



# Amazing

# Grace

## Newsletter



**JULY 2025**

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**To the faithful of Grace Church: A Global Methodist Community, My co-laborers in the work of advancing the Gospel of Jesus Christ for the life of the world— from whom is the source of all our hope, promise, joy, and security— The grace and peace of the Lord our God be with you.**

### **“Not All Small Groups Are Created Equal.”**

**—Kevin Watson**

In this series on *Evangelism*, you may ask:

**“Pastor Todd, what does small group ministry have to do with evangelism?”**

At first glance, small groups might seem like a side topic—a discipleship strategy or maybe just another church program. But in reality, *small group ministry is the beating heart of evangelism*. Why? Because evangelism, at its core, is not merely about conversion—it's about **making disciples** (Matthew 28:19).

Jesus didn't simply call people to believe; He called them to follow. Conversion is only the beginning. The church's mission is not complete until believers are formed in the image of Christ (Romans 8:29)—*until holiness becomes the trajectory of their lives*. That formation happens best not in isolation, but **in committed community**.

As Wesleyan Methodists, we believe evangelism must always be connected to discipleship. John Wesley insisted that a profession of faith without growth in grace was insufficient. As he once said:

**“The gospel of Christ knows of no religion but social; no holiness but social holiness.”**  
**—John Wesley, Preface to Hymns and Sacred Poems (1739)**

We are not about merely getting decisions—we are about forming disciples, nurturing them in the faith, and guiding them toward **Christian Perfection**: a life fully devoted to God, marked by love and holiness.

Small groups were not incidental in early Methodism; they were *foundational*. They were the method of Methodism.

Francis Asbury, one of the most influential early American Methodist bishops, put it well:

“We have no doubt, but meetings of Christian brethren for the exposition of scripture-texts may be attended with their advantages. But the most profitable exercise is a free inquiry into the state of the heart.”

This captures the unique purpose of Wesleyan small groups—not just learning **about** the Christian life, but actively **living** it together. Small groups in Methodism were *formative*, not just informative.

As Dr. Kevin Watson, Wesleyan historian and author of *The Class Meeting*, puts it:

“Not all small groups are created equal. The genius of Wesleyan small groups is their focus on transformation over information.”

That is, early Methodists didn't gather to passively consume content. They gathered to grow in grace, to confess sin, to rejoice in God's work in their lives, and to exhort one another in love.

Class meetings were the backbone of Methodist discipline. These groups of 8–15 men and women met weekly to ask one another:

**“How is it with your soul?”**

This was not a casual question. It was an invitation to transparency and accountability. Members confessed struggles, shared victories, and bore witness to the grace of God working in their daily lives. They helped one another “work out your own salvation with fear and trembling” (Philippians 2:12).

These groups were **intergenerational**, **mixed gender**, and focused on helping each other live in line with the *General Rules* of Methodism:

1. Do no harm.
2. Do good.

Attend upon all the ordinances of God (what Wesley called “means of grace”: prayer, Scripture, the Lord's Supper, fasting, Christian conferencing, etc.).

Even more intimate were the **band meetings**—groups of 4–7 people, separated by gender and often by marital status, focused specifically on confession and accountability.

These meetings dealt with the *intimate struggles of sin*. They were a safe space to ask:

- What known sins have you committed since our last meeting?
- What temptations have you met with?

Is there any area in which you are struggling and need prayer?

Far from being judgmental, these meetings were built on **trust**, **confidentiality**, and **holy love**.

The biblical foundation for this practice is clear:

*“Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed.”* (James 5:16)

In these groups, healing became real. Transformation was not just a theory—it was experienced.

The *Great Revival of Methodism*—which swept through Britain and America in the 18th and 19th centuries—was not fueled merely by preaching in fields or even powerful hymns. It was sustained and spread by **small groups of Christians committed to pursuing holiness together.**

“Methodism was not a product of theological innovation, but of practical genius in organizing spiritual community.”

—Dr. Ryan Danker, Wesleyan scholar

Revival didn't begin and end at the altar rail. It began at the moment of commitment—and was nurtured week after week in class and band meetings.

### **Additional Scriptural Support**

- **Acts 2:42–47** – The early church met in homes, shared meals, studied the apostles' teaching, and prayed together. Small groups are in our spiritual DNA.
- **Proverbs 27:17** – “As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another.”
- **Hebrews 10:24–25** – “Let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together...”

**Ecclesiastes 4:9–10** – “Two are better than one... If either of them falls down, one can help the other up.”

To conclude: **Evangelism is not complete until discipleship begins.** That's the Wesleyan way.

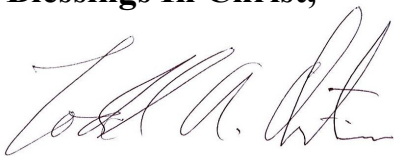
We do not just call people to believe—we invite them to *belong* and to *become*. Small groups are how the church moves from the event of conversion to the process of sanctification.

“We believe that God's grace is greater than our sins and that with participation in the Means of Grace and the disciplines of our faith we can be made more holy today than yesterday.”

That is why small groups are not optional—they are essential. They are where the seeds of faith grow into the fruit of holiness. They are the greenhouse of Christian perfection. Wake up each morning and set your heart toward God. Allow Him to guide your steps. Surround yourself with those who will pray with you, challenge you, and walk with you in holiness. That is what small groups are for. That is what Methodism has always known.

**Evangelism is about discipleship. And small groups are the next step.**

**Blessings In Christ,**



Rev. Todd Christine

Grace Church of Hanover | Senior Pastor





# Birthday Month

## July

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1 Pam Berwager	2	3 Bob Forrest	4 Meagan Baker	5
6 Cathy Mitzel	7	8 Lester Bankert Stan Fidler Sara Miller	9	10 Benjamin Hollinger Nash Miller	11	12
13 George Luckenbaugh Lisa Yingling	14 Mary Crumling Jean Dyke	15	16 Shirley Cruys Kyle Little	17 Lovellev Lovell Bill Mixer	18	19 Mary Catlin Ella Heap Tom Newcome
20 Miriam Lopez	21	22 Alexis Dover Terry Hollinger Kelly Parker	23	24 Jean Fidler Logan Kibler	25	26 Kristy Loper
27 Dylan Urenko	28 Samantha Bankert Karen Dietrich Jason Resh	29 Autumn Christine Barry Pecher	30 Troy Misner	31 Colton Cromer		



Greetings to my Grace Church family as we enter summer and Ordinary Time. The Sundays after Pentecost will take us through the end of the church year all the way to Christ The King Sunday, which this year is on November 23. Ordinary Time is the longest season of the year, and it is the only one without a specific focus for our teaching.

Pastor Todd has begun a sermon series called “Road Construction,” as we go through the book of Exodus together to learn how the story of Israel is our own story. I hope that you all get an opportunity to let Exodus sink deeply into your minds. It is my favorite book in the entire Bible, because it shows us God’s character, love, compassion, power, and ultimately, salvation.

After this series is over, in the Fall, we’ll do a short series on the subject of Good, Evil, Angels and Demons. In preparation for that, this month’s Theology Matters will begin with the question of, what exactly do we believe about evil?

### **What do we believe about evil?**

It is impossible to look at the world and not realize that, in the words of contemporary Christian music singer, Chris Rice, in his song, *Amusing*, “Something right went very wrong.” The world which God created as “good,” and humans, which God called, “very good,” are somehow no longer that way. Evil does exist in the world.

Where did it come from? One thing we do know is that God did not put it there. God is good (Psalm 100:5), and there is no evil or wrong in him at all (1 John 1:5). James writes, “When tempted, no one should say, ‘God is tempting me.’ For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone” (James 1:13). So evil is not from God.

Also, evil does not exist in some equally opposite power to that of the good in God. We do not believe in the idea of “yin and yang” or this idea that there are two equally strong forces of good and evil at war with each other in the universe.

This is called “dualism,” and it is not a Christian idea. God created all that is, and he is superior to all that is, so there is no other equal but opposite power to him.

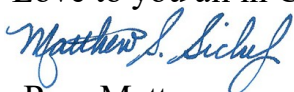
So, if everything was made good, and God made everything, where did we get evil? Think about it this way. Imagine you’ve gone out to buy your favorite food, whatever that is. Then, imagine you bring it home, but you can only finish half of it in one sitting, so you put it in the fridge. But then life happens. You forget that your food, which was your most favorite of all time, is in the fridge, and three weeks goes by. Eventually you find it tucked in the back behind the gallon of milk. You have a moment of wonderful recollection of its goodness, but quickly realize what happened. You open the lid and you see that “something good has gone very bad.” Bacteria, which in some cases is extremely good, has gotten into your food, and it has now wrecked it. It got in there, because you forgot about your good food. This is how evil has infected the good universe, but where did it come from?

Theologian Orton Wiley says that “The Bible connects the origin of sin with the abuse of freedom in free and intelligent creatures.” In this case, the abuse of freedom began with free and intelligent creatures in the realm of angels. John Wesley writes, “‘How came evil into the world.’ It came from ‘Lucifer, son of the morning.’ It was the work of the devil. ‘For the devil,’ says the Apostle, ‘sinned from the beginning;’ that is, was the first sinner in the universe, the author of sin, the first being who, by the abuse of his liberty, introduced evil into the creation.”

It was the angel Lucifer who became Satan, “The Tempter,” who introduced evil into the whole of creation. We also know that he is not God, and he does not have the last word. Paul closes his letter to the Romans like this, “I want you to be wise about what is good, and innocent about what is evil. The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet. The grace of our Lord Jesus be with you” (Romans 16:19b-20).

Be wise about what is good and innocent of evil. This is our calling as God’s representatives of good in the world that desperately needs to hear the good news of Jesus Christ. Go into the world and bring God’s good to every evil thing you encounter. “Despite all these things, overwhelming victory is ours through Christ, who loved us” (Romans 8:37).

Love to you all in Christ,



-Rev. Matt





# Encountering GOD



GLOBAL  
METHODIST CHURCH  
Northeast

## Summer Camp

Experience the awe of God and the movement of the Holy Spirit as we go deep in our faith journey at this year's summer camp for the Northeast Global Methodist Church. Your child or youth will encounter the Holy Spirit, go deeper in their discipleship walk with Jesus Christ, and be equipped to defend the Christian faith. This will all be combined with faith building activities, powerful daily worship, and practical hands-on-lessons that will transform your child's relationship with Jesus Christ. This five day camp will directly impact your child/youth, your family, your church, and your community. Be part of this new journey and come expecting the movement of the Holy Spirit. (Financial Aid is available)

- July 7-11th at Penn Grove Retreat Center,  
6419 Pamadeva Rd, Hanover, PA 17331
- Campers in 3rd-12th grades
- Cost per camper \$250

Scan  
Application Form







The first week of June, Miss Jan's Sunday School class and some Grace teens delivered sandwiches. These young people from Grace visited Clover Lane, Wirt Park and George St. fire responders, along with Penn Twp. Police.

We made sure to share lots of God's love, grace and mercy with all these first responders. We also had plenty of sandwiches to reach out to the Changing Lives Shelter at the Hanover Council of Churches.

Thanks to all who prayed, donated and helped these young people be 'on the move for God' in our community! Don't be surprised if God's hands and feet get moving again later this summer!!







**The Emory Ringers from Emory United Methodist Church gave a Pentecost blessing to Grace Church.**

**These pictures show the Ringers while playing various songs at our early worship service.**

**Praise God for the wonderful music!**



# Grace Preschool

*Providing a quality Christian education*

**REGISTRATION FOR  
GRACE PRESCHOOL  
IS NOW OPEN FOR  
THE 2025-2026  
SCHOOL YEAR.**

**REGISTER NOW**



**PreK Class has  
openings for  
the remainder  
of this year!**



**Jennifer Freeman  
717-632-3140**

**[GracePreschool@mygracechurch.org](mailto:GracePreschool@mygracechurch.org)**



**3-4 YEARS  
Mon - Fri  
9 - 11:30 am**

55 Albright Dr. Hanover PA







# Online

## LAITY EQUIPPING (L.E.T.) TEAM

# COURSES

Basic Bible Training

**TUESDAYS FROM 6-9 PM**



SEPTEMBER 16<sup>TH</sup>, 23<sup>RD</sup>, 30<sup>TH</sup>

OCTOBER 7<sup>TH</sup>, 14<sup>TH</sup>, 21<sup>TH</sup>

**REGISTRATION OPENS AUG. 4TH,  
CLOSES SEPT. 1ST**



Contact person: [brendarroof@gmail.com](mailto:brendarroof@gmail.com)

Global Methodist History, Polity,  
Theology

**MONDAYS FROM 6-9 PM**



SEPTEMBER 15<sup>TH</sup>, 22<sup>ND</sup>, 30<sup>TH</sup>

OCTOBER 6<sup>TH</sup>, 13<sup>TH</sup>, 20<sup>TH</sup>

**REGISTRATION OPENS AUG. 4TH,  
CLOSES SEPT. 2ND**



Contact person: [arlenedschmidt@gmail.com](mailto:arlenedschmidt@gmail.com)

6 Sessions  
per Course

**\$ Fee \$20**

Open QR Code  
for more  
information

