



ELIM
CHURCH
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IN THE CITY

THE FORECASTER

MARCH
2018

12 Words In 2018: “Grace”

The Anchor Bible Dictionary defines grace as “the favor of God to human beings” or “unmerited divine favor.” Understanding the idea of grace in the Old Testament requires a slew of Hebrew words and concepts—namely, God’s mercy, favor, love, pleasure, covenant, approval, and blessing. Consequently, people often think that because of the amount of laws and commands, the idea of God’s grace was somehow foreign to the Israelites and the writers of the Old Testament. However, that is certainly not the case. Enter the New Testament Greek word *charis*. Wherever you see *charis* / ‘grace’ in the New Testament, you almost always see the same words or ideas from the Old Testament (listed above) nearby in the context. *Charis* is such a big idea, it is essentially a central term for all of Paul’s letters, as well as the book of Acts, Hebrews, and 1 Peter. Now, let’s try to expand on these basic observations a bit. God’s grace is...

The fulfillment of God’s promises—What seemed to be at stake for the New Testament writers when talking about grace was the degree in which God had been faithful in doing for Israel all God had promised throughout history. God had made unconditional promises to Abraham, to David, and the people of Israel, yet they were suffering under the oppression of the Romans and in need of deliverance. “Grace,” then, describes the whole work of God in Jesus, from before time through the sending of the Messiah in Jesus of Nazareth. As in God’s promises to Abraham, God’s grace is extended not only to Israel, but to the whole world, and that deliverance is perfected and made complete on the Cross.

Unfathomable—Because of the way God had chosen to fulfill promises in Jesus Christ (the fuller revelation of God’s heart), God’s grace becomes even more difficult for us to comprehend. Prior to the cross, we might be tempted to think that grace was only material blessing or riches. 2 Baruch (see the poem to the right) is a Jewish pseudepigraphical text thought to have been written in the late 1st century AD (around the same time much of the New Testament was written). 2 Baruch is not included in the regular canon of scriptures, but it reflects how the Jewish understanding of “grace” had come to evoke the full scope of the unfathomable mysteries of God. The author concludes that it is impossible to begin to really see the unfathomableness of God’s grace until you have experienced the grace of God. The poem from 2 Baruch will remind you of Romans 11:33-36, a doxology (hymn of praise) on the grace of God to the Gentiles.

*Who can equal your goodness, O Lord?
For it is incomprehensible.
Or who can fathom your grace,
which is without end?
Or who can understand your intelligence?
Or who can narrate the
thoughts of your spirit?
Or who of those born can hope
to arrive at these things,
apart from those to whom you
are merciful and gracious?
—2 Baruch, 75:1-5*

Empowering—The more that grace becomes even more unfathomable to the people who have received it by faith, the more those people are empowered by it. God’s grace empowers us to do all the things God has done in Christ. Grace empowers us to live in the present, to forgive, to love, to show mercy, to heal, to overcome, to reach, and to bless others. This can only happen through a community committed to knowing, expressing, and worshipping a God of grace.

May we be that community of grace, and may you and those around you experience God’s grace in 2018!

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Leadership Team Update

Last fall, I wrote an article that focused on the momentum that we were experiencing at Elim. I still think that is true, but as is true with most things in life, there are setbacks along the way. Sometimes those setbacks can “take the wind out of our sails.” How do we cope?

Setbacks, in this case, refer to: ideas or programs that do not seem to “take off;” faces that used to be seen and now are not; finances, at times; shortages of volunteers; or folks who seem to be heading the right direction and then are not. Tangible items are easier to deal with than living things, including humans. Plates that are put away stay there. Boards that have been cut and screwed together stay that way.

Sometimes, organizing and motivating a group of people is like herding cats. Students do not consistently follow directions or remain focused. Sometimes our individuality overrides our team goals and plans. (Don't misunderstand me on this. Individuality is a necessary and a good thing.) Sometimes we give goods and services to folks who then keep asking and expecting more. Sometimes, no matter what we do, it seems it is not what some folks want.

What do we do? When I was a classroom teacher, I tried to remember that I was “playing the odds.” It was rare that every student was focused and progressing. But I knew that if I did not push, a smaller number would progress. It was my job (and calling) to try to push students to progress, but I could not guarantee results, because the materials I was working with were not fully under my control. The same is true for a church. We are called to work toward God's Kingdom, but we do not control the results. However, both in the classroom and in our church, if we do not work, then a lack of progress is a given.

A better answer is in the Parable of the Sower in Mark 4:1-9. The farmer throws the seeds out, but he or she cannot fully control the nature of the ground on which the seeds fall. That can be discouraging, but it is certain that if seeds are not thrown, no results will occur. It is our calling to tell and show God's love and hope, even when the results are frustrating or inconsistent. God knows our efforts.

Roger Dahl, Elim Church Chair

★ **HAPPY** ★
BIRTHDAY!

March Birthdays!

HAPPY BIRTHDAY to everyone at Elim celebrating a birthday this month!

Anna Smith (3-2), Carolyn Pinke (3-7), Carl Nelson (3-8), Barb Gabel (3-9), Jim Kelley (3-10), Virginia Thompson (3-14), Dave Beck (3-16), Nolan Venkatrathnam (3-19), Rod Tyberg (3-21), Pat McCurdy (3-24), Thomas Minnema (3-27), Duane Metz (3-30), Joyce DeHaan (3-31)

Missions: The Heartbeat Of God (Part 3 of 5)

Last month, we saw that Hussein chose to give his life to the God who would take all his pain and never stop loving him. He was incredibly happy. Then came a testing...

Hussein was at the beach, along the Caspian Sea, on a church retreat. He had never learned to swim, but—egged on by his friends—he splashed in the waves with water rising up to his chest. Suddenly, he stepped into deep water. Panicked, he thrashed and splashed, trying vainly to stay afloat. Then he began praying.



“Christ, give me one more chance,” he prayed. Months earlier, he had sensed God calling him to ministry, but he had a good job, a house, and freedom, so he refused. Now he desperately longed to live—to have the opportunity to give up all he had for Jesus. “One more chance! I never ministered for you. I will minister for you if you do this. Just give me one more chance.”

Several lifeguards dragged him from the depths. Time would show if his commitment had been born of true conviction, or based only on a desperate will to live.

“You almost died,” an Iranian church leader told Hussein after learning of his decision to be “all in” for Jesus. “You’re feeling emotional right now. Do you know how hard it is to minister in Iran?”

“I don’t care,” Hussein said, sincere conviction in his voice. “I have to. Jesus gave me one more chance, and I have to do this. If I have to sacrifice everything I have, I will do this.”

He quit his job, paid off his debts, and sold his car. Then he went into full-time ministry with a female co-leader who ministered to women. As an evangelist, Hussein had a great combination: his story was compelling, his passion convincing, and his message convicting. “The favor of the Lord was with me,” he said. “I felt God had anointed me to witness.” Dozens of people came to profess faith in Christ through his ministry, but he would pay a price for these souls.

In the Kurdish area of Iran, Hussein became involved with a group that shipped Bibles into the country. One day, just after five hundred New Testaments arrived, eight members of the Iranian secret police rushed in. They did not show any search warrants; they just ravaged his apartment looking for Christian literature.

The police handcuffed Hussein, along with three female church leaders, and whisked them away in a van...

Carolyn Pinke, For the Missions Team

The Unlimited / Kidz Klozet

The Unlimited is now accepting donations of gently-used, stylish, **SPRING and SUMMER** clothing—clean and on hangers. We can also use shoes and other accessories. Kidz Klozet is looking for clothing for kids of all ages, along with shoes, coats, backpacks... anything kid-appropriate, we can use! You may drop off donations on Sundays in the old entry, behind the sanctuary. During the week, the office accepts donations during regular office hours. The Unlimited and Kidz Klozet are both open on the first Thursday of the month, from 9 am—noon. Kidz Klozet is also open on the last Sunday of the month, from 8-10 am.





Elim Preschool News

We Are Marching Into A New Month!

A new month is upon us and we are looking forward to so much fun and excitement. February went by in a flash as we celebrated a super day with dads, grandpas, and uncles, as well as celebrating love at our Valentine Parties! We were so happy to finally get back outside to play in the snow after a long period where it was much too cold! The children love the snow, and being outdoors helps the wiggles!! Spring is on the radar!!

We are excited about our upcoming trip to Orchestra Hall with the older children, as they get to explore instruments and play music! It is quite a treat. This month, we are celebrating new life and the love that God has for us at Easter. Our children are reminded that Jesus is here for us, at all times, and that they are loved. Our Spring Break this year runs from Friday, March 30, to Friday, April 6. We are all looking forward to celebrating Easter and spending some quality time relaxing as well!

Have a wonderful month filled with the love of Jesus, new life and a few chocolate eggs and bunnies...

Michelle Espelien, Elim Preschool Director

Easter Egg Hunt Outreach

Elim has once again been invited by Mill City Church to join them in serving at the Easter Egg Hunt that they host each year at Logan Park for the families in our neighborhood. It will take place on Saturday, March 31, from 11 am-1 pm.

"It has a tradition of blessing the neighborhood and invites them into the Easter Weekend," says ChristianAnn from Mill City. Elim served last year and was blessed in doing so.

Once again, you may sign up to volunteer before, during, or after the Easter Egg Hunt. What kinds of jobs are available? Help is needed in the following areas:

Face Painting Food Set up and Serving Games
Bouncy House Monitoring Registration Hiding Eggs
Hunt Facilitators Craft Room Clean Up

To register to help, please go to <https://goo.gl/HkV9xY>

You will be asked to give your contact information and sign up for a specific time to serve. This is a great opportunity to join together in serving the folks of Northeast while bringing Christ's love to them. Last year, Elim was full of families because it rained and part of the activities were held inside. Let's be in prayer as we prepare for this opportunity to serve. **Note:** registration to join the Easter Egg Hunt itself happens on March 31.



Deb Somody, Director of Children's Ministry



MerryMakers' Outing—*Saturday, March 3, 2:30 pm*—For our next outing, we will attend a production of “*Anne of Green Gables*,” at the University of Northwestern. The play begins at 2:30 pm; doors open at 2 pm. Afterwards, we will eat at Byerly’s Restaurant in Roseville. If you have questions, please see Barb Gabel or Marilyn Pennoyer.

50 + Lunch—*Tuesday, March 6, noon*—The theme in March is “*Spring Cleaning*.” Bring your favorite dish to share with the group and invite a guest! If you plan to attend, please RSVP with Laurie Damberg (phone, email, or in person). Sign up on the sheet in the dining room. Newcomers welcome! See you there!

Mariners' Breakfast—*Tuesday, March 13, 9:00 am*—Our breakfast in March will be at Bakers Square (located at 1881 Highway 36 in Roseville).



50 + Lunch Thank You!

From Laurie Damberg: A special thank you to everyone who attended the "All About Love" 50+Lunch at Jax Café on February 6.

A fun time was had by all while celebrating God's love, connection, and community with a gorgeous red-velvet cake as a gift from Elim. Blessings all around!

A Note From The Hill Family

Thank you so much, dear, sweet friends of Elim, for your love and care in the recent months of our caregiving Ruth’s dad Ken at home, and also in his recent passing. He is in THE BEST place now! The flowers at the service were beautiful. Ruth is trying to keep them alive! Thank you! Dad is missed, but we are grateful for God’s perfect timing of bringing Ken home to heaven before his Alzheimer’s progressed. The meals and extra hands were so appreciated, as were Pastor Becky and Pastor Paul’s gentle, loving touches.

ECY Update

Rick Dischinger, Interim Director of Youth Ministry

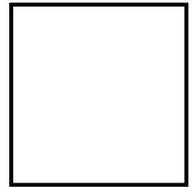
Winter is loosening its grip! Yay! I think I even saw Paul Bremer wearing shorts!

Some Elim Students and leaders got together to begin planning for the summer. We arrived at some dates and some great activity ideas. Pastor Paul has agreed to hang out with us July 15-19 at Ham Lake Camp for a getaway week to ourselves! We decided not to do a Youthworks trip this summer. Students are encouraged to take a week at Trout Lake Camp and—for sure—join us for a week of fun activities and teaching at Ham Lake Camp from July 15-19. We also have scheduled our weekly summer Wednesday activity! Watch for further details!

The Month of March looks like this for ECY: Wednesday, March 7 (also WNL), 14 and 21. No Wednesday ECY on March 28. There will be opportunity to observe “*Journey to the Cross*” during Holy Week. Sundays in March, we will have Sunday School at 9 am. Plan on a “Daylight Saving Time” Sunday School breakfast on March 11, starting at 9 am... or is it 8 am!?! I think we lose an hour? Or do we gain? Either way, the pancakes will be cold if you are late!

I also have several Comedy Sportz tickets available, and would love to take any student who was unable to go on February 9. Let me know if you are interested and we can work out a date. Elim Youth are the best!

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Time Sensitive Information

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 •Kidz Klozet, Unlimited open, 9:00 am	2	3 •MerryMakers' Outing, 2:30 pm
4 •Hope Avenue, 7:15-10 am •Prayer Time, 8:20 am •Sunday School, 9:00 am •The Gathering, 10:00 am •Worship, 10:30 am	5 •Women's Bible Study, 10:00 am, Lounge	6 •"50 + Lunch," Dining Room, Noon	7 •Jesus Calling, 6:30 pm, Prayer Room •Wednesday Night Live, 5:45 pm •GriefShare, 6:30 pm, Lounge	8	9	10
11 COMMUNION •Hope Avenue, 7:15-10 am •Prayer Time, 8:20 am •Sunday School, 9:00 am •The Gathering, 10:00 am •Worship, 10:30 am	12 •Women's Bible Study, 10:00 am, Lounge	13 •Mariners' Breakfast, 9:00 am	14 •Seniors' Bible Study, 1 pm, Library •Jesus Calling, 6:30 pm, Prayer Room •ECY, 6:30 pm, Youth Rooms, Gym •GriefShare, 6:30 pm, Lounge	15	16	17
18 •Hope Avenue, 7:15-10 am •Prayer Time, 8:20 am •Sunday School, 9:00 am •The Gathering, 10:00 am •Worship, 10:30 am	19 •Women's Bible Study, 10:00 am, Lounge	20	21 •Seniors' Bible Study, 1 pm, Library •Jesus Calling, 6:30 pm, Prayer Room •ECY, 6:30 pm, Youth Rooms, Gym •GriefShare, 6:30 pm, Lounge	22	23	24
25 •Hope Avenue, 7:15-10 am •Prayer Time, 8:20 am •Sunday School, 9:00 am •The Gathering, 10:00 am •Worship, 10:30 am	26 •Women's Bible Study, 10:00 am, Lounge •Elim Book Club, 7:00 pm, Lounge	27	28 •Jesus Calling, 6:30 pm, Prayer Room •ECY, 6:30 pm, Youth Rooms, Gym •GriefShare, 6:30 pm, Lounge	29	30	31