

# Grace Notes

## December 2024

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  
Visit Our Facebook Group - www.facebook.com/groups/embracegrace

*To know Christ and to make Him known!*

Senior Pastor: **Rev. William Beatty**  
Director of  
Congregational Care: **Cindy Price**  
Choir Director: **Floyd Moore**  
Organist/Accompanist: **Debbie Airgood**  
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

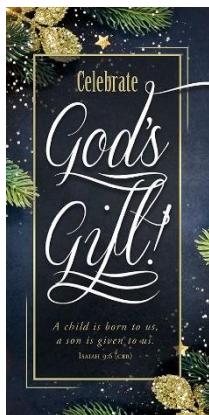
We are all sinners seeking God's grace together.

#### 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 go to **UMCOR U.S. Disaster Response**. Christmas offering envelopes will be in the Christmas letter and available for the Christmas Eve services.



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

# *From the Pastor*

## **Merry Grinchmas...**

**A** few months ago I was putting our worship series stuff together and I saw some churches had used the idea of the Grinch Who Stole Christmas as a theme for Advent and I liked the concept – the idea that something tries to “steal” Christmas from us.

I’ve been perusing the usual shopping places these past few weeks and I see a lot of Grinch themed decorations and clothing. Maybe I see more because I’m thinking more about it, though Lori says the Grinch is big this year...

Using something like the Grinch as an anchor theme for our Advent services might be a little disarming. What seems maybe lighthearted and casual (I mean, it’s Dr. Seuss, after all), belies the deeper truths that we will be talking about this season... much like how the Dr. Seuss book itself has some deeper themes of the dangers of materialism and isolation wrapped up in green, grinchy ridiculousness.

As much as this season is filled with opportunities for worship and adoration, with family and the promise of joy and hope, Materialism, Grief, Busyness and Conflict lurk at the edges of our celebrations. We can get obsessed with the “stuff” of Christmas, overwhelmed by who is not with us this Christmas, frantic with the schedule of people to see and places to be and blindsided by strife. So much can try to “steal” Christmas from us.

Merry Grinchmas indeed.

Maybe that phrase says something more than just being a play on words. Regardless of how Christmas movies tend to dilute the truth, in our lives of faith the Advent season is about examining our hearts and our lives and preparing ourselves to remember the birth of Christ – that one, unique and defining moment in all of history when God stepped into His creation, the Word made flesh John tells us who came to dwell among us (John 1:14). When we allow anything – busyness, materialism, grief, conflict or even the Grinch to take the place of our veneration of Christ this season, we will struggle to find meaning and joy and rest.

Enjoy the “stuff” of Christmas but keep it in perspective. The lights will be taken down (probably!), the gifts will be put away, the cookies will be eaten and the family members will all go home, but Jesus will still be the Lord of all. The reason for the season. The Light of the World. Our Savior.

[The] angel said to them, “Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.”  
(Luke 2:10-12)

This is our hope. This is our joy. This is our Savior.

In Christ’s Love,  
Pastor Bill

## Christ is born for You!

If you can read this, you've been through the Christmas season before. I have no sage advice, no admonitions, no new encouragements that you haven't heard before. But this year, let's keep it personal. *Christ Is Born For You! And you, and you, and you!*



God didn't give up his only Son because He didn't know what he was doing, nor does he not know what we are doing. God gave us his Son because he knows us. He knows we desperately need a Savior, and he cared enough to send the very best.

Keep it personal. Christ is born for you. And you know you – inside and out. That's just mind boggling. Search the scriptures, search your heart, and for the rest of your life, celebrate Christmas.

Keep it personal. Christ is born for you – and everyone you meet. That's a tough one. But it's true, Christ is born for them, too. Help them celebrate Christmas.

By now you know the 35<sup>th</sup> annual Christmas concert is being prepared for you. Your church musicians are preparing another inspiring Christmas concert to be presented on **Sunday, December 8, at 4pm**. Don't come early just for the reception, the punch and cookies will be *after* the music. Invite your friends and family. Everyone is welcome to join in the celebration of God's gift to us, come early for a good seat.

Thank you again for keeping your Grace ministries in your prayers. Spread Joy to the world, the LORD is come!

See you in church!

Floyd Moore  
Choir Director  
[amfm123@verizon.net](mailto:amfm123@verizon.net)

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December is an exciting time, as we 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 2025!



Registration for the 2025-2026 school year will begin in January. Registration forms will be available in the church office or by calling (814) 723-9440 or the preschool room (814) 723-8011 (during school hours).

We want to thank Karen Conarro for designing a new flyer for our program. We are grateful to have creative friends to help us with these special projects! If you know of any place that will allow us to post one, please let us know, or pick one up from the church office. THANK YOU!

We wish you all a blessed Christmas and Happy New Year!

Trish Gentilman & Jen Lynds  
[promisepreschool@myyahoo.com](mailto:promisepreschool@myyahoo.com)



## Come Join Our Messy Church

Messy Church? It's a time for family activities/crafts, worship, and dinner together. Monthly on the last Saturday of the month from 3:30-5:45. Our next event is **Saturday, December 28<sup>th</sup>**.



### Flock Talk

*"Let us not become weary at doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up."*

*Galatians 6:9*

It worked! All of our diligence and patience and trust in Christ has worked. We are seeing the fruit of our efforts and the results are wonderfully rich. Through thick and thin we have walked steadily and linked arms to encourage a mighty effort.

We came through the epidemic and waved farewell to the fear of gathering. We fastened our seat belts through the disaffiliation. We tightened our belts and are witnessing the financial situation take a healthier turn. Not only did it work, but we worked! We served, we were generous and we became experts at hospitality. With a little effort from all, some maybe a lot, we have become a thriving and welcoming presence in our community.

Now, at the end of the year, we look forward to duplicating our mission and methods. Better yet, we add to the creativity and the industriousness by inviting others to share the joy of serving. With Christmas fast approaching, we have opportunities to invite people to church who are feeling the tug of this glorious season. There are festivities and musical events and best of all, a great message filled with hope every Sunday.

Stay enthusiastic for God! Keep your eyes, ears, hands and feet ready to do His salvation work. Be a testimony to the power of His spirit leading you onward, Christian soldier!

Merrily,  
Sue Toombs, Lay Leader

Covered by Grace is a ministry that allows anyone needing winter items to simply take them from a clothesline on the front porch of the church. Donations can be placed in the bin across from Pastor Bill's office or visit our website for the link to our Amazon wishlist. The lines are up November through February so please keep those items coming throughout the winter.



### During Worship

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

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

December 1 – Anna Peterson

December 8 – Melissa Zaffino

December 15 – Anna Peterson

December 22 – Melissa Zaffino

December 29 – Anna Peterson



Items for the **January 2025** Newsletter need to be delivered to Mary in the office [mary@graceumcwarren.com](mailto:mary@graceumcwarren.com) by **Monday, December 16.** Thank you.

The Grace Church Food Pantry is in need of **canned meat (tuna, chicken, SPAM), syrup, and cereal** at this time. Thank you to all who contribute!



Along with the boxes packed by CREW, Grace Church sent **68** shoeboxes around the world for Operation Christmas Child.



## Grace Church Finance Report



### 2024 Monthly and YTD Financials

|  | October '24        | YTD                 |
|--|--------------------|---------------------|
| <b>Total Income</b>                                | <b>\$28,098.20</b> | <b>\$300,886.31</b> |
| Office Expense                                     | \$137.90           | \$5,777.20          |
| Buildings & Ground Expense<br>(Church & Parsonage) | \$5,723.01         | \$70,806.08         |
| Ministry Personnel                                 | \$22,361.47        | \$214,024.26        |
| Church Council                                     | \$0.00             | \$338.99            |
| Education Ministry                                 | \$152.84           | \$3,498.38          |
| Nurture Ministry                                   | \$90.04            | \$947.08            |
| Worship Ministry                                   | \$55.16            | \$1,857.78          |
| Outreach Ministry                                  | \$0.00             | \$511.22            |
| Connectional Apportionment                         | \$0.00             | \$6,742.48          |
| Witness Ministry                                   | \$0.00             | \$208.60            |
| <b>Total Ministry &amp; Expense</b>                | <b>\$28,520.42</b> | <b>\$304,712.07</b> |
| <b>Net Income</b>                                  | <b>(\$422.22)</b>  | <b>(\$3,825.76)</b> |

#### Borrowed Funds

|                            |                       |
|----------------------------|-----------------------|
| Account Balance 10/31/2024 | <b>(\$104,195.51)</b> |
|----------------------------|-----------------------|

We praise God for the generous gifts and offerings.

Submitted by:

Brian A. Jurkowski, Finance Chair & the Finance Committee

Do you like to knit or crochet? Yarn Angels meets weekly on Friday mornings from **9:30am-11am** in the **church library**. If you have any questions, call or text Karen Conarro 814-688-6445.



#### Attention women!

“Full of Grace” Women’s Ministry meets the **fourth Monday of each month at 10:30am or 6:30pm** in the **Grace Church library** (take the elevator to floor 2). If you have any questions, contact Karen Conarro at 814-688-6445.

Full of Grace will **not** meet in December. Enjoy the Holidays!

Our annual Christmas Concert, "Christ is born for you!" will be presented on **Sunday, December 8<sup>th</sup>** at **4:00PM**. The reception committee is asking for donations of cookies to be served following the concert. Signup sheets are in Higginbotham Hall and Wesley Parlor. You may also call the church office, 814-723-9440 or Linda Knapp, 814-726-1199, with further questions or to volunteer. Thank you for any help you may be able to offer.



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Olmsted Manor Retreat Center is inviting you to their Annual Christmas Open House December 8 & 15, 2024 from 3-7pm. You and your family are invited to come and see the Manor House and grounds decorated for the season, enjoy some live music and Christmas cookies, and spend the time celebrating the birth of Christ together. All are welcome!

To learn more about Olmsted Manor and the 2025 events, go to [www.olmstedmanor.org/events](http://www.olmstedmanor.org/events)

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### **Giving to an existing Endowment**

You may be familiar with some of our larger endowment funds, but this month I would like to tell you about another endowment, the Margaret Willett Memorial Fund. This fund was established in 1998 by Margaret's family for the purpose of generating income to fund a wide scope of Children's Ministry (ages birth to 18), including but not limited to: Work Camps, Vacation Bible School, Worship, After School Care, etc.

This fund, as are each of our Endowment funds, is invested for Grace Church by the United Methodist Foundation in a separate account for this purpose. Distributions from the fund are managed by the Foundation so that the principle will continue to grow in perpetuity and only the income will be distributed for use.

You can give to the Margaret Willett Memorial Fund in memory of a person or in honor of an individual or an event, including an anniversary or milestone, which can be a meaningful way to provide an enduring tribute to someone or something significant in your life. Gifts to the fund will add to the principle which will help to increase the future income it generates to support Children's Ministry here at Grace Church. You can send your tax deductible honorary or memorial gift to the fund, payable to Grace United Methodist Church with the designation "Margaret Willett Memorial Fund".

If you have any questions about this or any other Endowment or Special Purpose fund invested for Grace Church at the United Methodist Foundation, please call the church office or contact me via e-mail or phone: [gentilman@verizon.net](mailto:gentilman@verizon.net) or 814-726-9035.

Bill Gentilman, Chairperson - Endowment Committee.

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### **Disciple IV Class**

Our next Disciple class will begin on Thursday, January 9th at 6:00pm in the Library. This will be the second half of Disciple IV and will be held weekly until the end of April. Anyone is welcome to attend and you can jump right in without ever having taken any of these classes. You will be amazed at the level of learning we achieve during these four months.

Disciple IV will focus on John and Revelation and the books of the Bible that help us comprehend the mystery of the end of times. This course will be enlightening and interactive with all the beloved qualities of a small group study.

There are study books available, but please contact Sue Toombs several weeks prior to class to set one aside for you. Sue will be your instructor and is happy to answer any questions.



- 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 – George Broadbent, Michael Waseleski
- December 8 – 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 Filek
- December 24 – Harrison Johnson, Christopher Danielson
- December 25 – Alexis Manelick
- December 29 – Jayce Messinger, Madelyn Messinger
- December 30 – Douglas Renwick, Betsy Miller, Theresa Barney
- December 31 – Peggy Grosch, Beth MacPherson, Paige Johnson





# december



| SUNDAY   | MONDAY   | TUESDAY  | WEDNESDAY   | THURSDAY   | FRIDAY   | SATURDAY   |
|--|--|--|---|--|--|--|
| <b>1</b><br>8:30/9:30/11:00 a<br>Worship<br>9:30 a Agape<br>9:45 a Sunday School<br>6:00 p Worship @<br>The Crossing                         | <b>2</b><br>5:15 p Christian Yoga<br>6:30 p Wesley Parlor<br>Reserved<br>7:00 p Ping Pong  | <b>3</b><br>9:00 a Pickleball<br>11:00 a Staff Meeting<br>12:15 p Christian<br>Yoga<br>6:00 p Pickleball<br>7:00 p Prayer<br>Gathering | <b>4</b><br>7:00 a Men's Prayer<br>Breakfast<br>5:15 p Christian Yoga<br>6:00 p Madrigals<br>6:30 p Choir<br>6:30 p C.R.E.W.<br>7:00 p Gym<br>Reserved  | <b>5</b><br>9:00 a Pickleball<br>10:00 a Disciple 2A<br>5:00 p<br>Higginbotham<br>Hall Reserved<br>6:00 p Caregivers'<br>Support Group<br>6:30 p Handbells<br>8:00 p Disciple 2A | <b>6</b><br>9:00 a Pickleball<br>9:30 a Yarn Angels<br>11:15 a Fitness<br>Ministry<br>12:15 p Christian<br>Yoga<br>6:00 p Gym<br>Reserved  | <b>7</b><br>9:00 a Praise Team<br>12:30 p Gym<br>Reserved<br>5:00 p<br>Higginbotham<br>Hall Reserved |
| <b>8</b><br>8:30/9:30/11:00 a<br>Worship<br>9:30 a Agape<br>9:45 a Sunday School<br>4:00 p Choir Concert<br>6:00 p Worship @<br>The Crossing | <b>9</b><br>9:00 a Library<br>Reserved<br>5:15 p Christian Yoga<br>7:00 p Ping Pong  | <b>10</b><br>9:00 a Pickleball<br>12:15 p Christian<br>Yoga<br>6:00 p Pickleball<br>7:00 p Prayer<br>Gathering                         | <b>11</b><br>7:00 a Men's Prayer<br>Breakfast<br>5:15 p Christian Yoga<br>6:00 p Madrigals<br>6:30 p Choir<br>6:30 p C.R.E.W.<br>7:00 p Gym<br>Reserved | <b>12</b><br>9:00 a Pickleball<br>10:00 a Disciple 2A<br>6:30 p Handbells<br>8:00 p Disciple 2A  | <b>13</b><br>9:00 a Pickleball<br>9:30 a Yarn Angels<br>11:15 a Fitness<br>Ministry<br>12:15 p Christian<br>Yoga<br>6:00 p Gym<br>Reserved   | <b>14</b><br>9:00 a Praise Team<br>9:00 a<br>Higginbotham<br>Hall Reserved                           |
| <b>15</b><br>8:30/9:30/11:00 a<br>Worship<br>9:30 a Agape<br>9:45 a Sunday School<br>4:00 p Watson Home<br>6:00 p Worship @<br>The Crossing  | <b>16</b><br>12:00 p Caregivers'<br>Support Group<br>5:15 p Christian Yoga<br>6:30 p Wesley Parlor<br>Reserved<br>7:00 p Ping Pong | <b>17</b><br>9:00 a Pickleball<br>12:15 p Christian<br>Yoga<br>6:00 p Pickleball<br>7:00 p Prayer<br>Gathering                         | <b>18</b><br>7:00 a Men's Prayer<br>Breakfast<br>5:15 p Christian Yoga<br>6:00 p Madrigals<br>6:30 p Choir<br>6:30 p C.R.E.W.<br>7:00 p Gym<br>Reserved | <b>19</b><br>9:00 a Pickleball<br>10:00 a Disciple 2A<br>6:30 p Handbells<br>8:00 p Disciple 2A  | <b>20</b><br>9:00 a Pickleball<br>9:30 a Yarn Angels<br>11:15 a Fitness<br>Ministry<br>12:15 p Christian<br>Yoga<br>6:00 p Gym<br>Reserved   | <b>21</b><br>9:00 a Praise Team  |
| <b>22</b><br>8:30/9:30/11:00 a<br>Worship<br>9:30 a Agape<br>9:45 a Sunday School<br>6:00 p Worship @<br>The Crossing                        | <b>23</b><br>7:00 p Ping Pong  | <b>24</b><br>5:00 p Christmas Eve<br>Service<br>7:00 p Christmas Eve<br>Service  | <b>25</b><br><b>Office Closed</b>   | <b>26</b><br>9:00 a Pickleball<br>10:00 a Disciple 2A<br>6:30 p Handbells<br>8:00 p Disciple 2A  | <b>27</b><br>9:00 a Pickleball<br>9:30 a Yarn Angels<br>6:00 p Gym<br>Reserved   | <b>28</b><br>9:00 a Praise Team<br>3:30 p Messy<br>Church  |
| <b>29</b><br>8:30/9:30/11:00 a<br>Worship<br>9:30 a Agape<br>9:45 a Sunday School<br>6:00 p Worship @<br>The Crossing                        | <b>30</b><br>5:15 p Christian Yoga<br>6:30 p Wesley Parlor<br>Reserved<br>7:00 p Ping Pong   | <b>31</b><br>9:00 a Pickleball<br>12:15 p Christian<br>Yoga<br>6:00 p Pickleball   | <b>January 1,</b><br><b>2025</b><br><b>Office Closed</b>  |  | <b>PROMISE</b><br><b>PRE-SCHOOL</b><br>is open Sept-May<br>Mon, Wed, and<br>Thurs from 9:00 –<br>11:30 am (3-year-<br>olds) and 12:30 –<br>3:00 pm (4-year-<br>olds) located on the<br>ground floor. |  |



**GRACE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**  
501 Pennsylvania Ave. E.  
Warren, PA 16365

Published monthly;  
December 2024

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*- Grace Praise Team -*

*Pastor Bill, Lori Beatty, Jan Moore, Cindy Price, Keith Price, Tristan Johnson,  
Shirley Shafer, Aaron Stearns, Chris Ei, John Lewis, Patrick Ward, Chuck Keepports,  
Alice Pedersen, Cindy Dziendziel, Wyatt Stearns, Walter Miller, Dave Moore*

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