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Pleasant News

Gathered in Grace

By Leading Lady Michelle Robinson



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Inside this issue:

Tax Corner	2
Love Thy Neighbor	3
Year in Photos	4



Mt. Pleasant ladies gathered together in November in their cow-girl hats, boots, and western outfits for a harvest brunch catered by Sha'cona Howie, who did an outstanding job. The day gave us the opportunity to fellowship and learn more about the amazing grace of God.

Tammy Barber taught us that 'grace' is derived from the Hebrew word "kherson" which means favor, charm, delight and kindness. In **2nd Corinthians 2:9**, Jesus says, "**My grace is sufficient for you**", meaning God's power and strength are enough for us, especially in our times of weakness.

Sha'harra Howie Stewart shared the **Mark 5** story of the woman with the issue of blood who was miraculously healed by her unwavering faith and God's amazing grace. His healing power was sufficient for that woman then, just as it is for us today.

Minister Bettie McClairen reminded us that we have peace with God through Jesus Christ. Grace is a gift from God to us, and through our faith, we are able to stand (**Ephesians 6**) and rejoice in hope (**Romans 5:2**). She also taught us that just as God extends his grace to us, we must give grace to one another.

Rev. Claudia Williams spoke on **Ephesians 4**, "The Fabric of Grace". She defined "saving grace" as an act of salvation for us. Because of that grace, we must put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, long suffering; bearing with one another. We must be kind to one another, generous, forgiving and loving.

Finally, the testimony shared by Shauna Stephens, coupled with the songs she used to minister, had us all in tears praising God for the miraculous healing He has done. The Holy Spirit truly took control. What a day!



Tax Corner

By Angela Thomas



Let's talk taxes. The filing deadline is Wednesday, April 15, unless you file for an extension (Form 4868). You can only file for an extension if you owe the IRS money.

Changes to the tax code were passed in July, 2025, significantly affecting federal taxes, credits and deductions. As a result, this may affect how you file your 2025 tax returns. Below is information that's effective 2025 through 2028.

Deductions for Seniors (Section 70103) - Individuals age 65 and older may claim an additional \$6,000 deduction (or \$12,000 for a married couple if both spouses qualify). This is in addition to the standard deduction for seniors available under existing law. Taxpayers with modified adjusted gross income over \$75,000 (\$150,000 for joint filers) will be phased out. Deductions are available for eligible taxpayers (both itemizing and non-itemizing).

Deduction – No tax on tips (Section 70201) - Employees and self-employed individuals may deduct qualified tips they received in occupations the IRS identifies as “customarily and regularly receiving tips”, and are reported on a variety of forms. “Qualified tips” include voluntary cash or charged tips received from customers, including shared tips. Maximum annual deduction is \$25,000.

Deduction – No tax on overtime (Section 70202) - Individuals may deduct the portion of qualified overtime pay that exceeds their regular rate of pay (for example, the “half” portion of “time-and-a-half”). The maximum annual deduction is \$12,500 (\$25,000 for joint filers).

Deduction – No tax on car loan interest (Section 70203) - Individuals may deduct interest paid on a loan used to purchase a qualified vehicle for personal use that meets other eligibility criteria. Lease payments do not qualify. The maximum annual deduction is \$10,000 for a personal-use (non-business) vehicle.

For more information on any of these changes, refer to the Internal Revenue Service website, www.irs.gov.

Senior Ministry



Love Thy Neighbor

By Sylvia Ficklin

“When a foreigner lives with you in your land, don’t take advantage of them. Treat the foreigner the same as a native and love them as one of your own, remembering that you were once foreigners in Egypt.” (**Leviticus 19:33–34, The Message**).

This command from God to the Israelites is a reminder of God’s goodness and justice. Immigration is not a modern phenomenon; it has existed throughout history. Even Jesus was an immigrant when Mary and Joseph fled to Egypt to save His life (**Matthew 2:13–15**). Likewise, the Founding Fathers of the U.S. were immigrants seeking freedom from the rule of a king. Today, people from the Middle East and Africa flee poverty, violence, and instability in search of safety and opportunity.

Despite this biblical mandate, current immigration policies, aimed at conducting the largest deportation effort in U.S. history, have caused extensive harm. Fear, stress, and anxiety grip immigrant communities, leaving many afraid to work, shop, worship, attend school, or comply with court proceedings.

The current administration continues to detain immigrants, often separating children from parents without a plan for reunification. Detention centers are overcrowded, unsanitary, and inhumane. Statistics show last year, more than 34% of the 220,000 people arrested by Immigration and Customs Enforcement had no prior criminal record, contradicting claims that enforcers target only dangerous criminals.

The Supreme Court presently allows sweeping immigration opera-

tions based on “reasonable suspicion,” often linked to ethnicity, language, or location. As a result, even U.S. citizens have been wrongly detained. While some judges have ruled these practices illegal, enforcement continues.

Many Americans oppose these policies. Numerous faith leaders have denounced them too and some who want to minister to detainees, have even been denied access to detention centers.

Psalms 146:9 reminds us that God protects the stranger and frustrates the ways of the wicked.

Obadiah 1:15 warns that how we treat others will return upon us.

Praise the Lord.



Men's Fellowship



Children's Choir

Women's Ministry



Deacon's Praying



Newsletter Ministry



Pleasant News

85 + Saints



Evangelism Grads



King's Kids

