

Grace Notes



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

Greetings Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

A favorite Christmas movie for many is Home Alone. Perhaps one of the most touching scenes occurs at the end. Kevin looks out the window and sees his neighbor hugging his granddaughter. It seems that the neighbor and his son were not on speaking terms. But evidently, after talking with Kevin, he decides to call his son and make amends. His son and wife and granddaughter came to see him on Christmas Day. Reconciliation has occurred.

We have been given a gift of a new year. We can let things go along as they have been, or we can choose to make some changes. Think about some of the people you have drifted away from this past year. Why? Because you simply lost touch? Because something has been said or done to hurt you? Because you just haven't the time to call or write? Perhaps they are family members or friends. Whoever they are, this new year is the perfect time for reconciliation. What is keeping you from calling someone you have lost touch with?

Have you also lost touch with God? Have you gone a long time without prayer or talking to God? Has it been a while since you picked up your Bible to read? Do you feel like God is far away from your life? Perhaps it is also time to begin your relationship with God again. All you need to do is find a quiet place and talk to God. God is ready and waiting to hear from you. In this new year, begin again to know God closer.

May this new year be a chance for dreams to come true and for you to come closer to God.

Thank you to Grace UMC for the visits at our Open House, your cards and gifts, and for your continued prayers this Christmas season. Your generosity and love have warmed our hearts and helped to make it a wonderful Christmas.

Love to all....Pastor Mary and John

Prayer Shawl Committee

The hats and scarves blessed in October have been distributed. WATTS (Winchester Area Temporary Thermal Shelter) was given hats and the scarves, and Middletown Elementary School received hats. Other organizations that received hats are: Bright Futures, The Winchester Rescue Mission, C-CAP, and our own Thrift Shop.

This mission would not be possible if it were not for the generous donations of yarn and gift bags by the members of Grace and others in the community. Thanks to your generosity, our fingers are very busy.

But, many hands make light work, as the saying goes. New members to the Prayer Shawl Committee are always welcome. We meet at 10:00 on the second Thursday of the month in the church office. If you are unable to join us at that time but would like to participate, you can always get some yarn (see Michelle Cissel), work on projects at home, and return them to the church.

Sunday School is back!

A combined Adult Sunday School class meets in the Service classroom from 9:40-10:20 between the two services. If you have been missing Sunday School, please join us!

Grace Notes...

Thank you Grace family and friends for your prayers and concerns during my recent hospitalization and recovery at the rehab Health Center. I know the prayers brought me through a very serious and painful illness. I was overwhelmed with cards and well wishes I thank you from the bottom of my heart.

I miss everyone and hope to be back as soon as I get stronger.

Love and blessings, Helen Steele

Thrift Shop News

The Thrift Shop has expanded hours. We are now open on Thursdays beginning at 10:00. We will close when business goes. See Lucy Peters for details or to volunteer.

Non-appointed Clergy Report

Retired Clergy Brief Description of Ministry For 2022

On a beautiful day in south London, some years ago, while on a brief study leave, I was invited to view the magnificent English gardens that adorn the back lawn of the Anglican Church at Camberwell Green. The priest, who was my host and guide that day, had been a former student of mine at Union, and he pointed me to an untended mound of weeds beyond the stately garden rows, partially obscured by underbrush. "Do you see that mound?" he asked me. "It is the burial place of Mrs. John Wesley, who died October 8, 1881. I have petitioned the Methodists here in England several times to help clean it up a bit and provide a suitable marker, but I always receive a very frosty reply.

John Wesley himself outlived his wife Mary (known as Molly) by ten more years, still keeping daily records to the end. Of Molly's passing he notes

only that his wife died and was buried several days before he himself heard the news. And reports have it that when he did receive the word, the beloved reverend steadfastly refused even to say that he was sorry.

When I cast my vote on Zoom this coming Saturday, October 29, 2022, at the called conference sessions in Virginia of the embattled United Methodist denomination seeking the mind of Christ on what faithful marriage today is "compatible with Christian teaching," I will, God willing, be breathing an unaudited blessing for Molly, trusting that her Methodist husband, and his followers who have nurtured my whole life in the experience of God's grace, will not give the prayer for faithful same-sex marriage unions "a very frosty reply."

October 25, 2022

Christopher Ludwig Morse

Save the Date for Bishop Installation Service

Bishop Sue Hauptert-Johnson was assigned to the Virginia Conference at the 2022 Southeastern Jurisdictional Conference (SEJ) on November 4, 2022 at Lake Junaluska, NC. Bishop Hauptert-Johnson was elected to the episcopacy at the 2016 SEJ and has been serving over the North Georgia Conference. She will begin on January 1, 2023 in the Virginia Conference.

Save the Date for an Installation Service for Bishop Hauptert-Johnson on **Saturday**, February 11, at 10:30 a.m. at Woodlake UMC (15640 Hampton Park Dr, Chesterfield, VA 23832). More information will be forthcoming.



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**. Bishop Sharma D. Lewis announced the theme at the Annual Conference Team's recent meeting as planning for the 2023 June Session is now underway.

Updated E-mail list

We are trying to create an updated e-mail list for Grace. If you did not receive an e-mail from Lisa Higgs (higgs15@gmail.com) and are interested in receiving notifications about happenings at the church, please e-mail higgs15@gmail.com and specify which list you want to be on:

General announcements, meeting reminders, etc.

Prayer requests

Or Both

There is no need to respond if you do not want to be on any of the email lists. If there is no response, we will remove your name.

Thank you!

Lisa Higgs

Community-wide Breakfast

Trinity Lutheran Church in Stephens City is having a fundraiser breakfast on Saturday, February 11, from 7-10 AM. The community is invited. They are asking for a free-will donation to benefit their capital campaign.

Feeding God's Children

We are collecting food items (see display in social hall) for **Bright Futures Backpack Program** AND Monetary donations to **help students pay for lunches**. (Checks can be made to Grace UMC – Memo "Lunches")

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

Lent and Easter Activities and Services

Ash Wednesday Service: February 22, 2023 6:00 pm

Preparing ourselves with Scriptures, Prayers and Ashes to walk through the Lenten days and onto Easter resurrection.

Special Sunday: Sunday, February 26, 2023 8:30 and 10:30 am

Ellie Johnson, a Senior at James Wood High School and member of White Hall United Methodist Church, will be our guest speaker for the day. Ellie will also be sharing special music at both services.

March Lenten Boot Camp

It's March and Spring will begin this month! It's time for Boot Camp!

As we begin to get in shape for those summer months, let's also work on our spiritual lives. This Lenten season, we will have opportunities to do both!

Prayer Walks: Beginning on Wednesdays in March at 10 am

Meet at Grace UMC and we will walk around Middletown to pray, exercise, and enjoy fellowship.

Along with our Sunday services, I invite you to join me for a **Bible Study featuring The Andy Griffith Show and a meal.**

Thursdays Evenings Beginning March 9: 5:30pm – 7pm

Eat from 5:30-6:00pm (Meals will be provided)

A freewill donation will be collected for Society of St. Andrews

Watch an episode of The Andy Griffith Show: 6-6:30pm

Discussion and Bible Study 6:30-7pm

Episodes and discussions will go with our Sunday Sermon Series

Holy Week Services

Sunday, April 2 – Palm Sunday with Communion

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

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 8:30 and 10:30 am





Grace United Methodist Church
PO Box 61
Middletown, Virginia 22645

Website: graceumcmiddletownva.org
Email: graceumcmiddletown@gmail.com
Phone: 540-869-1008

Sunday Worship: 8:30 & 10:30 am

Updates & Reminders:

- Administrative Council meets Jan 25 at 6:30 pm

About Us:

Sunday Worship Services 8:30 & 10:30 am

Sunday School 9:40 – 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:

Email: graceumcmiddletown@gmail.com
Phone: 540-869-1008
Web: www.graceumcmiddletownva.org
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>