

Glimpses

of

Grace



Grace for Today, Grace for Tomorrow

August 2024

Seven Challenges Facing the Church



Church Leader magazine coaches pastors and church leaders toward helping churches grow and be more effective in their ministries. After several years of doing this work, they have compiled a list of what they see as the challenges facing churches in the next decade.

Here are seven of them with a brief suggestion on how to begin addressing them:

Challenge 1: Declining Worship Attendance

Most churches regardless of size or denomination are experiencing decreased weekly attendance, both in frequency and new members.

Solution Idea: Make worship a priority. It is the most important thing we do and this should be reflected in our budget and our calendar.

Challenge 2: Financial Strain

Giving is down in most churches. This parallels Challenge 1. When people stop attending, they eventually stop giving.

Solution Idea: Giving is often tied to attendance and when attendance is down, so is giving. Encourage people to give even when they can't be there, physically. And make it easy for them to do so.

Challenge 3: Digital Transformation

Most of us are not very good at digital ministry and the quality that we put out there shows it.

Solution Idea: Know who you are trying to communicate with. People under 40 use Instagram and "X" (formerly Twitter). Facebook is now almost all Baby Boomers. Don't expect people to come to these platforms looking for information. Take the info directly to them with Email.

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Seven Challenges Facing the Church—continued

Challenge 4: Volunteer Engagement

People are way less likely to commit today, and they are also less likely to keep the commitment once made.

Solution Idea: Instead of long and deep commitments, create one-hour opportunities and promote them heavily.

Challenge 5: Community Relevance

Churches need to become a relevant presence in their community.

Solution Idea: No need to re-invent the mission wheel. Rather than creating another food pantry or homeless shelter, encourage the church to support the ones that already exist.

Challenge 6: Spiritual Growth

Many Christians simply aren't interested in being challenged or thinking hard about what they believe so they avoid any opportunity to grow in their faith.

Solution Idea: Make growth fun. Videos are available that apply faith issues to old TV sitcoms. Approach scriptural issues through video or music. Break out of the old Sunday School models and create something new.

Challenge 7: Balancing Tradition and Innovation

Too often we find ourselves caught between "recruiting new members" and "keeping old members." We need new ideas and experiences to attract new people and we need old ideas and experiences to keep the old ones.

Solution Idea: Our church's programs and experiences need to show that both old and new have value. New expressions of the old faith are as important as the old expressions. The trick is to create a balanced approach.

I don't think of these so much as problems but as challenges and opportunities and here at GUMC we're already beginning to address many of them. Let's keep up the Lord's good work!

Have a wonderful August –

See ya in church,

Pastor Dean

Did you know that in Olde English the month of August was called Weod Monoth which means "Month of Weeds." But the word "weeds" here did not refer to rag weeds but to wildflowers. So, the Old English name for August was actually "Wildflower Month." Now you know.

Pastor Dean

Exciting Church Happenings

Free Dinner

GRILLIN' OUT!



The next community dinner here at Grace will be **Thursday, August 22** from **4:30-6:00 p.m.** The 4th grill out of the season.

Please volunteer to help, it gives one a warm feeling.

Thank you,

Bryanne, Carole, Ruth

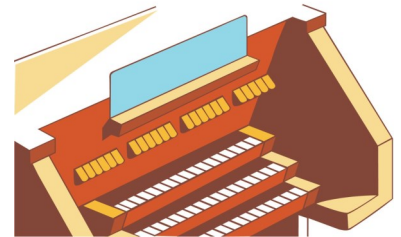
We have been blessed to have Bekah Davenport as our organist for the summer. She is doing a great job and it is so nice to hear the organ again.

August 18 will be her last Sunday with us as she will be returning to Ohio University for her Sophomore year, until her return the 2nd Sunday in December.

On August 18, Bekah and Patty will do an organ/piano duet for the prelude.

Mark the date on your calendar, August 18, a service you won't want to miss.

ORGANIST



**Children's
Room**

There is a sign-up sheet on the bulletin board by the ramp for volunteers to be in the **Children's Room** during worship, beginning on Sept. 8.

There is a need for 2 adults, not related to each other to be there.

In order to grow our church, we need this to make young families with children feel welcome here at Grace.

Please pray about this and sign up to help.

Thank you.

Our Church Family



3 Katie Coleman
4 Martha Joyce
4 Jane Perkins
4 Barbara Hameister
8 Pastor Dean Feldmeyer
13 Kellen James Stead
14 Kallie Chittenden Johnson
15 Lara Netherton
18 Karen Pope
20 Zach West
22 Erin Curry
23 Emily Harris
31 Harold McLaughlin



4 Ed & Peggy Huffman
5 Bob & Carole Haines
9 Fred & Janet Freeman
12 Kent & Jenny Chittenden
14 Jim & Ruth Johnson
14 Jeff & Michelle Ballinger

If you or someone you know would like to be included on our birthday and anniversary list, please contact the church office.



Jill Girard, Bev Shaw, Bill & Kathy Snowball, Debby Dunn, the family of Steve Steinbeck, Diane Salyers, Grant Haines, Rebecca Levering, Vicki Warden, Jim Ham-

mons, Tom Kittle, Jim Bailey, Mary Beth McCullough, Martha Joyce, Isaac Halker, D.J. Ross, Uncle Howard, Gary Moore, Beverly Cravens, L.J. Rineair, Courtney Hall, Glenn Funk, Angela Mueller, Ken Richson, Shirley Jacobs, Bow Hill, Faye Smith, Brandon Peery, Chrissy Charles, Charlie Johnson, Brenda Freeman Haley, the family of Shoranana Ison, un-named request for healing from cancer, health care professionals, those in hospitals, the jobless and homeless, our church, our village, our state, our nation and our world. Senior Chief Electrician Kyle Hoggatt, Sgt. Savannah Robinette, Major Morgan Bennett, Major Adam Putman (home from Germany), 1st Sgt. James Beckelhymer, 1st Sgt. Josh Fox

Dear Church Family,

We would like to thank everyone for the prayers & cards we received for Ed Adams. You were all so faithful in your prayers for many years & they were all appreciated. God bless you all.



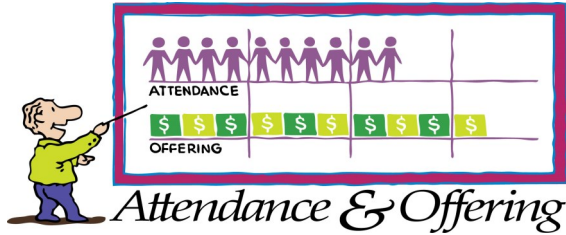
Your Sister in Christ,
Betty Adams
and the Adams Family

Dear Church Family,

Thank you to all who have called, stopped in, brought goodies and flowers, sent hugs and cards while I've been house bound. All have been greatly appreciated.

Martha Joyce

Bits and Pieces



Average attendance in July: 39

Average Online viewing in July: 34

Needed in July: \$9,612.00

Giving last Sunday of June & 1st 3
Sundays in July: \$9,102.00



Food Pantry Sunday
August 4

Communion
Sunday, August 11

Church Council Meeting
Thursday, August 15
7:00 p.m.

Sept. Newsletter Deadline
Monday, August 19 @ Noon

Free Community Dinner-Grillin' Out
Thursday, August 22
4:30-6:00 p.m.

Trustees Meeting
Wednesday, August 29
1:00 p.m.

FROM:
Judy & Harry Brumbaugh
Patti Loftin

Through your generous donations to the food pantry you helped to serve 280 people in July. The only needs for this month are: **chicken noodle soup, canned fruit, canned corn, spaghetti, crackers** and as always monetary donations are most welcome. Pantry hours are Monday & Thursdays 6-7 p.m. Volunteer help is also appreciated.

Thank you for your continued support of this outreach to the community.

Food Pantry Sunday is the first Sunday of every month.



The students and staffs of our local area schools, will soon be returning for the 2024-

2025 school year. Let us keep the students and staffs in our prayers that they have a safe, productive and enjoyable year. Blessings to all.



More Bits & Pieces

Newsletter

AUGUST

19

Deadline

The deadline for items to be in to the office for the September newsletter is **Monday, August 19 @ Noon. Thank You.**

Following Christ

To have faith in Christ means, of course, trying to do all that he says. There would be no sense in saying you trusted a person if you would not take his advice. Thus, if you have really handed yourself over to [Christ], it must follow that you are trying to obey him.

But trying in a new way, a less worried way. Not doing these things in order to be saved, but because he has begun to save you already. Not hoping to get to heaven as a reward for your actions, but inevitably wanting to act in a certain way because a first faint gleam of heaven is already inside you.

—C.S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*

Ingredients for True Success

How far you go in life depends on your being tender with the young, compassionate with the aged, sympathetic with the striving and tolerant of the weak and strong. Because someday in your life you will have been all of these.

—George Washington Carver

Stay in Touch with Us

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Web Site: blangrace.org

Pastor Dean: dfeldmeyer@yahoo.com

Assoc. Pastor Anita: grath47696@zoomtown.com

Office hours: Mon-Thurs. 9 a.m.-noon
Friday-Closed

Laughter is Good for the Soul

The Back Pew - Jeff Larson



In an attempt to make giving 'FUN'.. Nillydale Community Church implemented the use of Offeratory Frisbees.

A pastor is walking down the street one day when he notices a small boy trying to use the doorbell on a house across the street. However, the boy is very small and the doorbell is too high for him to reach. After watching the boy's efforts for some time the pastor walks across the street up to the little fellow and rings the doorbell. Kneeling down next to the child, the pastor smiles and asks, "And now what, my little man?" To which the boy replies, "Run!"

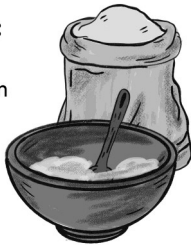
Kids' Korner



You don't have to visit the beach to make a sandcastle. Make fluffy "moon sand" to build fun structures.

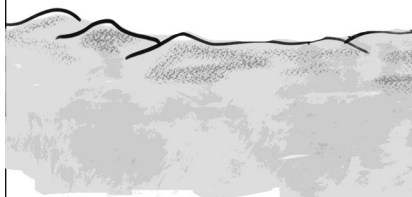
What you need:

- Large bowl
- Wooden spoon
- 8 cups flour
- 1 cup baby oil



What you do:

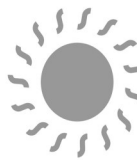
1. Measure flour into the large bowl. Add baby oil.
2. Mix thoroughly until all the oil is combined and the texture is consistent. If needed, use your hands to knead the mixture.
3. The sand is ready when it sticks together to form a ball when pressed in your hands.
4. Use sand toys and molds to create a sandcastle. Store sand in an airtight container for up to two weeks.



BY THE SEASHORE

The sea and its creatures are evidence of God's intention and purpose in creation.

Directions: Unscramble the words. Then copy the circled letters in order below to complete Psalm 104:24-25, NIV.



DASN

LHSELS

USN

ESEDAIS

BHECA

LALUBMER

WRTEA

FRUS

VWSEA



How many are your works, LORD!

In wisdom you made them ____;
the earth is full of your creatures.

There is the ____, vast and spacious,
teeming with _____ beyond number —
living things both large and small.

Psalm 104:24-25, NIV

Answers: sand, shells, sun, seaside, beach, umbrella, water, surf, waves, all, sea, creatures



Thanks to Ruth & Jim Johnson; Randy & Valerie Radcliffe for hosting the July *Coffee, Tea and Thee*. Great job!

Thanks to all who helped in anyway with the Free Community Dinner in July, especially the **Grill Master, Randy Radcliffe**. You are much appreciated.

Thanks to Pastor Dean & Jean for supplying the ice cream and fudge for Hot Fudge Sundae Day at the Free Dinner.

Thanks to Ellen Hill for the wonderful job she has done in the renovation of the church library. Well done!

Thanks to Fred Freeman for the new outside railings by the church office door and by the side walk You are the best.

Thanks to Linda Thompson for having the table service and drinks for the potluck dinner on July 14. You always go above and beyond.

If you would like to give a "Hats Off" to someone, please contact the office.

Glimpses of Grace is a monthly newsletter of Grace United Methodist Church, P.O. Box 66, 201 E. Center St., Blanchester, OH 45107; (937) 783-3655. You are welcome to worship with us each Sunday at 10:30 a.m. Adult Sunday School begins at 9:30 a.m. Rev. Dean Feldmeyer is Pastor. Anita Rathbun is Associate Pastor and Patty Williams is Secretary & Newsletter Editor.

Grace United Methodist Church
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CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

