



The Monthly Newsletter of Grace
United Methodist Church of Pen Argyl

October & November 2023



Grace United Methodist Church Mission
*Make followers of Jesus Christ through ministries that seek to
nurture people to model Christ, reach out to people right where
they are and witness that Jesus Christ is Lord!*
Nurture – Outreach – Witness


Grace United Methodist Church
404 East Mountain Avenue
Pen Argyl, PA 18072

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Sundays At Grace

8:30 — Worship Service
10:00 — Worship Service
10:00 — Children's Sunday School

Phone 610-863-4811
www.worshipatgrace.org
Email: graceumc@worshipatgrace.org

Children's Ministries

Mark your calendars! The next Sunday Funday will be October 29, 2023 during the 10 o'clock service. Meet us in the sanctuary for the first part of the worship. We will dismiss after the Children's message to Fellowship Hall where we will have a story, games, craft, singing and a snack. All children are welcome to join us for a fun time of worship and fellowship! Dismissal will be in Fellowship Hall after the church service.



The Children's Sunday School program is growing! We would like to offer a Junior High Sunday School class for our older students. We have one volunteer and are looking for more to make this program a success. Please prayerfully consider helping to spread the Good News to our youth. If you are interested please contact Beth Snyder or Jessica Miller, our church secretary.

MISSION MOMENTS

First and foremost, the committee would like to thank all those who attended our spaghetti dinner. We would also like to thank our amazing chefs, Maddie, Sandy and Jean! The night finished off with tasty desserts and wonderful fellowship!

The next few months will be extremely busy with activities, adopt a college student, a Fall Festival craft fair on November 18th, Operation Christmas Child and the Angel Trees.

We would like to invite anyone to the committee to help us do the Lord's mission.

"go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them, in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you."

(Matthew 28:19-20)

Women of Grace



Fall Fest

Saturday, October 14th

6:00 to 8:30pm

To sign up call the church office or sign up on Sunday Morning



MEN'S MONTHLY BREAKFAST

The Men's Breakfasts will be held on Saturday, October 7th at 7:30 am in the Fellowship hall.

All men are welcome and encouraged to bring a friend!

MINISTRY OPPORTUNITIES

- ✦ A parish member is looking for help getting to church and doctor appointments. This person lives just outside of West Bangor. If interested, please speak with Pastor Tim.
- ✦ If you are interested in reading the scripture at the 10:00am service, you can sign up in the Narthex on the back table or call Jessica at the office. Pastor Tim or Jessica will contact you with the scripture you will be reading.

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|---|---|--|---------------------|---|--------|--------------------------|
| <h1>November 2023</h1>  | | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| | | | | 7:00 pm Celebration Choir 7:00 pm Men's Bible Study 7:00 pm Boy Scouts | | Sight and Sound Bus Trip |
| 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 |
| All Saints Day 8:30 am Worship Service 10:00 am Worship Service 10:00 am Children's Sunday School 4:00 pm Pen Argyl Field Hockey Event | | 5:30 pm Cub Scouts 7:00 pm Trustees Meeting | 6:30 pm Girl Scouts | 7:00 pm Celebration Choir 7:00 pm Men's Bible Study 7:00 pm Boy Scouts | | |
| 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 |
| 8:30 am Worship Service 10:00 am Worship Service 10:00 am Children's Sunday School | | 6:00 pm Girl Scouts 7:00 pm Finance Meeting | | 7:00 pm Celebration Choir 7:00 pm Men's Bible Study 7:00 pm Boy Scouts | | 8:00 am Craft Fair |
| 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 |
| 8:30 am Worship Service 10:00 am Worship Service 10:00 am Children's Sunday School | 5:30 pm Women of Grace—Pregnancy Center of Stroudsburg Presentation and Baby Shower | 5:30 pm Cub Scouts 7:00 pm SPRC Meeting | 6:30 pm Girl Scouts | THANKSGIVING DAY Thanksgiving Dinner Prepare and Deliver Office Closed | | |
| 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | | |
| Christ the King Sunday 8:30 am Worship Service 10:00 am Worship Service 10:00 am Children's Sunday School | | 6:00 pm Girls Scouts 6:30 pm Church Council Meeting | | 7:00 pm Celebration Choir 7:00 pm Men's Bible Study 7:00 pm Boy Scouts | | |

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|--|-----------|---|---|---|-----------|---|
| <p>1</p> <p>World Communion Sunday</p> <p>8:30 am Worship Service</p> <p>10:00 am Worship Service</p> <p>10:00 am Children's Sunday School</p> | <p>2</p> | <p>3</p> <p>6:00 pm Girl Scouts</p> <p>7:00 pm Trustees Meeting</p> <p>7:00 pm Sunday School Planning Meeting</p> | <p>4</p> <p>6:30 Girl Scouts Special Event</p> | <p>5</p> <p>7:00 pm Celebration Choir</p> <p>7:00 pm Men's Bible Study</p> <p>7:00 pm Boy Scouts</p> | <p>6</p> | <p>7</p> <p>7:30 am Men's Breakfast</p> |
| <p>8</p> <p>8:30 am Worship Service</p> <p>10:00 am Worship Service</p> <p>10:00 am Children's Sunday School</p> | <p>9</p> | <p>10</p> <p>5:30 pm Cub Scouts</p> <p>7:00 pm Finance Meeting</p> | <p>11</p> <p>6:30 Girl Scouts</p> | <p>12</p> <p>7:00 pm Celebration Choir</p> <p>7:00 pm Men's Bible Study</p> <p>7:00 pm Boy Scouts</p> | <p>13</p> | <p>14</p> <p>6:00 pm Family Fun Night</p> |
| <p>15</p> <p>8:30 am Worship Service</p> <p>10:00 am Worship Service</p> <p>10:00 am Children's Sunday School</p> | <p>16</p> | <p>17</p> <p>6:00 pm Girl Scouts</p> <p>7:00 pm SPRC Meeting</p> | <p>18</p> | <p>19</p> <p>7:00 pm Celebration Choir</p> <p>7:00 pm Men's Bible Study</p> <p>7:00 pm Boy Scouts</p> | <p>20</p> | <p>21</p> |
| <p>22</p> <p>8:30 am Worship Service</p> <p>10:00 am Worship Service</p> <p>10:00 am Children's Sunday School</p> | <p>23</p> | <p>24</p> <p>5:30 pm Cub Scouts</p> <p>6:30 pm Church Council Meeting</p> | <p>25</p> <p>6:30 Girl Scouts</p> | <p>26</p> <p>7:00 pm Celebration Choir</p> <p>7:00 pm Men's Bible Study</p> <p>7:00 pm Boy Scouts</p> | <p>27</p> | <p>28</p> <p>Charge Conference at Stroudsburg UMC</p> <p>8:00 am Girl Scouts – Juliette Low Day</p> |
| <p>29</p> <p>Reformation Sunday</p> <p>8:30 am Worship Service</p> <p>10:00 am Worship Service</p> <p>10:00 am Children's Sunday School</p> | <p>30</p> | <p>31</p> <p>6:00 pm Girl Scouts</p> |  | | | |

2023

FROM THE PASTOR

“Grace to you and Peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ!” Thus Paul greeted many of the churches to whom he wrote and so I do you.

Every year I am required to write a “State of the Church” report for the Charge Conference. It’s a time to reflect upon and celebrate mission and ministry we have accomplished and to look for opportunities to nurture and grow in perhaps new ways in the year ahead.

We have emerged from the Covid pandemic in some ways returning almost fully to normal rhythms of ministry but in other ways a changed Body of Christ. We still have 2 worship services, but they are different. The 8:30 Service has considerably shrunk in attendance, averaging 15-18 persons; the 10:00 Service has not regained its former numbers either but is more on its way back, seeing between 50-70 persons attending. The 10:00 Service is now a fully Blended style, whereas before it was more Traditional. The 8:30 Service has no 'live' music most of the time but is returning to its origins as a Contemporary style by use of recorded/projected music. My sincere thanks to the persons on the sound and projection/computer teams for both Services must be extended: without them and their consistency our worship experience would be much the poorer, and the recording of the 10:00 Service for the internet has given it a broader outreach impact. In that vein, our Lay Leader, Lenny Petraitis, offers a weekly devotional reflection for the first Scripture lesson in the 8:30 Service which is then "podcasted" out to many many others as a "Both/And" outreach ministry.

Our Sunday School and Vacation Bible School had been severely affected by Covid and it was a joy to have the teachers and children return. These ministries have grown and now reach families who are not formal members yet, but who are actively and consistently attending. Some are getting involved in other

ministries or activities, which is a delight to see. As an example, there was an attempt to take the Women's Group away from Grace but because of the leadership of a few women who refused to let it go, the Women's Group is now stronger than ever and is involving a younger generation of the women of the church who are bringing friends. I praise the Lord for this!

In addition to the weekly worship, we held two Christmas Eve services (on Saturday in 2022): one “Family-oriented” at 3:00 and a second more traditional at 7:00, with 56 and 68 people attending them respectively for a total of 124 attending. During Lent we gathered again for “Soup and Scripture”, using a Bible Study whose core was Isaiah 43 developed to be used in concert with "The Chosen" movie series on the life of Christ. This mid-week event grew from the years before to needing more tables added. I personally found it to be a great blessing and I know others did as well.

Another cause for celebration worthy of note is that our finances have largely stabilized. This is a huge testament to the faithfulness of the people of Grace. I would be remiss in not thanking every one of you for prioritizing the church’s mission and ministries through your giving. Grace is much benefited by the endowment funds we created several years ago, particularly with the stipulations that the percentage of the yield the Restricted Endowment returns is given in thirds (1/3) to the General Budget, Missions and Trustees. This disciplines us as the church of the present to keep from over-relying on the yield to 'keep afloat', which almost certainly leads to spiritual reliance on the church of the past. Keep the faith; the Lord is with us, therefore nothing can prevail against us.

The Trustees have kept excellent care of the buildings and grounds. Chad Buzzard, our buildings & grounds “man on the ground,” undertook, as of last year, expanded responsibilities caring for our cemetery, Fairview. The Trustees purchased a

new mower for it and the cutting has been 'insourced' to Chad. I cannot praise Chad enough for the work he faithfully does. And the Trustees recognize this as well, almost forcing him to take vacation days off. My thanks to the Trustees for covering for him in his absence. One point of concern for the Trustees, however, has been that the yield of our endowments has suffered in these economic circumstances, while expenses have risen due to inflation. These factors affect all our budgets – the Trustees, the Missions and the General Budgets.

If you don't already know this, the largest Endowment is managed with the Principle kept untouched. Of the Yield, 3.5% is defrayed in 1/3s as stated above: to the Trustees' work; to Missions; and to the General Budget. Another, smaller, Endowment is unrestricted but the Trustees and Council have tried to carefully shepherd it's use. We are sure that the Lord will supply the church's financial needs if we continue to be generous to her so the Word might go forth: "Onward! Christian Soldiers!" If you'd like to know more about the Endowment Funds and/or how to include the church's ministry, either with a special gift to reduce taxes as the year's end approaches, or in your will, please speak with me.

Our Apportionments have for years been paid in full AND, moreover, we have kept generous faith with other Missions and Missionaries whom we support. Pam D'Andre, who serves in Ukraine, was of course, particularly affected by the Russian invasion and Ukrainians brave refusal to bend the knee to this tyranny. She was at one point relocated to Poland but has since returned to Ukraine, though hasn't been able to reach Kiev again. Please keep her and all our missionaries in your prayers. I am proud of your support of the work of spreading the Gospel to all the earth. And I am indeed proud of you for your generosity with your time, talents and treasure. You are the hands and feet of the Lord at work.

My ministry has tried to preach the Word of God accurately and fully; to love and care for people in times when the Sun shines brightly upon their faces and particularly in those times of trial and temptation we all face; to provide biblically-based leadership and a vision for the kingdom of God appropriate to our church's context; and to guide us as the Ship of Faith, through the turbulent waters of our times so we are not "conformed to pattern of this world but transformed by the renewing of our minds... by God's good, pleasing and perfect will." (Romans 12:2)

I thank the Lord I have such dedicated and visionary leadership to work out this ministry with. None of us are, nor can be, in ministry for the Lord alone. My motto in ministry and life is like that of Paul's: "I have become all things to all people so that by all possible means some might be saved." (1 Corinthians 9:22)

Yours in Christ,

The Rev. J. Timothy Fisher

Pastor