

Grace Notes

Monthly for the members and friends of Grace Church | Middletown, Virginia



Greetings In the Name of the Risen Christ!

The first daffodils bloomed in our yard! Blossoms are covering our trees and columbine just made their appearance. What a great way to begin the springtime bloom season with these bright spots of yellow, white and pink. It is also the time to see birds building nests and bushes with green leaves popping out. Can you tell that I'm glad spring is about here?

Springtime is all about starting over. Trees, flowers and grass begin again to blossom and show forth their colors. Some of my favorite springtime memories as a child are running up and down rows of trees with beautiful apple blossoms. Maybe it was the color and perhaps it was because they would become great tasting apples, but I loved the smell and the beauty of spring.

Nature isn't the only thing starting over...we too, can take this opportunity to start over. We've been through the 40 days of Lent and have had time to look inward. Perhaps you have seen some things you don't care for in your life. Maybe you have seen a bad habit, a judgmental attitude or perhaps some other sin. With the promises of forgiveness and life eternal from Jesus' death and resurrection, we can start over and begin to live a new life. We can become Easter people, full of hope, life, and the beauty of Christ's love. And as we blossom into the people God calls us to be, we can extend our gifts of mercy, love, and care towards others in need.

So, are you ready for spring? Are you ready for Easter? Most importantly, are you ready to receive once again, the reminder of our new life in Christ? Have a blessed Easter and enjoy the beauty of spring.

Blessings,

Pastor Mary

Prayer Shawl Committee

Thanks to some very generous donations, we currently have enough yarn and gift bags. We can use some white tissue paper for in the bags.

If you know of someone who would benefit from a shawl for comfort, celebration, or a hug over the distance, please let Michelle Cissel or Pastor Mary know. Any reason is a good one!

New starting time for Sunday School!

There has been a change in the time the Adult Sunday School class. It now starts at 9:30 am. If you have been missing Sunday School, please join us!

Grace Notes...

Many thanks for your prayers and kind expressions of sympathy for the loss of my brother. I want to share this poem with my church family.

Love, Helen Steele

The Dash Poem *by* *Linda Ellis*

I read of a man who stood to speak at the funeral of a friend.
He referred to the dates on the tombstone from the beginning to the end.
He noted first came the date of the birth and spoke the following date with tears.
But he said what mattered most of all was the dash between the years.
For that dash represents all the time that they spent life on Earth.
And now only those who loved them know what that little line is worth.
For it matters not how much we own, the cars, the house, the cash. What
matters is how we live and love, and how we spend our dash.
So, think about this long and hard. Are there things you'd like to change? For
you never know how much time is left that can still be rearranged.
If we could just slow down enough to consider what's true and real, and
always try to understand the way other people feel.
Be less quick to anger and show appreciation more, and love
the people in our lives like we've never loved before.
If we treat each other with respect and more often wear a smile, remembering
that this special dash might only last a little while.
So, when your eulogy is being read with your life's actions to rehash, would
you be proud of the things they say about how you spent your dash?

A big thank you for all the well wishes I have received since starting as GUMC Administrative Assistant February 1st. I am honored to serve our church in this capacity and look forward to our future together!

Truly, Diane Wittreich

Thrift Shop News

The Thrift Shop is open every Thursday and Friday, 10 am to 3 pm and Saturday from 10 am to 1pm. We have been busy receiving donations, pricing and hanging clothing, and various activities to ready the Thrift Shop for Spring!! We love our customers have some wonderful stories to share!

Thanks to our customers, the Thrift Shop money has helped with \$500 to Bright Futures; \$500 to UMCOR; \$1,000 to Middletown Elementary School for clinic supplies and lunch programs; and \$2,000 paid to the church gas bill for February. Future projects include new lighting in both bathrooms and in the Thrift Shop, and a new shed for the lawn mower, etc.

Outreach

Pastor Mary & John delivered a check from Grace to Middletown ES principal in the amount of \$1002 to help cover selected students lunch bills. The principal will let us know if the school has a specific need in the future.

Various members of the committee met in February and made 55 quarts of vegetable beef soup which was distributed to several church members as well as to C-CAP's Friendly Neighborhood FREEDGE in Winchester.



2023 Virginia Annual Conference News

The 241st session of the Virginia Annual Conference will be held in **Roanoke, Va., from June 15 to June 17, 2023**. It will be focused on the theme, **United as One in Mission**. Grace UMC will be collecting for hygiene and the NEW feminine hygiene kits for the conference. Further details will be announced soon.

Updated E-mail list

Thank you, Lisa Higgs for updating GUMC's email list. If by chance you did not update your email and would like to do so you can still contact Lisa at higgs15@gmail.com

Church website

Due to unforeseen circumstances our website, graceumcmiddletownva.org, is no longer operational. Diane is working on getting a new website up and running as soon as possible. Stay tuned for more information!

Feeding God's Children

We continue to collect food items (see display in social hall) for **Bright Futures Backpack Program**. We also collected items for **C-CAP** for their 2023 Easter Food Donation.



Jesus said, "Feed my lambs". John 21:15

LENTEN follow up

The Outreach committee held a Shrove Tuesday pancake meal with about 50 people in attendance. Through many generous offerings we collected \$483—enough for us to purchase a new BUNN coffee machine!!

Pastor Mary lead the Lenten Bible study and meal using the Andy Griffith show. Donations went to the Society of Saint Andrews to help feed others in need.

Holy Week Services

Sunday, April 2 – Palm Sunday with Communion

Thursday, April 6 – Maundy Thursday/Good Friday Combination Service at 6 pm

Experience being at the Table with Jesus in Communion

And recount the death of Jesus on the cross with dramatic readings.

Friday, April 7 – Good Friday The church sanctuary will be opened from

11am until 7pm for you to come, pray, meditate

Resources will be available for you to use. Come and go during the time as you wish.

Sunday, April 9 – Easter Celebration Services at 10:00 am. Light breakfast will be available from 8:30 - 9:30 am. Do you have Spring flowers blooming? Please bring some with you Easter morning to decorate the cross. If you do not have any, there will be extras available for you to use.



Financial Update

The finances of Grace remain stable for the first two months of 2023. Many thanks to everyone who supports the church through their financial gifts including the Thrift Shop staff. Please keep Grace in your prayers and give as you are able and led by the Holy Spirit.





Grace United Methodist Church

PO Box 61

Middletown, Virginia 22645

Website: Under construction

Email: graceumcmiddletown@gmail.com

Phone: 540-869-1008

Sunday Worship: 8:30 & 10:30 am

Sunday School: 9:30 – 10:20 am

Updates & Reminders:

Administrative Council meets May 17 at 6:30 pm

Newsletter deadline for articles is June 15, 2023

About Us:

Sunday Worship Services 8:30 & 10:30 am

Sunday School 9:30 – 10:20 am Pastor:

Reverend Mary J. Lock, 540-303-1076,
marylock@vaumc.org | Office Hours: Varies,
See board outside Pastor's Office. **Music: Joy**

Walker Church Office:

Diane Wittreich, Administrative Assistant

Office Hours: Tues, Wed, Thurs 10am-2 pm

Email: graceumcmiddletown@gmail.com

Phone: 540-869-1008

Web: Under construction

Mail: PO Box 61, Middletown, VA 22645

Street: 7882 Main St, Middletown, VA 22645

Prayer Requests during the week: Call or email the church office or call Barbara Steele 540-869-2430. (Please leave a message if prompted.) **2023**

Flower Calendar is on the bulletin board in the Hamilton Hall entryway-Please sign up to provide flowers for Sundays. See Sherry Jenkins or Helen Steele for info.

Grace Thrift Shop OPEN: Thursdays 10-?, Fridays 10-3, Saturdays 10-1. (Donations are accepted during shop hours.)

For your convenience we offer electronic giving.

Visit our website and look for the PayPal Donate link, or visit:

<https://paypal.me/GraceUMCMiddletownva>