



Life in Grace

NOVEMBER 2011 VOLUME 13 ISSUE 11

OPENING HEARTS OPENING MINDS OPENING DOORS

A PUBLICATION OF: GRACE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH 216 S. MARKET ST, MECHANICSBURG, PA 17055

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Lay Leader: Pat Emel

Custodian: Bob Griffiths

Director of Music: Timothy Hess

Secretary: Elena Yarlett

Pianist/Organist: Kim Badman

Children's Choir Director: Holly Kurten

The Pastor's Message

For What Are You Thankful?

Thanksgiving has always been one of my favorite holidays. For me, it started as a child. It was on Thanksgiving, more than any other holiday, that my entire family would get together. Meeting in a different home each year, my parents and brother, aunts, uncles, cousins, and grandparents, would all gather for the day. We would visit and joke with one another, play games, watch football, and of course, eat. These Thanksgiving days, now memories that I'll always carry with me, make Thanksgiving a special day for me each year.

As I think about those Thanksgivings past, it seems to me that those days included most of those things for which I was most thankful. Maybe that's why I loved Thanksgiving so much. On a Thursday, instead of going to school for that particular day, I had the day off and was surrounded by a loving family. I got to eat some of my favorite foods. It was a day of celebration and enjoying the gifts we had. We always took time to pray before our Thanksgiving feast, reminding us that all we had were gifts from God.

As the years have passed, much has changed. My maternal grandfather, who served as the patriarch, making sure our family came together, is no longer with us. New families have been created through relationships, marriages, and children. Distance and other demands often prevent us from all gathering on Thanksgiving Day as we once did.

And yet, those Thanksgiving memories remain. And along with those memories, the gifts of those days and reasons for gratitude remain. I'm still thankful for family, those who are no longer here, those who have experienced the joys and struggles of years together, and new family members that bless me in great ways. I'm thankful for the gifts of God's creation, food, and shelter. I'm thankful for a loving God, for God's amazing grace and my place in God's Church that gives me a bigger family than I could ever imagine. And beyond these gifts, there is so much more I could list.

So I want to ask you...for what are you thankful?

Throughout this month, our Sunday morning worship services will focus on this theme...For what are you thankful? Each week we'll celebrate something for which we are thankful. We'll start on November 6, All Saints Sunday, when we give thanks for the "saints" of our lives. We'll remember those saints we read about in the Bible as well as those saints that have crossed our paths. Come prepared on November 6 to add to our list one or more saints for whom you are thankful.

And let me know what else you're thankful for. Fill out the card in this newsletter and bring it to me Sunday morning or drop it off at the church office. Help me to write my sermons and guide our worship this month as we celebrate those gifts that make us thank God, on Thanksgiving Day and all year.

And thank YOU, my friend, for all you bring to GRACE. As I write this, I'm lifting up a prayer and giving thanks for my wonderful GRACE family.

"Enter his gates with thanksgiving, and his courts with praise. Give thanks to him, bless his name. For the LORD is good; his steadfast love endures forever, and his faithfulness to all generations." Psalm 100:4-5.

Blessings,

Pastor Mark

Our Vision is to walk with Christ while making disciples.

STUDY OPPORTUNITIES

ABOUT “BEGINNINGS THE SPIRITUAL LIFE” BIBLE STUDY

The bible study “beginnings” is open to all, no matter where you are in your faith journey. It provides an opportunity for new inquirers and experienced Christian inquirers to share conversations about the renewal of the heart. Together we will explore fundamental questions about the spiritual life. Our exploration will lead us to ask who we are, who God is, and how our lives intersect with God. The sessions consist of meeting together to share a simple supper fellowship, view a meaningful video and engage in group discussion. The class will be held on **Thursday evenings from 6pm-8pm through November 17th**. For more information, contact Doris Martin.

A YEAR WITH THE WORD – ONLINE BIBLE STUDY

“THE LAW” – THROUGH NOVEMBER 15

Our online bible study is designed for those with busy schedules that still wish to participate in a group study program. Follow the bible study 24/7 from your home computer and add your comments through our online blog site: <http://www.gracewelcomesu.org/Blog-With-Us.html> Post your thoughts and insights on your readings, and respond to other participants’ postings.

The first part of our study examines Genesis through Deuteronomy (The Law). The reading schedule is posted on our website on the “Blog With Us” page. For more information, contact Therese Finney.

THE JOURNEY: WALKING THE ROAD TO BETHLEHEM

CHRISTMAS BIBLE SCHOOL – TUESDAY, DECEMBER 13 THROUGH SATURDAY, DECEMBER 17 5:30PM TO 7:30PM

Based on Adam Hamilton’s “The Journey: Walking the Road to Bethlehem”, **children ages 4 through 9** will explore the story of Jesus’ birth. Children will learn about the places where the story occurred, experience some of the culture of Bible times, discover what each character in the story teaches us about God, and discover the real meaning of Christmas!

The Christmas Bible School will offer activities, crafts, and stories to introduce the kids to the characters of the times. We will start each evening at 5:30pm with a kid friendly dinner. Invite all the kids you know!

The event is free to the community, but we are requiring pre-registration (to assure we have enough dinners). Registration form is located in the Sanctuary.

For What Are YOU Thankful?”

Throughout November, each Sunday morning worship will focus on something different for which we are thankful. The first Sunday, November 6, we’ll give thanks for God’s saints as we join them at God’s table for Holy Communion. Help shape our other services by sharing those gifts for which you are most thankful.

Please fill out this card, and return it to Pastor Mark.

I am thankful for...

OUTREACH AND FELLOWSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

“THE SLEEPING MAT-TERS” MINISTRY PROGRAM - TUESDAYS

Join us **Tuesday evenings from 5:30 till 7pm** as we gather for the Sleeping Mat-ters ministry program.

Anyone can volunteer – no special skills or talents needed! From sorting, straightening, cutting, plarning, and crochet – there is something for all ages to do! ***If you are unable to come out Tuesday evenings, but would still like to help, we do have “jobs” for you to do at home.***

THANKSGIVING EVE SERVICE – WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 23

The Mechanicsburg Ministerium will be holding its annual ecumenical worship celebration on Wednesday, Nov. 23 at 7pm at Church of God Community Center in Mechanicsburg. Come join communities of faith from throughout Mechanicsburg to pause and give thanks for the many gifts God has given us.

THE GIVING TREE – SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 6

Thanksgiving is not only a season of giving thanks it is a season to be thankful we are able to give. As we enter November and prepare for the Holiday Season, we will be thankfully giving to two organizations in need of our gifts of love and prayer: New Hope Ministries AND the children and youth of the United Methodist Children Home. Beginning Sunday, November 6, we will have a Giving Tree on display in the Sanctuary. The ornaments will provide details for either a family in need or for a child. Please take the time to “adopt” an ornament from the Giving Tree for this Holiday Season. Purchase a special Christmas gift for this person in need and keep them in your prayers throughout the Season. Gift items may be left by the Giving Tree throughout November (deadline for items will be Sunday, November 27). Questions: See Therese Finney.

HARVEST HOME SUNDAY – SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 20

We think of harvest time as being a time of plenty, but there are many families in our immediate area as well as around the world that are in need of basic food supplies. You can give thanks for what God has given you by donating food (regular size cans or packaging) or money to help New Hope Ministries. A table will be set up in the front of the sanctuary on Sunday, November 20 (during both worship services) for donations of non-perishable food items. We will also have a donation basket for money donations to defray the cost of eggs. Please mark “eggs” on the memo line of your check.

Items needed: Juice and juice boxes, dry milk, boxed meal mixes, canned pasta, raisins, condiments, powdered drink mixes, pudding/jello mix, canned chicken, tuna or beef stew, instant potatoes, canned fruit, breakfast cereals, pancake mix and syrup, applesauce, flour, sugar, coffee, tea, pasta, crackers, personal hygiene items for male and female, diapers, wipes, laundry supplies

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SHOW US YOUR GIFTS & TALENTS – WAYS TO GET INVOLVED IN OUR COMMUNITY

MUSIC NOTES

The adult choir will rehearse on alternate Wednesdays at 7:00 PM. ***New members are always welcome!*** Please contact Timothy Hess (979-7584) or Kim Badman for more information.

Also, anyone interested in providing special music in worship, please contact Timothy or Kim. We look forward to making a joyful noise at Grace!

SUNDAY SCHOOL SUBSTITUTE TEACHERS

Grace is blessed to have regular volunteer Sunday School teachers. Throughout the year, there are times when these teachers are away and substitutes are needed to cover the classes. If you are interested in becoming a substitute teacher, please contact Holly Kurten (Preschool Class), Therese Finney (1st through 3rd grades), or Taryn Herold (4th through 6th grades). *Please Note: Sunday School teachers and substitute teachers must be Safe Sanctuary certified. Details are available on our website, or contact Holly Kurten for more information.*

REMINDER OF THE BIG MORNING ON NOVEMBER 19

Grace Church will be hosting the community and our church family, with a Breakfast Buffet from 6:30 until 10:30. The cost will be \$7.00 for adults and \$3.50 for children 4 to 11 with children 3 and under eating free. Proceeds from this event will go toward the Current Fund which pays for the day to day operations and ministries of our church. Anyone wishing to help with this event can sign up in the sheet at the back of the sanctuary.

That same morning, at the same time, there will be the Annual Christmas Bazaar which benefit's the Open Door Project. This project is a plan to make our 75 year old church accessible to all, regardless of physical ability. If you have art, crafts, gifts, or bake items you would like to include, please sign up for table space on the sheet at the back of the sanctuary.

Beginning at 9:00 on Friday morning the 18th we will be "setting the stage" for all of the Saturday events. If you are available, please come and join us.

NURSERY HELPERS - 10:45 Worship Service

First Sunday – Tammy Wilder

Second Sunday – Sue Witters

Third Sunday – Katie & Zoe or Daniel Richwine

Fourth Sunday – Linda Minnich

Fifth Sunday- Christi Catalano

**On Call Person for
November:
Doris Martin 677-6539**

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MISCELLANEOUS ANNOUNCEMENTS

RALLY DAY UPDATE

We wish to send a very special thank you to everyone for contributing to the Fall Rally Day. The Fall Rally Day has collected \$12,000 to date. This wonderful blessing enables Grace to reach out to our community in various works of ministry and missions.

UMCOR CLEANING BUCKETS

Due to the recent floodings in the area, Mission Central is in need of cleaning buckets. Visit the link below for a complete list of items needed for each bucket. Buckets may be dropped off at Grace UMC, or you take them directly to Mission Central.

<http://new.gbpm-umc.org/umcor/getconnected/supplies/flood-bucket/>

RECYCLING: MISSION CENTRAL

Our recycle program for Mission Central has changed. We will no longer collect plastic containers for recycling. We would like to have only aluminum cans (soda cans, etc) only.

Thank You!

Rusty Garner

GREENING OF GRACE:

In July we alerted you to the importance of conserving energy by making sure individual AC units were turned off as you left an area and making sure the doors were closed to help control cooling zones

In August we asked you to utilize the new blue recycle containers for bottles, cans and office type paper.

In September we suggested avoiding use of Styrofoam products for food service.

October and November mark the beginning of the winter heating season and we once again are concerned with conservation of resources. Since our church building is heated in zones, we ask that you remember to keep all doors closed when leaving an area, so that the heating system can work efficiently. This includes the double doors to the sanctuary and the hallways. Thank you for your cooperation.

CHRISTMAS WREATH ORDERS – DEADLINE NOVEMBER 5TH

Place your orders for Christmas wreaths with Sue Witters by November 5th. Wreaths are \$25 each; easels and brass hangers are \$3.50 each. Delivery date is the weekend after Thanksgiving. See Sue Witters for more details.

POINSETTIAS – DEADLINE NOVEMBER 13

The cost will be \$5 for 4 3/4" pot with 3-5 blooms. Color is Red. Flowers will be on display in the Sanctuary until Christmas Eve Service. You may pick up your poinsettias Sunday, December 25. All orders with money and dedication are due by November 13th. See Pat Emel for more details.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

GRACE CHURCH...FISHING FOR...FISH!

We're looking to set up a GRACE Church fishing trip to the Chesapeake Bay on **Saturday, November 5**. We would meet at the GRACE Church parking lot early in the morning for a full day on the water. The approximate cost would be around \$100./person, which includes boat rental, rods, bait, the fish we catch, etc. If you might be interested in joining in, please contact the church office for more information. If this day doesn't work for you, but you might be interested in a future trip, also let us know.

MORE DATES...

- The Grace Choir will perform at Bethany Village on December 7th at 7pm.
- Children's Play – Sunday, December 11
- Stocking Auction – Sunday, December 11 at 4:30pm
- Christmas Bible School – Tuesday, December 13 through Saturday, December 17 5:30pm-7:30pm
- Blood Drive – Saturday, December 17 9am till Noon
- Choir Cantata – Sunday, December 18
- Christmas Eve Services – 7pm Candlelight Service; 11pm Communion Service
- Christmas Day Service – One combined service at 9:30 (no Sunday School)
- Creation 2012 – June 26th through July 1, 2012 (contact Therese Finney for more information)

November 2011



Grace United Methodist Church
216 S. Market Street
Mechanicsburg, PA 17055
www.graceumc-mech.org

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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

This Newsletter is sent
With a prayer to.....

Sunday Mornings at Grace:

8:15 am Worship Service * 9:00 am Coffee Fellowship * 9:30 am Sunday School * 10:45 am Worship Service

Our annual **Church Conference** will be held this year on **October 30**. We will be meeting at Hope UMC (6260 Carlisle Pike, Mechanicsburg) as we join with Hope for a night of worship and holy conferencing, presided over by our District Superintendent, Rev. Dr. Dennis Keller. ***We will gather at Hope UMC for a time of worship at 7:15pm with our Church Conference meeting beginning at 7:45pm.*** All members of Grace Church are invited to come participate in this important time.

For those of you who may not know, Church Conference is an annual meeting where we celebrate the ministries of the last year at Grace and set goals for 2012. We also take care of business items such as electing leadership, setting staff salaries, reviewing the annual parsonage inspection, affirming our Lay Speakers, etc. It's a great time to learn more about what is happening at Grace and celebrate the ministry that is taking place. Again, please join us if you are able. If you would like to share in this meeting and need a ride, please contact the church office.

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