

Pastor's Message



“They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles. All the believers were together and had everything in common. They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had needs. Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved” Acts 2:42-47.

I thought it might be interesting for you to learn more about my family and my background so that you’d know us better. So, I want to share with you a brief story about the Anyuwaa people, a tribe to which we belong. Apay and I belong to an ethnic group called the Anyuwaa people. The Anyuwaa (or Anuak as known by others), lives both in Ethiopia and South Sudan, separated by the borderline imposed by the two countries, yet with one culture and traditions.

Largely, the Anyuwaa is a subgroup in the “Luo” community. In the present days, the Luo people are scattered all over eastern and central Africa as a result of a hundred years of migration. The Luo are grouped by anthropologists and linguists into “Nilotic family,”— people of the Nile. There are Luo of Kenya (to which president Obama’s father belonged); those of Tanzania, the Acholi of Uganda, Shilluk, Pari, JoLuo etc. of South Sudan; and Acholi, Alur, Jo Padhola etc. of Uganda and those in the Congo. Before the Luo dispersed all over east and central Africa, oral history placed the Anyuwaa’s original place in Egypt, worshipping “Anuk,” meaning “Embracer,” the goddess of the Nile River. Then they moved to the present-day Khartoum— from the Anyuwaa term “Kartum” fishing pool, referring to river Nile and later moved to the South before they migrated east to their present day Gambella, Ethiopia and Pochalla, South Sudan.

The name Anyuwaa comes from “Nyuwaak” meaning, “Embracing, or Sharing.” Unlike the Anyuwaa of today, historically, the Anyuwaa shared their resources to enhance the wellbeing of the community. In any Anyuwaa cultural setting, an individual person is regarded as part of the whole community. That a person exists because the community exists. Therefore, everyone is responsible and strives for the betterment of the tribe and its community. Like other African communities, the Anyuwaa community is organized from a simple core to the largest whole: Child-family-relatives-village, geographical clan, and the larger community. In those days, in a single village there were many places designated only for men situated at the gates of a village. They called this place “Wimaac” sort of a campfire place. More than a simple campfire, at Wimaac, issues are discussed and matters with contentious nature are solved. It was a place of learning for young boys. A boy stayed in the women’s court until he was old enough when he could join Wimaac (unlike some African communities, the Anyuwaa do not perform a ritual for a boy to advance to “manhood,” but only for a girl transitioning to “womanhood”).

At Wimaac, men of relative households shared their food while their wives ate together, and their children partook in the women's court (moving from one relative's home to the other for lunch and dinner with each bringing their own meal—a like a potluck style in our American culture). Widows and Orphans were considered as part of the whole and are supported by relatives and the community at large. Even if there might be slight changes, to this present day, everything associated with the home falls on the woman's shoulders while the man belongs outside of the home. In 2009, when I started cooking while in America, my food got burned, the next day the oven burned my arm, and then a week after, the food dropped on my foot. I had to call Apay often to guide me on what goes first while cooking; I was not trained to take on household duties. But now I enjoy cooking eggs for breakfast, "I'm part of the whole."

Naming children is quite interesting in this culture. The first three children born in the family have "given" names: Omod, Ojulu and Obang respectively for boys. The girls are named Ariet, Ajulu and Abang. If a boy is born in between girls, he is named Oman—"belongs to girls." If she is born between the boys, she is Awili or Akiic—"exchange." Traditionally, any child born after the three first born, is given a name by spirits or are named after older family members who are alive or had departed the family (died), but now live in an ancestral world. There are no last names in this culture. The Anyuwaa use their grandfather's name as a last name and their father's name as a middle name. Therefore, in one single village you'd find many men with similar names: Omod Omod Omod, Ojulu Ojulu Ojulu, or Obang Obang Obang if their fathers and grandfathers are first, second or third born. This is confusing to a visitor, but nicknames are used to distinguish people in the village and help visitors identify who is who as they strive to make friends.

In this new month of April, we break our journey through Lent but embark on the season after Easter, a season of outreach, community building and worship. As Luke reported to us, there was a paradigm shift, a radical change, and a reimagining approach after easter and ascension of our Lord. Through the empowerment of the Holy Spirit, the disciples were challenged in how to build their community after Jesus' physical departure. Then they formed a community that welcomes strangers, encourages the weak, uplifts the vulnerable, provides for the hungry, and prays with the homeless. They shared their resources to enhance the wellbeing of the community.

Friends, to that, we are called! We are "Christians." We all "belong" to this home, the church, dedicated to journeying with faith. In a Christian church, everyone is "part of the whole." Our church belongs to everyone. Our church belongs to the community because there is no church without the community of believers. Everyone has a part in making the church perfect as it aspires to welcome many and everyone in its surrounding community. Like the Anyuwaa people we are called to embrace one another as we voyage through Easter joy and celebrate "Pentecost and Yom Kippur." Then ours will be sunshine: we are restored and walk in the light and newness of salvation as we claim victory in the atoning blood of Christ.

He is risen!

Owar

Rev. Dr. Owar Ojulu

The Fruits

When we came to Grace Community in 1960, there was a poster in the basement with a Jeep on it having the logo: A Jeep for Don McClure. Don was a Presbyterian missionary in the then Sudan (East Africa) and by late 1940s and early 1950s he was extending his mission field across the boarder into Gambella, Ethiopia. He visited our church once or twice more. Grace continued to support his mission as Don extended his mission filed further to eastern part of Ethiopia, Somalia region in the request of the Emperor Haile Selassie of Ethiopia. I recall him telling how effective it was to dig wells in the Ethiopian villages.

After he was murdered while on his mission station in Somalia region of Ethiopia, Grace contributed to the funding of a mission "Chair" in his honor at the Pittsburgh Theological Seminary. Now, we have as our new minister, Owar, who was led to Jesus by an uncle inspired by Don McClure. Our mission dollars have come back to us. Glenn Nordmark

Thank you from the



Grace Church you are -hands down- one of the most generous congregations on the planet. With one week's notice, the deacons asked for donations of baked goods to sell at the March 2, 2024, Estate Sale, and we received a wonderful variety of homemade goodies. On behalf of the deacons, we thank you for your generous donations of your time, skills and baked goods! The proceeds of the sale were added to the proceeds of the estate sale and given to session to be used for the good of the church.

2Corinthians 4:15 All this is for your benefit, so that the grace that is reaching more and more people may cause thanksgiving to overflow to the glory of God.,



We would like to thank those that hosted coffee fellowship and to our greeters for the month of March. Gary & Judy Barbiaux, Reitha Bieranoski, Beulah Brown, Elsie Deem, Lisa Edwards, Dan & Teresa Howard, Linda Johnson, Glenn Nordmark, LaVonne Pelisari and the Reach-Out Committee.

Again, thank you so much for volunteering each Sunday.

9:40am Sunday Greeters Needed

Church greeters are very essential for our church. A greeter spreads hospitality throughout our church as part of an effective first impression. Please consider volunteering to be a 9:40am Sunday Greeter. Contact the office at 724-339-9661 if interested.



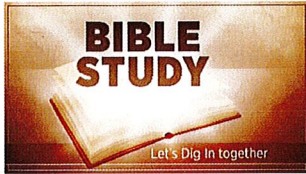
Join the GCPC Chancel Choir

- ♪ Open to members and friends of Grace
- ♪ Join with people who want to praise God thru music
- ♪ Wednesdays at 7:00pm

If you are interested, please call 724-339-9661 or email: secretary@gracecommunitypresbyterian.org



Come join us for Bible Study



Who: Everyone

When: Every Tuesday @ 1PM

Why: Join in an in-depth study of the Old and New Testament Prophecy



April 02 Jackie Chickerella

April 04 Rich Artman

April 08 Joe Bieranoski

April 25 Terri Ludwig

If your name does not appear, or if the listed information is incorrect, please contact the church office so that the records can be updated.



We are collecting items for the next spring rummage sale, (Date TBD). Please help by bringing in your unwanted items for the next sale. Your items can be placed inside the upper-level door by the old sanctuary.

NO ELECTRONICS OR LARGE FURNITRE

Help fill shoeboxes all year long! The Operation Christmas Child items for the month of April are Games/Puzzles. Donations may be placed in the OCC box in the Narthex. Thank you.



Please join us as we celebrate our Pastoral Installation Service of Rev. Dr. Owar Ojulu on Sunday, April 14 @ 4:00pm.

Join us after the Installation Service for our annual Chicken Pie Dinner on Sunday, April 14 @ 5:00pm in Cana Hall. See attached flyer.



A NOTE OF



Thank you, Grace Community Church, for welcoming my family with open arms. We are so grateful for the cards, kind words, and encouragement we received during Staff Appreciation Day. It means a lot to know that we are part of such a loving church family. May God bless you all for your kindness and may He continue to pour out His love on this community. Thank you once again—
Rev. Dr. Owar Ojulu and Family.

I thank all of you for the cards, gifts and words of appreciation you presented to me and to Grace Church's staff members. I consider it a privilege to serve all of you at Grace Church. Our past eleven years working together have been wonderful. I pray that we may have many more.
Thank you. – Ken McGeary

Thank you for the cards and gifts for Staff Appreciation Day. Your kind words meant a lot to me. I am blessed to be part of the GCPC family. Again, thank you and thanks to the Reach Out Committee's hard work putting this event together. Shalom, Wendy Stein Clark

John & I would like to extend our heartfelt thanks and gratitude for all the warm, encouraging, loving thoughts, words and gifts. It means so much to me that John is accepted and loved for who John is and not what is expected. For the last 22 years, you have embraced John, and we look forward to continuing this blessed relationship.
With our Love, John & Paul

To the wonderful people of Grace Church~~ I wanted to express my heartfelt gratitude for the Appreciation Recognition that was held for staff on 3/10. What a great job the Committee did in making it a time of celebration. I also was touched by the sincere cards people took the time to write to me. Also ~~the gifts that were enclosed are truly appreciated.
I really enjoy my role as Christian Education Director and hope that my efforts here at Grace Church impact for God's glory. Sincerely, Bill Ludwig

"Family is everything". I have a plaque to that effect on my credenza. Grace Church is a family. I always say that. We know your business and we care. This is evidenced by the outpouring of cards and nourishment when I horribly broke my left humerus and tore the deltoid muscle to shreds in late October and surgery in early November. PT is done and last week was my last follow up visit. I'm pretty good and if this is the best it gets, I'm OK with it. The Dr. says 8 - 10-month recovery so I'm hoping for better, but life is good, and my Grace Church family is a big part of that "life is good".
Linda Johnson

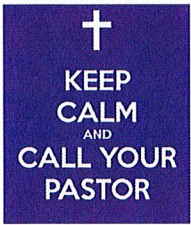


Glenn Nordmark, Cathy Christoforetti, Steve & Valerie Lester, and Sheri Cieslinski

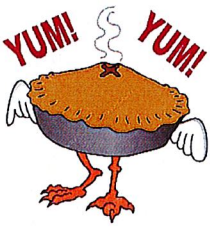
Saturday, March 23 was a great day at Kneads Cafe! If you haven't had the opportunity to volunteer for a few quick and fun filled hours, please sign up. Steph Tutka made the time even better when she brought her whole family in for breakfast!



There will be a new member's class starting in April. If you are interested in joining Grace Church, please call the church office @ 724-339-9661. Also if you are at Grace for worship, you can take the friendship pad at the end of pew and make your wishes known. Rev. Owar will contact you to set a date and time.



Rev. Dr. Ojulu is available anytime if you have any concerns, want to schedule a meeting, or if you need a prayer. You can contact him at the office @ 724-339-9661 or his cell 507-304-5958.



**COME AND JOIN
THE FUN
AT THE ANNUAL
Chicken Pie Dinner
Sunday, April 14, 2024
5:00 PM in Cana Hall**

The Reach Out Committee will provide mashed potatoes and beverages.

Please bring a covered dish to serve 10-12 people.

Table Service will be provided.

Use the tear off box to indicate your attendance or contact the Church office @ 724-339-9661 or secretary@gracecommunitypresbyterian.org

Name _____

No. Attending _____

Chicken Pie _____

Salad _____

Dessert _____



OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD

As we try for 500 shoeboxes this year, our Spring fundraiser will help us get a jump-start on shipping costs. Pizza, hoagies, and pies are available using the order form on the following page. The hoagies are from Marianna's, which is a Delgrosso company. They are packed with toppings in separate bags, to keep them fresh. More detail is given below. What a great way to have a meal, knowing you are helping to bring a shoebox to a child who needs it! The pies will be frozen (a great opportunity to fill your freezer for Summer events)!

Please return your **prepaid** orders to the church by **Monday, APRIL 15**. We can accept cash and checks made payable to Grace Church and please be sure your name and phone number are on the order form. You may mail your order OR if you'd prefer, place your order in the box on the table in the Narthex as you enter the church.

When you return to the church to pick up your order on **Saturday, APRIL 27 from 12 – 3 PM**, we will provide drive-through service. **When arriving to the parking lot to pick up your order**, please use the third driveway into the lot and create a large circle to the Narthex entrance to the building. There, someone will ask your name, locate your order, then deliver to your vehicle. Thank you!

HOAGIE DETAILS

Roast Beef	Roast beef, provolone cheese, lettuce, tomato, onions, pickles, horseradish sauce, Italian dressing
Italian	Peppered ham, capicola ham, genoa salami, pepperoni, provolone cheese, lettuce, tomato, onions, mild pepper rings, Italian dressing
Smoked Ham & Cheddar	Smoked ham, cheddar cheese, lettuce, tomato, onions, mild pepper rings, sweet & sassy mayo
All American	Cooked salami, ham, bologna, American cheese, lettuce, tomato, onions, Italian dressing
Turkey	Roasted turkey breast, provolone cheese, lettuce, tomato, onions, pickles, mayonnaise, Italian dressing
Ham & Swiss	Virginia baked ham, Swiss cheese, lettuce, tomato, onions, pickles, horseradish sauce, Italian dressing
Traditional	Imported ham, Genoa salami, provolone cheese, lettuce, tomato, onions, mild pepper rings, Italian dressing
Ham Club	Cooked sliced bacon, imported ham, Virginia baked ham, American cheese, lettuce, tomato, pickles, sweet & sassy mayo
Three Cheese	Provolone, American, and Swiss cheese, lettuce, tomato, onions, mild pepper rings, pickles, Italian dressing

PIZZA, PIE, & HOAGIE FUNDRAISER ORDER FORM

Orders are due to church no later than Monday, April 15th

Name:

Phone Number:

Delivery Date: Saturday, April 27, 12:00 - 3:00 PM (Pickup at Grace Church Parking Lot)

Pies are frozen. Thank you for your support!

VARIETY	QUANTITY	PRICE	TOTAL
APPLE PIE 10"		\$ 14.00	
PEACH PIE 10"		\$ 15.00	
CHERRY PIE 10"		\$ 15.00	
VERY BERRY PIE 10"		\$ 17.00	
PUMPKIN ROLL		\$ 9.00	
		TOTAL:	

VARIETY	QUANTITY	PRICE	TOTAL
ITALIAN HOAGIE		\$ 10.00	
ROAST BEEF HOAGIE		\$ 10.00	
TURKEY HOAGIE		\$ 10.00	
TRADITIONAL HOAGIE		\$ 10.00	
SMOKED HAM & CHEDDAR HOAGIE		\$ 10.00	
HAM & SWISS HOAGIE		\$ 10.00	
HAM CLUB HOAGIE		\$ 10.00	
THREE CHEESE HOAGIE		\$ 10.00	
ALL AMERICAN HOAGIE		\$ 10.00	
PEPPERONI PIZZA		\$ 10.00	
CHEESE PIZZA		\$ 10.00	
WHITE PIZZA		\$ 10.00	
		TOTAL:	
GRAND TOTAL:			



2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	 APRIL FOOLS DAY	2 1:00pm Bible Study	3 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal	4 6:00pm CS Den Mtg 6:30pm Ladies Club	5 OFFICE CLOSED	6
7 9:00-am SS 10am Worship/Communion 6pm Youth Group	8 6:30pm Mission Mtg.	9 1:00pm Bible Study 6:30pm Garden Club	10 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal	11 3pm CE Mtg 6:00pm CS Den Mtg	12 OFFICE CLOSED	13
14 9:00-am SS 9am Reach Out Mtg. 10am Worship 4pm Pastor Installation 5pm Chicken Pie Dinner	15  6pm CS Comte Mtg	16 1:00pm Bible Study	17 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal	18 7pm CS Pack Mtg 6pm Meris Club 6:30pm Ladies Club	19 OFFICE CLOSED	20
21 9:00-am SS 10am Worship 11am Deacons Mtg 6pm Youth Group	22 6:30pm Session Meeting	23 1:00pm Bible Study	24 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal	25 6:00pm CS Den Mtg	26 OFFICE CLOSED	27
28 9:00-am SS 10am Worship	29	30 1:00pm Bible Study				

Coffee Fellowship (Host(s)):

- April 7 Dan & Teresa Howard
- April 14 No Coffee Fellowship
- April 21 Volunteer(s) Needed
- April 28 Volunteer(s) Needed

April Greeter(s)

- Elsie Deem
- Lisa Edwards
- Terri Ludwig
- Beulah Brown

CALENDAR SUBJECT TO CHANGE

Grace Community Presbyterian Church (PCUSA)
2751 Grant Street
Lower Burrell, PA 15068

Address Service Requested

Non-Profit Organization
US Postage
PAID
New Kensington, PA 15068
PERMIT NO. 221



CROSSCURRENTS

