

# GCC MESSENGER

*This is the message we have heard from Him and declare to you, that God is light and in Him there is no darkness at all. 1 John 1:5*

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The following appeared in the July 2008 issue of the GCC Messenger:

## THESE THINGS I BELIEVE

I've been thinking lately about the word, 'believe'. I've looked at the dictionary definition of the word, and looked deeper at the nuance of meanings applied more to the concept of 'believe' and not merely the sterile dictionary explanation. It's caused me to revisit something I pondered a while ago. And it's this:

If you were asked the question today, "What do you believe?" I've been pondering that question – the large 'super-sized' question – you know, the BIG question, "What do I believe?"

### And I believe these things:

- I Believe in Relationship. I once knew God merely as 'Creator, 'Judge' and 'God'; I now know Him as my *Best Friend*, my *Counselor*, my *Constant Companion*, my *True Helper*, my *Loving Father*. No more is He a Concept to be understood or a Force to be reckoned with. As the old gospel song goes, "Heaven came down and glory filled my soul" – at the moment of my repentance and Jesus forged a personal relationship between Himself, the Father and me. That's **relationship** – beyond what any earthly bond could ever become.
- I Believe in Relationship with people; not 'membership' in an 'institution' or 'denomination' or 'church'. It occurs to me that it takes a 'fellow' to have 'fellowship'. I can't hold membership in a society or a club or an association and call that membership a 'relationship'. After all what would we call it? Society-ship? 'Club-ship?' 'Association-ship?'
- I Believe in *Showing*, as opposed to *Shouting*, the Good News. I suppose that ranting and screaming and shrieking have their place – perhaps among the near-deaf. I'm not that hard of hearing that I can't perceive the sound of a spoken word. And I'm not that dull that I can't recognize Good News when I hear , or better yet, see it – acted out, demonstrated, *lived more than lectured*.
- I Believe in Grace over Judgment. I believe in Mercy over Merit, Goodness over

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'Holy Talk', and Love over Law.

- I Believe in the manifold gifts our Father has given to assist our growth, our understanding, our peace and our eternity.
- I Believe in the Church – not the Masquerade of Religious Pomp and Circumstance that so many have become satisfied with, or the 'Corporation' of the church or the 'Institution' of the Church.
- I Believe in the Church which is the *Body* of Christ, unified, not 'unionized', in harmony with herself even when she's not in lock-step agreement. I Believe in the Bride of Christ, readying herself for her Wedding Day.
- I Believe in *Being the Church* more than 'Doing Church' or 'Attending Church' or 'Going to Church'.
- I Believe that Words Mean Things. and that when our words don't match our hearts or our actions, we're in Big Trouble with ourselves, let alone with heaven.
- And I Believe in YOU, the people of Gardiner Community Church, who gather together, week by week, as you are, as you have been graced, to be a blessing and an example of the Grace of our God brings us together to BELIEVE.

In His Grace,  
Pastor Greg

### ELDERS REPORT

Coffee and cookies on the table, and we are ready - Ted has worked his wonders.

We are beginning the planning for the 2012 Annual Meeting in February. A new elder will perhaps be elected.

Pastor Greg was pleased to hear that he is now free to hop on the platform that failed him two weeks ago. Ted has made it strong again with the addition of much new underpinning.

We have four new church members - Joyce and Carlton Posey and Becky and Don Isley. We welcome them.

Everyone will be relieved to hear that we will be getting a new sound system. Ron said that our trouble with the microphones is due to the failure of the whole system. He is taking charge of this for us.

We are changing the office days at the church. Starting in January the church will be open on Mondays and Thursdays, from 9:30 to 12:00.

We are grateful for the privilege of attending to the needs of our church. Thank you, and God Bless.

Mardy Pearson, Elder & Secretary

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## WE RECEIVED AN EMAIL

Hello Pastor Austin, Jon, Donna Harrison and the Gardiner Community Church Congregation,

I received your package today (11 Dec 2011), I am so thankful for all the treats, homemade goodies and socks, all are hot commodities at the location that I am deployed to. I am sorry I can't go into details, but know that there are groups of Americans working jointly with small Afghanistan communities in an effort to bring stability and security for these people. These operations are successful when relationships are built on trust. That can be difficult if you think short term, the success here will rely on the upcoming years and our commitment. Know that the men out here are living and working side by side, building those relationships in order to protect these people as well as ourselves.

In addition to the food I also wanted to thank you for the different scriptures, bibles and I particularly enjoyed the story of the soldier worshipping Christ with a deck of cards. I am in a continual battle with my walk with Christ; it is a difficult path so I really needed that motivation and inspiration to get back to the word.

I guess I should take a few moments to introduce myself. I am originally from FL., as you can see from the photos I sent you I have red hair and light skin, not exactly good for FL. So when I joined the AF 21 years ago I asked to be stationed anywhere but FL. You guessed it; I was stationed in FL. for 8.5 years at Hurlburt Field (Next to Fort Walton Beach). While there my wife Leslie (also a Redhead) gave birth to two sons, Daniel (Redhead 19 yrs) and Michael (Redhead 14 yrs). I then volunteered to be an instructor at the Combat Control School. While serving in Fayetteville NC. for 4.5 years Leslie gave birth to our last boy Christian (Right again a Redhead 11 yrs). I have since left Active duty AF and Joined the Air National Guard in Louisville, KY.

I think it important to note that during my time as an instructor in Fayetteville, I had the privilege of training the very best in the Special Operations community one of which happened to be Tim Davis, for which this package memorializes. It is truly a small world. I could tell a few stories about Tim as a student; one in particular, about making fire with sticks, but you really had to be there to appreciate the humor. Regardless Tim will be missed.

Finally I want to thank you all for your prayers. The next time you pray please be specific. Whenever I get the chance I tell people that my prayers aren't for my safety they are for wisdom, discernment, and strength. Finally don't forget our Gov't we as Christians should pray for them every time we talk to God.

Thank you all so much,

Westley Brooks  
1201 Ambridge Dr.  
Louisville KY 40207



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## GCC 'BOXING DAY' MEMORIAL MISSION

This mission started in 2008 in memory of MSgt Scott 'Mac' McDaniel, TACP, Washington National Guard and later added another Washington native SSgt. Tim Davis, Air Force Battle Control. Both made the ultimate sacrifice for their country. Pastor brought the situation to the attention of the GCC Women of Faith that he had a request from some Air Force personnel who knew 'Mac' that some 'baked goods' would taste pretty good in Iraq and Afghanistan. The women started baking and packed the first boxes to ship overseas in February, 2008. The mission later involved the GCC family and several from the neighborhood, as well as donations from some local businesses.



*February 2008 First Boxing Day*



*December 2008—new APO boxes*



*January 2009 Boxing Day*



*August 2009 Boxing Day*



*August 2010 Boxing Day*



*August 2011 Boxing Day*



*November 2011 Boxing Day — total shipped to date — 641*

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## FRIDAY NIGHT FELLOWSHIP

The second Friday of each month is the sailing of the USS Fellowship with Captain Ted Mata at the helm. Sailing time is always 7:00 pm. And we always leave from the library. We always have pot-luck nourishing snacks (some not so nourishing) each evening.

The ship stayed in port on Friday, December 9, as there was a special event planned by the ship's crew. Fourteen of the GCC family were present for this special event. Cards and tokens were passed out to each person – some received two cards, many only one. Then the Captain's assistant, Ron, arrived with the necessary equipment for a rousing game of BINGO! Numbers were called by Ron as little numbered balls fell out of the rotating cage.

Many were waiting for certain numbers, but others won more than once! Sharon J. and Dennis M., to name two. Then Sharon traded cards with Ted and he won on that card, too! Prizes? Of course there were prizes! Each winner received a coupon with absolutely no value, but each delivered a good laugh!

Watch for the notice of the Friday Fellowship, on Friday the 13th of January, then join us for an evening of friendly fun and fellowship.



## RONNIE'S BOOK

Ronn Burnette was a 'happy Christian' and a GCC family member who wanted to write the story of his addictive life in the belief that it may be a help to others with similar addictive behavior. Writing did not come easily to Ronn – he struggled to put his experiences down on paper. His lung cancer took his 49 year life on December 15, 2008 before he was able to refine the final chapter of his book.

A promise was made to Ronnie that his book would be edited, published and distributed to recovery facilities, which is the reason Ronn worked so hard on the book. The GCC family donated the money for publishing, but the local professional counselors felt that the book would not be beneficial.

Therefore we have a number of books that will be made available to those who have family members or friends who might benefit from reading Ronnie's story. Some of my family members have found the book helpful to them with their addictions.

If any of you know someone who might be encouraged by Ronn's story, the books are available. Just let me know how many books you would like to share with someone.

Mary Ellen Brown

Phone: 360-582-0644

E-mail: [mebrown@wavecable.com](mailto:mebrown@wavecable.com)

## GCC FAMILY CHRISTMAS POT LUCK

Six times each year the Gardiner Community Church family enjoys a pot luck dinner at the Gardiner Community Center, next door to the church. Each Sunday pot luck, the family is greeted with special decorations on the tables and, which are always keyed to the theme of the dinner. Kathy and Ron Henderson are both very creative and each dinner the family members are invited to take something home from the tables. It may be a special placemat or some other item. This December 11 dinner we were encouraged to take home the very small red or green 'pipe-cleaner' elves, which Kathy had made to sit on each of the grape vine wreath centerpieces.

The serving tables were loaded with great variety of dishes.

As the table numbers were called the family lined up and visited while awaiting their turns.



The tables are usually all set up with chairs in place before church services. Volunteers are always there to help set up the tables, take care of the hot items in the kitchen, help to cut items that need cutting, or locating the proper serving spoons to have for each dish. Everyone present for the church service is invited to join us, whether they have brought food or not, as there is usually enough food for all. The fellowship time is very important to the family and we have an opportunity to get to know each other better at each dinner.

This was our final dinner for 2011 and we are all looking forward to the first one in 2012 on February 12. Will the theme be Lincoln, Washington, – or Valentines day?

### **A PRAYER FOR YOU**

I said a prayer for you today and know that God must have heard –  
I felt the answer in my heart, although He spoke no word.  
I didn't ask for wealth or fame, I knew you wouldn't mind –  
I asked Him to send treasures of a far more lasting kind.  
I asked that He'd be near you at the start of each new day  
To grant you health and blessings and friends to share your way.  
I asked for happiness for you in all the things great and small –  
But it was for His loving care I prayed the most of all.

*Anonymous*

## OSWALD CHAMBERS MEDITATIONS

From: *My Utmost For His Highest* - 1935

*Romans 2:16*

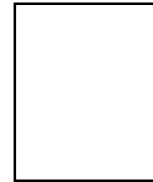
### IN THE VISION OF THE GOSPEL

Thank God for the sight of all you have never yet been. You have had the vision, but you are not there yet by any means. It is when we are in the valley, where we prove whether we will be the choice ones, that most of us turn back. We are not prepared for the blows which must come if we are going to be turned into the shape of the vision. We have seen what we are not, and what God wants us to be, but are we willing to have the vision "batter'd to shape and use" by God? The batterings always come in commonplace ways and through commonplace people.

There are times when we do know what God's purpose is; whether we will let the vision be turned into actual character depends upon us, not upon God. If we prefer to loll on the mount and live in the memory of the vision, we will be of no use actually in the ordinary stuff of which human life is made up. We have to learn to live in reliance on what we saw in the vision, not in ecstasies and conscious contemplation of God, but to live in actualities in the light of the vision until we get to the veritable reality. Every bit of our training is in that direction. Learn to thank God for making known His demands.

## **GCC MESSENGER**

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**THERE IS NO PARTIALITY WITH GOD**

*Romans 2:11*