

OCTOBER 2023  
Volume 4, Issue 9

# Amazing Grace

Grace Church of Hanover, 55 Albright Drive

Greetings in the name of the one who brings peace, restoration, and mercy to our lives—Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Shalom to each of you.

Today I am writing to you about the importance of focus. In scouting, the scout must work with tools and wood to build a project. This is an essential step for them to earn their awards and ranks in scouting. It seems to never fail that the hardest part each year is teaching how to hammer a nail. It takes me back to the days when I was just entering into carpentry. As a young person, I worked beside a contractor who taught me the best lessons in my life. I was not very good at hammering nails. If the truth be told, I remember bending more than half a 2lbs box with intermittent successes. Don, stood beside me and then asked me a very important question “What are you looking at?” I responded the nail and my hand. He laughed and told me a heavy life story in a simple way. You can look at all the things around you but if you are not focused solely on the nail head you have a good chance at being successful in what you are aiming for. Thoughts for life? Absolutely. What about our Christian lives? Definitely a yes! What about a worship experience?

Proverbs 4:25 says “Let your eyes look directly forward, and your gaze be straight before you”, Colossians 3:2 “set your mind on the things that are above and not on earthly things”. As a pastor, it is important for me to ask focusing questions before each Sunday’s message: Am I letting anything distract me for why I am here? Am I focused on the things that do not matter? Am I open to the movement of the Holy Spirit while in this space? Am I listening for God?

There was a story of a person that came to the pastor with complaints about worship. There were distracting things taking place. The pastor asked the man to do a simple task, to fill a cup of water to the brim and walk around the space with it but not spill anything. The man executed the task with efficiency. The pastor asked him about what he saw as he was walking? Did you see the ladder the janitor was using? “No, the man answered” How about the conversation the ladies were having about the next Women’s meeting? “No” again. Did he hear the phone of the pastor ring? “No, I was too focused on not spilling the cup” Now the lesson is simple. So, I will ask the question, what are you allowing to distract you in worship? What are we focused on? Maybe it is problems at home, maybe a fight with your spouse or family member before you entered? Maybe you are concerned about your job? Email? Vacation plans? Lunch plans? The weather?

Focusing on God and the worship of Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit’s presence is essential. We have only a brief time to be completely centered, away from the outside world. Worship on a Sunday morning is the best place to come and find that center. Be aware of the things inside or outside of worship that do not matter with the purpose we are here to achieve. After that lesson from Don, I can confidently share that rarely did I bend a nail again. Each time I did, I asked myself the question “What are you focused on?” Let us focus on Christ in worship, be open to the Spirit, glorify God so that we can be filled each week.

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Rev. Todd A. Christine





# Upcoming Events

- 10-1 Chantel Bankert  
Kristen Nickey
- 10-3 Stephen Kaltreider
- 10-5 Joseph Freet
- 10-8 Robert Miller
- 10-10 Ann Miller  
Anna Ryan
- 10-11 Annette Carbaugh  
Jessica Gross  
Adam Martin
- 10-13 Alyssa Lalbeharry
- 10-15 Dave Dutton  
Ryan Miller
- 10-16 Peggy Dement  
Charlotte Yingling
- 10-18 Mae Woodard
- 10-17 Tara Smith
- 10-21 David Bankert
- 10-25 Patti Reichenbach
- 10-26 Darren Myers
- 10-27 Jack Freet
- 10-29 Danielle O'Brien
- 10-31 Carol Pecher  
Aston Pritchard  
Darryl Zoller

## CRAFT FAIR

Come  
Join  
Us



21 OCTOBER, 2023

55 Albright Drive, Hanover  
[mygracechurch.org](http://mygracechurch.org)  
9:00-2:00

## WHAT TO EXPECT

GRACE CHURCH IS EXCITED TO BE  
HOSTING A CRAFT FAIR THIS YEAR  
FEATURING LOCAL ARTISANS IN OUR  
COMMUNITY.

SCROLL SAW & INTARSIA  
LIZZY'S APIARY HONEY  
ORNAMENTS  
ACRYLIC WATER COLOR PAINTINGS & MACRAME  
JEWELRY  
CROCHET & KLEENEX BOX COVERS  
HANDMADE TOWELS  
HANDPAINTED WINE BOTTLES, SLATES AND  
GOURDS  
TABLE RUNNERS AND HOLIDAY WREATHS  
HANDMADE JOURNALS AND CARDS  
SOAPS AND CANDLES  
GLASS BLOCKS, COZIES & CALLIGRAPHY PRINTS  
OUR VERY OWN GRANNY'S ATTIC  
AND MORE...

IN ADDITION WILL HAVE OUR KITCHEN  
OPEN WITH HOT DELICIOUS FOOD  
ALONG WITH A BAKE SALE



## Daniel Plan Faith & Food

Daniel Plan:  
The best way to maintain good habits especially when it comes to a healthy lifestyle is to have accountability. To help keep us motivated and on track, we will be having our next meeting on Wednesday, October 4th at 6:30pm. If you were part of the morning or evening study we hope you will join us. And if this wasn't for you before, but you feel you could use the support system please feel free to join us too. Watch the weekly news for next months date and time.

Please bring your schedule with you when you attend a meeting to help with some activities we will do at our meetings. Hope to see you there!

BLOOD DONORS ARE LIFE-SAVERS.

## SHORTAGE NOW

Saturday, October 28th  
8:00am - 1:00pm



Visit [RedCrossBlood.org](https://www.RedCrossBlood.org).  
Download the Blood Donor App.  
Call 1-800-RED CROSS  
(1-800-733-2767).

The American Red Cross is experiencing a national blood shortage. Blood donors of all blood types – especially type O – and platelet donors are urgently needed now to ensure patients at hospitals across the country continue to receive critical medical care.

## BOOK/PUZZLE SWAP & SOUP SALE

18 NOVEMBER, 2023

On Saturday, November 18 from 10 am until noon we will be holding a book & puzzle swap in the multipurpose room along with a soup sale. You can swap up to 5 books and 3 puzzles. Watch for more information as the date gets closer.

And what great timing to purchase and stock up on some soups before Thanksgiving! Hope to see you there. Please share with family and friends!



### Report on the Grace Church Garden:

The garden committee is submitting this report on the garden in 2023. On May 6 we planted and through the summer maintained the garden. The workers were: John and Mary Dehoff, Denny and Jan Blum, Debbie and Tom Thompson, Margaret Brown, Mary Blouse and Jackie Weeks.

The garden produced 101 green peppers, 82 zucchini, 41 cucumbers, 230 tomatoes (all sizes) 76 ears of corn and 6 bushels of potatoes. Sweet potatoes will be harvested after the first frost and green peppers are still being picked.

We are grateful for the good harvest in spite of the deer and the potato bugs. All produce was contributed to the Y.W.C.A, Council of Churches, and some was given to whatever member of the congregation wanted it.

If you are interested in helping next year, please contact Margaret Brown or Denny Blum.





PLEASE JOIN US FOR AN

Open House

SATURDAY DECEMBER 2ND

4PM TO 7PM

Grace Church of Hanover

55 ALBRIGHT DRIVE, HANOVER PA 17331

717-637-3100

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INDOOR NATIVITY WALK  
BAKED GOODS AND COOKIE SALE  
FREE COOKIE AND DRINK  
OPEN KITCHEN  
TRAIN DISPLAY  
LIVE MUSIC  
LIGHTING OF THE CHRISTMAS TREE



## Theology Matters: by Rev. Matt Sichel

This month, we're continuing the series on the Apostles Creed, which I introduced in last month's edition of *Amazing Grace*. Though we understand holy Scripture to be the primary rule for faith and practice, the Apostles' Creed, with the Nicene Creed and the Definition of Chalcedon, are understood to be correct summaries of what we believe as Christians, and they work as easy reminders to us. They help to connect us with Christians all over the world and throughout history. As we recite them together, they become a way to proclaim to the world what we, as followers of Jesus Christ, believe.

Interestingly, if you spend some time looking through our church's new hymnal, *Our Great Redeemers Praise*, you might notice that the hymns are grouped by topic, and the topics are the articles of the Apostles' Creed. In addition, there is a section entitled *Lyra Fidelium* (p. 638), which translated from Latin means, "song of the faithful," and it is twelve hymns on the Apostles' Creed. These hymns were written in 1866 by English clergyman Samuel J. Stone, who wrote the familiar hymn, "The Church's One Foundation." Stone wrote the Apostles' Creed hymns to help his congregation learn and appreciate the Christian faith. Just like Stone, I hope that these newsletter articles will help Grace Church have a new appreciation for the faith that we hold in common with each other and with Christians over all times and spaces.

**Article 1:** "I believe in God the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth."

The Apostles' Creed begins with a straightforward statement of belief in God. To believe in any god, separates Christianity from those who call themselves atheists. Atheism is not a new philosophical approach, but it did gain new strength and voice during the Age of Reason, when people began to seek truths in the natural world rather than the spiritual realm. Students of mathematics and science progressively became interested in proving that the world was not a product of a divine outside force.

This interest in separating the world we can see, taste, touch, smell, and hear (phenomenal world), from the spiritual or mystical world of things we seem to be compelled to believe in but cannot prove (noumenal world), began with thinkers like Immanuel Kant, David Hume, and René Descartes. Instead of placing the idea of a god at the center of all things, these philosophies centered on the human mind and human beings. This way of understanding the universe, absent of any god or supernatural powers, has continued to this present time in thinkers like Richard Dawkins and Christopher Hitchens.

The statement that "I believe in God," instantly distin-

guishes Christianity from atheism and even agnosticism. Agnostics claim that there is no way to *know* anything about the realms beyond the physical. However, to say, "I believe," is itself a way to confess *certainty*. Hebrews 11:1 says, "Now faith is *confidence* in what we hope for and *assurance* about what we do not see" (NIV). When we profess the Apostles' Creed, we claim that we are confident and assured about the existence of God and the noumenal world.

But the Christian faith is confident about more than an abstract idea of a god, and more than simply knowing that there is a god. Christianity confesses a belief in a "God almighty, creator of heaven and earth." This is a distinct echo of Paul's preaching to the Greeks in Athens in Acts 17. Paul is confronting the very same kinds of philosophical ideas that many of us might encounter in today's American culture. In his attempt to speak to the very religious, but very *pagan* Greeks, he says,

"The God who made the world and everything in it is the Lord of heaven and earth and does not live in temples built by human hands. And he is not served by human hands, as if he needed anything. Rather, he himself gives everyone life and breath and everything else."

-Acts 17:24-25, NIV

To call God, *almighty*, and *creator of heaven and earth*, is to speak of only one God who is in authority over all things. To speak of a God who created the world, recognizes that the world and everything in it was purposefully made, rather than simply an accident. The idea that God is intimately connected to and working within his creation means that God is not some far off being that made a watch, set it to working, and then left it alone. God cares for what he has done. At the same time, God is almighty, which means that nothing else in the universe can be revered and honored in the same way. This speaks against the human centered viewpoints of agnostics and atheists.

In this current cultural time, atheism and agnosticism are on the rise, but more so, those who profess *no faith at all* are increasing in number. Ten years ago, 75% of Americans called themselves Christian, but increasingly, people are labeling themselves as "none," or "non-religious," with almost 20% using those terms to describe themselves. Self-professed Christians now only account for about 63% of the American population.

The relativistic ideas that you can believe almost anything you want, as long as you're nice and good, have basically become standard fare in our culture. These ideas have also invaded the church. Moral Therapeutic Deism is the idea though God might exist, he simply wants people to be good, nice, and fair, and to be happy and content about themselves. It also believes that God allows all "good" people go to heaven, though he is not all that involved in

what happens on earth. This is now what many people understand as even the Christian faith.

To call ourselves believers in the true Christian God will soon make us incredibly different from those around us. This is a mission opportunity. Though people are calling themselves “no religion in particular,” that does not mean that they are not seeking some kind of community like the church. That said, many are non-churched, so bringing witness to our faith needs to recognize that. Relationship building is the best way help introduce people not only to God, but to the entire idea of a religious experience.

We need to be able to know what we believe and have the confidence to speak it to those who have never heard it. Further, we need to recognize that many people in today’s culture have little or no exposure to the Bible or church, and perhaps even have had bad experiences with both. Like the Apostle Paul speaking in Athens, we need to find a way to connect with people in their own experiences and understandings. People seeking love and community will find it in Christianity, if we model what we believe, and we show the care and concern that almighty God does for them as well. This is the way we will introduce people to the God who created heaven and earth.

Love to you all in Christ,



-Rev. Matt

**All are invited to participate in contributing to our own Advent devotional here at Grace. Starting with a scripture of your choice:**

**Your Christmas memory/story/devotion**

**Your prayer**

**Your name**

**You can pick a date from the bulletin board from the Advent season to have your page printed. After selecting your date, please leave your name and phone number on the board.**

**Deadline for submission is November 1<sup>st</sup> for publication. Thank you for helping produce this personal Advent devotional.**

**Send all to Autumn via email: [achristine@mygracechurch.org](mailto:achristine@mygracechurch.org).**

**Questions can be directed to Autumn or Linda Mohr 717-479-3166.**

### **PAL (Provide-A-Lunch) Dates for 2023**

#### **Friday's**

October 6th

November 17th

December 29

#### **Saturday's**

September 30th

December 30th

*Ruth's Harvest will be starting up soon. You may start bringing in your donations. Single serving entrees, vegetables, fruits, snacks, drinks and breakfasts. The schedule is not yet posted as to when we are asked to work. We will let you know as soon as we receive it.*







[www.crophungerwalk.org/hanoverpa](http://www.crophungerwalk.org/hanoverpa)

***3 or 1 mile Walk at Codorus State Park***

***Registration begins at 12:00pm***

***St. Paul's (Dubs) Union Church Annex***

# Path Youth

- 10/15/23 Sun, Crop Walk (Keith is our contact person for this)
- 10/24/23 Tue, Light the Night
- OCC: Items for Oct are toys and wow items (Amber will try to get you more information today)

## TOYS

- Ball
- Frisbee®
- Building blocks
- Slinky®
- Yo-yo
- Magnets
- Kaleidoscope
- Toy cars
- Interactive toys
- Other small toys and figures



## Girl

### A "WOW" ITEM

- Doll
- Large toy
- Soccer ball and pump
- Stuffed animal
- Musical instrument



During the month of October, Grace Church Path Youth Group will be collecting Toys as well as Wow Items for boys and girls ages 2-14. Collection boxes will be in the main lobby. Please use the following resources for inspiration and gift ideas. As an optional resource, Operation Christmas Child now also has an Amazon storefront with additional lists of quality items that are recommended for shoeboxes. As you shop, don't forget to ask God to lead you to what will particularly delight the heart of a child!