



# GRACE NOTES

Volume 11 Issue 11

November 2023

"Let them give thanks to the Lord for his unfailing love and his wonderful deeds. for He satisfies the thirsty and fills the hungry with good things."

"Let's come before Him with thanks! Psalm 95:2-3, 107:8-9

It is that time of the year when we get ready to welcome family and friends in preparation for thanksgiving. The display of colors is just beautiful to behold. There's a tree in the corner of the church that is first to display vibrant colors and the first to shed all the leaves. The rest of the trees that aligned the street will take its cue when the weather changes. Endings seem to lie in wait. We wait with hope.

The Good News is that we are invited to give thanks and in doing so re-imagine what God has done and what God will present in the fullness of time. We "flourish into grace" by cultivating a generous spirit.

You will receive two letters in the coming days to invite you again to prayerfully consider your commitment to the mission and ministry of Grace United Methodist Church. I was reminded again and again that there is a generous spirit in this place and we are returning what belongs to God—an expression of our thanks.

Our invitation is extended every year to be a part of a community of believers. We make promises for the future that will bless the present.

***November 12, 2023- Stewardship & Communion Sunday***

***November 19, 2023- Commitment Sunday ( Presenting our Gifts for 2024)***

May God bless the Church,

Pastor Romir R . Esguerra

## Christian Education

The focus for our Sunday School lessons are to recognize the promises and gifts God has given to us a family of faith. God says: "I am with you now and will protect you everywhere you go." - Genesis 28:15.

In thankfulness, we choose to give back to God a portion of what God has given to us so that all that we may meet may fully experience the love of God and love of neighbor.

During the month of October, our Education team launched and intentional effort to integrate rehearsal time for our Children's choir into the Sunday School schedule. The goal is to lend our voices for the Anthem with the Adult Choir or as special music for the Youth 5th Sunday worship services.

The youth have decided to do a card ministry for shut-ins or for members who are sick and donate those signed cards to the Care Committee. If you have extra cards you wish to donate, please bring them to the church office.

Blessings, Pastor Nancy





## ASP WREATHS

Thank you for supporting the ASP Youth Mission Team by purchasing wreaths. Wreaths will be available for pick up on Sunday, November 26th in the Narthex. ASP team members will be available to assist you in getting your wreaths to your vehicle.

## CANDY DRIVE

### DONATIONS NEEDED

During the coming weeks our Confirmation class will be collecting candy donations to make holiday gifts for senior citizens and shut-ins being served by the Meals on Wheels program. More people are in need of assistance this year than ever before. These gifts with their meals are a real treat for them and a simple way for us to show them that Grace UMC cares.

About 300 pounds of individually wrapped regular and sugar-free candies are needed for this project. Your left-over Halloween candy is an ideal donation. Monetary donations are most welcome, too; let us buy for you!

Candy donations can be dropped off outside the church office in our decorative collection box; monetary donations can be mailed to the church or left in the mailbox. For more information contact Jim Morrow at 815-482-2550. Thank you in advance for your help.

## POINSETTIAS

Grace Church will decorate the chancel area with Poinsettias on Christmas Eve. The flowers can be in honor or celebration of a special event, in memory of a loved one, or to the "Glory of God."

If you wish to order, please fill out a form and return it with a check made out to Grace Church by November 26, 2023. Poinsettias are \$9.00 each.



- \* Donors are encouraged to select an angel from the tree, purchase a suitable gift(s) and return the unwrapped gift(s) to the tree with the angel tag attached.
- \* Gift cards may be received in lieu of gifts. Gifts in price should be about \$35 per child. Higher amounts are up to the discretion of the donor.
- \* All items must be new.
- \* Wrapping paper can be included for the parents to wrap the gifts.
- \* All gifts are due back to Grace Church by Sunday, December 3rd.

**They ask that you do not use gift bags. Gift bags break easily when transporting.**

## SWEATSHIRTS FOR THE HOMELESS

Missions will do our annual sweatshirt drive for the homeless. We need Men's L, XL & larger size. Bigger is better shirts can be layered underneath for warmth. Dark colors preferred. Sweatshirts can be placed in Narthex under Christmas tree starting after Thanksgiving. We will collect them until December 26. If questions, call Adrian Stoddard 815-353-6032. Thank you for your generosity!

## HANGING OF THE GREENS

The first Sunday in Advent is December 3rd. Our 10:30am service will be a full Hanging of the Greens service.

# OUR CHURCH'S FINANCIAL HEALTH

## September

### 2023 Income & Expense Summary

Comparison to expected cash flow for budget approved 12/16/21

|                       | September      |                | Year to Date    |                 |
|-----------------------|----------------|----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
|                       | Budget         | Actual         | Budget          | Actual          |
| INCOME                | \$19,809       | \$17,700       | \$203,275       | \$199,017       |
| EXPENSES              |                |                |                 |                 |
| Apportionment         | \$2,317        | \$0            | \$20,853        | \$13,902        |
| Salaries & Benefits   | \$14,886       | \$13,627       | \$143,730       | \$136,765       |
| Administration        | \$1,221        | \$943          | \$10,988        | \$9,709         |
| Programming           | \$934          | \$42           | \$8,400         | \$5,031         |
| Church Buildings      | <u>\$6,233</u> | <u>\$1,963</u> | <u>\$69,825</u> | <u>\$62,737</u> |
| TOTAL EXPENSES        | \$25,591       | \$16,575       | \$253,796       | \$228,144       |
| SURPLUS OR (DEFICIT): | -\$5,782       | \$1,125        | -\$50,521       | -\$29,127       |

#### Notes:

- 1) Income continues to track the budget reasonably well.
- 2) Expenses \$26k below budget; \$19k below when adjusted for apportionment not paid.
- 3) Because the approved 2023 budget is not balanced, there are still challenges.

## Stewardship

The annual Stewardship effort to support Grace UMC ministry in the year 2024 will begin November 12, 2023, with dedication of Commitment Cards the following week on Sunday, November 19. You can expect to receive a letter with your Commitment Card/envelope in early November.







11/6—Donna Redmon  
11/15—Heather Linko  
11/19—Tessa Gray, Nancy Kramer, Romir Esguerra  
11/22—Dorothy Atkins,  
Joe McCormack  
11/28—Ed Young  
11/29—Sebastian Butler

## DAYBREAK SHELTER

The food sign-up sheets for Daybreak (Nov. 20) and Daybreak Breakfast (Nov. 21) are on the bulletin board in the narthex. Drop off item before noon on the Sunday before Daybreak date.

### Mark your calendars for upcoming

#### Restaurant Club dates!

**November 11<sup>th</sup>** – La Mex on Jefferson & Essington – 6pm RSVP (text or email) to Diane Parro by 11/5  
[630-430-3808/dparro@comcast.net](mailto:630-430-3808/dparro@comcast.net)

\*Please note that they told me they will not do separate checks, but I'll ask again when we get there.

**January 20<sup>th</sup>** – Goat & Vine Winery & Restaurant, 195 Remington Blvd., Bolingbrook – 6pm RSVP (text or email) to Diane Parro by 1/14

[630-430-3808/dparro@comcast.net](mailto:630-430-3808/dparro@comcast.net)

**April 6<sup>th</sup>** – Biaggi's at 2752 Showplace Dr., Naperville – 6pm RSVP (text or email) to Diane Parro by 4/1

[630-430-3808/dparro@comcast.net](mailto:630-430-3808/dparro@comcast.net)



Mike & Amber Kolodziej

November 15, 2014

Jay & Cindy Caswell

November 16, 1968

Donald & Diane Lutz

November 27, 1982



## SUNDAY SOUP SALES

The Grace UWF fundraiser starts with “tastes and orders” Sunday, November 5. Orders will also be taken November 12. There are lots of choices: tortilla, chili, chicken noodle, enchilada, chicken rice, tomato basil, broccoli cheddar, potato leek, French onion, creamy cauliflower, corn chowder, loaded potato, chicken stew, eleven bean, sausage lentil, split pea, white bean chili and vegetable. All mixes are gluten free, non-GMO, no salt or preservatives, and the cost is \$10. Think of your favorites and consider gifts for family and friends, as you support your UWF's missional outreach. Questions: Call Cathy DuBois (815.228.8361).

# God's Work Our Hands

Thank you, Grace UMC for sponsoring our Crop Walk Team on Sunday, October 22, 2023. We raised \$560. For local and global food missions. Thank you, Grace UMC for sponsoring our Crop Walk Team on Sunday, October 22, 2023. We raised \$560. For local and global food missions.



Thank you to our Grace UMC family for all of your kind expressions of sympathy on the passing of my father, Jim Smiles.

Dad was a lifelong member of Ottawa Street and came to Grace through our merger. It was wonderful to be supported by cards and visits from so many members of both congregations.

What an amazing church family you are!

With love, Ray and Sharon Stukel

## DAYLIGHT SAVINGS TIME ENDS

Turn your clocks back 1 hour before going to bed on Saturday, November 4, or you'll be very early for church on November 5.

## MISSION OF THE MONTH

### Will Grundy Medical Clinic

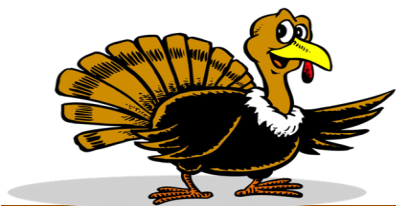
November

Funds collected will be sent to the Will Grundy Medical Clinic to support their mission of providing medical care for those in the community who cannot afford it.






| OCT<br>ATTEN | WORSHIP<br>8:30AM<br>10:30AM | CHILDREN'S<br>SUNDAY<br>SCHOOL | ADULT<br>SUNDAY<br>SCHOOL |
|--------------|------------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------|
| OCT 1        | 77                           | 22                             | 11                        |
| OCT 8        | 55                           | 18                             | 11                        |
| OCT 15       | 62                           | 22                             | 12                        |
| OCT 22       | 73                           | 24                             | 13                        |
| OCT 29       | 73                           | 26                             | 12                        |

Thanks to all who care for the beauty of our worship space with cleaning, flowers, seasonal decor, and more.



# November



| Sun   | Mon   | Tue  | Wed   | Thu  | Fri   | Sat  |
|---|---|--|---|--|---|--|
|   |   |  | 1<br>6:15 Bells<br>7:30 Choir   | 2<br>7:30 am<br>Men's Breakfast<br>    | 3   | 4<br> |
| 5 ALL SAINTS DAY<br>8:30am Prayer and Devotion<br>9am Christian Ed<br>10:30 Worship<br><br><b>Soup Tasting</b>          | 6   | 7<br><br>6:30 pm SPRC                              | 8<br>6:15 Bells<br>7:30 Choir<br>                                       | 9<br>7:30 am<br>Men's Breakfast  | 10  | 11 Veterans Day<br><br><br>6pm LA Mex Restaurant Club                                    |
| 12 COMMUNION<br>8:30am Prayer and Devotion<br>9am Christian Ed<br>10:30 Worship<br><br><b>Stewardship Sunday</b>        | 13  | 14<br><br>1 pm UWF                                 | 15<br><br>11:30am Pantry<br><br>6:15 Bells<br>7:30 Choir  | 16<br>7:30 am<br>Men's Breakfast<br> | 17  | 18   |
| 19<br>8:30am Prayer and Devotion<br>9am Christian Ed<br>10:30 Worship<br>1 pm Crop Walk<br><br><b>Commitment Sunday</b> | 20<br><br>5pm Daybreak | 21<br>7am Daybreak<br>Breakfast                    | 22 December<br>Grace Notes<br>Deadline<br>6:15 Bells<br>7:30 Choir<br> | 23<br>                               | 24<br> | 25   |
| 26<br>8:30am Prayer and Devotion<br>9am Christian Ed<br>10:30 Worship   | 27  | 28<br><br>6:30 pm Finance<br>7:15pm Church Council | 29<br><br>6:15 Bells<br>7:30 Choir  | 30<br>7:30 am<br>Men's Breakfast   |   |     |



Grace United Methodist Church

1718 Avalon Avenue

Joliet, Illinois 60435-5799

# Christmas Cantata

**Sunday December 17, 2023 10:30am**