

Dear Friends,

Can you believe that we are already in the season of Advent? On the first Sunday of Advent, December 3 we light the first candle on the Advent wreath, a purple one to represent HOPE as we anticipate the birth of Jesus. Hope is often defined as a feeling of expectation and a desire for a certain event to happen. Hope is positive; it is forward-looking; it is optimistic.



Hope is a light shining in the darkness of despair. That Jesus is born near the darkest time of the year is no accident; he is literally the Light that comes into a world struggling with the darkness of sin, despair, and death. As Mark 13: 28 says, "Take a lesson from the fig tree. From the moment you notice its buds form, the merest hint of green, you know summer's just around the corner." If I look carefully when we put up our outside Christmas decorations, I can just see the tips of our crocuses beginning to push through the mulch. Even in early December they are promising spring. That is hope.

Hope. When life seems bleak, that light of Christ will come to brighten your day. Hope. Just as you wait for that special visitor, expect the Christ Child. Hope. Christ comes to our hearts not just at Christmas, but every day and every hour to give us love and comfort, to be present with us no matter our situation, and to shine light in whatever darkness we are experiencing.

I know that the world may seem dark and troubled at times. With Christ we have a future. God is ever faithful. The Holy Spirit is with us. We are not alone. Let us begin this Advent season with hope.

Love in Christ,

Patti Miller



For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Isaiah 9:6

Announcements

~ A Congregational Meeting will be held after worship on December 17th to vote on the yoking proposal Memorandum of Understanding that has been available since Nov. 26th

~ Mrs. Claus' Mailbox: Beginning today, if you have a Christmas card for an active member of the congregation, please drop it in Mrs. Claus' mailbox by December 17, and she and her elves will distribute the cards (no postage required). If you would like to send a Christmas greeting to someone who cannot attend church, a mailing list is available by the mailbox for you to mail from home.

~ Sharing God's Grace donations to benefit the PAL (Provide-A-Lunch) program of the Hanover Area Council of Churches will be received during the last hymn next Sunday. Envelopes are available in the pews. (The last collection will be Dec 10th)

~ Financial Summary from November Consistory Meeting

General pledge October 2023: \$5,866

General pledge October 2022: \$11,543

YTD income: \$13,2541

YTD expenses: \$194,885

YTD deficit: \$62,344

~ Upcoming Events:

~ Advent Celebration TODAY immediately following church. There will be a potluck luncheon, crafts, decorating the church for Christmas, and singing Christmas carols.

~ Christmas Eve service will be held on December 24th at 10AM.

The Miracle of Hope



Grace United Church of Christ

100 Fourth Street

Hanover, Pennsylvania 17331

717-632-1146

December 3, 2023 ~ First Sunday of Advent

Gathering Music

Welcome/Announcements

Westminster Chimes

Prelude

**** Call to Worship**

Lector: As we enter into this holy season of Advent, let us open our hearts to the Hope of Christmas.

People: We are ready for this season of waiting and hoping.

Lector: As we enter into this holy season of Advent, let us be alert and expect the working of the Spirit.

People: God is with us, and we will enter Advent with open hearts, hope and the expectation to see God in our midst, not just as the Christ Child but as the Alpha and Omega, Lord of the Universe.

**** Opening Prayer (Together):**

Dear Lord, we rejoice that we can come into your house today and worship you with those who love you, too. Thank you for inspiring and leading us into this season of Advent. Help us to remember the true meaning of this season as we prepare to make room for Christ in our hearts and in our lives. We pray that all who worship here might experience Your love, grace, mercy, and forgiveness. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

Lighting of the Advent Candle: HOPE

**** Hymn: "Light of the World" ~ Tim Hughes***

Sharing the Peace of Christ

Joys and Concerns

Prayers, Lord's Prayer (debts, debtors)

Assurance of Pardon

**** Hymn: "Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus" 124**

Thank you for sharing your tithes and offerings

**** Doxology 625**

**** Prayer of Thanksgiving**

Sermon Texts: Isaiah 64:4-8 (The Message)

Mark 13: 28-37 (The Message)

**** Hymn: "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel" 123**

Poem: "Expectation"

**** Statement of Faith: "The Nicene Creed" 717**

Video: "A Baby Changes Everything" ~ Nash and Hill

Message: "The Miracle of Hope"

**** Song: "This Is Amazing Grace ~ Phil Wickham"**

**** Benediction**

Please remain standing to sing "A Choral Benediction" (Inside front of hymn book or on screen).

Postlude

*On the screen

** Please stand, if you are able.

Expectation

"I'm saying it to all: Stay at your post. Keep watch." Mark 13:37

The little boy could barely wait,
For Christmas time was near -
Circled in red that special date
That comes but once a year.
The parents smiled; his innocence
Seemed sweet, beyond compare.
His faith and joy were limitless
And spread hope everywhere.

Advent began and carols rang
To Christmas joy proclaim.
In church the family prayed and sang
As the first candle flamed.
The parents then did realize
The same hope as their boy,
And tears welled in the mother's eyes;
Her heart was full of joy.

It's not naïve or foolish whim
To view life as a gift,
For Christ is born; let's welcome him,
And let our spirits lift.
Let us like that small boy prepare
To greet with expectations
The Christ child in the manger, where,
Lies hope for all the nations! Patti Miller



H
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Christ the King Sunday, November 26, 2023

Scripture Reading: Ephesians 1:15-23

*Jesus was God spelling himself out in language
humanity could understand. —S.D. Gordon*

In its September 2018 issue, *The Atlantic* magazine asked the question: "Whose untimely death would you most like to reverse?" If you could turn back time and save a great leader, who would you pick? And what difference would it make?

The year 2023 is just one month shy of going into the annals of history. You can probably think of quite a few celebrities who have died in 2023. I am writing this in May 2023, and already we've noted the deaths of Tina Turner, Burt Reynolds, Richard Belzer, Raphael Welch, Stella Stevens, Bobby Hull, David Crosby and many others.

Did the death of any celebrity so far in 2023 hit you harder than another?

The response to *The Atlantic* question was varied. Abraham Lincoln, Walt Disney, Elvis, Buddy Holly, JFK, RFK and others were mentioned.

What about Jesus? Would you want to reverse the death of Jesus?

Today marks the end of the church calendar. Many congregations observe this Sunday as Christ the King Sunday. We remember the sign posted on the cross: "This is the King of the Jews." We end the liturgical year by remembering that Jesus died for us.

Next Sunday, Advent is upon us and we start over, headed now, not to a cross on Calvary but to a cradle in Bethlehem.

As horrific as was the crucifixion, I am eternally grateful for Jesus' love and willingness to lay down his life for me.

*All hail the power of Jesus' name!
Let angels prostrate fall.
Bring forth the royal diadem,
and crown him Lord of all.
Bring forth the royal diadem,
and crown him Lord of all!*

—Edward Perronet (1782)

—Timothy Merrill

Prayer: Lord Jesus, the words of John Newton seem apt: "How sweet the name of Jesus sounds, in a believer's ear! It soothes his sorrows, heals his wounds, and drives away his fear." Amen.



DAILY BIBLE READINGS

Sunday: 2 Peter 1-3

Monday: 1 Timothy 1-3

Tuesday: 1 Timothy 4-6

Wednesday: 2 Timothy 1-4

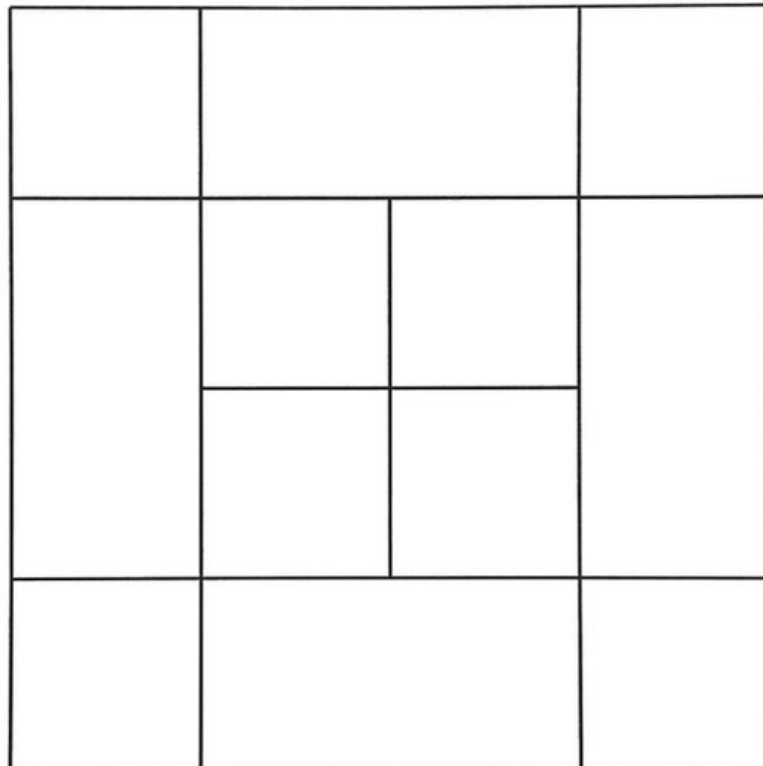
Thursday: Titus 1-3

Friday: 1 John 1-2

Saturday: Psalms 136-138

HOW MANY SQUARES DO YOU SEE?

(Solution next week)



Memorandum of Understanding for Shared Transitional Ministry
Grace United Church of Christ, Hanover and
Trinity United Church of Christ, Gettysburg

A congregation's transition between called pastoral leaderships is vital to the success of the relationship between the next pastor and the church. The transitional (interim) period provides an opportunity for a church to access past ministries and missions and to obtain the hopes of the congregation for the landscape of future endeavors and ministry.

Pastor Young feels called to enter this yoke ministry since Grace, Hanover is his home church who supported him in his initial call to ministry and eventual seminary education. Knowing the congregation of Grace on a more intimate level, and experience and training within the Church and Ministry Committee of the Association and as a Search and Call Associate and Clergy/Church Coach for the Penn Central Conference helps to establish a solid foundation to begin this partnership.

The purpose of the shared Transitional Ministry between Grace United Church of Christ in Hanover, PA and Trinity United Church of Christ in Gettysburg, PA is to provide ample opportunities for Grace UCC to heal, regain trust, access ministries, committees, and worship and to eventually develop a new ministry plan; all while sharing the pastoral leadership and resources with another UCC congregation. Such collaboration will hopefully allow Grace UCC to be ready to call a new pastor and teacher.

The yoke between Grace UCC, Hanover and Trinity UCC, Gettysburg will be a temporary partnership with a specific time period identified.

This **Memorandum of Understanding for Shared Transitional Ministry** is between Trinity United Church of Christ, 60 East High Street, Gettysburg PA 17325 and Grace United Church of Christ 100 Fourth Street, Hanover, PA 17331.

We agree to the following:

1. Trinity United Church of Christ (Trinity) and Grace United Church of Christ (Grace) congregations will share the services of Rev. Dr. Frederick Young for the purposes of worship, sacraments, pastoral care, leadership of church staff teams, and all recommended meetings.
2. Pastor Young would conduct a worship service one Sunday per month at Grace at 10 a.m. (At this time, Pastor Young is recommending the second Sunday of the month.) The other services at Grace would be led by Grace worship leaders or supply pastor. On the one Sunday Pastor Young is leading worship at Grace, Pastor Young will lead an 8 a.m. service at Trinity and Trinity will offer a 10:30 a.m. service led by a worship leader or supply pastor.

3. This Memorandum of Understanding is in effect for a period of 12 months with a review of the agreement at the end of six months. Either congregation may withdraw from this shared transitional ministry agreement after the six-month review with a 30-day notice. Pastor Young will have the ability to assess the practicality of the shared transitional ministry and to withdraw from the arrangement at any time with a 30-day notice.

4. Pastor Young would split his weekly pastoral schedule between Grace and Trinity. Pastor Young would work in the office at Grace two days per week for four hours each day unless extenuating circumstances arise. It is recognized that the Pastor's division of time and presence in each community of faith may vary from week to week, but is it expected to equal 50% of his time each month. It is understood that this yoking proposal would mean Pastor Young would have a 75/25 time split (75 Trinity/25 Grace) regarding worship services.

The Grace paid Visitation Leader will continue to assist Pastor Young with visitation. At Trinity, the Care Team will continue to assist Pastor Young with visitation.

5. Trinity will continue to employ Pastor Young on a full-time basis following his call agreement. Trinity will share that agreement with Grace, so they are aware of items such as vacation etc. Trinity will invoice Grace on the first working day of the month for 50% of previous month's pastoral costs to include: salary, health insurance, life and disability insurance, retirement, social security offset, continuing education, and parsonage utilities. The Pastor will separately log mileage for Grace and Trinity work travel at the IRS rate. Trinity will invoice Grace for the Pastor's mileage related to his work with Grace. This will NOT include travel from the pastor's home to Grace in Hanover and back to Gettysburg.

6. Any issues which arise in matters related to this temporary yoke of shared ministry services are to be directed to the Consistory President and Pastoral Relations Committee of each congregation who will consult with the Consistory to seek resources as may be helpful in resolving the issue.

7. Trinity and Grace are each responsible for arranging their pulpit supply during the Pastor's absence due to vacation, continuing education, illness, or other leave.

8. This agreement will come into effect on _____ (date).

Nina L. Redding _____ Date
President, Trinity United Church of Christ Consistory

David A. Fawks _____ Date
President, Grace United Church of Christ Consistory

Rev. Dr. Frederick A. Young _____ Date

An Advent Word Search

P	R	O	P	H	E	T	S	W	Z	B	H	P	E	S	O	J
E	A	F	S	W	D	G	M	H	T	I	A	F	D	U	H	Q
L	P	N	C	U	R	A	I	A	J	C	A	N	D	L	E	S
I	X	O	G	V	S	E	R	N	R	J	W	M	I	C	A	H
G	U	K	H	E	I	N	A	K	U	Y	Y	P	D	L	W	H
H	X	P	V	S	L	Z	E	T	N	R	C	Y	B	M	J	J
T	Z	Q	Z	N	K	A	T	C	H	E	T	G	E	C	G	O
E	T	H	Y	M	S	D	X	P	F	W	S	L	T	O	N	Y
T	C	H	I	N	U	V	Q	P	J	O	I	S	H	U	I	K
S	X	A	X	T	C	E	V	E	W	N	R	Q	L	N	T	F
G	Y	I	E	S	U	N	F	E	L	D	H	M	E	S	I	K
G	A	L	M	P	J	T	B	G	A	E	C	D	H	E	A	F
R	N	B	P	Y	C	E	U	R	A	R	R	U	E	L	W	O
L	G	I	R	Z	M	G	S	P	K	F	B	P	M	L	K	P
L	K	U	M	I	R	E	M	U	Q	U	T	N	U	O	I	T
A	X	M	I	O	E	R	D	L	S	L	Y	M	G	R	F	B
V	A	B	J	H	C	L	H	A	I	A	S	I	G	F	A	V

ADVENT
CENSUS
DARKNESS
ISAIAH
LIGHT
PROPHETS

ANGEL
CHRIST
FAITH
JESUS
MARY
WAITING

BETHLEHEM
COMING
GABRIEL
JOSEPH
MICAH
WONDERFUL

CANDLES
COUNSELLOR
HOPE
JOY
PEACE
WREATH

Ready for His Return

"Be on guard! Be alert! You do not know when that time will come." Mark 13:33 (NIV)

Based on Mark 13:32-37 (NIV)



What time
is it?

X S Y U H H R S L E E P I N G
J I E C E U N C F P R N C A F
B N T R T E D V W U C Z R P L
T A P R V R C E O X Y R O Q U
W T E A A A Y H O S Z K O Y K
T L E U Z V N G B T S F S W J
A H G J L M M T L C W J T U S
M I D N I G H T S O Z G E H N
F M L Q O E I N N S K S R O N
A T W R V V X K O N L N Y U X
T V H E V E D A Y E W E C S K
H J L Z Z N G E G A W J E E C
E D T X W I I N D D O O R S N
R K D D R N A T U M B Q K O C
A T I M E G P D D I K Q S F O

GUARD	DOOR	HOOR	ALERT	HOUSE
HEAVEN	SON	WATCH	ANGELS	CROWS
MIDNIGHT	FATHER	DAWN	ROOSTER	EVENING
DAY	TIME	SLEEPING	SERVANTS	KNOW