

Grace Notes

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GRACE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

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Warren, PA 16365

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Visit Our Website - www.graceumcwarrenpa.com

To know Christ and to make Him known!

Senior Pastor: *Rev. William Beatty*
Director of
Congregational Care: *Cindy Price*
Choir Director: *Floyd Moore*
Office Administrator: *Meghan Brooker*
Office Manager: *Mary Quiggle-Pickering*
Director of
Children's Ministries: *Libby Yaegle*
Director of Youth &
Family Ministries: *Nicki Egger*

December

2020

*"God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that in all things at all times,
having all that you need, you will abound in every good work."*

II Corinthians 9:8



This month's Communion offering will benefit **Grace HOPES Fund**. Please use the special Communion envelope in your monthly packet for your contribution.

Our Christmas Offering will be split between **UMCOR – US disaster**



response and Red Bird Mission. Christmas offering envelopes will be available in the pew pockets or the Christmas letter.

Ushers & Greeters



December Greeters

Will resume soon.

December Ushers

Will resume soon.

From the Pastor

Advent

How do you usher the Christmas season in your family? As a kid, this was the *longest* month of the year – waiting for Christmas day to finally come was like torture. As I've gotten older, I have a greater appreciation for the meaning of the season, even if December still seems really long ☺

In church we call this the Advent Season. The word "advent" just means "the arrival of a notable person, thing, or event." In the dictionary that I looked this up, the example they gave was "the advent of television." Okay... sure, I guess it's important (television, like it or not, shapes our culture today, though social media is quickly displacing it).

But in the church Advent is about preparing to welcome a notable person. It's more than a little ironic that when Jesus was actually born, he was of so little notoriety that King Herod couldn't locate his family, but 2,000+ years later our entire nation (and a good number of people around the world) focuses this whole month on this celebration. Even people who have no anchor in faith, still celebrate Christmas...

So... how do you usher in this season? Advent is about waiting. The prophet Isaiah cried out to God:

I wish you would open up your heavens
and come down to us!
I wish the mountains would tremble
when you show your power! (Isaiah 64:1)

For hundreds of years the people of Israel waited for the Savior to come, to deliver them, to bring God's salvation. And then Jesus came. He was born in Bethlehem, he lived and revealed God's kingdom to us. He was betrayed, crucified, died for our sin. He rose again and ascended to heaven.

So... what exactly are we waiting for during Advent? Just a birthday party? Well, yes, but... It's more than that. We live in time similar to when Isaiah wrote those words. We're not waiting for our Savior to be

born – but to return. Jesus promised that everything would one day be set right – that all the injustice, the poverty, the disease, the animosity between people – that all of that would one day be cleared away and we could live forever as God had originally intended us to live.

That's the Advent we wait for.

But this waiting is not passive, it's not idle or without expectation. We wait *actively* and *expectantly*. While we wait for this Advent, for Christ to return, we are play our part in bringing in that Kingdom of God that Jesus taught about. Part of that is how we honor God ("love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind and strength") and part of that is how we treat one another ("love your neighbor as yourself") – how we live out this life of faith among "the least of these" – clothing the naked, visiting the prisoner, giving food to the hungry, caring for the sick, quenching the thirsty... (Matthew 22:37; 25:31-46). That's the active part. The expectant part is that we know Jesus could return at any moment – and we need to be ready. There's an old joke that someone said to the pastor, "Jesus has returned" and the pastor says, "Okay, everybody look busy!" The Apostle Paul says that Jesus' return will be "like a thief in the night" (1 Thessalonians 5:2) If you know something's going to happen, but you don't know when, doesn't it make sense to try to be as prepared for it as possible...all the time?

So... how do you usher in this season? What are you waiting for?

In Christ's love,
Pastor Bill

still hope and pray you and your family are healthy and well. I also hope you continue to attend our worship services, either online or in person. **I have good news!** We are making a Christmas concert video compilation available online on the traditional day of our concert, December 14. Check the website for the link.

Also, we are making plans to worship on Christmas Eve, live and online, at 7pm and 11pm.



Stay tuned for more details.

We have been making plans to worship in the most meaningful ways while staying as safe as possible during these difficult times. Although we cannot present the wonderful Christmas concert as we have in the past, we will be involved in our Christmas Eve service, along with our Sunday worship services. Stay tuned!

I still hope you'll be involved in our ministry as much as you're comfortable at this very strange time. Please continue to pray for your ministry and your congregation here at Grace.

Floyd Moore

An Advent Hymn for our times

Ok, so it's not exactly new. The initial words were written in Latin around 800 AD, the second and fourth verse in 1916, during The Great War. The tune was written in the 1850's. But notice how relevant this hymn, this prayer, of Emmanuel – "God With Us" fits into 2020.

O Come, O Come Emmanuel

*O Come, O Come Emmanuel, And ransom captive Israel,
That mourns in lowly exile here Until the Son of God appear.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel Shall come to thee, O Israel!
O Come, Thou Wisdom from on high, And order all things far and nigh,
To us the path of knowledge show, And cause us in her ways to go.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel Shall come to thee, O Israel!
O come, Thou Dayspring, come and cheer Our spirits by Thine advent here.
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night, And death's dark shadows put to flight.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel Shall come to thee, O Israel!
O come, Desire of nations; bind All peoples in one heart and mind.
Bid envy, strife, and quarrels cease; Fill the whole world with heaven's peace.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel Shall come to thee, O Israel!*

What a prayer! What hope! What an ancient advent hymn for our times!

From the Director of Congregational Care

Cloud of Witnesses

Let's think back to All Saints Day 2020. It was a month of Sundays ago ... about 4 1/2 weeks to be exact. It was a heart-warming service for me. Thanks to Pastor Bill's techno-wizardry, the traditional recitation of names was memorable. I am grateful for all the families who dug into photo albums to provide the pictures. In some instances, I was able to finally put a face to a name. For most, a bittersweet smile of remembrance and loss crossed my face. And then tears would often wet my face.

Pastor Pat Lenox then tied it all together with his message. He asked us to imagine the "cloud of witnesses" whom have proceeded us to heaven to be seated in the balconies of Grace Church. They would be looking down upon us and urging us to be strong, keep the faith and act as Christians. I looked up to a balcony and my heart ached a bit as I thought, "I hope I am not disappointing you".

I will share with you some of the Saints that I have recognized in my life:

Clarence Baldwin and Jeannette Nowlin. When we arrived at Grace in 1988, Clarence was a Pastor Emeritus. He was a gentle, insightful and encouraging man. Jeannette had a heart for missions that was inspiring.

Two of my Aunts – both named Grace (!). I have no doubt that they PRAYED me into becoming cognizant of my need for Jesus.

Dean Johnson. He lived his life as a companion and teacher to all: family, friends, co-workers and students, both in the classroom and on the field or wrestling mat.

What all these saints have in common is that they lived their lives as Christians. They put their thoughts into words and actions. As individuals they preached, taught Sunday School, played the piano in church and nursing homes and worked on mission teams. They loved unceasingly.

Next Sunday, look in the balcony and imagine YOUR Saints there. They are urging you on to not only think WWJD, but to DO What Jesus Would Do. They have faith in you. Let's help each other to show it.

Cindy Price

Hello Grace Church!

At the Methodist Conference in 1744, John Wesley asked, "What do we teach? How do we teach it? And what do we do?"

He sought to inspire individuals to a higher level of ministry and mission in the world by encouraging them to progress from contemplation about faith to believing and then ultimately to living out their faith in the world.

In line with our Wesleyan tradition, the act of confirmation should be understood both as a "what" and "why" experience. It should be structured as a religious experience that teaches historical, theological and doctrinal understanding of the United Methodist Church, while simultaneously being an experience that creates a space where our youth can encounter Christ through imagination, exploration and expression.

I want our youth to have this experience, at Sunday School and at CREW. An integral part of their confirmation journey rests with you. How can you help? Have you considered becoming a mentor for one of these youth? A mentor is a guide, an encourager, a cheerleader and a coach...all the things our youth need to successfully navigate this journey. A great mentor is:

- Authentic – genuine in actions and words
- Committed and Engaged – just as each confirmand is expected to engage
- Dedicated – willing to invest time
- Someone who thinks outside the box – understands the unique needs of these great kids
- A Disciple Maker – Jesus asks this of us all

You do not have to have all of the answers. Our good Lord knows I am far from perfect and what I lack in knowledge He provides in enthusiasm! I



am looking for folks who are willing to help these kids imagine, explore and express their own answers. Sound like something you'd like to do? Or want to learn more before making this awesome commitment? Fantastic!

Send me an email with your contact information at nicki@graceumcwarren.com or leave me a message at the Church office. A meeting and additional details are forthcoming. We'll explore this awesome experience, learn how we can engage these students and better understand the process. Let's keep His light shining bright! God Bless!

Nicki Egger

And just like that, December is here!

I'm not sure where the last eleven months have gone, but here we are. While hosting events is a little more difficult with the colder weather limiting our ability to be outside, that doesn't mean Children's Ministry is sitting idly by. We are on to round two of lip balm sales. Orders are due December 9 with payment and pickup after all three services on December 13. Don't miss out! They make great stocking stuffers and gifts. You can place an order through email or by calling the church office. The Holiday Letter Train is growing and the little elves in our church are spreading holiday cheer with their letters and cards. If you know of any kids who would like to be involved, you can sign up by emailing me. Emmet and I are still reading stories on the Embrace Grace Facebook page. You can find current and past recordings online. Also, in December, look for Nativity Trail Mix and the "Dough Holy Night" event, things that you can enjoy at home with your family.

I'm wishing you all the best the season has to offer and the richest blessings. May your stockings be overflowing on Christmas morning, but your hearts be even more full with the things that truly matter. "For unto us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace." Isaiah 9:6

Libby Yaegle





After a month of learning about Thanksgiving and celebrating all the things we are thankful for, we are looking forward to returning from our fall break to prepare for the Christmas season. We are grateful for each day, week, and month we have safely gathered at school and pray for continued good health for all! In December we will be learning new songs, decorating our room, and creating gifts for our families. In the midst of our busyness we will share the birth of baby Jesus and use some puppets to act out the story. We also hope to visit Pastor Bill in the sanctuary and hear the Christmas story using the Nativity. Our last day of school before Christmas vacation will be celebrated with a Fun Day where we will make crafts, sing songs, decorate and eat cookies, then say our good-byes until we return in 2021! Sadly, we will not be able to share this day with our parents this year, but we will make the best of our Christmas celebration with all our friends!

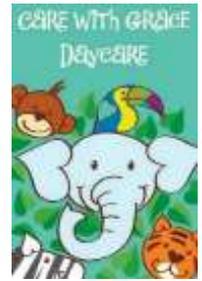
Registration for the 2021-2022 school year will begin in January with current preschool families, Grace Church members & Care with Grace Daycare children. If the classes are not full by the end of January, we will open registration to the public. Registration forms will be available in the church office or by calling 723-8011 during school hours. We wish you all a blessed Christmas and Happy New Year!

Trish Gentilman & Jessica Rex

The clotheslines are up outside the front of the church. Hats, mittens, gloves, and scarves can be donated by placing them in the tote in the hall right outside Pastor Bill's office. Covered by Grace runs from November through February. Please keep those clothing items coming throughout the winter.



Thank you for all that donated to the Trunk or Treat we participated in with YMCA and Jefferson DeFrees. I had made 200 bags with treats and toys, 100 for each group. The Y started at 3, the first 100 was gone in 20 min. Went and purchased 515 more bags of pretzels and things. They were gone by 6:15 at Jefferson DeFrees. They gave me more candy and made it till 7:00. It was a great time and saw a lot of children. November was full of no school days and eating over Thanksgiving break. For December we will have all day care on Wed December 23rd, 2020 and will be closed to children Thu December 24th, 2020 through Jan 3rd, 2021. There will be teacher in-service days December 21st-December 23rd, 2020. The rooms will be cleaned from top to bottom to start fresh for the new year.



Irene Garris



During Worship
9:30 a.m. (0-2 yrs.)
 ~
11:00 a.m. (0- 5 yrs.)
Will resume soon.

December Worship Assistants



Advisors:
Linda Knapp 726-1199
Sheryl Richards 726-3876

Will resume soon.

Our budget the month of October 2020:



Other income consists of funds from Sunday School, Room Rental, Bible Studies, Literature Tables, Fitness Ministry,

Easter, Christmas, and Misc. Income.

BUDGET	2020	2019
Other Income:	989.00	1,478.75
Offerings & Tithes	<u>24,516.92</u>	<u>28,684.75</u>
Total Income	25,505.92	30,163.50

Number of Sundays:	4	4
Borrowed	0	0

Expense:		
Staff Parish	21,589.02	23,984.22
Trustees	5,855.29	6,982.75
Ministry	<u>4,174.89</u>	<u>7,403.92</u>
Total Expense	31,619.20	38,370.89
Attendance:	866*	832

Connectional Apportionments

Obligation-	3,252.42
Paid to date	32,524.78
Ahead (Behind)	0

Percent of year to date paid 83%

His income: Was \$4,657.58 higher in October 2019 compared to October 2020

Our expenses: Were \$6,751.69 lower in October 2020 compared to October 2019

We praise God for the generous gifts and offerings given.

*October 2020 attendance is estimated due to online worship services.

Submitted by:

Alice Bonnell, Finance Chair

If you wish to continue giving, please mail your envelopes to the church (501 PA Ave E) or use the electronic giving option posted



on our webpage www.graceumcwarrenpa.com.

Online giving accepts checking/savings accounts as well as debit/credit cards.



“The eye is the lamp of the body; so then if your eye is clear, your body will be full of light.”

Matthew 6:22

How exciting to have Christmas within reach! Last year at this time, we never expected to have church look so different this time around. The decorations are the same beautiful presentation, the music is heartwarming and familiar, even the anticipation of tradition quickens our heartbeat! *But, we’re different.*

We have begun to see things in a new light. Perhaps, not always favorable, but unavoidable nonetheless. We have learned how to greet without contact. We have learned how to step aside and away to give others space. We have learned how to politely navigate this new way of looking out for each other.

Interestingly, we have learned how to communicate with our eyes. The masks hide our smiles. They even hide our yawns. But, when we find that smiling at each other has to be done with more creativity, we begin to make better eye contact. And, we learn the beautiful art of how to make our eyes sparkle at one another!

Who would have guessed that we could still find new ways to light up each other’s lives! We become experts at reading expressions and noting the wide eyed happiness of children. We look for the furrowed brow of someone who needs to talk, who misses our hug. We develop a new normal of expressing emotion even in the presence of a mask.

So, let’s sparkle! Let’s make our eyes dance with happiness upon greeting each other. When I look around, I see a church full of saints who are already reflecting Christmas in their cheerful and loving expression!

Warm heartedly,
Sue Toombs, Lay Leader

It all starts with an empty shoebox ... and ends with sending great joy to the life of a child and an opportunity for them to hear the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Together, we have prepared 75 shoe boxes as part of Operation Christmas Child. Thanks to the congregation for donating the items to be placed in these boxes; thanks to the ladies of the church that helped sort and make these items ready to be put into these boxes; and a huge thanks to the CREW (church youth group of 6 with 2 leaders) who put these boxes together. Another thank you is to the individuals and families that packed and donated boxes on their own. We hope they will become a blessing to all.



Amazon donated 0.5% of the price of your eligible AmazonSmile purchases to the charitable organization of your choice. Support your charitable organization by starting your shopping at smile.amazon.com. Select "Grace United Methodist Church Warren" as your charity for Grace Church to receive quarterly distributions from Amazon. Now also available on the Amazon app. Select "settings" in the main menu, tap on "AmazonSmile" and follow the instructions to turn on AmazonSmile.



Items for the January Newsletter need to be delivered to Mary in the Church office (mary@graceumcwarren.com) by Wednesday, December 16. Thank you!



The Grace Church Food Pantry is in need of **boxed potatoes, Knorr's rice sides, Jiffy mix, crackers** at this time. Thank you to all who brought in boxes. We have enough for now.



- December 1 – Bev Smith, Gene Burns, Rachel Beatty, Pam Hahn
- December 2 – Lexi Jansens, Larry Willis
- December 4 – Alec Conarro
- December 5 – Erica Bailey
- December 6 – Casey Retterer
- December 7 – Mike Waseleski, Buddy Birgel, George Broadbent
- December 8 – Tori Solberg, LuAnn Munksgard
- December 10 – Phyllis Broadbent
- December 11 – Ashlynn Fry
- December 12 – Caitlin Barney
- December 13 – Jayden Fry, Janette Brown
- December 14 – Jim Armstrong, Joe Glotz, Kolby Sabat
- December 15 – Logan Peterson
- December 16 – Caleb Ei
- December 17 – Larry Neal, Diane DeLarme, David Anthony, Karen Larson
- December 18 – Dave Engstrom, Nancy Callahan
- December 19 – Stephanie Pearce, April Barr
- December 20 – Vicki Anthony, Wallace Yaegle, Jace Yaegle, Austin Jerman, Ben Hampson
- December 22 – Rayna Tucher
- December 24 – Carol Baughman, Christopher Danielson, Harrison Johnson
- December 25 – Lexi Manelick
- December 28 – Andrew Duda
- December 29 – Jayce Messinger, Madelyn Messinger
- December 30 – Doug Renwick, Nikki Barney, Betsy Miller, Ruth Zavinski
- December 31 – Paige Johnson, Beth MacPherson, Peggy Grosch



december

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<p>CARE WITH GRACE DAYCARE is open daily from 6:30 am to 6:00 pm located on the first floor (nursery) and the second floor.</p>	<p>PROMISE PRESCHOOL is open Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday from 9:00 – 11:30 am (3-year-olds) and 12:30 – 3:00 pm (4-year-olds) located on the ground floor.</p>	1	<p>2 7:00 a Men's Prayer Breakfast 6:30 p C.R.E.W. - ONLINE ONLY 7:00 p Truth Project Bible Study</p>	<p>3 6:00 p Praise Team</p>	4	5
<p>6 9:30/11:00 a Worship ONLINE ONLY*</p>	7	8	<p>9 7:00 a Men's Prayer Breakfast 6:30 p C.R.E.W. - ONLINE ONLY</p>	<p>10 6:00 p Praise Team</p>	11	12
<p>13 9:30/11:00 a Worship ONLINE ONLY*</p>	14	15	<p>16 7:00 a Men's Prayer Breakfast 6:30 p C.R.E.W. - ONLINE ONLY</p>	<p>17 6:00 p Praise Team</p>	18	19
<p>20 9:30/11:00 a Worship ONLINE ONLY*</p>	<p>21 12:00 p Caregivers' Support Group</p>	22	<p>23 7:00 a Men's Prayer Breakfast 6:30 p C.R.E.W. - ONLINE ONLY</p>	<p>24 Office Closed 7:00/11:00 p Christmas Eve Worship</p>	<p>25 Office Closed</p>	26
<p>27 9:30/11:00 a Worship ONLINE ONLY*</p>	28	29	<p>30 7:00 a Men's Prayer Breakfast 6:30 p C.R.E.W. - ONLINE ONLY</p>	<p>31 Office Closed</p>		

*Worship services are online only for now and will be re-evaluated weekly. Check the website for updated information.

GRACE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

501 Pennsylvania Ave. E.
Warren, PA 16365

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- Grace Praise Team -

*Pastor Bill, Julie Danielson, Chuck Keeports, Walter Miller, Dave Moore,
Jan Moore, Cindy Price, Keith Price, Shirley Shafer, Liz Anderson, Mary Hellman,
Aaron Stearns, Chris Ei, John Lewis, Alice Pedersen, Cindy Dziendziel*

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