

Grace Notes

December 18, 2022

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 18

4th Sunday in Advent

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

Monday, December 19

9:00 am Grace In Motion Walkers (gym)
1:30 pm Caregivers Support

Tuesday, December 20

4:00 pm Organist Practice
5:30 pm Boot Camp

Wednesday, December 21

10:00 am Staff Meeting
11:15 am Yoga
4:00 pm Organist Practice
5:30 pm Bootcamp
6:15 pm Grace Ringers
7:00 pm Chancel Choir

Thursday, December 22

5:30 pm Boot Camp
7:00 pm Basketball

Friday, December 23

9:00 am Organist practice
9:00 am Grace In Motion Walkers (gym)

Saturday, December 24

5:00 pm Christmas Eve Worship
7:00 pm Christmas Eve Worship

Sunday, December 11

Christmas Day and Holy Communion

No early worship
11:00 am Worship Service

In-person/Online Attendance & Offering for 12/11/2022

In-person Worship Service:
10:30 am 434
Online Worship Service: 446
Operating Funds Given \$ 12,655
Building Preservation \$ 955

November

Operating Funds Given YTD \$ 563,245
Operating Expenses YTD \$ 635,806
Balance \$ (72,561)

November

Annual Bld. Preserv. Receipts \$ 51,232
Annual Bld. Preserv. Fund Exp. \$ 31,216
Balance \$ 20,015

Apportionments are paid through November.

On-line Sunday Worship Services Continue

The service will be available Sunday starting
at **4:00 pm**

This is the link:

[https://www.youtube.com/channel/
UCAK2Z36cUQ1JzE6Ye7TzcGg](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCAK2Z36cUQ1JzE6Ye7TzcGg)

VOLUNTEERS TODAY

LITURGISTS: 8:30 Tom Guthrie
11:00 Michelle Ginocchio

USHERS: 8:30: Tom and Linda Snider
11:00: Brian Lewis Leader
Bettye Broadwater, Lydia Vaughan
Mark Holcomb, Bev Holcomb, Carolee Doty

TRUSTEES ON DUTY: Ken Wolfe
Stew Wolling

ALTAR: Renate Cooper, Jo Ellen Hickmon

SOUND SYSTEM: 8:30 Rodney Lester
11:00 David Vaughan

GREETERS: Lawrence and Jane Phipps

ACOLYTE: Beatrice Vaughan

ALTAR FLOWERS

Please turn to the insert in the bulletin for the dedications of the beautiful poinsettias in the sanctuary today. Thank you for your support. Due to the tight deadline, we will print the dedication again next week in case there are any that didn't arrive in time. If there are any updates call Ginny in the church. There are spots for 36 poinsettias on our altar, so there are always more dedications than plants. Some will remain on week's altar as well.

Flowers in the Narthex are offered to the Glory of God in loving memory of Marilyn Brown by Jennifer and Brian Lewis. And in celebration of Joan Cunningham's birthday by Mac Cunningham.

Grace United Methodist Church

401 Grace Street
Wilmington, North Carolina 28401

email: grace-
umc@gracedowntown.net
910.763.5197; Fax 910.763.4108
website: gracedowntown.church



GRACE STAFF

Rev. Benton W. Oakes, III M.Div. - Senior Pastor
Jerry Cribbs - Director of Music Ministries
Leslie Bergbower - Organist
Kelsey Keenan - Director of Children's Ministry
Jada Martinez - Director of Youth Ministry
Janet Keenan—Nursery Leader
Rich McKeon—Custodian
Ginny Peterson—Director of Operations and Admin.

Charles Sanders - Accountant
To contact any staff by email use this format:
firstname@gracedowntown.net

Last week for luminary sales

Our youth are selling luminaries this Christmas season for those who would like to honor someone special. They will be displayed during the Christmas Eve service. The cost is \$5.00 each, with all proceeds going towards their upcoming mission trip in July. For those who are interested, please come by the table in the Welcome Center. If you have questions, please get in touch with Jada Martinez or email her at jada@gracedowntown.net.

-Soli Deo Gloria- (To God Alone the Glory)

A sincere word of gratitude and appreciation to everyone who helped to make the Sunday, December 11, Advent Divine Liturgy and Cantata Service of Hope, Love, Joy, and Peace worshipful and successful. The statement, it takes a village, is an understatement as it applies to the many hours committed by so many individuals and committees to provide this glorious service of the spoken Word and music in praise and adoration of Jesus Christ, our Lord.

The 225th Anniversary Ornaments have arrived!

If you haven't picked up your ornaments, please see Ginny in the Church office.

Prayer Requests

Jim Alban	Martin Ginocchio
Dan Barnes	Mark Hansen
Wayne Blalock	Betty Hinson
Ibis Burnette	Alexandria Oakley
Larry Burnette	Carolyn Parker
Margaret Falls	Aaron Swaney
Larry Florea	Louise Thompson
Adam George	

Please keep the following military persons in your prayers:

ETN1 Anthony Augustine, USN	Capt. Benjamin Mabee, USMC
LCpl. John Capwell, USMC	LCpl. Seth Mack, USMC
Sgt. Tim Cobaugh, USMC	PFC Schuyler Marshall, USA
Col. John Delaney, USA	SSg. Emily Olinger, USAF
Ens. Elizabeth Downing, USN	Pvt. Steven Patterson, USA
E3 Hadden Scott Dubel, USN	Sgt. James Pritchett, USA
E6 William Chase Dubel, USA	CDR Kevin Ringelstein, USN
E3 Caylen Folmar, USAF	Col. Amy Moore Russo, USAF
E3 Taylor Folmar, USN	Capt. Brandon Showers, USMC
Sgt. Alex Gifford, USMC	AB Michael Sloan, USAF
Maj. Jason T. Hill, USSF	Capt. Robert Stockman, USMC
SFC Letty Long, USA	Michael Tate, USA
SFC Woodrow Long, USA	E2 Cassie Wenz, USMC

If you have a prayer request, please contact Marilee Tremlett at mtrem3@icloud.com.



A Service of the Longest Night

Prayer
Reflection
Music
Space

Wednesday, December 21

6:30 pm

425 S. Fourth Street Wilmington, NC 28401

Next Wednesday night, December 21, there will be what is called "A Service of the Longest Night." It's a tradition in the church, held on or around the Winter Solstice (the longest night). It is intended for people who struggle during the holiday season. There is no preaching at this service – just some quiet readings, music, reflection time, and a chance to light candles. This is not the place for singing "Joy to the World" or trying to say, "Cheer up and put a smile on now!" This is a space to help people hold grief, anxiety, struggle, and pain during a season when there is so much pressure to "be of good cheer." This service offers a time and place to say, "We see you. God meets you right where you are. And you are not alone in it." Feel free to invite and share for others who might need this. We look forward to seeing you at 6:30 PM on Wednesday, December 21 at 425 S. Fourth St.

Liturgists Needed

The lay liturgist sets the tone for the Grace UMC worship services. He or she leads the congregation in reading responsively the Call to Worship, reciting together the Affirmation of Faith (usually the Apostles or Nicene creeds) and then reading aloud the day's Scripture lesson. The lay liturgist may also assist in serving Communion when requested by the Pastor. If you would like to serve, email Rick Zigler at rzigler@aol.com and specify 8:30 or 11:00 services or hopefully both.

It's a wonderful time of the year!

Are you looking for that perfect Christmas gift? How about a beautifully engraved brick in memory or in honor of a loved one. The bricks will be placed in the garden around the columns under the portico.

Brochures are available in the Welcome Center with ordering instructions or contact Karen Evans evans493@gmail.com, or Sally Barnes sallymbarnes11754@yahoo.com with questions.

Bible Project Bible Study coming soon!

Let's read the Word of God together in 2023. Beginning January 1, 2023, we invite you to read the entire Bible with us, utilizing the free reading plan from the Bible Project. In this engaging work, the fine folks at the Bible Project have organized videos and other materials to accompany Bible reading. Their purpose – straight from their website – is, "We believe that the story of Jesus has the power to transform people and entire communities." As Methodists, we agree, and I invite you into this challenge with me. More information will be forthcoming, and for now, consider this challenging invitation, and let's grow in Grace together!

A Christmas Surprise

The Chancel Choir of Grace surprised Jerry Cribbs, Director of Music Ministries, with a very special Christmas gift this year. They secretly commissioned Joseph M. Martin, an internationally-known composer, to compose an anthem to honor and celebrate Jerry's twenty years of service at GUMC. The gift, in the form of a framed, signed copy of the first page and the manuscript from the composer, was presented to a very surprised Jerry at the choir Christmas party on December 11. The choir is looking forward to sharing this beautiful new anthem, "A Joyful, Jubilant Song" with the congregation sometime next year.

Do you like to drive?

We are looking for a few Grace members, with a good driving record, and the ability to drive a 15-passenger bus, to serve on a rotating team to provide transportation for some of our members on Sundays. If you would like to serve the church in this capacity, please contact the trustees at their email: gumctrustees1@gmail.com for details and requirements.

Parking reminders

On Sunday mornings, if you can't find parking in the church lot, please only use the main Wells Fargo parking lot on Fourth St., until 2:00 pm, and not the bank's side lots. We are not permitted to park there for other activities and services throughout the week. In addition, the city has been writing tickets during the week for those parking in our 15-minute loading zone and for those staying more than two hours in the 2-hour parking spaces along Grace and Fourth streets. If you are planning on staying more than two hours, we recommend you park in the grassy lot or in our main parking area off Walnut St. near the portico. We are sorry for the inconvenience and thank you for understanding.

Monthly and other Meetings

If your committee has recurring meetings, please confirm 2022 meetings and time with Ginny to update the Church schedule, especially if there is a change. Thankfully, the Church facilities are being reserved more with more activities and events taking place inside our place of worship and also in our greater community. If there are special events that you know about that will happen later in the year, let Ginny know as soon as possible so she can reserve that date and space for you as well. Thank you so much for your support.

Letter from Pastor Benny

Advent and Christmas Seasons' Greetings, friends:

As I write this letter, it has been just a few days since our Christmas Cantata, and my heart is full of gratitude for all of you here at Grace UMC. What a wonderful time of worship, as we continue our preparation for Christ's incarnation, remembering the story of Jesus's birth, as well as anticipating our Lord's second coming!

Also, July was not long ago when my family and I came to Grace and Wilmington. We arrived as strangers and you welcomed us as friends; as Christ's family, as sisters and brothers in the Lord. I now understand why the Apostle Paul often begins his letters to the people he has visited with such gratitude. The welcome you have extended to us is surely akin to the biblical hospitality Paul received from many of the people with whom he shared his life. Thank you and thanks be to God, the giver of all good things.

Receiving the gift of Christ's love from you during this season when we notice that God is both the gift (Jesus) and the giver (God the Father), I encourage you to continue sharing this abundant gift of love with our community. Soon we will welcome 2023 as a new year in the Lord, and we pray we complete December well, sharing what we already have received as gifts.

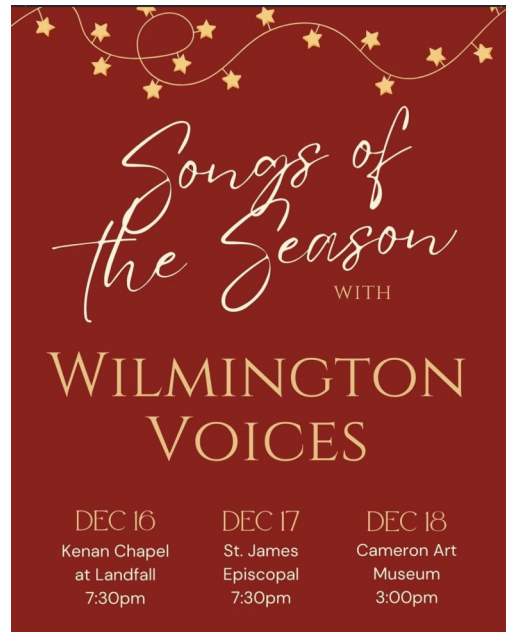
In this Spirit of giving, if you would like to send a year-end, financial contribution to further bless the work of the body of Christ at Grace UMC, please send your gift soon. Our General Fund could surely use the blessing. If you would like to know how much you have contributed thus far in 2022, you may call Ginny Peterson at the church office at (910) 763-5197. Please note that the office will be closed for Christmas on Monday, December 26, and Tuesday, December 27. The last day to contribute financially for tax credit purposes is Saturday, December 31, 2022, either by collection plate or postmark.

Remember, 2 Corinthians 9:7-8 says, "Each of you must give as you have made up your mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to provide you with every blessing in abundance, so that by always having enough of everything, you may share abundantly in every good work."

May God continue to bless you abundantly so that you may be an abundant blessing for others.

In Christ's love,

Benny+



Free Concerts! Grace Social Media coordinator, Mary Tyndall, sings in this group and invites you to the Wilmington Voices performance of Songs of the Season today at 3 pm at Cameron Art Museum.

Coffee and Teas from Equal Exchange/Fair Trade

Last Sunday at fellowship several varieties of Equal Exchange/Fair Trade coffees & teas were served. We encourage you to consider these delicious organic products as gifts for your loved ones this Christmas. Teas and chocolate bars are lightweight to mail & make great stocking stuffers! Orange infused & dark chocolate bars have been added to our fare, as well as chamomile & turmeric teas. All are popular and have been well-received. As always, thank you for supporting this mission and changing lives.

Special Dates to remember

Saturday, December 24, Christmas Eve Services at 5 & 7 pm

Sunday, December 25, Christmas one service at 11 am

Monday and Tuesday, December 26-27 Office Closed

Saturday, December 29, last day to mail or drop off donations for 2022 tax credit

Sunday, January 1, One service at 11 am; Bible Project study begins

Monday, January 2, Office closed