

Grace and Peace

A Newsletter from Grace Methodist Church (*The Miracle Church*)

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{Grace Methodist Church where people gather to celebrate, serve, and grow in Christ.}

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A Message from Pastor Kip...Greetings Church Family!

My prayer and hope is that this February newsletter finds you well and joy filled! I am writing this article on Monday the 29th of January, the day after our one-year anniversary celebration. What a great day and experience we shared together on the 28th. The demonstration of love to Pastor Bill and I was amazing! And yes, the cherry pie was delicious.

Two important events take place this month. The first is Ash Wednesday. This somber event of remembrance is meant to bring into focus the events of the Lenten Season. Ash Wednesday offers us a time to stop all our busyness and pause long enough to realize that we are entering into what is meant to be a very holy and reflective season of our faith. Our service will be held at 1:00 pm in the sanctuary and will include the disbursement of ashes. Our Sunday morning worship services following Ash Wednesday will focus on the events in Jesus' life which will eventually take him to the cross and tomb. Then the Lenten Season's climax is of course the discovery of the empty tomb and the assurance of our resurrection through the resurrection of Jesus. Pastor Bill and I look forward to initiating the beginning of this Lenten journey with you on February 14th at 1:00 pm.

The other day of recognition is also on February 14th and of course it is Valentine's Day. It is believed that the origin of our Valentine's Day is founded in a Roman festival called Lupercalia. This festival was held in mid-February. It celebrated the coming of spring. However, it also included the celebration of fertility rights and the pairing of women and men through a lottery. Around the end of the 5th century Pope Gelasius I ended the Lupercalia celebration. Valentine's Day became a day to recognize romance around the 14th century. And today we recognize that the love we share with spouses, children, grandchildren and friends is a gift of God. In scripture, 1 John 4:19 reveals that "we love, because He first loved us." So, be sure to express God's gift of love to someone you cherish or is special to you on the 14th. Well, there is more than anyone probably wanted or needed to know about Valentine's Day. Happy Valentine's Day, to you and yours!

Pastor Kip continued....

Let me close by sharing with you how blessed Pastor Bill and I feel by being able to serve our church. It is a true blessing to be with all of you each Sunday morning and to celebrate worship with all of you. It remains the highlight of our week! Blessings to you - Pastor Kip

Ways of the Kingdom.....Jan Wise

Two Christian brothers met on the street, and one inquired of the other, "How are you, Mark? Mark replied he was doing ok. Then he added, "except for the fact my wife is having tests for allergies, which are driving her nuts and making her irritable. Oh, and I'm trying to make out our income tax, which leads to all kinds of problems. But, under the circumstances, I guess I'm doing fine. Mark's inquiring friend quickly responded with, "My friend, whatever are you doing under there"?

When I heard that story, it raised questions in my mind, questions like, "Are Christians really supposed to live 'above the circumstances' in this trouble-weary world"? How could that be possible"? In 2 Corinthians 5:16-17, Paul writes about how the new believer no longer looks at people (and I assume Paul means situations, too) the way he did before coming to Christ. "If anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!" So, with the Holy Spirit of Christ living in me, God has put in me the ability to think and even live above the challenging circumstances threading their way through my daily life. This would be more than taking the "high road". It would be taking the heavenly road!

In Romans 12:2, Paul again refers to "above-the circumstances" thinking. "Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is--his good, pleasing, and perfect will". Train my mind to think like God thinks? Jesus said, "Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God".

Jesus repeated many times, "Don't let your hearts be troubled". Hating an enemy troubles our heart and keeps us below the circumstances. Jesus teaches us how to love our enemies and pray for those who persecute us. This illustrates one of the ways Jesus kept his spiritual life from being dragged down into the circumstances.

A family member had the most certain way of dragging all around her down under the daily circumstances. She loved a "heated" discussion, and, whenever the group conversation got boring, she would drop a casual "bone of contention" (usually about politics) into the scene. Without a thought, those who were with her grabbed for the "floor" to express their opinion. Soon an argument, some name calling and more "under the circumstances" behavior would result. One day, I asked the Lord what I could do about it. He said, "You could go to the other room and resist touching the "bone of contention". For me, that lesson became one of the most important ways to live above the circumstances.

Proverbs 3:5 says, "Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him and he will make your paths straight". God wants us to learn to live above the circumstances of our world so our light will shine brightly in an ever-darkening world.

February is Heart Month...Karen Kline, Faith Community Nurse

It is not only about sending Valentine cards, flowers, and candy to those you love. To truly say "I Love You", it really means learning about heart disease, heart attacks, and sudden cardiac arrest, and what to do in an emergency... How? By learning how to do CPR. Even if you yourself are not strong enough to do chest compressions, you need to have the knowledge so that you can instruct someone else how to do it and be the person controlling the situation.

Each year in the U.S., over 350,000 out of hospital cardiac arrests occur. When someone has a cardiac arrest their chance of survival depends on immediately receiving CPR by those who are with them; and that could be you! Over 70% of out of the hospital cardiac arrests occur at home. Cardiac arrest is defined by the American Heart Association as an electrical malfunction in the heart that causes an irregular heartbeat (arrhythmia) that disrupts the flow of blood to the heart, brain, lungs, and other organs. You can be the difference for someone you love; whether it be a spouse, parent, child or friend!

On Saturday, February 17th, from 9:30 AM to 12:30 PM a BayCare Faith Community Nurse who is certified as a CPR/BLS provider by the American Heart Association will be at our church to conduct a class. Each participant, or couple, will receive a take home CPR Anytime kit that includes your very own personal manikin! What more could you want? Oh, I forgot to tell you, the cost to participants... It's FREE.

Please sign up on the clip board in Fellowship Hall. Show those you love how much they really mean to you. Depending on the number who sign up, we may need to schedule a second class. See you there!

Ladies of Grace Present 2024 Plans...Sue Pagano

Ladies of Grace held their second meeting after church on Sunday, January 21, 2024. The Welcome Table was built around the acronym of Ladies of Grace (LOG). Definitions of LOG include: a large piece of a branch; a record; and "log in" to study and learn. Prayer Logs were made for each person to take home and place where they would be reminded to pray throughout the day. Prayer logs will be available at future meetings. The accompanying poem with the logs is: "A Prayer Log is a special way of remembering to pray throughout each day. Speak glory, thanks, repentance, and needs; many fruits can come from wonderful seeds."

Five committees were formed: Comfort and Care Home Meals, Craft and Chat Days, Information Fair on February 25, Veterans Recognition & Support, and a 2024 Women's Retreat.

Mission Statement and Signature Scripture Selected

Ladies of Grace Mission Statement is: To faithfully serve and minister in our church and community through fellowship, service opportunities, spiritual growth and with social and worship events. Signature Scripture: *1 Peter 4:10: Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms.*

Calendar of Events

A potential calendar of events was approved and members were encouraged to share other ideas.

Ladies of Grace...continued

- January- Support the church's anniversary events on January 28
- February- Information Fair, February 25
- March – Begin Comfort and Care Home Meals
Craft & Chat, March 12, 10:30am-1pm
Support the church's Lenten and Easter activities
- April- Craft & Chat, April 9, 10:30am-1pm
- May- Mother's Day Cookie Exchange, May 10, 10am
Craft & Chat, May 12, 10:30am-1pm
Support Memorial Day activities for veterans
- June- Father's Day (pending)
- July- Fourth of July (pending)
- August- Open
- September- Chili Cook-Off and Game Night
- October- Support Grace Methodist Rummage Sale
2024 Women's Retreat Option
- November- Support church's Thanksgiving activities
Support Veterans Day activities for veterans
- December- Support church's Advent and Christmas activities

Next Meeting

The next meeting for the Ladies of Grace will be on Sunday, February 18, 11:30am in Fellowship Hall. We welcome new members. For info, see Judy Chambliss or Sue Pagano.

Coming Next Month...Kent Kester

Mark on your calendar, March 24 from 9-11 am, the Men's Prayer Group will be sponsoring a community-wide pancake breakfast. No charge, but DONATIONS will be accepted. Plans are being finalized and more information will be available later. If you have any questions, please call Kent Kester at 814-553-2614.

Anniversary Celebration and Pie Auction...Alice Trusley

What an awesome Sunday service and celebration was held on January 28 at our one-year celebration. The Holy Spirit was in this place! Jay Therrell, President Pro Tempore, Florida Provisional Conference of the Global Methodist Church, presented a stirring message on "Building a Faithful Future", great singing from special guests Steve & Maria Gardner, and a wonderful song, "We are the Church" from our own great, faithful choir. A delicious potato bar with numerous delicious sides, many delicious pies, and other desserts were also available. A great big "thank you" to our Founding Pastor Bill Farmer and Donna for the great idea of a "pie Anniversary Celebration & Pie Auction...continued

Auction." Pastor Bill's son, Neil, was our auctioneer, who was funny, great at auctioning all the pies, and was instrumental in raising \$8,165 for renovations at Grace. Thank you to everyone who participated in this awesome day.

Dates to Save

February 4, 2024 – Communion Sunday
February 8, 2024 – Women of Worship (W.O.W.) @ 2:00 p.m.
February 14, 2024 – Ash Wednesday @ 1 pm
February 14, 2024 – Happy Valentine's Day
February 14, 2024 – GMC Board Meeting @ 9:00 a.m.
February 18, 2024 – Ladies of Grace @ 11:30 a.m.
March 17, 2024 – Ladies of Grace @ 11:30 a.m.
March 24, 2024 – Palm Sunday
March 29, 2024 – Good Friday
March 31, 2024 – Easter Sunday

Bible Studies, Prayer Groups, & Other Meetings at Grace Methodist Church

Mon 1:00 pm Memory Lane Support Group & Respite
Tues 9:00 am Weight Management Meeting (women & men)
Wed 7:00 am Men's Prayer Group at GMC followed by breakfast out
Wed 4:00 pm Choir Practice led by Katherine Cornelius
Thurs 10:00 am S.O.A.P. (Scripture, Observation, Application, Prayer)...Jan Wise
Thurs 11:30 am 1:30 pm Women's Lunch Bunch Bible Study led by Sharon Miller
Note.... Women of Worship...Meet once a month on the second Thursday @ 2 p.m.
Fri 10:00 am Bible Study led by Jan Wise (10:00-11 Prayer concerns, joys, & fellowship)
Fri 11 am -12 pm Bible Study...led by Jan Wise
Fri 10:15 am Bible study led by Pastor Farmer, Meadow Crest Clubhouse

Articles for future newsletters and if you have a testimony that you wish to share, please send to Alice Trusley @ atrusley@pantherbranch.com

Grace Methodist Church is a member of the



What is Lent? Lent is a 40-day period of reflection and prayer leading up to Easter Sunday. Ash Wednesday is the first day of Lent and this year, Ash Wednesday falls on February 14, 2024.