

We want to thank each of you that come to 101, 202, and/or small group! If you haven't checked out one of the groups, we encourage you to! Each group is full of brothers and sisters eager grow in our Gods word and talking together is a great way to grow. Proverbs 27:17 says, "Iron sharpens iron, as one man sharpens another". We want to make sure you know you are welcomed if you come to every group every week, one group sometimes, or whatever it looks like.

CAMP BEREIA

In January we partnered with River of Life Worship Center to take 11 teens to Deep Freeze at Camp Berea in Hebron NH on Newfound Lake. It was a great weekend for kids and adults. We were able to watch the kids build relationships and have discussions about Jesus and how they can take the next steps in their faith journey.

NORTH COUNTRY YOUTH GROUP

Steaming from the great time at Camp Berea we are looking to engage more with the youth in the area by working together with other church youth groups. On February 1st we held a teen movie night at GCC and had 9 teens from GCC and River of Life (ROL). On February 22nd we are planning a large-scale youth event at the Canaan gym. This will be a time for teens from all over the North Country to come and hang out with their friends and play games, hangout, worship and hear a talk by Dean. If you know of any teens from 12-18 please invite them the more kids the more fun the event will be.

PRAYER LIST

If you have anything on your heart you would like the leadership to pray about, please send us an email or let one of us know. We want to pray for you and requests sent to us will never be distributed to anyone outside leadership, unless clearly specified.

THANK YOU FOR BEING YOU

If you would like to include something for next month's newsletter, please email
Dean at dean.rw.neary@gmail.com
or call (603) 331-1261