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March, 2017

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**FROM PASTOR CHAMBERS:** As we roll into March, I am reminded of just how much time flies! March is probably my favorite month of the year, due to “March Madness” in the basketball realm as well as the reminder of spring being just around the corner. This particular March will be very special for Stephanie and me, for our daughter Ella will be turning 1 on March 12. She truly is a miracle from God to us as well as a blessing, and a reminder to us that though we don’t understand why God waited 9 years to give us a child, He had a reason, and that we must trust Him more and more each day. We are so thankful for our daughter as well as for our church family. With that said, there are some exciting things in store for us at Spring Hill as we approach the Easter season, one of which is a baptism service coming up Sunday, April 9. There have been a couple of salvations recently in our church and we are looking forward to baptizing them on this particular Sunday. If you have been saved but never been baptized, and would like to be baptized, please see me sometime this month. We have had some amazing services over the last month and looking forward to what God will do in our church this month!

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**WHO WAS SAINT PATRICK?:** Patrick was born in Roman Britain in 385 AD to a Roman official. His birth name was Maewyn. When he was 16 years old, he was captured, kidnapped, and carried to Ireland, where he was sold into slavery. He later escaped to Gaul (France) and converted to Christianity. While there, Patrick had a vision in which the Irish people begged him to return and minister to them. Patrick returned to Ireland as a missionary in 432 AD, spending the last 30 years of his life there, baptizing the people there and founding churches. The influence of Patrick in Ireland caused the pagan nation to fully convert to Christianity within 200 years and was the only county in Europe to Christianize peacefully, ending slavery, human sacrifice, and intertribal warfare associated with their pagan practices. Over the centuries debate continues as if Patrick was Catholic or not, my personal opinion from historical study being that he evangelized the area for Christ but after his death was claimed by the Catholic church as a patron saint of Ireland once the church got a foothold in the area. Either way one looks at it, one of the best books to read on the subject is *How the Irish Saved Civilization* by Thomas Cahill. In this book, it is claimed and noted that Patrick’s influence extended far beyond Ireland. In a time when the Roman Empire came crashing down, issuing the Western world into the Dark Ages, Patrick’s conversion of Ireland allowed Western learning to survive the Dark Ages, for the monasteries there copied and preserved classical texts, later returning this knowledge to a crumbled Europe paving the way for the Renaissance and Reformation, in effect “saving” civilization. St. Patrick’s Day as a holiday really wasn’t celebrated like it is today until the Irish emigrated to the United States, for the celebrations became a way for the Irish to connect with their roots after they moved to America. The tragedy in all this is that a holiday honoring a man for evangelizing a country for Christ has turned first into a tradition by the church and then over time into just another “holiday” for some Americans to get out and drink and party. Regardless of how a person views Patrick, the influence of the man changed a country, which would change the Western world, which would influence American culture today. The lesson in all this is that we should never underestimate the power of influence in which we have for Christ in our community and in our world. The cause of Christ will go on, He just chooses to use us. That I am thankful for as I reflect on this man’s life.

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**SAINT PATRICK’S BREASTPLATE:** St. Patrick’s Breastplate is a popular prayer attributed to one of Ireland’s most beloved patron saints. According to tradition, St. Patrick wrote it in 433 A.D. for divine protection before successfully converting the Irish King Leoghaire and his subjects from paganism to Christianity. I came across this prayer recently, and the words of it are so true and so inspiring, I thought I’d pass it along...

I arise today... Through a mighty strength, the invocation of the Trinity, Through belief in the Threeness, Through confession of the Oneness of the Creator of creation.

I arise today... Through the strength of Christ’s birth with His baptism, Through the strength of His crucifixion with His burial, Through the strength of His resurrection with His ascension, Through the strength of His descent for the judgment of doom.

I arise today... Through the strength of the love of cherubim, In the obedience of angels, In the service of archangels, In the hope of resurrection to meet with reward, In the prayers of patriarchs, In the predictions of prophets, In the preaching of apostles, In the faith of confessors, In the innocence of holy virgins, In the deeds of righteous men.

I arise today, through... The strength of heaven, The light of the sun, The radiance of the moon, The splendor of fire, The speed of lightning, The swiftness of wind, The depth of the sea, The stability of the earth, The firmness of rock.

I arise today, through...God's strength to pilot me, God's might to uphold me, God's wisdom to guide me, God's eye to look before me, God's ear to hear me, God's word to speak for me, God's hand to guard me, God's shield to protect me, God's host to save me From snares of devils, From temptation of vices, From everyone who shall wish me ill, afar and near.

I summon today...All these powers between me and those evils, Against every cruel and merciless power that may oppose my body and soul, Against incantations of false prophets, Against black laws of pagandom, Against false laws of heretics, Against craft of idolatry, Against spells of witches and smiths and wizards, Against every knowledge that corrupts man's body and soul;

Christ to shield me today... Against poison, against burning, Against drowning, against wounding, So that there may come to me an abundance of reward.

Christ with me, Christ before me, Christ behind me, Christ in me, Christ beneath me, Christ above me, Christ on my right, Christ on my left, Christ when I lie down, Christ when I sit down, Christ when I arise, Christ in the heart of every man who thinks of me, Christ in the mouth of everyone who speaks of me, Christ in every eye that sees me, Christ in every ear that hears me.

I arise today...Through a mighty strength, the invocation of the Trinity, Through belief in the Threeness, Through confession of the Oneness of the Creator of creation.

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#### NOTABLE AND QUOTABLE:

- "Prayer will keep us from sinning, or sinning will keep us from prayer." - Nick Harrison, *Magnificent Prayer*
  - "Prayer will make a Christian cease from sin, or sin will entice a man to cease from prayer" - John Bunyan
  - "The concern of the devil is to keep the saints from praying. He fears nothing from prayerless studies, prayer less work, prayer less religion. He laughs at our toil, he mocks at our wisdom, but he trembles when we pray." - Samuel Chadwick
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**CHURCH EVENTS FOR MARCH:** Remember the official "church calendar" is located in the church office. Every announcement in the bulletin for Sunday comes from the calendar. If you lead a ministry and desire to plan an activity not yet on the calendar and need it announced for Sunday, please let us know by Friday morning so that it can be announced in the bulletin each week.

**Sunday, March 5** - Lord's Supper - evening service, voting on supporting missionaries Zane Bloom and Brittany Szilagyi

**Monday, March 6** - Ladies Bible Study at the church - 7:00-8:30 pm

**Thursday, March 9** - Sunshine Seniors going to Cross Lanes Christian School for Jolly Seniors - program and lunch - 10 am

**Thursday, March 9** - Ladies Bible Study at the home of Sarah Frazer - 7:00-8:30 pm

**Sunday, March 12** - Daylight Savings Time ("Spring Forward"); CURE Youth Group Snak-n-Yak after the evening service

**Monday, March 13** - Advisory Council Meeting, 7 pm

**Tuesday, March 14** - Mom's Group, 6:30-8:30 pm

**Sunday, March 19** - Dr. Bob Cropsey, Medical Missionary in Togo, West Africa will be speaking pm service

**Monday, March 20** - Ladies Bible Study at the church - 7:00-8:30 pm

**Wednesday, March 22** - Last Good News Club (Pray for the workers as we finish the year there)

**Thursday, March 23** - Ladies Bible Study at the home of Sarah Frazer - 7:00-8:30 pm

**Friday, March 24** - Good News Club Dinner at the church (evening)

**Saturday, March 25** - Clean up Saturday at the church - 8 am - 12 pm

**Saturday, March 25** - CURE Youth Group - work at Union Mission Store/Movie night at the Frazer's home

**Sunday, March 26** - Zane Bloom and family will be with us Sunday morning, Gideon Report for the pm service

**Monday, March 27** - Deacon's Meeting - 7 pm

**Tuesday, March 28** - Mom's Night Out - 6:30-8:30 pm

**Wednesday, March 29** - AWANA - silly string the commander night

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