

Grace Notes

December 23, 2018

Mission Statement

*To draw people to Christ,
nourish their spirits, and
prepare them for service to God,
the Church, and the world.*

OPPORTUNITIES OF THE WEEK

Sunday, December 23 - 4th Sunday of Advent

8:30 am Worship Service
9:30 am Fellowship Time
9:45 am Sunday School
10:30 am Fellowship Time
10:30 am Chancel Choir
11:00 am Worship Service

Monday, December 24 - Christmas Eve Church Office Closed

5:00 pm Candlelight Worship Service
7:00 pm Candlelight Worship Service

Tuesday, December 25 - Christmas Day Church Office Closed

Wednesday, December 26 Church Office Closed

Thursday, December 27 12:00 pm Welcome Meal

Sunday, December 30

8:30 am Worship Service
9:30 am Fellowship Time
9:45 am Sunday School
10:30 am Fellowship Time
10:30 am Chancel Choir
11:00 am Worship Service

The text for *Mary, Did You Know?*, is as follows:

*Mary, did you know that your baby boy
Would someday walk on water?
Mary, did you know that your baby boy
Would save our sons and daughters?
Did you know that your baby boy
Has come to make you new?*

This child that you delivered, will soon deliver you.

*Mary, did you know that your baby boy
Will give sight to a blind man?
Mary, did you know that your baby boy
Will calm a storm with His hand?
Did you know that your baby boy
Has walked where angels trod?
When you kissed your little baby,
then you kissed the face of God?*

*The blind will see, the deaf will hear,
The dead will live again:
The lame will leap, the dumb will speak
The praises of the Lamb.*

*Mary, did you know that your baby boy
Is Lord of all creation?
Mary, did you know that your baby boy
Will one day rule the nations?
Did you know that your baby boy
Was heaven's perfect Lamb?
This sleeping child you're holding,
Is the great, "I AM!"*

Church Office Closures

The Grace Church Office will be closed Monday, Dec. 24 through Wednesday, Dec. 26. It will re-open on Thursday, December 27 at 8:30 am.

The Grace Staff wishes everyone a Merry Christmas and a New Year filled with God's blessings.

Prayer Requests

Please pray for comfort and healing for the following people:

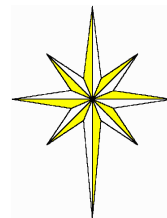
If you have a prayer request, please contact Pastor Patricia at patricia@gracedowntown.net. In order to keep the prayer list current, names will be kept on the list for 4 weeks and then removed, unless you instruct us otherwise.

Margaret Adams	Beth Humphrey
Tina Albrechtsen	Carl Humphrey
Shelley Atwell	Family of Carol Langdon
Kristen Baker	Barney Lewis
Louise Berry	George & Billie Lyndon
Barbara Brown	Jessica Martin
Bethany	Lt. Col. Gene McCarley & wife
Lynn Burney	Sherry
Amy Burrous	Family of Frank O'Brien
Joan Chason	Larry Phipps
Family of Chris Chase	Kyna Rose & Family
Ricky Clay	Marilyn Schildt
Jim Conley	Cozette Southerland
Claude Davis	Don & Kathy Spitzner
George Gardner	Madison Williams
Family of Wayne Gibson	Dana Zigler

Please keep the following military persons in your prayers:

Maj. Jeffery Bernard, USA
Capt. Hanson Causbie, USA
Capt. Tim Collins, USMC
Col. John Delaney, USA
E5 William Chase Dubel, USA
LCDR Colleen Fagan, USN Reserve
WO3 Jonathan Finch, USA Reserve
E3 Caylen Folmar, USAF
E3 Taylor Folmar, USN
Sgt. Alex Gifford, USMC
Capt. Jason T. Hill, USAF
SFC Letty Long, USA
SFC Woodrow Long, USA
Capt. Benjamin Mabee, USMC
LCDR Nicholas Madren, USN
SSg. Emily Olinger, USAF
Pvt. Steven Patterson
Maj. Brian Potts, USMC
LCDR Kevin Ringelstein, USN
Lt. Col. Amy Moore Russo, USAF
Capt. Brandon Showers, USMC
AB Michael Sloan, USAF

Christmas Candlelight Services Monday, December 24, 2018 5 pm & 7 pm



Come!

*Let the light of Jesus' birth shine
into your heart anew.*

Childcare will be available at both services
for children age 3 and under.

Please check the appropriate box or boxes and place in the offering plate.

- Would like to join Grace United Methodist Church.**
 - Need Grace UMC name tag(s).**
 - Change of address, phone number, or email.**
- Will be attending the Prospective Member Class on Sun., January 27, 2019**

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Help Needed Today & Tomorrow

In order to have enough seating for the Christmas Eve services, additional chairs will need to be moved to the gym.

Today, after the 11 am service, help is needed to move about 40 chairs from the Bible Class room to the gym.

Tomorrow night, at the 7 pm candlelight service, help will be needed to move them back.

Many hands make light work!

From the Treasurer

Financial gifts to Grace UMC **must** be postmarked or hand-delivered to the church office by Tuesday, December 31, 2018, to be credited for 2018.

Gifts postmarked or hand-delivered after December 31, will be credited to 2019. This is to comply with IRS requirements.

Thank you.

A Note of Thanks

Grace Family,

Thank you so much for the prayers! The visits were so uplifting. When in pain, that helps a lot. Thank you also for the food, and most of all, for all the cards and words of encouragement on the phone. I am truly blessed to be a part of the Grace Church. Grace UMC is truly full of love and Grace.

In Christ's love,
Debbie Cole

Worship Service Help Needed in 2019

Grace UMC needs your help in the following areas for 2019:

Liturgists - Lead the first portion of the Grace worship experience at 8:30 or 11:00 am or both, To volunteer or for more information, contact Rick Zigler at (910) 341-5726.

Ushers - Several members of the ushering teams have lost members over the past months. Therefore, new volunteers are needed to fill these team for both the 8:30 and 11:00 am worship services. The ushers are a vital part of the worship services at Grace. If you would like to serve in this ministry, please contact Bob High at: rshcch@gmail.com. Thank you!

Thank You

Our thanks to the following people for their service on The Way Forward Communications Team at Grace. This team has kept the congregation aware of the events leading up to the General Conference of the United Methodist Church, February 24-27, 2019.

Sandy Smith	John Glasgow
David Miller	Ed Hickmon
Hope Inman	Sam Spicer
Patricia DiGiuseppe	Pat Goodman
Mac Cunningham	Tal Madison
Cindy Henry	

Family Promise/WIHN

A few volunteer are needed to keep the WIHN families well-fed this holiday season. From Sunday, December 16 through Sunday, January 6, our WIHN guests will be staying in a unit at Willow Pond apartments. Volunteers are needed to deliver dinner each night at 6:00 p.m. There is no need to stay and eat or clean up. You can just drop off the food and go.

Please see the link below for more details and to sign up via the Family Promise Sign-Up Genius.

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10c0b4baca92fa3f49-wihn3>

United Methodist Women

Tuesday, January 8, 2019
10:30 am

Our meeting for January has been moved to the 2nd Tuesday since the 1st Tuesday is New Year's Day.

Program: Lauren from DREAMS of Wilmington

Hostesses: UMW Leadership Team

Lunch will be chili, cornbread and dessert....perfect for a January day!

All women are invited to come and enjoy good fellowship.

Out of the Office

Pastor Tal will be out of town Tuesday, December 25 through Tuesday, January 1.

Many thanks to Pastor Patricia for bringing the message in both services on December 30.

New Wednesday Night Adult Bible Study

Study the book of James with us this fall. We'll meet for five sessions starting Wednesday, January 20, 2019 at 6:00 pm. Childcare will be provided by the Children's Ministry that will be going on during that time. Leader: Tal Madison. Among the things we'll explore are:

- Who do scholars say wrote the book of James? When was it written, and why?
- What do we make of James' stronger emphasis on good works than we find in the writings of Paul?
- How does James help direct our following Jesus today?

Sign-up will start soon.

2019 Altar Flower Chart

The 2019 sign-up chart for altar flowers is in the Welcome Center. You may sign up for one or both sides for any available Sunday.

The cost is \$45 per side. Checks should be made payable to Grace UMC, with "altar flowers" written on the memo line, and may be placed in the offering plate or mailed to the office. Marion Little will contact you about the dedication wording for the bulletin the week prior to your selected date.



2019 Operating Budget Approved

At Grace's Annual Charge Conference on November 27, the Administrative Council approved the 2019 Operating Budget submitted by the Finance Committee. The budget totals \$746,181; an increase of only \$306 over the 2018 budget.

Our thanks to the various committees and ministry teams, the Administrative Council, the church staff, and Finance Committee for the ways they bring the ministries of Grace forward, while being mindful of costs at the same time.

Financial Peace University Coming in 2019

Financial Peace University will help you "take control of your money, plan for your future and transform your life". Financial stress is one of the leading challenges to the American home. This nine week DVD based course will help you get your financial house in order. Dave Ramsey is the teacher on the videos.

Russell Ipock will facilitate the classes on Sunday afternoons at Grace. The class will begin on Sunday, February 10, in the afternoon. The cost is \$110, which covers up to two people from a household to the take course.

Congratulations! **Grace's December College Graduates**

Meghan Mabee (member at Grace UMC) earned her Master's in Library and Information Science on December 7th from UNC Greensboro.

Jada Smith (works in the Grace nursery) earned her Bachelor of Arts degree in Special Education K-12-Adaptive Curriculum from UNC Wilmington on December 15th.

Kelsey Keenan (Grace children's teacher and a member of Grace UMC) earned her Bachelor of Arts degree in Education of Young Children Birth-K from UNC Wilmington on December 15th.

We are so proud of all three young women!

Prospective Members Class

Sunday, January 27, 9:30 am
Second floor office suite
Light Refreshments

Thinking about becoming a member of Grace UMC? Pastor Tal will offer a history of the United Methodist Church, basic United Methodist beliefs, what it means to be a Christian, and the commitments of membership—all in an hour!

So that we can prepare the right number of information packets, let us know you are coming by using the tear-off at the top of the previous page and place it in the offering plate, or call the church office (763-5197). **Please respond by Sunday, January 20.**

We look forward to seeing you!

Mark Your Calendars!

Graceful Seniors Lunch
Tuesday, January 22, 2019

Program: A specialist will speak to the group on elder fraud and scam prevention.

Lunch will be catered.
Watch *Grace Notes* for more details!

Mission of Hope - Rotifunk

Just in time for Christmas, there is a basket in the Welcome Center containing gift cards and envelopes with pictures of Sierra Leonians from the Rotifunk area. The cards can be used as Christmas cards (they are blank inside). The cost is 6 for \$10 and all profits benefit Mission of Hope, which serves the people in that area, in an effort to reduce suffering and prevent fatal diseases.

If you want to make a larger donation than the card cost (an Alternative gift for Christmas), there are inserts for the cards, describing the work of Mission of Hope. For more information about the cards or Mission of Hope, please contact:

Sam Spicer at 352-5771 or sspicer@ec.rr.com.

2019 Stewardship Campaign Coming in February!

Sunday, February 24, 2019 will be our New Consecration Sunday that marks the culmination of our 2019 Stewardship Campaign. Dr. Reggie Ponder will preach at both worship services that day. This will be a special day in the lives of the people of Grace Church. Mark your calendars!

Lay Leadership for 2019

If you agreed to serve on a committee when called, congratulations! The Lay Leadership Roster for 2019 has been approved. You will begin serving on January 1, 2019. We thank you for your willingness to serve Grace Church and our Lord in this way.

A complete list of the Lay Leadership for 2019 will be available soon.

Do you have any questions regarding the General Conference of the Methodist Church to be held in February 2019 that will address the Way Forward? Feel free to call the Grace Church office to set up a time to talk with Tal.

Praying Our Way Forward - We Are One in Christ

A prayer vigil is being led by the Bishops of the United Methodist Church around the world, seeking unity in our church families as we move toward the special session of the General Conference on February 23-26, 2019. At this Conference, the church will determine requirements for people entering the clergy of the United Methodist Church or being joined in marriage, specifically as it relates to those of the LGBTQ community.

All United Methodists are invited to:

1. Engage in a weekly 24-hour fast, at the same time John Wesley, founder of Methodism did-- from Thursday after dinner to Friday mid-afternoon. Those with health issues that prevent them from fasting might consider fasting from social media, TV or emails.
2. Pause and pray for our church's mission and way forward daily for 4 minutes, from 2:23 through 2:26 am or pm, because the Conference will be held 2/23 through 2/26. You might want to set a daily alarm.
3. Pray using the weekly prayer calendar on the UMCPrays.org website through the end of February 2019. The calendar will give a prayer theme and list names of bishops and delegates to the Conference, and others involved in decision making, so that we can pray for them by name.

Prayer is the most significant and positive spiritual thing we can do at this important moment in the history of the United Methodist Church. Thank you for participating in this worldwide prayer initiative.

State of the Church Report

Have you ever wondered about all the ministries, projects, missions, and accomplishments of your church? Find all of this information compiled in the Grace State of the Church Report. This document reviews and explains everything that is happening and everything that has been completed at Grace in 2018. You will be proud of Grace's work and outreach in the community.

Much appreciation goes to all those members who contributed to the writing of this report and to Pat Goodman and the Staff Parish Relations Committee for editing and compiling the final document. Copies are available in the Welcome Center.

LOOKING AHEAD AT GRACE

Monday, December 24, 5 pm & 7 pm - **Christmas Eve Candlelight Worship Services**

Tuesday, January 8, 10:30 am - **United Methodist Women**

Tuesday, January 22, 2019, 12 noon - **Graceful Seniors Luncheon and Program**

Saturday, February 9, 2019 - **Cinderella's Closet Throwback Prom**, 7-11 pm at the Brooklyn Arts Center

Wednesday, March 6 - **Ash Wednesday**

Sunday, March 17, 8:30 & 11:00 am Worship Services - **Guest Preacher, District Superintendent, Edith Gleaves**

Wednesday, March 27, 7:00 pm - **Awakening Service**, guest preacher will be Bishop Hope Morgan Ward, Bishop of the NC Conference of UMC

Sunday, April 21 - **Easter**

Sunday, June 23—Thursday, June 27 - **2019 Vacation Bible School**