

# Grace Notes

## December 2022

Phone - 814-723-9440      GRACE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH      FAX - 814-723-6137  
501 Pennsylvania Avenue East      Warren, PA 16365  
Email – office2@graceumcwarren.com      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 &  
Family Ministries: *Amanda Slattery*  
Director of Youth &  
Family Ministries: *Nicki Egger*

### Our Core Values

#### **Extravagant Generosity**

We give joyfully of our time, talent, and treasure.

#### **Authentic Engagement**

We want to shine the light of God's love in our whole community.

#### **Transformational Discipleship**

We seek God's will and God's way for our lives.

#### **Extraordinary Grace**

We are all sinners seeking God's grace together.

#### **Word-Centered Mission**

We believe the Word of God provides the foundation for all that we do.

*"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*



Our Christmas Offering this year will be split between the **UMCOR US Disaster Response** and the **Women's Care Center of Warren**. Christmas offering envelopes will be in the Christmas letter and available for the Christmas Eve services.



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

# *From the Pastor*

## Being One Who Loves God

**D**ecember is upon us. I can't believe that Advent is here already!

As I have been getting ready for our worship services in December, I have been reading the nativity stories in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke. Matthew begins in a very Jewish way, I think, by tracing the genealogy of Jesus right at the beginning of his Gospel account, tracing the line (in a very structured, formal way) from Abraham who received the covenant from God to Joseph, the husband of Mary. Luke, as it is, has a much more awkward genealogy which he doesn't even get to until chapter 3, after all the events of Jesus' birth, his presentation in the Temple as an infant and his adventure in Jerusalem as a twelve-year-old boy.

In fact, Luke's introduction to his Gospel is very different from the other three (while each of them starts out differently, yet none have this kind of introduction – they start *in media res* [in the middle of the action] if you will).

*Many have undertaken to draw up an account of the things that have been fulfilled among us, just as they were handed down to us by those who from the first were eyewitnesses and servants of the word. With this in mind, since I myself have carefully investigated everything from the beginning, I too decided to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus, so that you may know the certainty of the things you have been taught. (Luke 1:1-4 NIV)*

The first most notable thing is that Luke tells us right off the bat that he didn't witness these things, but that he relied on word of those who did. Directed by the Holy Spirit, Luke put the stories and teachings of the Gospel that bears his name into the order that we have it today (even where it is different from the Gospel of Mark, which seems certain to have been one of his sources). In other words, Luke had a plan in constructing this writing about the life and teaching and death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. He tells us as much. "I too decided to write an orderly account...so that you may know the certainty of the things you have been taught."

What drew me to this introduction, however, was not the what or how of Luke's plan, but the WHO. In this case, he says, "I too decided to write an orderly account **for you, most excellent Theophilus...**"

Did you ever wonder who this Theophilus is? It could be just some random Bible name, lost to history (there are many, after all), but there's something about this name, and the way Luke uses it, that makes me (and many people much smarter than me) think that this is something else.

Theophilus (θεόφιλος) translates from the Greek as "Friend of God" or "Beloved by God" or "One who Loves God" (Theos – God; philos – love). True, this *could* be a random name of someone, perhaps a high-ranking Roman Official (hence the "most excellent" appellation), but it seems just as likely that Luke is writing to *all who love God*, to all who are beloved by God, to all who are friends of God.

So, if Luke is writing to all who would call themselves beloved of God, what then is his "plan" (or agenda) for writing this Gospel? Afterall, none of the Gospels are simply biographies as we think of biographies today – simply a recounting of someone's life in chronological order. Each of the Gospel writers wants us to "get" something out of what they wrote. Luke says, for Theophilus, it is to "know the certainty of the things you have been taught."

This Christmas season, may the stories of Jesus be more than stories for you, but may these stories deepen

and enrich your faith, so that all of us who are beloved by God will “know the certain of the things [we] have been taught.”

Have a blessed Advent and a happy Christmas!

In Christ's Love,  
Pastor Bill

**T**HE CHRISTMAS CONCERT'S COMING! THE CHRISTMAS CONCERT'S COMING! Will You be there? The excitement is building, not unlike the anticipation of the Christmas Eve child, waiting for the gifts of Christmas morning. Many of your musicians are preparing our gifts for you to enjoy on Sunday, December 11, at 4pm.



So mark your calendars for the second Sunday in December, at 4 pm to receive your musical gifts from your Grace choir and friends. It will be wonderful if you mark your calendars and attend, but much more wonderful if you invite and bring your neighbors! Take up a whole pew! (We'll still be plenty warm.)

While you're inviting your friends and filling your pew, remember to celebrate each Sunday of Advent with us, either at 8:30, 9:30, or 11:00. Don't forget our Christmas Eve services at 7 and 11pm, and our combined Christmas Day worship service at 10am. We have plenty of musical gifts to share!

**THE CONCERT IS COMING! THE CONCERT IS COMING!** Will You be there? Did I mention the punch and cookie reception following the concert? I can't wait!

See you in Church!

Floyd Moore

## GIVE THANKS

**Y**es, you are reading this in December, but I wrote this before Thanksgiving. While we celebrate that national holiday in the USA every year on the fourth Thursday of November, shouldn't we consider every day a day to GIVE THANKS?



**Give thanks with a grateful heart  
Give thanks to the Holy One  
Give thanks because He's given  
Jesus Christ His Son  
Give Thanks**

In 1612, the harvest feast shared by the Plymouth colonists and the Wampanoag is considered one of the first Thanksgiving celebrations in the colonies. They gave thanks for their harvest and for the blessings of the past year. Today, while some people are thankful for a full day of football and good food, as Christians, we may have a different outlook.

We give thanks GRATEFULLY to God because He GAVE us Jesus Christ, His son. Our expression of thanks for that begins with Advent and culminates on Christmas Day. God's plan then proceeds to Easter, when Christians remember that God GAVE UP his only son for us.

We have so much to be thankful for.

By now, we know the result of our first vote on disaffiliation. But, as I am writing this, I do not know what the final count was on November 22nd. Regardless, I give thanks to our Lord for our Grace Church family. For 54 years, this building has been home to a United Methodist congregation. There have always been differences of opinion within Grace, on a variety of issues, as it is in every family. But even as people came and went from Grace Church, the congregation remained a vibrant and vital group of worshipers. Things may be changing, but God never does.

May the Holy Spirit enter your heart and renew His Spirit within all of us.

With sincere blessings, Cindy Price

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**H**ello Grace Church!

Hey, how are you feeling? It's December and the holiday season is upon us. How are you? While many have debated and voiced concern over the appropriate timing of Christmas lights and music, debated the merits and outcomes of November elections, and grappled with what to get your crazy Uncle Joe (no offense to any Uncle Joes – you are great, keeping being you!) for Christmas, others feel the weight of the season a bit differently.



Perhaps it is the weight of disaffiliation concerns. By the time this hits the newsletter, our Church will have made a decision on that subject. It will bring forth many additional questions and uncertainty. Regardless, an answer is coming and options are in front of us. How are you feeling?

Perhaps the weight of the season is family and friends, strained relationships. December and the holiday season are supposed to bring everyone together right? Bring joy, peace and contentment. The key word there is “supposed” to. How do you feel about that?

Perhaps the weight of the season is grief, loss. How bright can Christmas lights really be in the valley? Can the songs of the season reach the ears and hearts of those in such depths? How loud must you be, how bright your light?

Friends, the reoccurring theme here is around expectations. December and the holiday season is upon us. What expectations are you placing on yourself, what are you placing on others? I want you to think about how you feel. What is it that you and your family really need? I challenge you to let go of these earthly expectations, this weight. Slowly close your eyes and visualize all of these expectations, one by one. They are soft snowflakes, melting in the palm of your hand. The weight, the expectations. I know some of you see boulders of snow, the Ghostbusters Stay Puft Marshmallow Man...yeah, that big! Work with me here...take 'em apart. Give yourself the time and space to break down those boulders into tiny snowflakes. When we no longer allow these expectations to drive us and we think about what we need, what our family needs, what do you find in its place? Personally, this is where I find God. I see His light more brightly when I realize I am enough. When I realize this weight is in His hands. He has given me all I need and He will guide me. I see God's light brighter in others. Let's help each other lessen the burden, remove the weight, see the beautiful snowflakes and let His light be the beacon that melts snowflakes as well as hearts this holiday season. Feel better?! Take care and God Bless folks.

Nicki Egger  
Director of Youth & Family Ministries

**H**appy December! On November 19th, the Children's Ministry held our "We are Thankful" event. During the event families made cookies, watched a movie, made some crafts, and celebrated those things we are thankful for.

Extra cookies were also delivered to our local police/fire station to show them just how thankful we are to have them in our community. Thank you to all that attended the event. I have loved spending time with each family and building a better relationship with each of you.



A December event is currently being planned for New Year's Eve. Please stay tuned for more information.

Blessings to All,  
Amanda Slattery

**A**fter a month of learning about Thanksgiving and celebrating all the things we are thankful for, we are looking forward to our fall break! We are grateful for each day, week, and month we have safely gathered at school and pray for continued good health for all!



December is an exciting time to prepare for the Christmas season. We will be learning new songs, decorating our room, and creating gifts for our families. In the midst of our busy-ness, we will share the birth of baby Jesus and use some puppets to act out the story. We also plan 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 2023!

Registration for the 2023-2024 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 & Jen Lynds

**I**n November we did our soup and Winter Wishes fundraisers; thank you to everyone who helped us! The children are all excited for the coming of Christmas and all of the snow. We are hoping for some warmer winter days so the children can enjoy the snow in the play yard just as much as they got to enjoy the leaves.

Cindy Kalkbrenner  
Director



### **During Worship**

**9:30 a.m. (0-2 yrs.)**

**11:00 a.m. (0- 5 yrs.)**

**December 4 – Melissa Zaffino**

**December 11 – Anna Peterson**

**December 18 – Melissa Zaffino**

**December 25 – Anna Peterson**



### **Flock Talk**

***"Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid."***

***John 14:27***

**T**his is the time of year when we hear the question, "What do you want for Christmas?" We never seem to outgrow this, even though we sometimes don't really need anything. If I got everything I wanted I would have too many horses. Four is enough. But, what happens if we look around and re-envision what others may need for Christmas.

Let's start with peace. In a world that over thinks, over schedules and over spends, maybe we just need to offer someone a little peace of mind. That may look like stepping in and offering to share a burden or performing an act of kindness. But, what if it looked even more unique.

Maybe we won't even tell someone what we're giving them - we simply do it. Give someone the benefit of the doubt, not just in our words, but in our thoughts. Give someone undivided attention, especially when you see the need is great in their life. Give someone your warmth. We never know when the last time someone felt a sincere hug. Give someone space. If there is too much being asked, step in and be protective.

Jesus is the gift to mankind. His birth was so important it literally separated history! He brought grace which allows for salvation which brings us joy and eternal life. He asks one thing of us - that we trust Him. That we trust that our lives are secure in His hands. This is the gift we can bring anyone anytime. What a glorious gift! Let's talk of Him as though we were giving the most treasured gift we could find!

Merry Christmas,  
Sue Toombs, Lay Leader

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### **Special Church Conference Results**

On November 22nd we had a Church Conference to vote on the Resolution of Disaffiliation. Pastor Bill opened with a prayer and introduced our District Superintendent, Rev. Sang Choi, who conducted the Church Conference.

There were 147 ballots cast with the following results:

70 votes for disaffiliation

74 votes against disaffiliation

3 abstentions

In order for the resolution for disaffiliation to pass, a 2/3rds majority was needed and was not reached. Thus, the resolution did not pass and Grace Church remains in the United Methodist Denomination. A second ballot (electing representatives to speak with the Conference Trustees regarding the financial obligations of disaffiliation) was rendered moot as the first resolution did not pass.

Thank you for all who prayerfully attended to this important Church Conference.

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# Grace Church Finance Report

## Merry Christmas

Merry Christmas Grace Church!

Christmas is a time for celebrating the birth of Christ, for time with family and friends, for spreading generosity and cheer. This Christmas season, let us celebrate as a church family and, despite any differences, unify in our celebration of Jesus' birth.

Wishing you and your family a wonderful Christmas season!!



### 2022 Monthly and YTD Financials

	October '22	YTD
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$32,058.11</b>	<b>\$311,914.24</b>
Office Expense	\$205.67	\$4,812.42
Buildings & Ground Expense (Church & Parsonage)	\$5,463.30	\$70,432.95
Ministry Personnel	\$21,591.50	\$239,626.16
Church Council	\$0.00	\$443.79
Education Ministry	\$114.64	\$2,123.55
Nurture Ministry	\$49.21	\$1,928.82
Worship Ministry	\$182.64	\$1,456.64
Outreach Ministry	\$548.00	\$1,526.74
Connectional Apportionment	\$2,939.00	\$29,390.00
Witness Ministry	\$0.00	\$796.51
<b>Total Ministry &amp; Expense</b>	<b>\$31,093.96</b>	<b>\$352,537.58</b>
<b>Net Income</b>	<b>\$964.15</b>	<b>(\$40,623.34)</b>

### Borrowed Funds

<b>Account Balance 10/31/2022</b>	<b>(\$86,090.87)</b>
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We praise God for the generous gifts and offerings.

Submitted by:

Brian A. Jurkowski, Finance Chair & the Finance Committee



The clotheslines are up! Covered by Grace is in need of **gloves** and **mittens**! Donations can be placed in the gray tote across from Pastor Bill's office or visit [www.graceumcwarrenpa.com](http://www.graceumcwarrenpa.com) for the link to our Amazon wishlist.



The Grace Church Food Pantry is not in need of anything at this time. Thank you to all who contribute!



Items for the January 2023  
Newsletter need to be delivered to  
Mary in the office  
[mary@graceumcwarren.com](mailto:mary@graceumcwarren.com) by  
Friday, December 16.

## Angel Tree Opportunities

This year, our Angel Tree will be benefiting the Ruby Coffee + Co. that Rachel Beatty had spoken about in church earlier this year. Ruby Coffee + Co. is a coffee shop created to employ and empower Central PA women who have been exploited by the commercial sex industry.

To help, pick a tag from the tree in Wesley Parlor, submit a check in the amount of the item to "Ruby Coffee + Co.", and return the tag and check to the church office or offering box. No need to go shopping! Ruby Coffee + Co. will purchase the items with your donations.

For more information, visit [www.RubyCoffeeAndCo.com](http://www.RubyCoffeeAndCo.com)

For other donations, visit [www.MoreThanRubiesCampaign.com](http://www.MoreThanRubiesCampaign.com)

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## Disciple Class Begins!

Thursday, January 5th 6:00pm in the Eaton Parlor

Grace Church has offered Disciple classes for the past eight years and they are absolutely life changing. We continue to rotate through the four year curriculum by dividing the classes into sixteen week courses. This January, we are stepping into Disciple II and reigniting where we left off last spring. If you have wanted to experience these classes, you need nothing other than a desire to better understand Scripture. All are welcome in this unique small group dynamic. Our focus will be on the books of Luke and Acts. We will add many other pivotal stories to help us understand how to take the Word into the world.

The most beloved feature of these classes is that they teach you how to see your Bible with a new perspective. The commentaries, the explanations and the videos allow us to become wonderfully familiar with God's Word and His call to be a disciple of Jesus Christ.

The classes will meet every Thursday until the first week of May. Plan on spending 90 minutes at each class. Please let me know ahead of time if you need a book. Contact me or find me at church if you have questions!

Sue Toombs 814-730-9996 [fourwindsranch@verizon.net](mailto:fourwindsranch@verizon.net)

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## Annual Choir Concert Reception

Our Grace Choir's annual Christmas Concert will be presented at 4:00 on Sunday, December 11. The reception committee is asking for donations of cookies to serve following the concert and for volunteers to help set up, serve, and clean up. Signup sheets for cookies (2-3 doz.) and workers are in Higginbotham Hall and Wesley Parlor. Thank you for any help you may be able to offer.

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**Reminder:** Grace Church Ladies Christmas tureen luncheon.

All women of Grace Church are invited to attend a Christmas salad tureen luncheon on Thursday, December 15<sup>th</sup> at noon in Higginbotham Hall sponsored by the Ruth M. Smith Center Circle.

Please bring a salad/tureen to share AND your own table service. Dessert and beverages will be provided. There is no cost for this luncheon, but we would like reservations to be made by Dec. 10<sup>th</sup> to Suzette at 814-723-3964, Linda at 814-726-1199, or to the church office at 814-723-9440.

A short program is being planned, but we need your help. Following our devotions, those who wish to share a fond, favorite, or funny Christmas memory may do so. We will close with Christmas carols.

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First United Methodist Church (200 Market St) presents **MUSICAL POTPOURRI** December 4<sup>th</sup> at 4:30pm. Everyone is invited to attend this free event. Following the program, there will be a catered dinner in Founder's Hall. Reservations not necessary but appreciated. Please call the church office at 814-723-4930 to RSVP. Cost for the dinner is by donation.

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## **KANE FIRST WILL HOST DENVER AND THE MILE HIGH ORCHESTRA**

Join them in the sanctuary at Kane First UMC, 112 Greeves St Kane PA, on December 14<sup>th</sup> at 7pm! Denver and the Mile High Orchestra will perform a classic, big-band Christmas Concert inspired by Bing Crosby, Nat King Cole and more. Hear some amazing holiday classics & carols LIVE! Come celebrate the Christmas season and the birth of Jesus together with us, and the Mile High Orchestra! They will be celebrating & performing some of the greatest holiday music of all time. It's going to be a great night for the whole family! There will not be a charge for the concert, however, a free will offering will be taken. This is a great opportunity to experience this world-renowned orchestra! Bring your friends!

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## **Christmas Concert: SEEK 1<sup>st</sup>**

Russell UMC is having a night of music and celebration with the Christian worship band SEEK 1<sup>st</sup> on Thursday, December 15<sup>th</sup> from 6-8pm. Russell's own Bay Allen will open with some songs before SEEK 1<sup>st</sup> takes the stage. There will be a love offering received to support the ministries of Russell UMC. Join us for a night of music, refreshments, and good times!




December 1 – Bev Smith, Gene Burns, Pam Hahm, Rachel Beatty  
December 2 – Larry Willis, Alexandria Jansens  
December 4 – Alec Conarro  
December 5 – Erica Bailey  
December 6 – Casey Retterer  
December 7 – Buddy Birgel, George Broadbent, Michael Waseleski  
December 8 – LuAnn Munksgard, Victoria Solberg  
December 10 – Phyllis Broadbent  
December 11 – Ashlynn Fry  
December 12 – Caitlin Barney  
December 13 – Janette Brown, Jayden Fry  
December 14 – Jim Armstrong, Joseph Glotz, Kolby Sabat  
December 15 – Logan Peterson  
December 16 – Caleb Ei  
December 17 – Karen Larson, Diane DeLarme, Larry Neal, David Anthony  
December 18 – Nancy Callahan  
December 19 – Steph Pearce, April Barr  
December 20 – Vicki Anthony, Austin Jerman, Benjamin Hampson, Jace Yaegle, Wallace Yaegle  
December 22 – Rayna Tucher  
December 24 – Carol Baughman, Harrison Johnson, Christopher Danielson  
December 25 – Alexis Manelick  
December 29 – Jayce Messinger, Madelyn Messinger  
December 30 – Douglas Renwick, Betsy Miller, Ruth Zavinski, Theresa Barney, Erin Hennessy  
December 31 – Peggy Grosch, Bethany MacPherson, Paige Johnson



# december



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	CARE WITH GRACE DAYCARE is open Mon-Fri from 6:30 am to 5:30 pm located on the first floor (nursery) and the second floor.	PROMISE PRESCHOOL is open Sept-May Mon, Wed, and Thurs from 9:00 – 11:30 am (3-year-olds) and 12:30 – 3:00 pm (4-year-olds) located on the ground floor.		<b>1</b> 6:00 p Caregivers' Support Group 6:00 p Higginbotham Hall Reserved	<b>2</b> 11:00 a Fitness Ministry 12:15 p Christian Yoga	<b>3</b> 9:00 a Praise Team 5:00 p Higginbotham Hall Reserved
<b>4</b> 8:30/9:30/11:00 a Worship 9:30 a Agape 9:45 a Sunday School 6:00 p Worship @ The Crossing	<b>5</b> 5:15 p Christian Yoga	<b>6</b> 11:00 a Staff Meeting 12:15 p Christian Yoga 6:00 p Pickleball	<b>7</b> 7:00 a Men's Prayer Breakfast 5:15 p Christian Yoga 6:00 p Madrigals 6:30 p Choir 6:30 p C.R.E.W.	<b>8</b> 4:00 p Higginbotham Hall Reserved	<b>9</b> 11:00 a Fitness Ministry 12:15 p Christian Yoga	<b>10</b> 9:00 a Praise Team
<b>11</b> 8:30/9:30/11:00 a Worship 9:30 a Agape 9:45 a Sunday School 4:00 p Choir Christmas Concert 6:00 p Worship @ The Crossing	<b>12</b> 5:15 p Christian Yoga 6:30 p Wesley Parlor Reserved	<b>13</b> 12:15 p Christian Yoga 6:00 p Pickleball	<b>14</b> 7:00 a Men's Prayer Breakfast 5:15 p Christian Yoga 6:00 p Madrigals 6:30 p Choir 6:30 p C.R.E.W.	<b>15</b> 12:00 p Ruth M. Smith Center Luncheon 5:30 p Pickleball	<b>16</b> 11:00 a Fitness Ministry 12:15 p Christian Yoga	<b>17</b> 9:00 a Praise Team
<b>18</b> 8:30/9:30/11:00 a Worship 9:30 a Agape 9:45 a Sunday School 4:00 p Watson Home 6:00 p Worship @ The Crossing	<b>19</b> 12:00 p Caregivers' Support Group 5:15 p Christian Yoga	<b>20</b> 12:15 p Christian Yoga 6:00 p Pickleball	<b>21</b> 7:00 a Men's Prayer Breakfast 5:15 p Christian Yoga 6:00 p Madrigals 6:30 p Choir 6:30 p C.R.E.W.	<b>22</b> 5:30 p Pickleball	<b>23</b> 11:00 a Fitness Ministry 12:15 p Christian Yoga	<b>24</b> 9:00 a Praise Team 7:00 p Christmas Eve Service 11:00 p Christmas Eve Service
<b>25</b> 10:00 a Worship	<b>26</b> <b>Office Closed</b>	<b>27</b> 6:00 p Pickleball	<b>28</b> 7:00 a Men's Prayer Breakfast 6:00 p Madrigals 6:30 p Choir 6:30 p C.R.E.W.	<b>29</b> 5:30 p Pickleball	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b> 9:00 a Praise Team

**GRACE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**

**501 Pennsylvania Ave. E.  
Warren, PA 16365**

Published monthly;  
December 2022

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*- Grace Praise Team -*

*Pastor Bill, Walter Miller, Dave Moore, Jan Moore,  
Cindy Price, Keith Price, Shirley Shafer, Aaron Stearns,  
Chris Ei, John Lewis, Alice Pedersen, Cindy Dziendziel*

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