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Amazing Grace

**Grace Church of Hanover, 55 Albright Drive Hanover, PA
17331 (717)637-3100, Reverend Todd Christine**

A Flamed Spirit

Methodist is a term with a rich heritage. In the not too distant past when one described one's self as a Methodist a very clear picture came to mind. Methodism has been a people of serious faith for over 250 years. It is my hope as your pastor that you have heard the names of John and Charles Wesley, and George Whitefield often in worship and during other gatherings, but I am embarrassed to say that there is one name that does not get the notoriety though in every way he is responsible for shaping the American landscape with his dedication and work John Wesley certified a young man to be one of his Methodist Preachers by the name of Francis Asbury (Frank). Asbury was the son of a farm hand and himself worked to be a blacksmith. Asbury was known for his youthful vigor and his love for people. It is important to know that Asbury had no higher education. He told ordinary people in an ordinary language about the extraordinary work of Jesus Christ and what that meant for their lives. Asbury, to "spread scriptural holiness over the land." for methodism.

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John Wesley certified a young man to be one of his Methodist Preachers by the name of Francis Asbury (Frank). Asbury was the son of a farm hand and himself worked to be a blacksmith. Asbury was known for his youthful vigor and his love for people. It is important to know that Asbury had no higher education. He told ordinary people in an ordinary language about the extraordinary work of Jesus Christ and what that meant for their lives. Asbury, in 1771 was sent by John Wesley to America to preach to a growing population. In 1776, the American Revolution began and most clergymen returned home to England to weather the conflict. Asbury, however refused. In fact, when Wesley sent word for him to return, Asbury resolutely penned he would not leave "I can by no means agree to leave such a field for gathering souls to Christ as we have in America," Wesley later changed his mind and encouraged Asbury to stay to do the faithful work in America. Then, in 1784 Asbury was appointed by Wesley to be ordained a Superintendent of the Methodist Church but in a humorous twist Asbury had caught the love for democracy and insisted he be elected bishop at a gathering

of his peers. At the Christmas Conference in Baltimore, MD in 1784 Asbury was elected the first Methodist Bishop to America.

Over the course of 45 years Asbury would ride 145,000 miles, crossing the Appalachian Mountains 60 times, preaching sermons along his circuit, he ordained 700 preachers including the first African American Methodist Richard Allen. He was a gift to organizing the church and it thrived. Under the leadership of Asbury, the Methodist Episcopal Church grew from 1,200 to 214,000 members. At the rate of conversion should it had stayed the same Methodists would have outpaced the number of people in a growing America- there would have been more Methodists than people. This statement was recorded about Asbury "**Under the rush of his [Asbury's] utterance, people sprang to their feet as if summoned to the judgment bar of God.**"

There is a statue at the intersection of Mt. Pleasant and 16th St. in Washington D.C. that still stands to this day. It was dedicated in 1924 by the 30th president of the United States Calvin Coolidge. It is a statue of Asbury atop of his horse as a Methodist Circuit Rider. Coolidge at this presentation stated this about Asbury "He is entitled to rank as one of the builders of our nation" The faith we have as Methodists is a rich and vibrant practice which has marked the course of history in America and around the world. Asbury was dubbed "A Flamed Spirit" and without the conviction and commitment of historical leaders like Asbury there is no telling how the country would be different and also the world.

It is great time to be a Methodist despite the controversy that has encapsulated the name over these last years. Methodists will endure, and orthodox methodism is the flame that will reignite a great awakening, like it has done so in the past. Christians [when living into faith in passionate and life-giving activity are, to quote J.R.R. Tolkien "are the falling of small stones that start an avalanche"]

Asbury understood the dynamic faith and practice of Methodism. He said: *"We live by faith in a prayer-hearing, soul-converting, soul-saving, soul-restoring, soul-comforting God. God is gracious beyond the power to describe. My desire is to live more to God today than yesterday, and to be more holy this day than the last"* Christians and holy living shake the gates of hell.

1 Peter 1:13-16: ¹³Therefore, with minds that are alert and fully sober, set your hope on the grace to be brought to you when Jesus Christ is revealed at his coming. ¹⁴As obedient children, do not conform to the evil desires you had when you lived in ignorance. ¹⁵But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do; ¹⁶for it is written: "Be holy, because I am holy." A Wesleyan Methodist is a person who takes faith seriously and seeks to lead a life that invites everyone we come into contact with to a rich faith in Christ Jesus our Lord and Savior. Earlier this year it was no coincidence that revival broke out at Asbury University in KY. When people gather and are serious about God and open themselves up to an experience of the divine, God shows up in a powerful way. The fire of faith and revival doesn't come with high intellectual preaching, dramatic productions in worship, or really anything that a corporate church can offer but purely and simply it comes when serious people get serious about their faith and seek God in invasive ways. Asbury is described as not being a great theologian or articulate preacher but like the disciples with Jesus he had a passion for his faith and was real in every way.

Several of our community at Grace has asked me "what will be different moving forward as Global Methodists and not United Methodist?" My answer is simple. Global Methodism is not 2.0 update but a chance for a new birth and a flamed spirit that connects to our rich heritage that allowed Methodism to be the epicenter of The Great Awakening. As your pastor I will encourage you to step into new shoes of faith formation. We want to be intentional about living our faith and establishing our witness. Fire is ignited but the ability to burn comes from prayer, study, community, and worship. Everyone of us should be engaged in daily devotion and prayer, be engaged in small groups, and be present in worship together. We like the Methodists before want to provide the best context for the Holy Spirit to invade our hearts and minds and use our hands and feet. We are going to evangelize and share the Gospel that we have experienced in our own lives so that others may know what God has done. We are going to plant seeds and reshape our community here in Hanover and beyond. We are going to speak the name of Jesus to have all authority over our lives, ministry and mission, we will pray for the Holy Spirit to come fill our hearts and fill this place. We are going to work to be a people of becoming, a people on a journey of growth, a people moving to build the Kingdom of God in our hearts and the community. By seeking to lead holy lives each day in the simple and ordinary. A powerful Gospel is not only preached but lived. I am very excited for the future that awaits us as we enter into a new era of Methodism. We stand on the shoulders of giants and the Flamed Spirit of Francis Asbury.



Rev. Todd A. Christine

Pastor of Grace Church of Hanover



Your Mission Dollars at Work

Thank you for blessings us with your donation of \$7400 which will be applied to the PAL (Provide A Lunch) Ministry here at Hanover Area Council of Churches.

We are able to serve the Hanover community with various ministries here such as Provide—A-Lunch, Meals-on-Wheels, Changing Lives Homeless Shelter, the clothing bank, and Ruth's Harvest to name a few. It is so wonderful knowing that together and with God's blessings many lives have been turned around and changed for the better. Our work will never end and thanks to you we will make sure that we continue to be there ready and able to help our Hanover community.

Once again, please accept our many thanks.

Mirna Wildasin
Executive Director
Hanover Area Council of Churches

July

07-02 Pam Berwager
07-03 Robert Forrest
07-08 Lester Bankert
Stanley Fidler
Sara Miller
07-10 Ben Hollinger
Nash Miller
07-13 Lisa Yingling
07-14 Mary Crumling
Jeannie Dyke
07-16 Shirley Cruys
Kyle Little
07-17 Lovelle Lovell
Bill Mixter
07-19 Mary Catlin
Thomas Newcome
07-22 Terry Hollinger
Kelly Parker
07-24 Jean Fidler
07-26 Kristy Loper
07-28 Samantha Bankert
Virginia Kirk
07-29 Barry Pecher
Autumn Christine
07-30 Troy Misner

August

08-01 Dana Capece
08-02 Caralee O'Brien
08-03 Ashley Parker
Dixie Schaefer
Jim Ward
08-05 Jason Reck
08-06 Brad Butt
08-08 Maureen Downey
08-09 Riley Abel
Alex Pecher
08-12 Rex Daniel
June Kline
Erik Zaleskiewicz
08-14 Jessica Abel
08-15 Mary Dehoff
Warren Kellenbenz
Pamela Reed
08-18 Chad Cruys
Eric Leonard
08-17 Todd Christine
08-19 Crystal Miller
08-20 Janice Garrett
08-21 Vallie Hinkle
08-23 Christine Forrest
Beverly Hoffman
Tom Howard
08-24 Brian Jenkins
08-25 Vance Adkins
Lance Reed
08-27 Kim Miller
Tristan Christine
08-29 Ron Duff



Daniel Plan Faith & Food

Attention Daniel Plan bible study members - We will be having a follow-up meeting on Wednesday, July 26th at 6:30 pm to check in and see how everyone is doing. Accountability is important and we would like to help you maintain and reach your faith, fitness and food goals. Bring your walking shoes and we hope to see you there!

#40 Days to a Healthier Life

The Women of Grace Retreat

LIZ CURTIS HIGGS
Best-selling author of *The Girl's Still Got It*

The Women of Christmas

Experience the Season Anew with
ELIZABETH, MARY,
and ANNA

*September 8-10
Mount Asbury*

**GRACE
PICNIC**

Food, Fun, Fellowship

September 2 • 3 pm • Grace Church

RSVP AT THE EVENTS BOARD BY: AUGUST 27



CONNECTING WITH COUNCIL

Chair: Linda Mixter

Members: Denny Blum, Pastor Todd Christine, Karen Coons, Ed Davis, Amanda Myers, Amber Myers, Brian Jenkins, Anna Mae Terry, Jim Winbourne

- May Financial Reports reported we are 7-8% ahead of last year.
- New Hymnals have been purchased and are on backorder.
- Credit cards have been issued to appropriate staff.
- The Youth checking account has been closed and funds moved to M&T Bank.
- Council approved the purchase of a mini fridge for under the coffee station in the lobby.
- The 2023 Missions/Benevolence Budget for July - Dec of \$18,201 was approved.
- The 2023 General Budget for July - Dec. of \$170,370.00 was approved.
- Council voted to increase our commercial umbrella insurance from \$1,000,000 to \$3,000,000.
- Council approved the motion: If income less expenses is positive at the end of the year, this will be used to pay back the savings used for disaffiliation.
- Alissa S. Lalbeharry's application for a scholarship from Grace Church was approved.
- Ron Carter and Duane Myers have fulfilled their duties as lay member representatives for Grace Church, as their positions have been dissolved due to our disaffiliation. Therefore, this was their last Council meeting. This Council thanked them for their many years of representing Grace Church at Conference.

Meet Matt

The Rev. Matthew Sichel, his wife, Jessica, and his two children, Rose and Isaac, hail from Manchester, Maryland (it's not too far across the Maryland line). They come to Grace Church from Wesley United Methodist Church in Hampstead, Maryland, where they were previously long-time members and Rev. Matt was appointed. The Sichel family, after finding that Wesley was choosing to remain a UMC, began looking for a new church home. Grace Church has been helping them in the effort to establish roots in new ground. For that, they thank God and the congregation.



Rev. Matt long knew that he had a calling in ministry to teach; however, it was not until 2014 when the pastor at Wesley looked at him and said, “Matt, what are you *doing?*”, that he began to fulfill that calling actively. Rev. Matt, a Civil Engineer by day, attended Evangelical Theological Seminary in Myerstown, Pennsylvania, receiving his master’s degree in religion with a concentration in theology and church history. He was then commissioned in the UMC’s Baltimore-Washington Conference as a Deacon. He also began his doctoral program at London School of Theology (England) via Asbury Theological Seminary (Kentucky), which is currently underway and expected to be completed around 2027. The topic of his dissertation is “how God uses food in a sacramental way to build relationship with people.”

Rose and Isaac were literally raised in the Wesley church building, as Jess was the Church Secretary there for many years. Jess currently works as a Grant Coordinator with Carroll Community College in Westminster, Maryland, helping early childhood educators obtain their degrees debt-free. In the fall, Rose will be a 16-year-old 11th grader and Isaac will be 12-year-old 7th grader. Both children have already found a bit of a niche in the Path Youth group here at Grace. Rose and Isaac enjoy music and art, have imaginative spirits, and love Jesus. Rose has experience in audio-visual ministry, and Isaac has his professional acolyte’s license. Rev. Matt and Jess are also working on getting “plugged in,” relying on the Holy Spirit to help them find ways to serve Christ at Grace. Rev. Matt’s passion is prayer and teaching, and Jess enjoys getting into Scripture and learning new things about the triune God we serve. Rev. Matt’s clergy credentials will transfer to the Global Methodist Church on July 1st, when he will begin to serve as an ordained Deacon appointed to school and Grace Church. As a Deacon, he will assist Pastor Todd in the sacraments, teach, and look for ways to connect the world to the church and the church to the world. The congregation at Grace has been very welcoming to the whole family, introducing them to others in the church and involving them in dodgeball, volleyball, and dessert choices at the strawberry social, for which they are very appreciative.



VBS is scheduled for July 17 to July 21 from 6-8pm each night.

How can you help:

- Pray for VBS. Pray for the kids, volunteers, and families.
- Volunteer-we still have some needs for volunteers, please see Autumn to get more information.
- Register your kids. Please see the VBS posters as well as flyers. There is a QR Code on them that will take you to a registration page.

Invite your friends and neighbors. You do not have to attend Grace Church to come and take part in VBS. This is an outreach opportunity.

- Decorate: Friday July 14th and possibly Saturday July 15th at 10am, come and help us transform the church into an intergalactic space station. Many hands make light work.



Blessing of the Backpack: On Sunday August 20th at both the 9am and 11am Services we will be Blessing the backpacks of the kids, of all ages, heading back to school. We will also be acknowledging all who work in the school systems, at every level, and praying for a safe year for all.



Coming Soon:

End of Summer Grace Youth Ministries Color Run

Sunday School kick off-Sunday September 10th – Look for the new Sunday Morning Schedule!!

Tuesday Night Family Nights at Grace Church!!!

A lot is in the works for our Grace Kids and youth ministries. Please be watching for information and ways you can help.