

GRACE NEWS

December/ January
2017/2018

A Publication of Grace Presbyterian Church



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"It's that time of year!" I started saying that before Thanksgiving even arrived. "It's that time of year!" "It gets crazy this time of year!" "Advent is always so busy..."

I do not need to explain any further. December is "that time of year!" The old Christmas carol got it wrong; it is not always "the most wonderful time of year," even with the tree and the cookies and the cider.

But our souls desperately want it to be, and need it to be.

Christmas is a difficult season for a lot of people. For many, it is a time of difficult memories, of missing loved ones, of feeling desperately lonely and depressed. For others, it is just too busy or taxing to be enjoyed, with the tasks of getting ready for celebrations, planning how to handle the financial burden of gift giving, or even just having a job that involves a cash register and toys or something similar.

It is easy – and forgivable – to miss the joy of our savior's birth for all the tasks we have to do to "properly" celebrate our savior's birth. And when it is not a happy time of year for you because of whatever weighs on your soul, the demand for you to be happy when you simply cannot pulls you further from the joy of the event.

Jesus came into a broken world of chaos. In the first years of his life, he was whisked away to Egypt for his protection. His life would lead him to a terrible end, an end that Mary would have to watch.

But for a few moments, a mother, step-father, and some shepherds celebrated the joy of the event.

This Christmas, give yourself the gift of quiet and prayer. Spend time just celebrating our savior's birth, praying to our loving God, and feeling the Holy Spirit, not because you should or because it is proper, but to give your soul time to feel the joy. Spend time reading scripture and letting the Word work within you. Spend time away from the hustle and bustle, instead focusing solely on the baby Jesus.

And know you are loved.

Peace,
- Pastor Robert

This month you get two articles from me. I could not bring myself to have this as my sole article on the front of the newsletter, but this article is definitely more important.

We are required annually to notify the congregation of our Child and Youth Protection Policy and Sexual Misconduct Policy, and there is a hesitation to even talk about this because it is uncomfortable. It is not happy, it is not what we want to talk about, and we often just want to ignore it.

In a bit of a weird coincidence, the same day that John let the session know that we had not given the congregation its annual notification of our policies, the hashtag #churchtoo was trending on Twitter, telling stories of how churches have been complicit in and even facilitated abuse and assault on women, children, and men, and looked the other way because it was uncomfortable or the one who was responsible was beloved.

That should never happen here. Everyone must be safe here, and if they are not, that needs to be corrected and the danger removed. We have good policies in place and anyone can look at or receive a copy any time; just ask me or someone at the office like Kim. In 2018 we will be working on solidifying a reporting policy for misconduct by any church leadership, myself included, and making sure everyone knows that there is an ear to hear and to help. Also in 2018, all

Employee's, and all volunteers who work with children, will be required to review the policies, sign receipt of the policies, and complete a youth and child protection training.

It is Christmas time and we do not like to be in dark places during joyful celebrations, but I personally cannot determine a better time to tell everyone that they are safe here, that their concerns will be heard, and they will not be silenced for the sake of order and image.

You are safe here, and you are loved. Let us continue to prove that to you.

- Pastor Robert and the Session of Grace Presbyterian Church



Vivian & Gene Allen, Nancy Current, Connie Stucky and all who contributed bingo prizes and pudding cups. We entertained 58 residents at Byron Health Care Center.

Evelyn Brunnegraff

Cathy and Tod German- for taking charge of Halloween with grace

Stacey Monnier

To the church - for allowing the purchase of the leaf and grass collector for the lawn tractor. The leaves can now be collected at the same time as the grass is mowed, saving many hours of hard work.

Property Committee

Dennis Allen and John Current - for building the storage area for the 3B equipment.

Tammy Menkes

Todd German and Cindy Bowers - for substituting for my youth Sunday school class. I really appreciated not having to worry about what was happening with them.

Tammy Menkes

Isy Bosse, Jill Werling, Nancy Current, Linda Haller, Connie Stucky, Dee Stoiche and the four ladies from Trinity Lutheran Church- Thank you for all your help. We sewed 36 cancer pads for Cancer Services of Northeast Indiana.

Evelyn Brunnegraff



*Congratulations
Pam and Tom Callahan
On your marriage
November 11, 2017*



Art Classes

There will be class December 5th and 12th

Art classes will resume on February 6th
2018



Body, Brain, & Belief movement class is on hiatus until Monday, January 8th. For those not already attending, starting the class in January could be one of those New Year resolutions that would be easy to keep up.



The Presbyterian Women will be having both the Garage Sale and Christmas Sale 2018. We are collecting items for both sales, but please no clothes. Items may be placed in the adult library or the closet with double doors in the fellowship hall.

46808 Work Day

Thank you to all who volunteered for this day. With your help Grace and the participating churches made 36 cancer pads, 25 thank you cards for first responders, and raked over 20 yards.

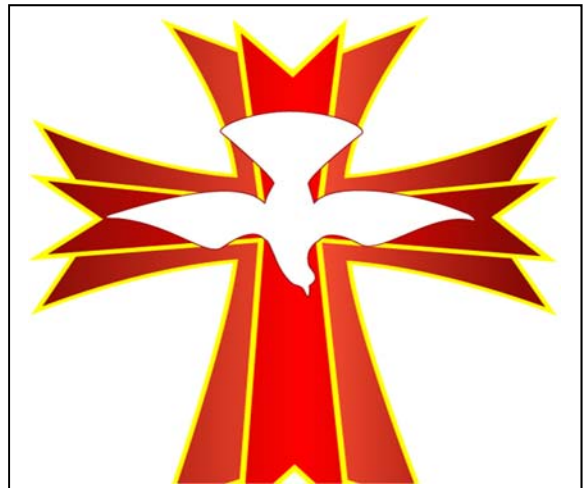


Pastor Robert Brown's Ordination Service
Sunday November 19, 2017



Thank You to everyone who made my ordination services such a wonderful event, especially Bill, Peggy, and Stacey for serving on my Ordination Commission and all who helped with an amazing reception after the service.

I am looking forward to many years serving Grace Presbyterian Church, and this was a great way to officially start!





Grace Presbyterian Women is a ministry of our church. We invite ALL women to join our special programs, circle and projects. You do not have to be a member of Grace to participate. Please invite a friend and join our fellowship.

Greetings to all!

Grace Presbyterian Women is pleased to present this 2017 update on the activities of the Grace Presbyterian Women. Through the years, the women of Grace have assisted the church in many endeavors. Recent/current projects include the accessibility fund, Church Women United, main kitchen fund, funeral dinners, Wellspring donations, graduations, and supporting the Whitewater Valley Presbyterian Women. Ongoing projects include the collecting of UPC labels and Box Tops for Education for Crossroads Children's Home, helping with bingo at Byron Health Center, cancer pad sewing, and hosting Fellowship several times. This past year we supported the Studio in Bloom and also the 46808 Neighborhood Cleanup by holding an open cancer pad sewing on Saturday morning.

Our main fundraisers were a plant sale and garage sale with proceeds going to the main kitchen fund. There was no Christmas Sale in 2017 but we are collecting for the 2018 sale. The Women's Lunch Bunch meets on the last Thursday of each month at the Glenbrook Mall Food Court near J.C. Penney's at 12 noon. All women and their friends are invited to attend. Sarah Circle still meets the second Thursday from 1:00 – 2:30 in the fellowship hall. The study group has is completing the book, *In His Eyes*. For those who wish to do so, we meet at Arby's for lunch at 12 noon before the meeting.

We can't do all the wonderful and loving things we do without your help. If you are willing to donate and/or serve at funeral dinners, please contact Tammy Menkes, 483-4856; Evelyn Brunnegraff, 424-2804; or Connie Stucky, 424-0069. For information on Church Women United, contact Pat Morrison, 812-486-8543. For information on cancer pad sewing, you can contact Evelyn Brunnegraff, 424-2804.

Where we walk, may God be present so that whether we walk together or separately, we shall be united in the love of Jesus Christ for us. Amen

2017 Letter

NAME _____ PHONE _____

ADDRESS _____

To Grace Presbyterian Women I pledge \$ _____ each month; or a gift of \$ _____.

If you would like to help financially, make checks payable to Grace Presbyterian Women. Then complete the form and mail it to Treasurer, Tammy Menkes, 1626 E. Cook Rd., Fort Wayne, IN 46825 or leave it in the church office.

Thank You

happy birthday

Dec. 01	Pat Morrison
Dec. 01	Evelyn Pelz
Dec. 01	Misty Tsamwa
Dec. 03	Katie Lochry
Dec. 11	Madge Zion
Dec. 12	Rev. Bob Leas
Dec. 17	Jean Swigart
Dec. 17	Ezekiel Tsamwa
Dec. 18	Sharon Allen
Dec. 19	Holly Bouthot
Dec. 20	Jeff Kachmar
Dec. 20	Adriannah Tsamwa
Dec. 21	Jeff Widmann
Dec. 23	Don Clark
Dec. 27	Betsy Kachmar
Dec. 28	Rick Werling
Dec. 29	Jill Werling

Jan. 02	Al Creager
Jan. 05	Ken Rogers
Jan. 06	Rev. Ann Pitman
Jan. 07	Linda Knepple
Jan. 10	Dorman Keller
Jan. 13	Carol Courtney
Jan. 16	Alice Bauman
Jan. 17	Cathy German
Jan. 20	Abel Ankney
Jan. 22	Dick Young
Jan. 23	Vivian Allen
Jan. 23	Tim Bauman
Jan. 23	Bill Zion
Jan. 26	Carrie Geist

Happy Anniversary

December 27 2014 Steve & Allison Schneider
 January 17, 1959 Don & Dee Stoiche
 January 18, 1947 Albert & Glenda Bragalone
 January 21, 1949 Gene & Vivian Allen

Sarah Circle

Meets 2nd Thursday of month
Dec 14 and January 11
 Lunch is at Noon – Arby's
 Meeting & Study 1:00 at church

Cancer Pad Sewing

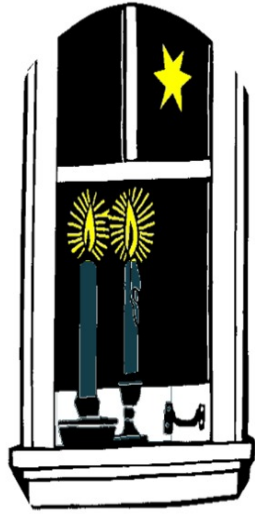
Come and help with this great Mission.
Dec 20 and January 17
 We meet the third Wednesday of every month 9:00am-12:00pm

Lunch Bunch

12 noon at Glenbrook Mall Food Court near JC Penny's. All women are invited.
Dec 28 and January 25



We are in need of Lay Leaders, Candle Lighters and Announcers.



the Longest Night

Thursday

December 21, 6:00 p.m.

United Faith Presbyterian Church

1616 W. Main Street

Even in this season of joy...

there is sometimes grief, weariness, loneliness

Yet even in the darkness...God's light does shine!

When the days are at their shortest, and darkness grows deeper,
many experience depression in contrast to the expectations of joy.

The loss of a loved one - due to death or divorce, unemployment,
ill health or a sense of isolation can all contribute to a deep pain
which is intensified when everyone around us seems to be celebrating.

The Presbyterian churches of downtown Fort Wayne invite you
to a special time of worship...

A time to lament, to acknowledge our sadness and concern.

A time to know that we are not alone,
and to affirm that God's light and presence
are with those who struggle.

A time for hope, to experience the light of Christ
that continues to shine, even in the darkest times.





Dec 2 PW Christmas and Potluck/White Elephant Exchange party 12-2:00pm

Dec 3 Hanging of the Greens
First Sunday of Advent

Dec 17 Children's Pageant during worship

Dec 21 Longest Night Service at United Faith at 6pm

Dec 24 Christmas Eve 10:30am Worship Service and 5:00pm Worship Service



CHRISTMAS JOY
SPECIAL OFFERINGS

Advent is a time of anticipation and promise, of thanksgiving and celebration. Every year, we pour out our gratitude by giving to the Christmas Joy Offering. This offering not only supports church workers and their families in need but also nurtures the promise of our future racial ethnic students. Please give generously to the Christmas Joy Offering, December 24, 2017.

The Grace Legacy Ministry Committee wants to thank everyone for the gifts given for our initial investment to the Grace Legacy Fund, and we want to recognize those people who money was given in memory and honor of:

In Memory Of

Randy Menkes

Ralph & Hattie Springer

William & Betty Werling

Adrian, Kathleen & Jack Wolfe

Berniece Guingrich

Darlean Dupre

Betty Jean Sark

In Honor Of

Robert Guingrich

Thank you again for investing in the future of Grace!

Church Attendance

Oct 1- @ First Presbyterian 18

Oct 8 – 62

Oct 15 – 63

Oct 22 – 56

Oct 29 – 60

Nov 5 – 73

Nov 12 – 43

Nov 19 – 66

Nov 26 - 65