



Grace Community Presbyterian Church
2751 Grant Street
Lower Burrell, PA 15068
724-339-9661
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Website: gracecommunitypresbyterian.org



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Our Staff

Pastor: Rev. Dr. Owar O. Ojulu
pastorowar@gracecommunitypresbyterian.org

Secretary: Kellie Newcomb
secretary@gracecommunitypresbyterian.org

Christian Ed: Bill Ludwig
Organist: Dane Skroupa/Lisa Clark
Treasurer: Ray Zerjav
Custodian: John Baron and Paul Zurich

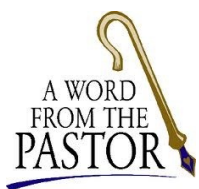
Office Hours:
Monday-Thursday
9:-00am—2:00pm

Worship Times:
9:00-9:45am-Kids Sunday School
10:00 am– Worship
11:00 am– Adult Sunday School



11:00 am– Coffee Fellowship in Cana Hall (downstairs) every Sunday (unless otherwise stated).





"And you saw in the wilderness how the Lord your God carried you as a man carries his son all along the way you traveled until you reached this place." Deuteronomy 1:31

My father was a tall and sturdy African man. He owned herds of cattle, sheep, and goats. His farm was the largest in our village and growing up, he would ask me to help sow crops as he hauled holes. That was his method of training me. Looking back, I realize that being the last child, I rarely experienced harsh discipline, but I did witness his different sides on several occasions.

I had a young man of my age in my village, named Agnyuwaa-Jom. He was a bully. He was tall and strong; I was skinny and short. I did not match him in any measure. While I was filling holes with seeds during the seedling season with my father, I reported this constant bullying. My father responded by saying, "Don't worry, my son, you are strong. Do not be afraid of him. If he continues with the bullying, just confront him; he will not beat you." *"He will not beat you!"* These five words stuck in my head. Indeed, one afternoon, Agnyuwaa-Jom ran after me, attempting to push me down from my back. In my reaction, I turned around, stretched out my fist, and the young man tumbled before me. From that day forward, he never bullied me again. I confronted my fear and my bully because of my father's powerful words.

In a separate occasion, I decided to go fishing with a spear. I looked in the closet of my father's hut and found a long dark spear. Then, in the process of fishing, I threw the spear into the deeper part of the river, and all my efforts to retrieve it were futile. Shaking with fear, I returned home. What I did not know was that that dark spear was not a regular spear, but rather an ancestral spear, that descended from generations and bloodline before him. My father did not punish or condemn me for losing that special spear; rather, he consoled me. His approach to my mistake encouraged me to see a different side of him, one that was supportive and understanding, even in the midst of my guilt.

Also, at one point, my father disciplined me for forgetting to release the calves after the herd was released for pasture. As a young boy, I was responsible for taking care of calves, but it was a finishing season where young lads often enjoyed their leisure time by the river. I had completely forgotten that it was the time when I was expected to go to the open range, a walk from the village. He was furious, and for the first and last time in my life, my father physically punished me.

Deuteronomy 1:31 speaks to our experiences and the nature of fatherhood. Israel's journey was tough, filled with thirst, hunger, and nights filled with terror; valleys filled with pits and destruction. Yet, God's leadership, discipline, and consolation enabled Israel to confront their circumstances on their path to Canaan. Like a father, God carried the nation of Israel on His shoulders (Exodus 19:4). And Moses remembered he couldn't confront Pharaoh alone, but God spoke into his fear (Exodus 6:11).

As we celebrate and honor fathers and father figures this month, remember that though they might not provide the comforting love like a mother, fathers inherently possess attributes of God's leadership and strength. He speaks strength into your weary and fearful soul. In his discipline, though sometimes harsh, he teaches you what is good and evil, providing practical lessons of life. He tells you not to worry, to get up, to confront your fear, your pain, and to keep moving when at the bottom of life's circumstances. He holds your hands and helps you walk to the finish line.

Happy Father's Day.

Pastor Owar



Sermon Titles & Summary—June 2026

In this month of June, we will begin a sermon series –“Christ Is Enough” and explore the depth of Paul’s message to Colossians. The book of Colossians is a small yet impactful letter in which Paul reminds the Colossians and the Christian church that Christ is enough for grace and salvation.

Sunday, June 7th

***Colossians 1:1–14*—“Growing Process”**

Paul calls for a faithful Christian journey with Christ, filled with spiritual growth, understanding, and transformation. He desires his readers to recognize God's grace, comprehend the fullness of Christ, and experience reconciliation and hope of future glory.

Sunday, June 14th

***Colossians 1:15-20*—“Christ Alone is Enough”**

Christ's supreme position and authority over all things is the main theme in Colossians. This tells us that Christians should place Christ at the center of their lives, understand His identity, His purpose, and recognize His sovereignty and authority over all aspects of their existence. Finding complete satisfaction in Him is the ultimate goal."

Sunday, June 21st

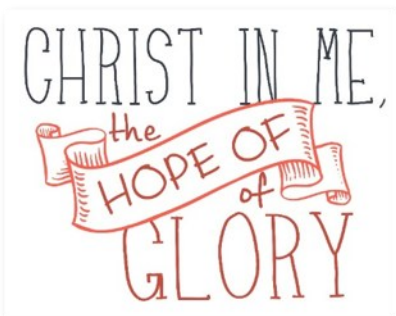
***Colossian 2:1-15*— “Are You Rooted?”**

Emphasizes the importance of being rooted in Christ as the central focus of a Christian faith journey. Your spiritual growth and maturity indeed spring from your connection and grounding in Christ. The passage warns against false teachings and the dangers of being conformed to the standards of the world. However, it also encourages you to focus on Christ, to grow in your knowledge of Him, and to live your life in a manner that reflects Him.

Sunday, June 28th

***Colossians 2:16-23*—“What is the Matter?”**

This passage effectively addresses the issue of observing religious practices and rituals within the context of Christian faith. Paul asserts that there is only one place to find true spirituality and meaning. This place is a personal relationship with Christ, not external rituals or traditions. He encourages Christians to move beyond legalism and human traditions, and to focus on the true spiritual fulfillments that only Christ provides.





Grace Family,

As we transition into this season summer, I pray that all your vacation plans go smoothly and bring you joy and rejuvenation.

—Exciting News in our Family—

While Ammani Graduated college, BeenyJwok finished pre school in May 2026



~ Get to Know ~

I am grateful for the many of you who have opened your doors to me, allowing me to continue to get to know each of you. This is my priority as your pastor. In the meetings I've had so far, I have enjoyed every moment with you, learning about your families. These meetings provide me with an opportunity to learn more about you, answer your questions, and navigate my work as your pastor, taking inputs from you to help our church grow within and reach out. So please contact our office and let schedule a meeting at your convenience. Thank you again for being open to my visits and for giving me this opportunity to be your pastor.

Kellie knows to

~Moving Plan~

We continue to make small progress; our garage is cleared and we are working with a constructor to reconstruct the front stairs. We are still aiming to place the house into the market by June. Your continued prayers are vital as we navigate this process.

~Vacation Plans~

I will be taking off Sunday, May 31st, and the next vacation will be taking off Sunday July 5th and the 12th. During these two weeks, I will dedicate my time to addressing Apay's health. She will be at the Cleveland Clinic Functional Health Department on July 8th, and we will go from there. We want to determine whether her pain is related to any dietary factors, and then explore other medical options to help reach a diagnosis for her chronic pain. Thank you for your continued support and love.

Blessings

Pastor Owar & Apay





Organist Search

We want the congregation to understand the scope of our search and know that the Worship Committee is working toward a successful outcome. So far, two musicians have responded; they are not interested in the position but are willing to serve as occasional Sunday guest musicians.

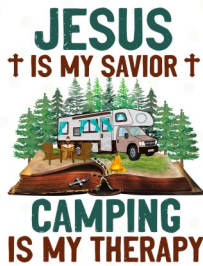
The committee has contacted 5 colleges or universities that have organ or music majors. They have posted our job description, and we have followed up with each to ask for more guidance where we can also have our notice posted.

Redstone and Kiskimentis Presbyteries have our needs on their website. Grace Church has job listing on our web page and on the churches Facebook page. The American Organist Society, Pittsburgh Chapter, has been a tremendous help in supporting our church and has our information on their website.

Finally, the Worship Committee would encourage all Grace Community members to go to the web page or Facebook page and repost it on your site. The more we reach others the more chances that someone knows a prospective applicant for the position of organist/music director.

Blessings,
Worship Committee

Community Events



Vacation Bible School
“Camping for Christ”
July 21st– July 23rd– 6-8pm

THE GARDEN CLUB FEDERATION OF PENNSYLVANIA



STATEWIDE GARDEN TOUR 12 COUNTIES • 90 GARDENS

Allegheny • Bucks • Chester • Clarion
Cumberland • Dauphin • Delaware • Fayette
Lancaster • Montgomery • Washington • Westmoreland

BURRELTON GARDEN CLUB & PUCKETOS GARDEN CLUB TOUR ALLEGHENY & WESTMORELAND COUNTIES

\$25 TICKETS
INCLUDES BOTH DAYS
SCAN TO PURCHASE



JUNE 20 & JUNE 27
9:30 AM - 4:00 PM
RAIN OR SHINE

www.pagardenclubs.org



DesiComments.com



Semi Annual Rummage/ Bake Sale

Friday– June 5th– Grace Community Church only– 4pm-7pm

Saturday– June 6– Public Sale– 8am –12pm

Whether your church is mega or small, the call and the work matter the same

BY REV. LORENZO SMALL

A CNN article was recently sent to me regarding the success of a mega church in Atlanta that I will not name. The premise of the article was that this pastor has figured out how to reach young people in the thousands, while highlighting the continued failure of the mainline church in America. The article actually names the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) as one of those failing denominations.

Now, before I write the rest of this devotion, let me say that we, disciples of Jesus Christ, celebrate wherever God is at work and persons are being reached with the glorious gospel of Jesus regardless of size and denomination. However, I refute any notion that says God is only at work in these mega places. Furthermore, I refute any teaching that says unless we employ a particular strategy, we are doomed for failure.

So today, I write to encourage and warn us one-talent pastors, that is, pastors who serve in communities like mine, Battle Creek, MI. Pastors who serve in places where the membership of these mega churches exceeds the population of your entire city. I am writing to us lest we become discouraged and, like the unprofitable servant in Matthew 25:14–30, fail to take seriously the call God/Jesus has given to us to be just as productive in our small places as our brothers and sisters in these big places.

The danger we face in the culture's persistence in only lifting up what they perceive to be markers of success in Christ's church—the big places—is that we can easily begin to believe that the small places, the one-talent places we serve, are of no real value to God or to Jesus. Not only that, but we can fall victim to the idea that the strategies these articles often reference, used by these mega churches producing mega results, far exceed the power of God's Holy Spirit at work in and through us.

That is not to say that we cannot learn something from our peers who serve in mega places, but we must never start to believe that human strategies trump reliance on God's Holy Spirit. Furthermore, success in Christ's church isn't always reflected by big numbers. The measurement of success in Christ's church is faithfulness, whether you have one or five talents.

“And he also who had the two talents came forward, saying, ‘Master, you delivered to me two talents; here, I have made two talents more.’ His master said to him, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master.’” —Matthew 25:14–30 ESV

If you spend time with this parable, you will soon notice that the reward rendered was the same for the servant with two talents as the servant with five talents. Why? I believe it is because the thing being measured was not outcomes but the servants' faithfulness with what their master had given them. Are we taking seriously what our Master has given us, though it be only one talent, metaphorically speaking? If not, we become like the unprofitable servant.

I pastor a predominantly older white congregation. When my family and I arrived, our diversity went from one to five, and our youth ministry went from zero to two. Now, on any given Sunday we boast about 10 to 15 teens in worship. The majority are Black, Latino and Mexican. During a recent worship, I surveyed the congregation, and we had six of them present. My boys were out of town, so we did not quite hit our normal quota, but that's not the point. Of the six who were present, four were Black teenagers between the ages of 15–18. They did not come because their parents made them. None of our teens' parents attend the church, except my sons, of course. They did not come because when they looked around most of the people looked like them. Nope. Of the 100-plus persons in attendance, 94-plus were white and over the age of 65.

So why were they there? I surmise it is because we have taken seriously what Jesus has given us. By no stretch of the imagination do these figures qualify as mega results—or maybe they do, taking into consideration Luke 15:10 ESV: *“Just so, I tell you, there is joy before the angels of God over one sinner who repents.”*

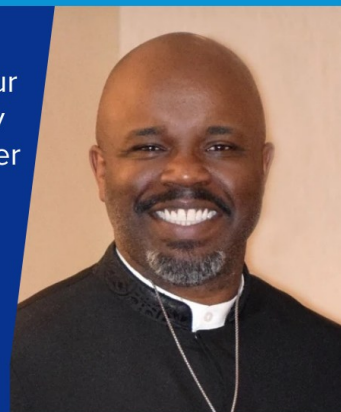
Nonetheless, I am certain they constitute the truth that God/Jesus/Holy Spirit is as much at work in small places as in big places. Never despise your small place, never measure your success in ministry simply by the numbers, and never forget the call is to faithfulness whether you be a one talent or five talent pastor.

Rev. Lorenzo Small

Rev. Lorenzo Small serves as Lead Pastor of First Presbyterian Church of Battle Creek, Michigan. He is a graduate of North Carolina A & T State University where he studied Finance. Following graduation, he moved to St. Paul, Minn., where he worked for a number of years in the corporate world (for such companies as 3M Corporation and Eli Lilly). While there, he felt the call to the ministry and was ordained as a Baptist minister. Following graduation from Union Presbyterian Seminary he was ordained and installed as pastor of Pleasant Ridge Presbyterian Church of Lancaster, S.C. Rev. Small is a board member of the Foundation for Reformed Theology. He previously served as pastor of First United Presbyterian Church of Charlotte, N.C.

Never despise your small place, never measure your success in ministry simply by the numbers, and never forget the call is to faithfulness whether you be a one talent or five talent pastor.

Rev. Lorenzo Small, Sr.



Presbyterian
FOUNDATION 

Library News

"You'll Get Through This"- Hope and Help for Your Turbulent Times- Max Lucado

This book was donated to the library by Barb McGeary. I have no doubt that Ken read this book many times. It offers practical wisdom to get through whatever "this" is- He tells the story of Joseph and how he was sold by his brothers into slavery but turned evil into good. *"You'll get through this. It won't be painless. It won't be quick. But God will use this mess for good. Don't be foolish or naïve. But don't despair either. With God's help, you'll get through this."*- Max Lucado

-Kellie Newcomb

Bible Study

Pat Briscoe has agreed to continue the Tuesday Bible Study. This will continue to meet in the Library at 1:00 every Tuesday (unless otherwise stated). Many thanks to Pat.



MARK YOUR CALENDARS!!!

Annual Strawberry Festival!!

Sunday, June 14th.

Details to follow at a later date.





Get to Know.....

Suzanne Pish

Name: Suzanne Pish

Nickname: Sue

Family Members: Husband: Michael, Children: Michael & Ben—Grandson Michael

Number of Years w/Grace Church: 25 years

Favorite thing(s) about Grace Church: The people, Pastor Owar and his teaching, it's a traditional church values with a loving congregation.

Occupation and/or Retired from: Region Support Specialist– GE Healthcare (40 years)

Favorite Meal: Grilled Cheese & Tomato Soup

3 Items Always in your Refrigerator: Milk, cheese, eggs

Favorite Type of Vacation: Annual family trips

Favorite Hobby or Recreation: Reading & Gardening

People Would Be Surprised to Know: I have 5 brothers and 2 sisters

Hidden Talent: Sewing

Always Wanted to: Read the Bible all the way through. (I'm almost there!) from beginning to the end, in a year.

What Makes My Heart Smile: The sound of children laughing

PLEASE KEEP IN YOUR PRAYERS:

- Lori G.– Lori finished her radiation treatments and now is “healing” and on immunotherapy. Lori has an amazing attitude/faith!!
 - Family of Ken McGeary– Grieving/Coping
 - Glenn N.– Glenn is back at Hempfield Manor Rehab, 1118 Woodward Drive, Greensburg, PA 15601 . Room 11.
 - Artmans– Rich is currently at The Willows receiving rehab therapy and Darlene is facing health issues and tests.
 - Debbie & Duke Pollick– Debbie is now suffering with calciphylaxis which Duke reports is painful and prognosis it not good.
- * If you have a prayer request for this newsletter, please let the secretary know. Thank You



Bequest Gifts

*Gift from the estate of Dale Branzet– designated to music, Worship, Deacons, Reach Out, Christian Ed, Mission, Property (including parking lot) committees. His wife Fay Branzet was a long time member and sang in the chancel choir.

*Blessing of a generous gift from an estate-donor wishes to remain anonymous. Session has met with financial planners to develop an investment plan.



Our Thanks to This Week's Sponsor

**GRACE COMMUNITY
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**

In Honor of

Glenn Nordmark

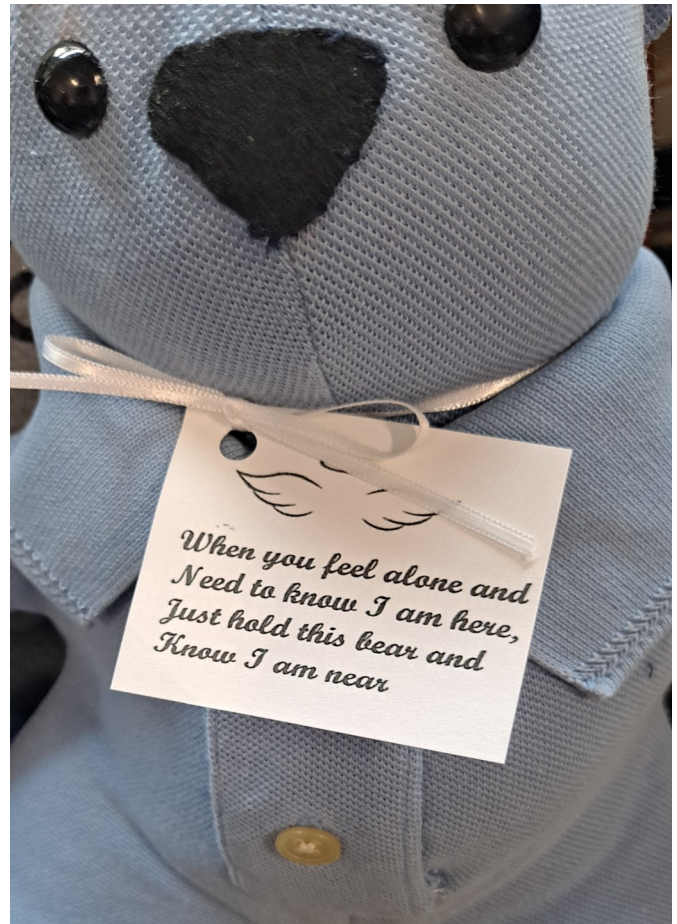
Thanks also to our community Sponsors



THANK YOU!



Look at these adorable “Memory Bears” that Dee Shaffer made for Ken McGeary’s family. The red bear is a shirt from Wales that Ken would wear on Christmas. There is also 2 made from t-shirts when Ken’s daughter Bethann won a bowling tournament. Ken’s son in Florida received a bear with a “Pirates” and “Steelers” logo on after he wouldn’t support his PA teams and his dad called him out on it.



Liturgist Schedule– June

June 7—Cheryl Landis

June 14– Cathy Brady

June 21– Terri Ludwig

June 28– Rev. Paul Milz

Children’s Message Schedule

June 14– Michael Cochenour

June 28– Brian Hacker



Sunday Morning Greeters

(sign up sheet located outside the church office)

It’s always so nice to be greeted with a smile!!



Coffee Fellowship

(sign up sheet located outside the church office)

Our church’s middle name is “Community” and coffee fellowship is a wonderful opportunity to catch up with our church family.

There is usually treats available in the freezer and the coffee/tea is easy to make.



Altar Flowers

Do you miss fresh flowers in the sanctuary? If you wish to purchase altar flowers, the sign-up calendar and order forms are on the bulletin board outside the church office. They are \$60 for 2 arrangements and provided by “Just for You” Florists.

RECIPE OF THE MONTH– Gerry Zelle's Chipped Ham Barbeque Sandwich

1 lb Chipped Ham

4 TBSP. Brown Sugar

1 cup Ketchup

1/4 cup water

Dash of Worcestershire sauce

1 tsp. red wine vinegar

Heat ingredients in saucepan then add the ham.

Serves 6-8

(submitted by Cindy Irvin)

What Makes A Dad?

God took the strength of a mountain,
The majesty of a tree,
The warmth of a summer sun,
The calm of a quiet sea...
The patience of eternity,
The depth of a family need,
Then God combined these qualities.
When there was nothing more to add,
He knew His masterpiece was complete,
And so, He called it ... Dad.

—Unknown



JUNE BIRTHDAYS/ANNIVERSARIES

June 1– June Cicola	June 4– Kellie & Jim Newcomb
June 2– Michael Maddox Pish	June 6– Jackie & Chick Chickerella
June 17– Reitha Bieranoski	June 15– MaryAnn & Lou Walter
June 17– Melissa Gott	June 15– Ryan & Melissa Gott
June 20– Olga Howrelook	June 16– Duke & Debbie Pollick
June 21– Mary Ann Love	June 17– Chris & Karen Legters
June 27– Barb McGeary	June 28– John & June Cicola
June 28– Mary Ann Walter	

Session Meeting Highlights

Grace Community Presbyterian Church

May 24, 2026

Stewardship and Finance:

Positive financial outlook. Discussed possibility of obtaining a CD in the future.
MSP to approve financial report for April 2026

Committee Reports:

Worship: Report for May 2026 was received.
No Session action at this time.

Christian Education: Report for May 2026 was received.
No Session action at this time.

Nominating Committee: Rev. Owar noted that Stephanie did a wonderful job.

Personnel: Dave Briscoe and Cathy Brady to oversee employee evaluations.

Property: Report for May 2026 was received.
MSP to approve purchase of 10 round tables w/rack for Cana Hall.

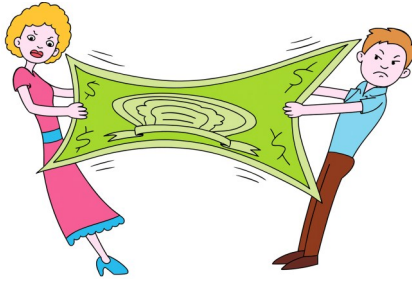
Reach Out Committee: Report for May 2026 was received.
No Session action at this time.

Moderator Report: Rev. Owar will email to Session members.

MSP to receive all committee reports.

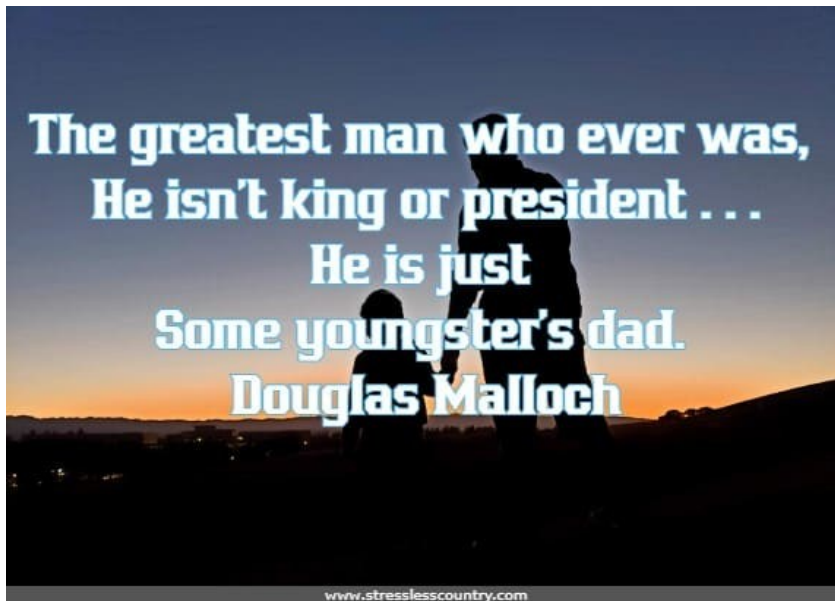
Next Session meeting on June 22, 2026

Adjournment: MSP to adjourn the meeting with prayer at 9:30 AM.



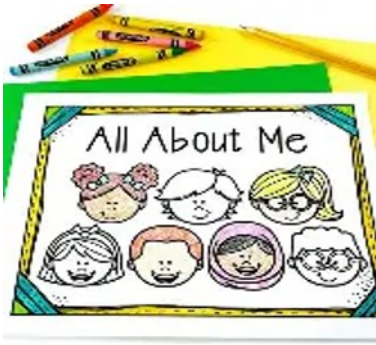
The shoebox item of the month is toothbrushes, washcloths, and hair accessories for girls. If you like to **stretch your dollar** - here are some good deals:

- Washcloths are typically sold in 18-packs at Walmart for \$4.88 or less - - that's less than 30 cents per washcloth
- FRESHMINT toothbrushes sold on Amazon are 23 cents each on sale right now (box of 144), and they come INDIVIDUALLY WRAPPED
- MEDLINE adult combs 9" are 24 cents each (box of 144) on Amazon
- FUMETE ball pumps (we give one with every soccer or playground ball) are 94 cents each (box of 100) on Amazon
- Coloring books for \$1 each at Dollar General are still the best deal we can find (adult coloring books cost more, but are great in girls 10-14 shoeboxes)



BAKE SALE ITEMS NEEDED

The Deacons are organizing a bake sale in conjunction with the Rummage Sale on June 6, 2026. We are asking the congregation to contribute baked goods. Cookies, brownies, rice Krispie treats, pies and cakes are all welcome. We will be at the church (Cana Hall) on Friday, June 5th from 4-7pm to receive baked goods as well as 8am Saturday morning. As always, the deacons appreciate your contributions. A sign up sheet is on the bulletin board outside the church office.



Get to Know

Name:

Nickname:

Family Members:

Number of Years at Grace Church:

Favorite thing(s) about Grace Church:

Occupation and/or Retired From:

Favorite Meal:

3 Items always in your refrigerator:

Pet(s), Names, etc.

Favorite Type of Vacation:

Favorite Hobby or Recreation:

People Would be Surprised to Know:

Hidden Talent:

Always Wanted to:

What Makes My Heart Smile:
