



# MOUNTAINSTREAMNEWS

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## AMAZING GRACE

### MESSAGE FROM PASTOR



and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus

*Ephesians 2:3-6*  
*Among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind. But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved—*

Most Christians think they understand God’s grace until they come face to face with raw, unfiltered grace. Pure, unadulterated grace is amazing and bewildering at the same time. Whenever we experience God’s bounty, we strive mightily to find some shred of merit in ourselves to justify God’s actions to us. We suggest that God must have seen that we had a “good heart,” or seen some meri-

torious thing we had done. Yet “grace” means to receive something we do not deserve. The truth, therefore, is that God’s actions sprang entirely from His nature. His outpouring of mercy and beneficence on us is because of who He is – not because of anything we are.

Listen to our state in Ephesians 2:3. We all lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of our bodies and minds and deserved wrath and judgment, just like the rest of mankind – including those who we think do despicable things. In other words, there was nothing in us to commend us to God. We were no better than the vilest sinner. But because God is rich in mercy, and capable of great love, He reached out to us when we were still in our awful state, pulled us out of our sin, and gave us new life in Christ! Verse 5 states clearly that it is all grace – unmerited favor. Not only has God rescued us from our sins, but He has elevated us to “heavenly places” in Christ Jesus. That is amazing! No wonder those who begin to get a glimpse of the nature of grace can’t help but declare it amazing.

And just in case we still didn’t get it, in verses 8 and 9 of Ephesians 2 God, speaking through Paul, explicitly tells us we are saved by grace, which is a gift, and not our works. How much clearer could God be? But when we stand in front of such grace, we can barely comprehend it. Our minds can barely stretch itself to believe any being could be as good as God is. We stand dumbfounded in His presence. When the reality sinks in, we fall to our faces in total gratitude and humility. Those who understand grace love God with all their heart. They know that they deserve nothing from God. Therefore, they are devoted to Him because of all He has done for them.

They join with the former slave ship captain, John Newton, and declare in awestruck wonder: “Amazing Grace how sweet the sound that saved a wretch like me.”

God bless you,

Pastor James

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### WHAT'S HAPPENING

**CORPORATE PRAYER**  
TUE @ 7 PM

**JUL 25**

Join us via Zoom video  
 Please contact Pastor James for log on information at rcantio@gmail.com

**YOUTH GROUP**  
FRI @ 6:45 PM

**JUL 28**

In-person at church.  
 For teens ages 13 and over

**EVENING SERVICE**  
1st & 3rd  
SUN @ 6 PM

**AUG 6 & AUG 20**

Join us in-person at church

**KIDZONE & NURSERY**  
SUN @ 11 AM

**JUL 30**

These ministries are available every Sunday during the morning service  
 Kidzone for ages 6-12 yrs. old.

**GROWTH GROUPS**  
THU & FRI @ 7 PM

**JUL 27 & JUL 28**

In-person at church.

**WORSHIP SERVICE**  
SUN @ 11 AM

**JUL 30**

In-person service and Livestreaming on Facebook, Youtube and our webpage.

- Heartfelt thanks to all who helped to make VBS a success!
- Growth Groups conclude this Thursday and Friday @ 7 pm at church. Preparation questions are available online.
- Family Fun Day is August 5th at Bulldog Realty & Property Management (formerly Mountain Manor). Sign up at the Information Counter to help with this wonderful outreach.
- Help Needed: If you’d be willing to bring refreshments on a Sunday, speak to Becky or Lori.
- Join us on 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday at 3:15 at the Garden at Stroud as we sing and share the gospel with the residents. Contact Tom for more information.
- Bible Reading plans for 2023 are available at the Information Center. Also, read Pastor Jimmie’s daily blog on the readings via the link on our website.

### QUICK TIPS ON WAYS TO GIVE YOUR OFFERING

Traditional during the Sunday morning service, with a check by mail or through our secured website. Please remember to hit “SAVE” after you give if you did not set up an account so the church can have a record of who gave for tax purposes. Thank you!