

FEBRUARY 2024
Volume 5, Issue 1

Amazing Grace

Grace Church of Hanover, 55 Albright Drive

In 1 Corinthians (Cor.) 12 the Apostle Paul describes the church and how its members relate to each other. For the church to be complete (whole) each member must be about their function within the Body of Christ. *Ecclesia* is the Greek word used and it means “the called-out assembly”. It is used 114 times in the New Testament and 90 of those are utilized to describe the gathered body of believers in Jesus. I want to look into this verse to discuss and reflect on church membership and what it means. Membership in the local church is important. It is a public commitment to live out the Christian faith through a local gathered body. Like baptism, it is the declaration of living in a renewed way through a renewed people to continue in personal growth and pursue kingdom growth.

True, no passage specifically speaks of church membership in the Bible but there are strong inferences that help us understand that church membership is assumed by Jesus and the early church. Church membership is a willingness to commit to living your Christian faith through the life of a local gathering body. Paul tells us “There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit. There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. There are different kinds of working but the same God works all of them in all people” (1 Cor. 12:4-6, NIV). Each person is called to be a member of one body, not every body. Just as David Platt of Radical Church wrote “You are not called to be among every church just as I am not called to be the pastor of every church. When I am held to account for my leadership it will be my leadership of my local church, as so you will not be held to account by every church but by your local church” The local church is a place of belonging and accountability.

Jesus in Matthew 18, gives the direction on how accountability looks through the local church. ¹⁵ “If your brother or sister^[b] sins,^[c] go and point out their fault, just between the two of you. If they listen to you, you have won them over. **16** But if they will not listen, take one or two others along, so that ‘every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses.’^[d] **17** If they still refuse to listen, tell it to the church; and if they refuse to listen even to the church, treat them as you would a pagan or a tax collector.” (Matt. 18:15-17). That public commitment ushers us into the dedicated community that works alongside other communities of the church to usher in the Kingdom of God. Each church is one body working in this world to advance the gospel and grow in our faith.

For Wesleyans and Methodists local church membership is the vehicle to live a serious Christian life. With each relationship we have more opportunities to be sanctified entirely! Membership is accompanied by the expectation of being present in the gathered body and supporting it with your prayers, presence, gifts, service, and witness. The church is not like civic organizations where one can have an association. It is a divinely orchestrated community from which we move from strength to strength in service to Christ’s kingdom. The church needs every one of its members to complete the work of The Great Commission: “Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and the Holy Spirit, **20** and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.” We need the pastors, evangelists, teachers, prophets, healers, encouragers, extravagantly generous, servants, care givers, leaders. “Everybody in” as former Cubs manager Joe Maddon famously said.

As your pastor, I want to ask you to reflect on your membership and ask yourself “Am I living up to my vows, all of my vows? Are there vows I can live into more faithfully? In short, church we are poised to make a large impact in our community. God has been pouring out into our midst and is raising for us the leadership we need to go to the next leg of the journey. But we can’t do it without all hands-on deck. Likewise, if you are considering membership, please seek me out and let’s have a conversation. I saw a meme contrasting a cruise ship and a ship of war. We church are called into battle and we are a ship of war set out against the cosmic evil in this world. God is doing great things among us and God has great things instore for us. My hope and my prayer is that you jump in with both feet into the life of the local church here at Grace.

Blessings in Christ,



Rev. Todd Christine

Inside This Issue

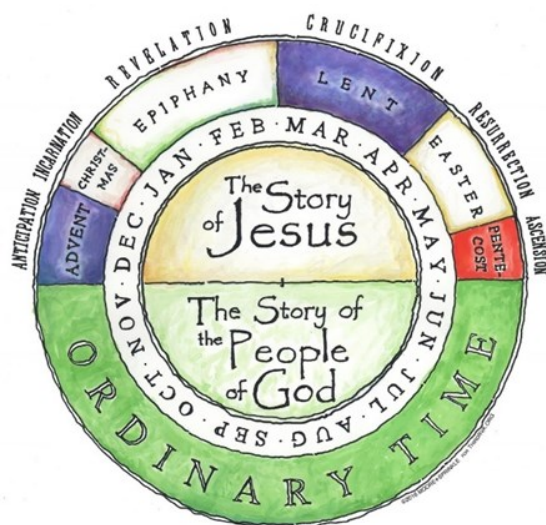
A Message from the Pastor	1
Birthday's	2
Theology Matters	2-3
Growth Opportunities	4
Missions	5-6
Events & Church Happenings	7-9
Council	9
Pre-School & Youth	10



Theology Matters

Rev. Matt Sichel

Happy New Year! We've made it into 2024 and through the Christmas rush. Did you know that the church really celebrated its new year at the beginning of Advent? The liturgical year for the church begins in Advent and runs through to Christ the King Sunday in late November. It's a different rhythm to life than perhaps you may be used to, but it is helpful to us as we continue to walk through our study of the Apostles' Creed. This graphic will guide you through the year:



As you can see, we're in the middle of Epiphany and walking our way toward Lent. Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, which is 40 days (excluding Sundays) before Easter and will be February 14, 2024. It is fitting then that we begin this work to look at Article 4 of the Apostles' Creed, which covers Jesus' (life), crucifixion, and burial.

Article 4: "I believe in . . . Jesus Christ. . . who suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried;"

Notice that I put the word "life" in parentheses. Many Christians spend much of their time studying the life of Jesus, his teachings, and his ministry, but the Apostles' Creed never mentions any of those items. Furthermore, notice how the Christian calendar moves quickly and directly from Christmastide to Lent, with the short season of Epiphany as the only time to talk about Jesus' life and teachings. Here is a curious thing! One wonders why the centerpiece confession of our Christian faith, the Apostles' Creed, would neglect any mention of what happened in our Savior's life from his birth to his passion.

- 02-01 Nicole Downey
Paytyn Christine
- 02-03 Mary Zaleskiewicz
- 02-03 Lucas Myers
Sarah Myers
- 02-07 Louise Bankert
Josephine Resh
- 02-08 Elaine Foley
- 02-10 Tom Foley
Chrissy Howard
- 02-11 Scott Kuntz
- 02-12 Randy Hnatkowicz
- 02-14 Kathryn Trump
Makenzie Yingling
- 02-15 Kim Smith
- 02-16 Alexander Martin
- 02-22 Katherine Blum
- 02-24 Martha Prichard
- 02-25 Scott Miller
- 02-26 Ryan Garrett
Amanda Myers

Theories on this omission are many, but I would point back to Paul's words in 1 Corinthians 15 (which we covered in our introduction to the Creed):

For what I received I passed on to you *as of first importance*: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, and that he appeared to Cephas, and then to the Twelve.

– 1 Cor. 15:3-5 (NIV)

Paul's words here seem to indicate that the Christian message finds greatest significance in the items that are listed in Article 4. Additionally, most of Paul's letters and the other Epistles spend much of their energy discussing Christ's atoning death on the cross and his resurrection, followed by instructions on how Christians should live because of it. One also might wonder why Christians spend so much more energy looking at Jesus' life and teaching, but neglect his passion, death, and resurrection.

I would suggest this to you. The earliest church recognized that the entire world changed not because of what Jesus *taught* (and that's not to deny the importance of his teachings), but because of what Jesus *did* on the cross of Calvary and his subsequent resurrection from the dead. Everything that was wrong in the world from humanity's Fall in Eden was somehow reversed in Christ's actions on the cross. Theologian N.T. Wright puts it this way:

Whether we believe in Jesus, whether we approve of his teaching, let alone whether we like the look of the movement that still claims to follow him, we are bound to see his crucifixion as one of the pivotal moments in human history.

In the end, our trouble with God, and the trouble with all Creation is *not* something which can be repaired by better moral living, even moral living patterned after Jesus of Nazareth's teachings (which were almost all commentary on the Old Testament anyway). Instead, the Christian message is that the curse of sin and death must somehow be undone, and it is the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus that accomplishes that. As Paul writes in Romans:

Just as through one human being sin came into the world, and death came through sin, so death has come to everyone, since everyone has sinned. . . So now the righteous requirements necessary for life are met for everyone through the righteous act of one person, just as judgment fell on everyone through the failure of one person. Many people were made righteous through the obedience of one person – Romans 5:12, 18-19 (CEB)

The rescue of the world depends squarely on Jesus' atonement on the cross of Calvary. This work of Christ on our behalf satisfies every righteous requirement that God has for the redemption of human beings from evil, sin, and death.

There are many different understandings of how exactly Jesus' death rescues us from sin. Some like to focus on his punishing death in our place. Others like to envision how Jesus' death defeats the devil. Still others like to think about how Jesus models full and complete obedience to the Father. All of these have merit and value, but one thing is most important: Contrary to what some liberal scholars want to do today, the atonement of Jesus cannot be ignored or downplayed. Scripture will not allow that. Like a fine diamond, lit and rotated against the black felt, making that gem a delight to behold, the different ways that we understand Jesus' atoning death all bring light into our sinful and darkened souls when viewed as a whole.

Jesus' death brings life to all of us who put our faith and trust in him. Jesus' death destroys the power that Satan has over each of us, but satisfying the demands of a righteous God and ransoming us from the power that evil has over us. Jesus' death shows us the full measure of love that the Father has for us. Jesus' death releases us from our own humanistic self-worship and refocuses us on the God who demands our devotion and adoration. Jesus' death accomplishes everything for our salvation that is necessary and that we could not ourselves.

As our Christmastide celebrations die away, and our Epiphany light draws us toward Lent, I encourage us to dial in on Jesus' passion. Look toward the sacrifice of Calvary and train your eyes to watch Jesus as he suffers under Pontius Pilate, is crucified, dies, and is buried. Consider the magnificence that is the murder of our Savior. Don't let it pass you by. It is the centerpiece of God's actions to redeem you and the whole world, and it makes all the difference.

Love to all in Christ,

-Rev Matt



Growth Opportunities:

New Year, New Beginnings

Some may not be aware of all the wonderful things we have to offer here at Grace. Covid may have kept you away from wanting to be more involved or maybe you are new and are looking for something but you are not sure what that something is. Below is a list of groups with the time and location. It is our prayer that if you are not currently involved in a group that you consider trying something new this year.

Group	Location	Time
Men's Fellowship	Multipurpose Room	First Saturday of the Month @8:00am
Women of Grace	Multipurpose Room	Second Saturday of the Month @8:00am
Sunshine Stitches	Resource Room	First and Third Monday @ 10:00am
Defenders of the Faith with Brian Jenkins	Resource Room	Monday's @ 6:30pm
Bible Study with Linda Mohr	Upper Room	Tuesday's @9:30am
Hand's On Prayer	Grace Church	Tuesday's @9:30am
Bible Study with Sheila Carter	Resource Room	Tuesday's @11:00am
Al-Anon	Resource Room	Wednesday's @12:00pm
Choir Practice	Sanctuary	Wednesday's @7:30pm
Praise Team Practice	Sanctuary	Thursday's @6:30pm
Missions	Various Local Locations	Varies
Children's Ministry	Rainbow Room	Sunday's
Music with Mr. Larry and Mrs. Cindy	Resource Room/Choir Room	Sunday's @ 9:40am
Children's Sunday School	Various Room's	Sunday's @ 10:00am
Upper Room	The Upper Room	Sunday's @ 10:30am
Forged @ Grace	Various Rooms	2nd & 4th Tuesday @6:00pm
Path Youth	Youth Room	2nd & 4th Tuesday @ 6:00pm
Good Grief	Varies	Varies
Blood Drive	Multipurpose Room	Quarterly on Saturday's from 8:00-1:00pm

GRACE CHURCH MISSION SUPPORT:

In addition to our many mission trips to Red Bird we also provide monetary support through the Church's Mission/Benevolence giving. Our support contributes to Red Bird's ability to spread hope and joy at Christmas as they have reported in the message below.

Also included on the next page is our 2024 spending plan for the Mission/Benevolence giving.



Christmas Giving Spreads Hope and Joy

It's been bustling at Red Bird Mission Community Outreach this month with Christmas giving. Thanks to the many donors and volunteers, scores of families and hundreds of individuals will have a more joyful Christmas this year.

Christmas really began in September at Red Bird when families and the elderly filled out applications for Christmas assistance. Since October volunteers and staff have been busy packing boxes and baskets fulfilling Christmas wishes and needs for over 450 children, youth, and the elderly. Christmas boxes and baskets were picked up or delivered during the first days of December. Over 2,700 small box gifts were delivered earlier this month by churches in central New York State. Distribution of these boxes to area churches, schools and first responders will finish up this week.

The generosity of Red Bird supporters and partner organizations are also making sure families in need will have a good Christmas dinner. One hundred (100) food boxes were delivered to Red Bird Christian School families by churches in middle Tennessee on Monday. Community Outreach will receive 144 boxes Friday from a Murfreesboro, TN church that will be given to the elderly and families needing food assistance in the coming days.



These generous acts at Christmas came about because many people gave of their time and financial resources. Your continued support of Red Bird Mission, Inc., and Red Bird Clinic, Inc., is vital to moving us towards our vision - Building healthy, sustainable communities in the mountains of southeastern Kentucky.

On behalf of our staff and all those served and serving during this holiday season, we wish you hope and joy during the Christmas season and throughout the coming year!

2024	GRACE CHURCH Benevolence Spending Plan	Mission/
National & International		
	Red Bird Mission	\$1,000.00
	Red Bird -School	\$1,000.00
	Mission Central	\$1,000.00
	Haiti Mission School	\$4,000.00
	Little Dresses for Africa	\$500.00
	World Renewal Face to Face Ministry **	\$4,000.00
	GMC Disaster Relief	\$500.00
	Total International	\$12,000.00
Local		
	HACC:	
	Fair Share	\$3,000.00
	PAL	\$3,000.00
	Changing Lives Homeless Shelter	\$1,500.00
	Ruth's Harvest	\$600.00
	Tender Care Pregnancy Center	\$300.00
	Pastor's Discretionary Fund	\$500.00
	Fruitbelt Farmworker Christian Ministry	\$500.00
	Spousal Abuse Prevention	\$500.00
	Adams Christian Prison Ministry	\$500.00
	Church Sponsored Mission Trip	\$1,500.00
	Mission Committee General Expense	\$200.00
	Grace Garden	\$500.00
	Mission Discretionary Fund	\$2,000.00
	UM Home for Children	\$2,000.00
	York City Summer Day Camp	\$1,500.00
	New Hope Ministries	\$1,500.00
	Olivia's House	\$500.00
	TruNorth, Hanover	\$1,000.00
	Total Local	\$21,100.00
	Total Missions/Benevolences	\$33,100.00

WELCOME
WELCOME
WELCOME

**WE WOULD LIKE TO WELCOME OUR NEW MEMBERS
TO GRACE CHURCH:**

Seth Sauble
Wendi Myers
Dale Myers
Janele Foster
Alan Foster

Grace Church
**Grocery Card
Fundraiser**

Available at the Hospitality
Desk



Are you looking for a gift idea for a loved one?
Consider purchasing a Giant Grocery gift card.
We have several different increments for
purchase. Proceeds will benefit our campus
improvement fund.

BLOOD DRIVE
TEAM MEMBERS NEEDED

Greet

Visit donors/manage
canteen

Assist in Clean-up

Manage Drive From
Open to Close

Assist in Set-up



Belinda Maxwell
717-965-9657

Saturday, February 24th
8:00am - 1:00pm

GRACE CHURCH



BOOK &

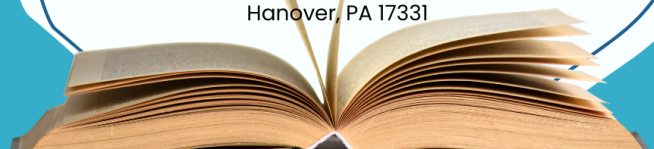
PUZZLE SWAP

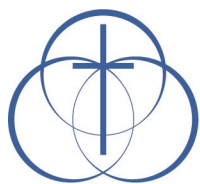
9 March 2024 10-11:30am

55 Albright Drive
Hanover, PA 17331

Bring up to 5
fiction books,
adult, young
adult or
children's that
you do not
want back
and/or 3
jigsaw puzzles

If you bring one
book you take
one book. You
must leave with
the same
number you
brought.
Same idea with
the puzzles, but
we ask that you
don't bring more
than 3.





GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH

Dear Grace Church of Hanover:

Thank you for your generous contribution of \$500.00 to the Global Methodist Church's Disaster Relief Fund, received on December 27, 2023. Your gift makes possible an immediate response of compassion and love to those most impacted. One hundred percent of your donation, after the credit card processor deducts their fee, is being used to provide concrete relief to churches and persons who have suffered significant losses.

Funds contributed have already been disbursed to our ministry partners in the impacted areas providing critical resources for emergency needs such as the purchase of generators and gasoline to enable provision of hot meals to community members and first responders, food and water, and supplies for initial clean up and protection of damaged homes and businesses.

Each new day brings news of additional needs in areas impacted. Responding quickly to needs in areas impacted by disasters in an important way that each of us and the Global Methodist Church can love generously as we grow as disciples of Jesus Christ.

May God bless you for your generosity.

In Christ,

Keith D. Boyette

Transitional Connectional
Officer



Women of Grace Prayer Breakfast
the ROCK the ROAD, and the
RABBI

2nd Saturday, Monthly
8:00am Grace Church
Hanover
55 Albright Drive
Hanover, PA

Contact Sheila Carter
scarter@mygracechurch.org
717-637-3100

CONNECTING WITH COUNCIL

Chair: Kim Smith

Members: Denny Blum, Pastor Todd Christine, Karen Coons, Ed Davis, Amanda Myers, Amber Myers, Brian Jenkins, Jim Winbourne, Anna Mae Terry, Dave Dutton, Seth Sauble, Pastor Matt Sichel

December 2023 Highlights

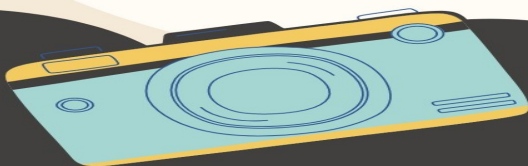
- ⇒ As of the end of November the church is 16.7% ahead of last year's giving.
- ⇒ The 2024 Missions & Benevolence Spending Plan was approved at \$33,100. The 2024 General Spending plan was approved at \$376,918.00. Both 2024 Spending Plans are available at the church office.
- ⇒ The Post Graduate Education Fund and recent distribution was approved by Council.
- ⇒ The SPRC has reviewed all staff members and Pastor Todd was offered and has accepted a one year agreement with Grace Church.
- ⇒ Council has accepted our Office Manager's resignation and the SPRC has changed the job description hours to M-F 9:00am - 1:00pm.
- ⇒ Linda Mixer will be the Liaison for the church and its meetings with Horizon.
- ⇒ There are three new Council members starting in Jan. 2024: Seth Sauble, Dave Dutton, Kim Smith.
- ⇒ Council has approved a full page advertisement in the Hanover Symphony Orchestra Concert Bulletin @ \$180.00.

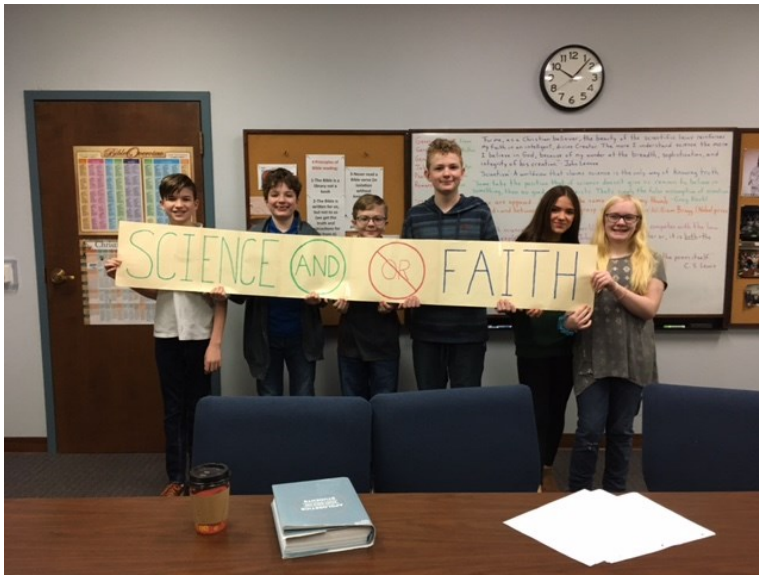
TAKE TIME TO

capture what's important

NEW CHURCH PICTORIAL DIRECTORIES COMING SOON!

Be on the lookout for more information





The JP class recently started its second quarter session in the Advocates apologetics study with the lesson on the subject of science and how science actually leads us to God. "Christianity and science are opposed... but only in the sense as my thumb and forefinger are opposed-and between them I can grasp everything." – Sir William Bragg (Nobel Prize for Physics 1915)



Registration For 2024-2025 School Year Open Now!

What better to introduce the school environment to your child than in this fun, faith-based Preschool?

Our curriculum is designed to help your child develop the skills and confidence necessary in making a smooth transition into kindergarten.

Your child will enjoy learning letter and numbers, social skills, fine/gross motor skills through centers, calendar/weather, games, movement activities, bible lesson, and songs.

We offer a 3's class as well as a Pre-K (4's class).

Preschool runs from 9:00—11:30 daily.

Space is limited so call for a tour and reserve your spot today!

Registration forms and more information can be found on the website:

Gumpreschool.weebly.com

Path Youth

Path Youth will begin collecting donations for Operation Christmas Child in February. Each month will be a different collection for a final packing party in late October or early November. Our goal is to pack and ship 100 boxes.

February's collection is Fashion Items and Hats, Gloves & Scarves.



Hats, Gloves, & Scarves



Fashion Accessories

We would like to thank everyone who helped with the bag of Christmas Gifts we received. It was greatly appreciated and a pleasant surprise. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to everyone.

~Peg & Steve Garrett

Thank You