

The Bi-Monthly Newsletter
of Grace Church of
Pen Argyl

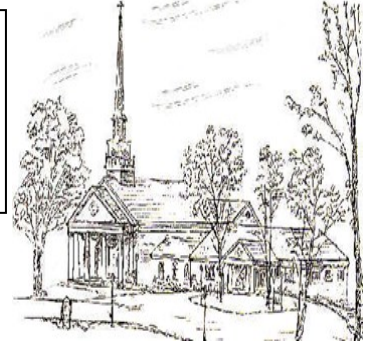
Grace Notes



Grace Church Mission

Nurture – Outreach – Witness

Our ministries do N. O. W.



NOVEMBER



&



2024



Grace United Methodist Church
404 East Mountain Avenue
Pen Argyl, PA 18072

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Sundays At Grace

9:30am—Worship Service
9:30am—Children's Sunday School

Phone 610-863-4811
www.worshipatgrace.org
Email: graceumc@worshipatgrace.org

FROM THE PASTOR

Every year I am required to give a “State of the Church” report, according to our Discipline. It asks the pastor to give an account of ministry in the following areas; worship, evangelism, discipleship, faith formation, congregational care, mission and community outreach, and stewardship. I think it’s important for you to have a chance to read it as we near the end of one year of ministry together and begin a new one next year. The following overview of Grace’s ministry I hope blesses and encourages you, seeing what great things God has done and is doing through us.

October 19, 2024

“Grace to you and Peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ!” Thus Paul greeted many of the churches to whom he wrote and so I do you.

The “State of the Church” report for the Charge Conference provides a moment to reflect upon and celebrate mission and ministry we have accomplished and to look for opportunities to nurture and grow in perhaps new ways in the year ahead.

WORSHIP:

We experimented with combining the two worship services into one at 9:30 over the summer and it has been so well received that the Council has decided to continue this for the foreseeable future. The unity of the congregation has been much enhanced. The service blends 'contemporary' and traditional elements, particularly music. And we are anticipating having this one service will allow us to have an adult Sunday School class.

EVANGELISM/MISSIONS/COMMUNITY OUTREACH:

We support fourteen (14!) missionaries and missions reaching people for Christ in settings both beyond our local church and in our community. In addition, we support the Conference’s “apportioned ministry funds” with \$25,401 – no small amount for a church of our size. I am reminded of what Paul wrote to the Corinthian church about his request of them to be generous in their aid to the Jerusalem church: “You will be enriched in every way to

be generous in every way, which through us will produce thanksgiving to God.... Thanks be to God for his inexpressible gift!” (2 Corinthians 9:11, 15)

We also host a Vacation Bible School week which in 2024 had a registration of over 60 young people, not counting all the volunteers needed to make it happen, some of whom were not members but friends of Grace. During the Dedication Night I spoke with most of the classes about what it means to follow Jesus as Lord and Savior. One young person has asked to be baptized

and it is in our calendar for after the Charge Conference Session. Three others wish to be baptized, possibly four. In addition, 13-15 adults are desiring to join Grace Church.

DISCIPLESHIP:

We have a Men's Group and a Women's Group which meets monthly for breakfast, fellowship and devotions. They also support several mission/outreach efforts Grace has (Thanksgiving and Easter Dinners, VBS, sponsorships). There is a long-standing Men's Bible Study at our Lay Leader Lenny Petraitis' home of 14+. The Celebration Choir is a supporting/discipling small group of 8 or so. Every Lenten Season we have a Dinner Bible Study, which in 2024 went into the Easter Season with 16 participants and great food.

CONGREGATIONAL CARE:

Our "shut-in" persons are brought Holy Communion at least once a quarter, or more often as I am able to visit them. Members of Grace are quite good at caring for these persons - I have often heard of the various people who have called and cared for various of them. Once this year I was called on by a couple who had found a person fallen on the floor. Persons who have been in the hospital or are about to have surgery are visited for prayer and support.

STEWARDSHIP:

I preach through whole Books/Letters of the Bible and wherever

the topic is present will address the Stewardship of our time, talents and treasure. The "introduction" to the Offering is always placed in the context of a proper act of worship and the prayers I write for communal use emphasize that these gifts and tithes are given as an act of love and devotion.

Additionally, I would like to thank ALL those who serve our Lord Jesus Christ and His Church here at Grace with me.

The Trustees have kept excellent care of the buildings and grounds. Chad Buzzard, our buildings & grounds "man on the ground" cares not only for Grace but for our cemetery, Fairview. I cannot praise Chad enough for the work he faithfully does. And the Trustees recognize this as well. My thanks to the Trustees for covering for him when Chad does take time off. And CONGRATULATIONS to him and Vicky in their marriage.

The Trustees continue to monitor both the physical and financial endowed funds of Grace. These factors affect all our budgets – the Trustees, the Missions and the General Budgets.

The Endowment is managed such that the Principle is kept untouched. Of the Yield, 3.5% is defrayed in thirds: to the Trustees' work; to Missions; and to the General Budget. Another, smaller, Endowment is unrestricted but the Trustees and Council have tried to carefully shepherd it's use. We are sure that the Lord will supply the church's financial needs if we continue to be generous to her so the Word might go forth: "Onward! Christian Soldiers!" If you'd like to know more about the Endowment Funds and/or how to include the church's ministry, either with a special gift to reduce taxes as the year's end approaches, or in your will, please speak with me.

Our Apportionments have for years been paid in full AND, moreover, we have kept generous faith with other Missions and Missionaries whom we support. I am proud of your support of the work of spreading the Gospel to all the earth. And I am indeed proud of you for your generosity with your time, talents

and treasure. You are the hands and feet of the Lord at work.

In my own ministry I have endeavored to preach the Word of God accurately and fully; to love and care for people in times when the Son shines brightly upon their faces and particularly in those times of trial and temptation we all face; to provide biblically-based leadership and a vision for the kingdom of God appropriate to our church's context; and to guide us as the Ship of Faith, through the turbulent waters of our times so we are not "conformed to pattern of this world but transformed by the renewing of our minds... by God's good, pleasing and perfect will." (Romans 12:2)

I thank the Lord I have such dedicated and visionary leadership to work out this ministry with. None of us are, nor can be, in ministry for the Lord alone. My motto in ministry and life is like that of Paul's: "I have become all things to all people so that by all possible means some might be saved." (1 Corinthians 9:22)

Yours in Christ,

The Rev. J. Timothy Fisher
Pastor



ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL

An Adult Sunday school will begin November 3rd at 10:45am in the Jr Room. The study will be on 1 Thessalonians and 2 Thessalonians.

POINSETTIAS

You can order poinsettias to be placed in the sanctuary to share with the congregation during this Christmas season. Plants can be dedicated *in memory* or *in honor of* loved ones and ordered through Jessica in the office. They can then be taken home to enjoy after the Christmas Eve Services, or consider taking them to a shut in to brighten their day. The cost this year is \$15 per plant. The deadline for orders in Sunday, December 3rd.



FAMILY FUN NIGHT

Friday, December 6th

6-8pm

Family Fun Night is hosted by the Celebration Choir!
All are invited to join the choir as they carol along the streets of Pen Argyl



Christmas is approaching! Join us for one or both of our Candlelight Christmas Eve Services. The family service will be held at 3:00 pm and will feature a special children's message. The 7:00 pm service will have music lead by the Celebration Choir and will be a more traditional Christmas Eve Service.

Children's Ministries

On December 15th, Sunday School will hold their Happy Birthday Jesus Party. Children of all ages are welcome! Come to the church service at 9:30am and children will be dismissed together after the Children's message. Join us for songs, story, games, a craft and birthday cake! Children will then be dismissed after the church service from Fellowship Hall.

The Children's Sunday School Departments will be singing at the Family Christmas Eve Service on 12/24 at 3:00pm. We will be practicing our songs in Sunday School over the next few weeks. Please plan to bring children to the Primary Department Sunday School room at **2:45 pm** on 12/24 so that we can practice before the Christmas Eve Service. We will go into church together as a class and sing early in the service. After children sing they will return to their families in the pews for the remainder of the service.

No Sunday School on December 29th!



Missions and Social Concerns

Missions Moments:

We received a thank you from Joe and Corinna Cavanaugh, "The warm reception was delightful. We appreciate you and the Grace UMC Family".

A second thank you was sent from Faith Christian School in Roseto, "Thank you for your gift for Bearing Precious Seed. The ministry has reached across the world sending out Bibles in all different languages. Our students look forward to "Bible making" each year. In April of 2024 FCS Students from Kindergarten to 12 grade made 27,500 Bibles over 3 days. This Bibles went to New Zealand (GUM donation of \$500 = 2500 Bibles). GUM has given 71 gifts over the years adding up to \$28755, WOW!"

Our committee would like to thank each and every one who has supported our Missions.

Fall Craft Fair

November 23

Save the date to start your Christmas Shopping! November 23rd 9am-3pm Crafters, Vendors and More.....Our kitchen will be open serving Turkey BBQ, Chili and much more!

UPDATE YOUR CONTACT INFORMATION

Please remember to notify the church office if your address, phone number or email address changes. *Thank You.*

MEN'S MONTHLY BREAKFAST

The Men's breakfasts will be held on Saturday, November 2nd and December 7th, both at 7:30am in the Fellowship Hall. Please RSVP to Dick Stiles or Jessica in the office.

***All men are welcome
and encouraged to bring a friend!***



Sight and Sound Bus Trip to see Noah

May 17th 2025

Grace Church will be sponsoring another bus trip to Sight and Sound Theatre and Bird in Hand Restaurant on May 17, 2025.

Adults \$137.00

Children (ages 3-12) \$94.00

(Check with Denny for *special pricing for kids of Grace*)

If you are interested in going or would like more information, please contact Denny Miller at 610-703-1412 or Dmbm74@outlook.com

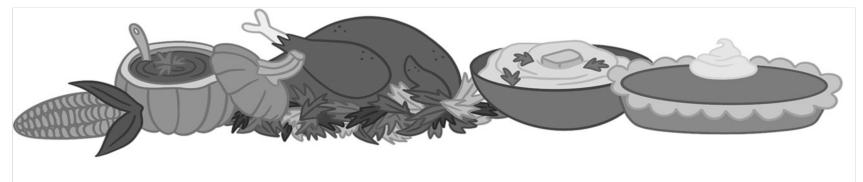



WOMEN OF GRACE

The Women of Grace will be meeting on November 18th and December 16th at 5:30pm in Fellowship Hall. On the agenda for our November meeting is making cards to go along with the Thanksgiving Meal Outreach. December's meeting will include a Christmas party. Pizza will be served, gifts will be exchanged, and games will be played!! If you would like to join in with us, bring a gift (serious or silly) that costs around \$10, give or take a few bucks!!! Don't miss out on this night of Christian fellowship!!

THANKSGIVING DINNER OUTREACH

Again this year we will be continuing the Thanksgiving Dinner Outreach, by offering meals to those who are shut-in and alone on Thanksgiving day. We are in need of volunteers to bake boneless turkey breasts and pans of stuffing. We will need help to pack the meals on Wednesday, November 27th and delivering the meals on Thanksgiving Day. If you are interested in helping or have any questions please contact the church office.



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						
					1	2 7:30 am Men's Breakfast
3 9:30 am Worship Service 9:30 am Children's Sunday School 10:45 am Adult Sunday School 4:00 pm Private Event	4	5 5:30 pm Cub Scouts 7:00 pm Trustees Meeting	6	7 7:00 pm Celebration Choir 7:00 pm Men's Bible Study 7:00 pm Boy Scouts	8 6:00 pm Boy Scouts Raingutter Regatta Sleepover	9
10 9:30 am Worship Service 9:30 am Children's Sunday School 10:45 am Adult Sunday School	11	12 5:30 pm Cub Scouts 6:00 pm Girl Scouts 7:00 pm Finance Meeting	13 6:00 pm Girl Scouts	14 7:00 pm Celebration Choir 7:00 pm Men's Bible Study 7:00 pm Boy Scouts	15	16
17 9:30 am Worship Service 9:30 am Children's Sunday School 10:45 am Adult Sunday School	18 5:30 pm Women of Grace	19 5:30 pm Cub Scouts 7:00 pm SPRC Meeting	20	21 7:00 pm Celebration Choir 7:00 pm Men's Bible Study 7:00 pm Boy Scouts	22	23 9:00 am Craft Fair
24 9:30 am Worship Service 9:30 am Children's Sunday School 10:45 am Adult Sunday School 4:00 pm Private Event	25 6:30 pm Missions and Social Concerns	26 5:30 pm Cub Scouts 6:00 pm Girl Scouts 6:30 pm Church Council Meeting	27 10:00 am Thanksgiving Meal Preparation	28 <i>Thanksgiving Day</i> <i>Office Closed</i> 10:00 am Thanksgiving Meal Distribution	29	30

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p><i>First Sunday of Advent</i> 1</p> <p>9:30 am Worship Service 9:30 am Children's Sunday School 10:30 am Private Event 10:45 am Adult Sunday School</p>	2	<p>3</p> <p>5:30 pm Cub Scouts 7:00 pm Trustees Meeting</p>	<p>4</p> <p>6:00 pm Girl Scouts</p>	<p>5</p> <p>7:00 pm Celebration Choir 7:00 pm Men's Bible Study 7:00 pm Boy Scouts</p>	<p>6</p> <p>6:00 pm Family Fun Night</p>	<p>7</p> <p>7:30 am Men's Breakfast</p>
<p><i>Second Sunday of Advent</i> 8</p> <p>9:30 am Worship Service 9:30 am Children's Sunday School 10:45 am Adult Sunday School</p>	9	<p>10</p> <p>5:30 pm Cub Scouts 6:00 pm Girl Scouts 7:00 pm Finance Meeting</p>	11	<p>12</p> <p>7:00 pm Celebration Choir 7:00 pm Men's Bible Study 7:00 pm Boy Scouts</p>	13	14
<p><i>Third Sunday of Advent</i> 15</p> <p>9:30 am Worship Service 9:30 am Children's Sunday School 10:45 am Adult Sunday School</p>	<p>16</p> <p>5:30 pm Women of Grace</p>	<p>17</p> <p>5:30 pm Cub Scouts 7:00 pm SPRC Meeting</p>	<p>18</p> <p>6:00 pm Girl Scouts</p>	<p>19</p> <p>7:00 pm Celebration Choir 7:00 pm Men's Bible Study 7:00 pm Boy Scouts</p>	20	21
<p><i>Fourth Sunday of Advent</i> 22</p> <p>9:30 am Worship Service 9:30 am Children's Sunday School 10:45 am Adult Sunday School</p>	23	<p>24</p> <p>3:00 pm Family Christmas Eve Service 7:00 pm Traditional Christmas Eve Service</p>	<p>25</p> <p><i>Christmas Day</i> <i>Office Closed</i></p>	<p>26</p> <p>7:00 pm Celebration Choir 7:00 pm Men's Bible Study 7:00 pm Boy Scouts</p>	27	28
<p>29</p> <p>9:30 am Worship Service 10:45 am Adult Sunday School</p>	30	31				