

**FROM THE PASTOR
JIM GARRISON**

Have you seen the “evangelical atheist” billboards by the freeways? Against a blue-sky-with-clouds background, bold letters ask, “Are you good without God?” A second line assures you that, “Millions are,” followed by a web address for more information. I didn’t record the address, and haven’t looked them up, but I am curious why someone who doesn’t believe in God would go to the effort and expense of advertising against God. To say, “I’m good without God,” could mean “I’m moral even though I don’t go to church nor believe in God.” It could also mean, “I have no need or desire for God,” like when you offer a guest a drink refill and she says, “No thanks, I’m good.”

I’m assuming the sign is meant to promote atheism, but it could have the opposite effect. I am strongly in favor of encouraging those “without God” to consider whether they really are “good” both in the sense of moral and of satisfied. We often convince ourselves that we are “pretty good people,” at least better than average, as if that were all that God wanted for us. We fill our lives with nice things and are somewhat satisfied, even if we are missing the greatest things God has for us. But the Holy Spirit is an expert at piercing through our delusions, revealing to us that we aren’t as “good” as we might imagine. I pray the Spirit will use those billboards to create real soul-searching in those who read them.

Or maybe the billboard is aimed at church folks. I could imagine the same words as a sermon title, or maybe stitched into a banner. The truth is that there are millions of folks in church who are missing the point of Christianity, and who are trying to be “good without God.” They believe in God, but they are working hard to be good by their own human effort. They are satisfied with religion without the relationship. The good news of the gospel starts with some bad news: we have sinned, messed up, and we need forgiveness and help. The good news is that God offers us forgiveness and help and love through Jesus. Don’t be satisfied with rules and rituals without the relationship. Take the whole gift God offers – a loving relationship that spills over into passionate worship and holy living. Now, that is really good!



Workbook of Living Prayer

Pastor Jim is looking forward to teaching a six-week personal prayer adventure beginning right after Easter. He is offering two times: Tuesday at 7Pm or Thursday at 10AM. Choose your time and sign up in Buckner Hall on the bulletin board. Those of us who have taken a class from Pastor Jim can vouch for his good teaching skills. Any one who has been in church when Pastor prays can attest to the fact: this man knows how to pray and he covers it all!

There is a cost of \$15. for the class workbook.

Community Service

The first Sunday of each month is our monthly “Food Collection” Sunday. We collect food and clean blankets (blankets go to FOCUS) on any Sunday, but we want to remind our fellowship to think about the local food ministries at the Seventh Day Adventist Church in Georgetown, Cool Community Church in Cool, and Calvary in Greenwood. Bring food any Sunday. All food and blankets donated will go to the hungry and cold here on the Georgetown Divide. As the weather gets warmer in the Spring we see a demand at the Food Ministries as those “holed” up for the Winter make their needs known at the food ministries. The current stress in the economy will increase this demand. We specifically need canned vegetables, tuna, peanut butter and packaged goods such as Mac/Cheese, and bulk items: beans and rice.

Mens Ministry

The men of the church served you at our recent Valentine’s Dinner and they wish to thank the women from the Women’s Ministry for their help in decorating Buckner Hall for the party. The decorations were beautiful and very much appreciated. The steaks were barbequed and served by the men involved in the Men’s Ministry.

We are currently involved in identifying sources for firewood for the 2010 – 2011 season. We are cutting and rounding out firewood from various sources in and around Georgetown. We will continue to accept 15” rounds if you prefer to round out trees downed from your property. Firewood will be split and stored at my house for distribution to those who need firewood next winter. This firewood is for use by members and friends of our church family who either

cannot afford firewood, run out of dry firewood, or need additional firewood due to the duration of winter weather.

We continue to have a good attendance at our Men's Breakfasts on the 1st and 3rd Thursdays of each month. If you have not been to a breakfast lately, please put it on your calendar and come for fellowship, devotion, and good food.

We are currently planning our first fishing trip to Union Valley on June 7th thru the 11th. Mark your calendars !

Gary W. Johnson



SALAD SUNDAY IS MARCH 7TH

Salad Sundays are always appreciated. There's no good reason to have one, but every one surely does enjoy the food and the camaraderie of this event. Plan to come and enjoy! See you there!

The Travel Group

Under the chairmanship of Anna Carter Long, this group meets on the second Wednesday of the month at Para's at noon. Anna has put together an Alaskan cruise on the Celebrity "Infinity" for July 30 - August 6. Give Anna a call if you are interested in going.

Anna Long 333-1122

WOMEN'S MINISTRY

Ladies, don't miss our March 8th meeting. We are having a special guest speaker, Gail McGonigle. She has written a book **"Dad's Home Alone : Caring For Your Elderly Parent"** She gives advice on caring for elderly loved ones. Gail is the daughter of Ralph and Jean Sharpless, long time members of this church. We are having baked potatoes for lunch in honor of St. Patrick's Day. The potatoes will be provided and you bring the goodies to go on top. This should be an excellent meeting----bring a friend and come and enjoy! The time is 12 noon at Buckner Hall.

We are starting a new ministry at our church; it's for seniors. You will receive a letter explaining this program. Our seniors are valued members and we feel a program that expresses our love and respect for them is in order. This is a work in progress so your ideas are very much welcomed.

Mary Boitnot

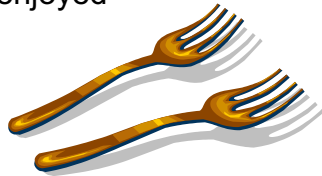
MARY SERVED THIS AT THE LAST WOMEN'S MINISTRY LUNCHEON AND SHE IS SHARING HER RECIPE!

- 8 boneless chicken breast halves
- 1 can cream of mushroom soup
- 2 1/2 oz sliced almonds
- 1 cup sour cream
- 1 can cream of celery soup
- 1/2 cup chopped celery
- 1 can cream of chicken soup
- 3 tubes Ritz Crackers crushed
- 3/4 cup {1 1/2 sticks} melted butter

Place the chicken in a large deep skillet and add water to cover. Cook over medium heat for 30 minutes or until tender. Drain and cool the chicken and tear into bite size pieces. Put the chicken in a large bowl and add the soups and sour cream and celery, mix well. Spread the mixture in a greased 13x9 inch pan. Mix the crackers and butter, and cover the casserole with the crumbs. Top with the almonds and bake at 350 degrees for 30 minutes, or until bubbly.

**Healthy Living Group to Meet
at Eleanor Hansen's Home**

March 11th is the day; 5:30 is the time. This is evolving into an important small group activity, and the group is growing! Oh, no! Not on the weight scale; but the number of participants is growing. Healthy, low calorie food is provided along with a menu to know just how many calories are being consumed. You can put your fork down when ever you want to do so! Comradery and food are enjoyed and then it's time for accountability. There are some wonderful success stories among the participants!



The more the merrier! You do not have to be a regular member of this group to be a guest of Eleanor. Please call her no later than March 9th if you would like to sit at her table.

Eleanor Hansen 333-4581

**We weep along with our friends,
Bill and Margaret**

To all those who remember us and prayed for our daughter, Tina, during her long illness, we thank you so very much. We appreciated your thoughtful notes, emails, and expressions of sympathy.

Bill and Margaret McIntyre



BIRTHDAYS

5	WILLIAM CHO	21	CELIA GARCIA
6	ANNETTE HENDRIX	22	JADEN FAITH
9	KELLY WILSON		ROBINSON
10	ANITA MANES	22	RANDY SILVA
10	TOM FREAS	24	LINDA FREAS
10	HAZEL TODD	25	GUS ANASTOLE
11	NILS KAHNBERG	30	KATY WALSH
13	RONNIE STEWART	30	LEVI WALSH
15	LAURA HARPER	30	APRIL CLARK
19	JOANN SHEPHERD	31	GREG THOMPSON
20	SILVIA EVA SORBER		

WE WISH EACH OF YOU A VERY HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

If you have a birthday this month and it is not listed here, or if you are new to our church and would like have your name and birthday listed, please notify your Growler editor at 333-4581.

The idea is to die young as late as possible.

— Ashley Montagu

(1905-1999), (Montague Francis) English anthropologist and educator - work centered primarily around human biosocial evolution; wrote The Elephant Man (1971) based upon his subject John Merrick.

Americans are living longer than ever - the U.S. government reported earlier this month that life expectancy has surpassed 78 years. U.S. life expectancy, say officials, has been rising two to three months each year. This past year, it rose by four months. Japan has the longest life expectancy - children born in Japan in 2006 are expected to live 83 years.

SPRC

The first meeting of the new year for SPRC was held on February 4, 2010. The meeting was chaired by Dean Buchholz and opened with a short prayer. The meeting was well attended by committee members, Pastor Jim Garrison, and Lay Leaders Eleanor Hansen and Gary Johnson were present. New members on the committee for 2010 are Anna Long and Roger Mostar. We welcome them to the committee and look forward to their participation in future SPRC meetings. The committee discussed the fundamentals of what is required of the SPRC in relation to the church and congregation. The next SPRC meeting is scheduled for April 8, 2010.

Submitted by Dean Buchholz, 626-5821

BIBLE QUIZ

- Q. What kind of man was Boaz before he married Ruth?
A. Ruthless.
- Q. What do they call pastors in Germany ?
A. German Shepherds.
- Q. Who was the greatest financier in the Bible?
A. Noah He was floating his stock while everyone else was in liquidation.
- Q. Who was the greatest female financier in the Bible?
A. Pharaoh's daughter. She went down to the bank of the Nile and drew out a little prophet.
- Q.. Who was the greatest comedian in the Bible?
A. Samson. He brought the house down.
- Q. What excuse did Adam give to his children as to why he no longer lived in Eden ?
A. Your mother ate us out of house and home.

GOOD NEWS

A few weeks ago, Phyllis West stood up in church to thank the Growler editor and her helpers for the newsletter. She is absolutely right to mention the helpers! There have been several. Once, Frances Fuller and myself, equipped with the originals, arrived to publish. We put them in to copy and every other page was upside down. Here were two women with at least six college degrees between them and they were unable to "get it right". Finally, they used the scientific method to figure it out. In this case the "scientific method" was trial and error. Another time, we had a paper jam and had to call Pastor Jim on his cell phone. At the time he was driving his car some where near Merced. It took two phone calls, but Pastor was able to explain the answer to the problem. When Frances shared these dilemmas with her daughter, Jan said, "You two are technological peasants." Wayne has come to help and Shirley Logan has been helpful; this editor likes the security of having Pastor in the office on publishing days! He knows all the answers!

Super Bowl Sunday was special in our church because there was **soup!** The young people collected \$401.05. from those who stayed to feast on soup and hot bread and birthday cake. Under the direction of Troy Johnson those who collected the money will determine which local charities will be the recipients of the donations.

The Men's Ministry, with decorating help from MaryEllen Johnson, Mary Boitnott, Celia Garcia and Phyllis West, put on a lovely Valentine's dinner for the women of the church. The food was perfect and the service much appreciated. Thank you, gentlemen!

Having Phil and Sue Swensson and Angela with us was a great treat. We wish we could clone them and keep them.

Mike and Junell Murchie are still in their motor home and staying near Monterey, CA. There is so much to see and do they may never come home. They have had Junell's sister and brother-in-law from Minnesota come for a week and then friends from Georgetown will visit in early March. They are staying in Betable RV Park. Junell says they miss us.

Melanie Groth writes to say she is enjoying her new job. She feels she is helping a lot of people who don't have much else going for them. She bought a piano and is learning to play again.

Dave Justice has been doing "The Cup of Noodle" ministry. They served about 20 people with ham and cups of noodles. They also hand out toiletries. Those who gave and those who have been helped are equally thankful and blessed. Dave thanks every one who helped to make it happen.

Loran Berck wrote to say his son, David, proposed to his girlfriend and she said "YES!" Now listen to this: he arranged a helicopter trip to a mountain meadow overlooking a small river, flew up ahead of time and set up a picnic site with roses, wine, linen, and delicious food; he then flew back to the airport, picked up his girlfriend, Mary, and took her on a helicopter ride over the Trinity Alps! They landed a short distance from the picnic site. How's that for romantic!

At the end of January Loran traveled to Yuba City to attend the Memorial Service for his mentor pastor, Rev. Dr. Edgar Nelson, then he continued on to Valley Springs to spend time at Hogan Lake. He was the only one in the campground. On Saturday evening a horrendous thunder and lightning storm passed directly over head! Loran popped his head outside to see what was going on. Big mistake! Lightning struck twice right where he was parked with his 5th wheel. Both times it was about 300 feet away. Needless to say he slammed the door and hunkered down for the duration. It hailed so hard he thought the roof of his 5th wheel was going to come apart. Half inch hail covered everything the next day and into the next evening.

Mickey Rome made the Boy's Varsity Volleyball Team at Golden Sierra High School, but then had to give it up because he has a heart murmur. We are proud of you, Mickey, for making the team! And, we are sorry about the heart murmur. Ashley, Becky and Mickey are all speaking at upcoming Chrysalis Flights. The Girl's Flight is March 4-7 and the Boy's Flight is March 18-21. We, as their home church need to support these young people with our prayers. Ashley and Mickey are doing the Prodigal talk and Becky is doing the Christian Action talk.

Joyce Bennett and her daughter, Pat. from Menlo Park are hosting a Dessert and Thank You Party at the Greenwood School House on Saturday afternoon from 12:30 to 4:30. There will be music, too! We are all grateful to God for the healing He has accomplished in Joyce. Now, is there anyone who does not believe in miracles!

Mike and Tara Bryant spent three days in Fort Bragg over the Valentine's Day weekend and they had a great time exploring the beaches that were accessible. The sun came out for a bit on Valentine's Day but they had a lot of overcast skies. They liked the trip so much they plan to go back for their anniversary.

Zach Fuller, still in pursuit of a place on the U.S. National Speed skating team, traveled to Dale City, VA, on February 4 for the third of four qualifying meets. On Saturday the 6th he and other skaters shoveled snow to exit from their hotel but managed to get to the rink through two feet of white stuff. As they were warming up for the first round of competition there was a noise like a truck hitting the building. Zach looked up to see a steel supporting beam buckling and braces flying loose. The good news is that all skaters evacuated the building without getting hurt before a huge portion of the roof collapsed. The bad news is that the meet had to be canceled and the Speed skating Association has not figured out how to make up the lost competition. During the year skaters trying to earn a place on the national team have four such opportunities to get their best score. Zach had already missed the first two, so now he is down to one chance for a perfect race.

Wayne and Frances Fuller traveled to West Hills in the Fernando Valley February 11-16, picking up their friend Maria Daoud in San Jose on the way. The days were like a wall-to-wall party. First they saw granddaughter Shannon and her El Camino High School basketball team win their regional tournament. Then Frances led a large and successful jewelry show. Finally they took part in Shannon's 16th birthday party. For five days they ate burgers, fries, hot dogs, chips, apple pies, ice cream,

candy, and even an occasional salad. It was fun and nobody has any regrets.

Neill and Mary Boitnott spent the last weekend in February in Milpitas celebrating their daughter-in-law's 30th birthday----big party, great food, and of course a special visit with their granddaughter, Sophia.

Thank you to Bob Freas for installing a porch light by the steps to the pastor's office, and servicing some of our other outdoor fixtures. Let your light shine!

We all agree our own grandchildren are cuter and smarter and more wonderful than anybody else's. Well, your editor's granddaughters really are! Rachel and Vanessa teamed up to take their grandmother to see **Wicked**. Now I know they are taking care of me! They avoided parking problems by taking BART; we had grand seats right down front and of course, you all know the story is the prequel to **The Wizard of OZ**. The set design and the lighting effects were magnificent. It was such fun! This was one happy grandma!

The California Nevada Conference has sent \$246,203.70 to Operation Resurrection for Hati Earthquake victims. That's a Praise the Lord!

PUT THIS ON YOUR CALENDAR

Steve and Carol Johnson will be our guests for a missions dinner and program on Wednesday, April 14. They are missionaries to Russia. Perhaps you receive their mission letters, 2Russia with Love

YOUTH MINISTRY

This past month has been a great time for our youth! We are taking opportunities to serve and raise money for those who are in need. On 'Souper Bowl Sunday' we raised over \$400 to distribute throughout the Georgetown Divide. One of the ministries we will be supporting with these funds is the Cup of Noodle Ministry which is a joint ministry of our church and Garden Valley Chapel. We had a chance to join the CNM ministry in Auburn the other day and hand out basic essentials as well as warm cups of noodles. We heard the stories of a few homeless persons and we got to know the problem that exists in Auburn. It was a great opportunity for our youth to observe and listen to the voices of people who typically go unheard. We are looking forward to serving with CNM again very soon, and we are looking for other service opportunities within our small community and beyond.

I'm getting very excited about the warmer weather because that means that spring is near and we will have chances to take the youth outside into the wonderful community we have been given.

Summer is coming soon and we are looking into summer camp opportunities and family camps, so get ready for some fund raisers, and tell all the youth you know that our church is a place where they can come to have fun, learn about God, and grow in the Lord.

Sincerely,
Troy Johnson