

*A Sanctuary of Hope and
Jesus' Love for Everyone*



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Grace-St. Paul's United Methodist Church

GRACE NOTES

December, 2020



Greetings!

Last month I started by asserting that we were standing on the threshold of winter's door, and the few snowflakes we've seen would seem to affirm that assertion. As such, as most of you undoubtedly know, we have seen the last of our 9:00 AM outside worship services for this year. Pastor Stephanie and I want to thank all of you who faithfully came to that service, as well as all who dropped in from time to time, or even once. It allowed a portion of the Body of Christ to assemble and worship together in person during a time when not all were comfortable doing so indoors. Though we all understand that it is Mother Nature who precludes us from meeting outside for the winter, we are sad to see it come to an end. God willing, we will not need the outside service as extensively in 2021, but do not be surprised to see it offered now and again in some form. It is a wonderful experience to worship God in the natural setting in which He has placed us.

As you read this, we will have entered the season of Advent. This is always a special time of year as we anticipate the celebration of Christmas. Usually, I remind people to take a moment amid the holiday hustle and bustle to remember why we celebrate at this time of year. This year looks different than any other in my memory. We all individually face difficult decisions about whether we should gather with extended families over the holidays. It feels like we have been robbed of so many things this year; in many cases, we have. The reality is that we are facing things similar to what countless brothers and sisters in Christ have faced through the millennia. Christians in other parts of the world must choose every year whether it is safe to celebrate Christmas publicly. This year we are facing some adversity as a church and as individuals. Personally, I am using that adversity to deepen and sharpen my faith. I am allowing it to help me to understand what I have taken for granted my whole life. It makes me aware of how blessed I am to have been born when and where I was. The old adage is that we don't appreciate what we have until it is gone seems appropriate. I hope and pray that my appreciation of Advent and the celebration of Jesus' birth hits vividly home this year as I learn to more fully appreciate why He came into our broken world in the first place.

As I finish this final note of the year, I pray that God through the Holy Spirit gives each and every one of you the very thing you need as we close this most unprecedented year. I pray that each one of you will be refreshed in body, mind, and spirit as we look forward to a brand-new year. Peace be with you all.



In the name of Jesus Christ,

Pastor Tim

Sunday Worship

10:00 am

MASKS MUST BE WORN AND SOCIAL DISTANCING MAINTAINED

Online livestreaming also available for this service. Please visit gspumc.org for link.

Sunday, December 6th

Second Sunday of Advent - Communion Sunday

Advent Tea Boxes

At worship on Sunday, December 6th, the GSP Women's Ministry will be giving out Advent Tea Boxes to the ladies of GSP.

If any ladies would like their box dropped off at their home, please call the church at 570-325-9151 or Heather Bacsick at 570-786-7120 and we will set that up for you.

Instead of having the annual Advent Tea Luncheon for the ladies, the Women's Ministry decided to share Advent Tea Boxes. These boxes will have homemade cookies, tea bags, and candies. Please enjoy!

Holiday Food Box Campaign

We will be preparing boxes for **17 families** in our community.

We are in need of the following items: **pancake mix, oatmeal, macaroni & cheese** (x2 per family), **spaghetti sauce** (no pasta needed), and **tuna**.

If you would like to donate, please let Eva Beckman know what items you are bringing in and please drop them off at church by **Thursday, December 10th**.

Bring as little or as much as you wish! Your help is greatly appreciated. Thank you!



Christmas Eve Worship- Thursday, December 24th

Worship Service at 2:00 PM

Worship Service at 7:00 PM

Livestream will be available for both services.



Christmas Eve Notes:

The two services will be the same format. Masks are required. There will be no singing inside the church, however, we are going to gather outside the church directly following each service to sing *Silent Night* (weather permitting). Please stay home if you are experiencing COVID symptoms or have been exposed to someone who tested positive. Thank you!



Tuesdays at 10 am

GriefShare is a 13-week program with video and discussion each week. \$10 charge for materials, but scholarships available.

If you or someone you know is grieving the loss of a close family member or friend, we are here to help.

Call Donna (570) 225-8565 or email gspumcoffice@gmail.com for info



Attention children of all ages and parents!

Check out the church's website for information and web link for lessons for Sunday.

You can pick and choose what activity you like to do.

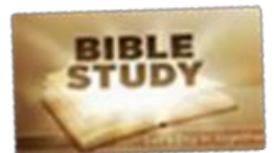
There are coloring pages, mazes, word searches, crossword puzzles, etc. for preschool to elementary ages.

All lessons are from the church lectionary.

We miss you all. Stay safe.

- KidzZone Teachers

Thursday Morning Bible Study 10 am



We are studying the book of Acts.

Join us in the church sanctuary. Social distancing will be in place and please wear a mask.

If you would like to join via Zoom, please email the church.



If you are in need of prayer, would like to participate in praying for others, or would like to volunteer to distribute requests, please email gspumcprayer@gmail.com or talk to Donna deVillers.

When submitting prayer requests, please keep the confidentiality of the person in mind. God knows the situation and all details are not always necessary.

Requests may also be submitted via our Facebook closed Prayer Group: GSP online Prayer Room

“They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.”
Acts 2:42



PENN-KIDDER MINISTERIUM AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAM
40 Church Road, Jim Thorpe, PA 18229
P. O. Box 2210, Albrightsville, PA 18210
570-722-1712 / pkmasp@ptd.net / www.pkmasp.vpweb.com
A Safe, Secure, Faith-Based Learning Environment for the Children of Our Community

Earlier this year, the “Virus” shut the Program down for five months. It now threatens to do the same, but God has other ideas right now.

Last week, the Jim Thorpe Area School District School decided that it would transition all education to a distance learning environment beginning Tuesday, December 1st with an anticipated reopening on January 19, 2020. Translated, this means that the children will attend school “virtually.” What this means to us is that the Program will be providing care and supervision for approximately 15 children needing a place from which to attend school. In other words, children enrolled in the Program will be spending their school day with us here at Grace-St Paul’s.

Putting the Plan and resources together to provide whole-day care, on such short notice, was a challenge. A 48-page plan was prepared, reviewed, and coordinated with GSP leadership. The results, I am happy to report, have been great. The challenges have been solved quickly, thank God and our excellent Staff at the Program.

We are implementing the Plan in such a way to keep the impact to the on-going GSP programs to a minimum.

We thank the Congregation for its continued support of God’ children!

Celebrations!

Happy Birthday to: Judy Manns 1 Nicole Meader 1
Marge Frantz 3 Benjamin Pieri 5 Cassie Wallace 8
Josh Moyer 10 Pete Pyne 10 Janet Drury 21
Christine Eckert 25 Andrea deVillers 26

Happy Anniversary to: Connie & Ted Jacobs 9
Linda & Harold Hydro 18
Sheila & Bill Barno 24

**If your special day is not listed, please contact Heather Bacsick (sweet88@ptd.net or 570-786-7120).*

Please note:

- **Administrative Council:** Thursday, December 10th at 7 pm via Zoom.
- You may still send in, drop off, or bring your Stewardship Campaign Cards for Sunday, December 6th.
- **Grace Notes newsletter:** Information for the January *Grace Notes* is due by 12 noon on Friday, December 18th to Heather Bacsick. Please send information to sweet88@ptd.net.