

2017 Church Office Report

Births

March 30 Isabelle Margaret Neff, daughter of Darren & Kelly Neff
August 24 Andrew Joseph Walsh, son of Matt & Julie Walsh
September 1 Emerson Arrow Mast, son of Derek & Tanya Mast
October 12 Alice Joy Rothenberger, daughter of Justin & Regan Rothenberger
November 5 Thatcher Christian Heyl, son of Justin & Alicia Heyl
November 23 Hannah Mae Smoker, daughter of Troy & Dani Smoker

Deaths

January 21 Mahlon Oberholtzer

Baptism

June 4 Adalie Clemmer, Cassady Foote, Hannah Miller, Matt Pierce, Austin Ranck, Ashley Ranck, Megan Ranck, Evan Zimmerman

Marriages

February 25 Cameron Stoltzfus & Ramona Martin

Average Church Attendance for 2017 - 224

Highest Attendance - 311

Lowest Attendance - 152

Notes of Interest

January 8 - Appreciation Breakfast

January 10 - Coffee Shop Hop at Shady Maple Cafe

January 11 - "Lifted", a night of worship at GPC

January 23 - Women of Grace, 5-week Bible Study entitled "Breathe" began

February 12 - Communion Service

Feb 23 - Coffee Shop Hop at Speckled Hen

March 13 - Members' Meeting

March 26 - GPC 101, lunch in the fellowship hall

April 1- GPC Annual Basement Sale

April 7 - Ladies Guided painting night, 7-9 pm

April 9 - Communion Service

April 20 - Coffee Shop Hop at Speckled Hen

April 23 - Dominican Republic Fundraiser Lunch

June 4 - Immersion baptism service at the home of James & Corrie Eby

June 17 - Run Ride Walk at Intercourse Heritage Days

June 18 - Communion Service

July 7, 21 & 28 - Friday Night Picnics in the Park

July 16-20 - Vacation Bible School

August 20 - Communion Service

August 27 - Child Dedication: Caleb & Carina Pongracz, Judah Rothenberger

September 18 - Women of Grace 8-week study entitled "Brave Enough" began

October 1 - "Coffee & Conversation" in Pastor Tim's office during the 9 am hour

October 15 - Communion Service

October 15 - "Big Girl/Little Girl Glamour Night"

October 15, 22 & 29 - GPC 101 during the 9 am hour, in Pastor Tim's office

October 17 - Coffee Shop Hop at Speckled Hen

October 23 - Vision Meeting

October 27 - Fall Fun Fest

Dec 7 & 11 - Christmas Open house at Tim & Jen's

December 17 - Communion Service

December 24 - Annual SS Christmas Program

Adult Education

Our mission is to lead people into a growing relationship with Jesus Christ by creating an environment in which people can build quality relationships, participate in life-changing Bible study, and develop a lifestyle of reaching out to others.

In the beginning of 2017, a group of about 50 people gathered together to talk about the 9:00 am hour and how to be most effective with that time. We focused on helping people to Belong, Believe and Become. Through the process of brainstorming and planning together, we launched the 9:00 am Intersect hour beginning in June of 2017.

Each Sunday during this time, we have a coffee bar open for people to connect with each other. There are also two elective classes to choose from and several age-based adult classes that meet as well.

Tim Rogers
- Lead Pastor

Elders

The Elder Board meets on a monthly basis or as needed along with many e-mails and phone calls between us. Our purpose is to shepherd God's flock at GPC in a manner consistent with Christ's servant leadership.

Some notable events of 2017 include:

- Worked on developing a job description and compensation package for the literacy liaison position
- Prayed for the prayer requests received from the congregation through the communication cards
- Worked with a group of congregational members to develop and implement new options for the 9:00 am hour
- Supported the missions team in sending short-term mission teams to the Dominican Republic, Maine and a small exploratory team to Taiwan & Cambodia
- Worked with the Deacon of Administration on staff benefit packages and what the best options are with the ever increasing cost of healthcare. A draft plan was implemented, but will continue to be re-evaluated as the healthcare market continues to evolve
- Updated the by-laws
- Ongoing discussions on "what's next" as attendance continues to increase
- Helped develop a renovations team to come up with and implement a plan to enlarge the junior high youth room and provide a new and larger space for the coffee bar

- Revised the communications card and implemented a new process with the goal of getting more response/prayer requests from the congregation and the ability to do a better job of following up with visitors
- Ongoing discussions on how to have a better assimilation process along with healthy adult and young adult programs
- Discuss ways to increase the interaction between the deacons and the elder board.
- Completed a book study entitled “Church Elders: How to Shepherd God’s People Like Jesus” by Jeramie Rinne
- Discussion on the best ways to balance staff resources as we continue to have opportunities in the local mission field through the Together Initiative Network
- Greg Petersheim will serve as Elder chair in 2018

We as an Elder Board thank you very much for your continued prayer support as we serve Him and you in the year to come.

Respectfully submitted,

Amos Ebersol, Chair
Greg Petersheim
Marty Clemmer
Chris Slabaugh
Kevin Hackett
Tim Rogers

**SAUDER SCHOLARSHIP FUND
for Biblical Studies
Grace Point Church of Paradise**

Philosophy

The Pastoral Leadership that the church will need for the next century is now being born, nurtured, and developed, growing out of today's congregations. It is only right that the pool from which our own future pastors will be called, should also be one to which we have been faithfully contributing. The wise are commended for sowing, watering, and cultivating while it is summer, that they may also participate in the reaping later. We intend to imply no commitment or obligation to or from any beneficiary of this program other than to further the faithful and worthy pursuit of their Christian life, witness, studies, and calling.

Purpose

This Scholarship Aid program is for the purpose of investing in, encouraging, and facilitating a solid Biblical education for young men toward a potential pastoral ministry somewhere in the church of Jesus Christ.

Qualification

Young men between the age of 20-40, who have been members of GPC* for at least one year, enrolled for credit in Biblical, Theological, or Pastoral Studies at an approved institution with a doctrinal stance compatible with that of GPC** are eligible to apply. The applicant needs to demonstrate spiritual maturity, character, and giftedness appropriate to pastoral ministry.

Terms

Applicants may apply for grants of up to \$250 per credit hour for courses in the general categories of Bible, Theology, and Pastoral studies. Grants will be approved at the opening of each term by the Elders in accord with available funds and with accountability arrangements set out by the Elders.

* Consideration may be given as funding permits for others who are in some way related directly or indirectly to GPC.

** A list of currently approved institutions are available from the Elders

Approved 11/2/98

Cemetery Report

Beginning Balance - January 1, 2017

Checking Account \$ 12,132.08

Income

Interest \$ 53.99

Donations 100.00

Sale of Lots 1,600.00

Funerals 6,750.00

\$8,503.99

Total Income \$ 20,636.07

Expenses

Digging graves \$ 2,780.00

Maintenance 2,836.34

Caretaker 1,425.00

Repairs, fuel, misc. 561.56

Total Expenses \$ 7,602.90 \$13,033.17

ENDING BALANCES

Transferred to CD - 4,624.16

Ending Balance (checkbook) 12/31/17 \$ 8,409.01

Money for Perpetual Care & Future Expansion

Bank of Bird in Hand (cd) \$ 81,251.08

Bare Financial (cd) \$ 25,038.36

Nevin Hershey, President

Richard Neff, Secretary

Ben Landis Jr., Treasurer

Children's Department

In 2017, the Children's Department included 45 regularly attending children from age 2 through grade 5. We also have someone in the hallway during the Sunday School hour. If a teacher would need something, instead of leaving the room, that person is able to get it for them. (ex: copies, water, markers) Also assisting the little ones to the restroom or offering a teacher extra assistance.

Children's Church was held during the Worship Hour on the 2nd and 4th Sundays of the month. Children age 5 through grade 3 were invited to participate. Teachers used music, stories, skits and various activities to present the lesson. During the fall, this time was used to prepare for the annual Christmas program. Many thanks to all the volunteers who helped make this special time possible.

As a congregation, we collected 85 filled shoe boxes for Operation Christmas Child, which were sent to children in several different countries. Many of our children look forward to this project, which is a fun way for them to get involved in the joy of giving.

The Christmas program was held on December 24 during the Sunday School hour. Children in grades K through 5 presented a musical called "Just a Little Christmas." Preschool children also joined them for a song.

I appreciate the dedication of those who have taught SS throughout the year and thank them for taking the time to invest in the future of GPC through the lives of our children.

In August I gave each teacher/helper a commitment letter to commit for another year, running with the school year, September 2017 - September 2018. This will continue as I do not want anyone feeling like they can't get out of teaching or helping.

We could not do this without each and every one helping!

Sharon Burget
- Children's Department Director

Deacon Board

The purpose of the GPC Deacon Board is to serve as a supporting role in assisting the Elders in the work of the ministry of the Church.

There are five Deacons and these positions are currently filled by the following people:

Deacon of Administration	Cliff Mast (replaced Rob Beiler 1-1-18)
Deacon of Property	Kevin Beiler
Deacon of Support	Todd Zimmerman
Deacon of Hospitality	Randy Kunkel
Deacon of Caregiving	Sheri Yoder

The Deacon Board is chaired by the Deacon of Administration and it met various times throughout the year. At other times, decisions were made via email and phone calls. Our discussion and decision making revolved around tending to the physical, material and practical needs both of the building, congregation and the community.

We appreciate your support as we strive to provide the proper oversight and support of various functions of the church and to be of assistance to the Elders.

Rob Beiler
- Deacon of Administration

Flower Committee

Fresh flower arrangements were placed at the welcome center when they were available.

The two large pots at the west entrance were filled with seasonal plants in the spring, summer, fall and winter.

- Adrienne Neff & Corrie Eby

Food Service Committee

Committee - Heidi Kunkel, Michelle Fisher, Katie King, Lynne Huenink, Alesia Yoder, Sheryl Gehman, Peg Graber

Kitchen Co-managers: Vern Beiler, Linda Beiler

The food service committee served for the following events in 2017:

January 8	Appreciation Breakfast
February 4	Mahlon Oberholtzer memorial meal
July 7	Friday Night Picnic in the Park

A BIG thank you to:

- all the committee members for helping to prepare & serve at the events
 - many from the congregation who helped in different ways with the events
 - Randy Kunkel and his crew to set-up and tear-down the fellowship hall
 - for food and monetary donations from the congregation
- Heidi Kunkel & Michelle Fisher

2017 Grace Groups

At Grace Point, we believe we are here to be developing fully devoted followers of Jesus Christ. We believe that growing and maturing together in the context of true community is vital in accomplishing our stated mission. One of the primary ways that we encourage each other to do this is through a network of small community groups, what we like to call "Grace Groups." We currently have five Grace Groups meeting in homes throughout the Lancaster County area.

2017 Grace Groups Listing:

Beiler Grace Group, Austin & Katie Beiler, Leaders

Smucker Grace Group, Eric & Sabrina Smucker, Leaders

McDonald Grace Group, Wes & Laura McDonald, Leaders

Smoker Grace Group, Vernon & Deb Smoker, Leaders

Martin Grace Group, Fred & Mim Martin, Leaders

Library

In 2017, 5 books were donated to the library and 1 dvd.

150 books were checked out, which were mainly children's books. 25 dvd's/videos were checked out as well .

Jen Smith was added for a term. Denise Kreider & Maria Beiler are also in the midst of terms. Joyce Kreider finished her term.

- Amber Zimmerman

Missions Committee

2017 was another encouraging year for GPC missions as we continued to help expand the impact of the Together Initiative.

We came together again in 2017 and accomplished the following projects:

- Held community picnics and games every Fri night in July at Paradise & Salisbury Park
- Provided additional programming and meals for Pequea Valley summer school
- Sponsored workshops through The Factory Ministries

The 6th annual Paradise Run Ride Walk was the main fundraising event for the Together Initiative and took place on June 17, 2017. We again partnered with Intercourse Heritage Days for this event. It raised \$15,000 for the Together Initiative. We had great weather and participation for the 5K race, kid's fun run, and 25 & 50-mile bike rides.

In September, a group of 17 cyclists rode from Paradise Elementary School to St. Louis, MO to raise awareness and money for the Together Initiative. Once in St. Louis, members of the Together Initiative presented the work of the Initiative at a national conference on poverty put on by the Aha! Process. \$8,000 was raised for the Initiative.

In 2017, GPC sent several mission teams. We sent Chris & Joyce Slabaugh and Vernon & Deb Smoker to Taiwan and Cambodia to support and visit Bobby & Michele Law and Don & Tabitha Nguyen. We also sent a team to Monson, Maine for one week to partner with Daryl & Mary Witmer on a work project. Lastly, we sent a team to the Dominican Republic to partner with the Lehrs and Makarios by running VBS and sports camps.

We helped to resettle a refugee family from the Congo. Shortly after their arrival, the family transitioned out of state to stay with relatives.

The missions team also helped plan the annual Fall Fun Fest in October which was another great success.

For the second year we had the opportunity to devote the entire final offering from 2017 to support local ministries and our missionaries. The offering was divided between The Factory Ministries, Open Door Development in Burkina Faso, Makarios in the Dominican Republic, Daryl & Mary Witmer and the Pequea Valley Education Foundation.

We supported the following missionaries in 2017: a family in Western Asia, Bobby & Michelle Law, Don & Tabitha Nguyen, Heather Albrecht, Matt & Julie Walsh, Daryl & Mary Witmer and Kevin & Christine Lehr.

The 2017 missions team members were: Katie Kauffman, Tim Rogers, Jessica Smoker, Marty Clemmer, Lloyd Eby, Cliff Mast and Joyce Slabaugh. Thank you for your participation and support throughout the year! We thank God for the ways He used GPC in 2017.

Tim Rogers
- Missions Committee Chairman

**Necessary Steps
in preparation for Short Term or Career Mission Service
as a member of
GRACE POINT CHURCH OF PARADISE**

Jesus Christ instructed us to "... go into all the world and preach the Gospel to all creation." (Mark 16:15) Certainly we need not leave our home community to do that...and we don't become a missionary by crossing water or leaving home. There are missionary opportunities all around us...at school, work, or in our daily routine of meeting and interacting with those around us.

However, there are times in our lives when God may ask us to "go" to a particular place as an answer to His call to us individually, or He may call us to be part of a group who will engage in missionary work of some nature...stateside or in a foreign country.

If you sense a call from God, through His Holy Spirit speaking to you, here is what you should do, in the order listed:

1. Arrange to talk with Pastors or the Missions Committee chairman, in order to receive help in discerning your call and area of interest.
2. As a part of above consultation, you will receive help to think about the most appropriate mission agency to which you should apply, and the church will assist you in this, in order that you know you have the full backing of your congregation as you move ahead.

Financial Considerations:

1. Particularly in the case of short-term missions, it is necessary to raise support. The Missions Committee will be quite helpful in this process if you are working with us from the beginning.
2. Fund raising activities are encouraged, in keeping with those methods approved by the church.
3. Modest grants are available to qualified persons from the Etta and Mel Beiler Trust Fund, with consideration given regarding length of service, availability of funds, etc. These funds are administered by the Missions Committee.
4. Members may designate support for missionaries in the offering envelope system. However, contributions must be to agencies and not directly to the candidate, otherwise they would not be tax deductible.
Commissioning services are usually scheduled for persons serving for one month or more.

Nursery

The youngest members of the GPC family continue to increase in number! We have had six new babies born since last year's report, as well as others who have joined us at older ages.

We average 4-6 children in the infant room on Sundays, and around 10-12 in the 2-4 year old room. We have around 65 volunteers faithfully staff our rooms.

We had a child dedication in August, where three children were dedicated to Christ, and will be having another in the Spring of 2018.

Becca Holt
- Nursery Coordinator

Junior High Student Group

Our Spotlight group consists of 6th, 7th, and 8th graders. We average around 20-25 youth at our events. We meet the 2nd and 4th Wednesday of each month for Bible Study, plan one other activity each month, and do outreach opportunities throughout the year. The following is an overview of our year:

January	Ozzy's Family Fun Center
February	Movie Night
March	Girl's Sleepover, Boy's Breakfast, Turkey Hill Experience
April	Together Initiative Network Day of Caring - service project
May	Village Greens Mini Golf
June	Mt Gretna beach day trip
July	Pool Party - Pongracz house
August	Kickball kick-off
September	Wacky Welcome Night
October	GAIN Outreach service project/Flashlight Maze
November	Barn Party
December	Kitchen Kettle Live Nativity, Christmas Party, Landis Homes Christmas Caroling

A few of our Bible Study topics were:

Just Like Jesus - Remembering that Jesus is our ultimate role model and representing him as we go throughout our days

Time Out! Pausing Our Lives to Grow with Jesus - Learning about the value of solitude and scripture memorization

Four Things - A focus on four things that can be harmful to our lives (lying, gossip, popularity, multiple me's)

Jr High Student Group Leadership Team,

Austin & Katie Beiler

John & Steph King

Corinne Petersheim

Cameron & Ramona Stoltzfus

Senior High Student Group

Sunday School – This year our studies have been aimed at challenging students to focus on their personal relationship with God through practical applications that prepares them for life after youth group. The book of James has been our framework. We have also inserted stand alone discussion-based sessions in which we interact critically and biblically with a specific media piece. These opportunities help students train their critical thinking skills and equip them to filter their culture through a theological framework.

Wednesday Group – Food, fun and fellowship typify our Wednesday evening gatherings. Each evening has a Bible Study component and a chance to get more personal in small group discussions. Our key studies this year have focused on the importance of choosing friendships wisely, discovering pathways to God, walking through the stories of faithful missionaries, and looking into the Word for ourselves. The volunteer leadership team has undergone some changes recently and we are building toward a significant shift in both scheduling and structure of student group. We're looking forward to serving students and families better in the coming season of change.

Over the summer, we continued a tradition passed down from Wes McDonald and we took to the homes of staff and students and even some outings to Paradise Park. Our meetings consisted of pool parties, ultimate frisbee, game nights, bonfires and good conversations.

Activities and Events – Here's what has been on our calendar:

Super Bowl Party at the Neff's house, Ping-Pong Tournament (at GPC with official bracket), Father/Son backpacking trip on the West Rim Trail, a trip to Hershey Park, a Sr. High combined kick-off event, a multi church Turkey Bowl football event, an Ugly Sweater Christmas party to cap it off.

All activities are planned with the intention getting to know our students and building relationships along the way that encourage and challenge. Creating space and environments where trust and openness grows allows us to meet students where they are and point them to Christ.

Staff – Adult staff this past year included Dylan Salyards, Tim and Heather Albrecht, Bethany Rudy. Our newest members include: Kent Buohl, Karla Neff, Kendra Neff, and Zach Neff.

Last note - It has been a privilege to serve in this pastoral capacity along with my wife and the other volunteer leaders. I am continually blessed in countless ways through the relationships with students, staff and their families. I am very hopeful about the future of Student Ministry at GPC and look forward to what God has in store!

Respectfully submitted,

Kevin Hackett
- Pastor of Student Ministries

Women of Grace

- A Ministry for Women at GPC -

The Women of Grace, Women's ministry, has continued to grow in 2017. We love seeing women connect with each other and growing in their faith; having honest and real conversions and supporting each other in life's ups and downs.

We hosted a Guided Painting Night with Amanda Crooks in April.

We continue to offer a fall and winter Bible Study session with a morning and evening group.

We hosted a "Big Girl/Little Girl Night" in the fellowship hall on October 15. This was an event where we paired up girls ages 3-5th grade with girls in Jr High and Sr High. We all had a wonderful time remembering that God has made us each so different and that he loves us very much. Our event consisted of a beauty parlor, craft area, photo booth, a wonderful tea party and some games and dancing to praise music at the end.

Ladies are enjoying the "Coffee Shop Hop" events as well. We choose a different coffee shop each month and ladies come when it works for their schedule we averaged 10-16 ladies each time. These are great evenings of fellowship and encouragement.

- Michelle Miller

Community Cooperative Programs

Meals on Wheels

Meals on Wheels is a community program designed to provide meals for residents who for various reason, would otherwise not be receiving proper nutrition.

The program is designed to provide one hot meal and one cold meal to participants five days a week. There is a nominal fee to cover the cost of the food. The preparation, the packaging, and the transporting of the food to the resident recipients is the result of volunteer service.

The cold meal and the packaging is done in the kitchen of the Leacock Presbyterian Church. Bird-in-Hand Restaurant prepares the hot meals. We serve about 34 meals a day.

It takes many volunteers to cover kitchen help and drivers for two routes to deliver meals. Volunteers from GPC are Peg Graber, Nevin & Ruth Hershey, Charlie & Glenda Neff and Ellie Oberholtzer. We are in need of more volunteers.

Happy Hearts SS Class donates \$300 to help cover the cost. We thank each one that helped.

Ruth Hershey
- Board Member

Wednesday Night BLAST

We've had another great year at Wednesday Night BLAST! We closed out our 2017 year in the spring with a BLAST celebration. The children and parents joined us for dinner and we showed a slideshow, as well as provided a craft and some games for the children to play.

Our fall session began in October and has been going very well. The main change this year was that Michelle Miller left the lead team and Andrea Ebersol joined the team! We have all been working together and the children seem to have a great time each week! BLAST continues to grow; we average between 50-60 students each week. The interest groups we offered this year were woodworking and team building. A local PV teacher volunteered to lead the woodworking group, so that has allowed us to form another great connection with the local school district.

Overall, we are enjoying the opportunity to minister to the children that come to BLAST and remind them each week how deeply loved they are by Christ.

- Regan Rothenberger, Dani Smoker & Andrea Ebersol

Vacation Bible School - 2017

Maker Fun Factory: Created by God, Built for a Purpose

Curriculum

This year, once again, we used Group's most current curriculum, "Maker Fun Factory: Created by God, Built for a Purpose." Children, ranging from Pre-K through those who completed grade 5, spent the week discovering that our loving God made each of us and that His love gives us incredible purpose.

Attendance

The average nightly attendance was 85 children. Approximately 100 volunteers helped throughout the course of the week with 85 staff helping every night and an additional 15 filling in as needed. Of those 100 volunteers, 29 were teens. Everyone was a huge blessing to make this ministry happen!

Nightly Format

Each evening began with an assembly time in the sanctuary. The elementary children and preschoolers alike were treated to a short skit and song time. Following the assembly, each child, along with their crews, visited four different stations: Bible Teaching, Snacks and Kid Vid, Games, and Imagination Station. For the elementary students the evening concluded with a short closing assembly. Pre-school crews ended their evening with a short circle time.

Crews

Crews were led by an adult crew leader and teenage crew assistant. There were five preschool crews, four K-2 crews and three grade 3-5 crews. An effort was made to keep crews smaller this year. Each crew contained approximately 5-8 children.

Missions Project

This year's project, "Share What You Can," focused on filling the Factory Ministries' Food Bank. Donations of both non-perishable food items and cash gifts were encouraged. Our goal, 600 food items, was graciously exceeded. A total of 610 items were donated!

Music CDs

As in previous years, each family attending VBS was given a cd containing the Maker Fun Factory music. GPC families' CDs were placed in their church mailboxes in the spring. Other families attending VBS received them at the registration table.

Advertising

Three main forms of advertisement were utilized this year to notify families in the community of GPC's VBS. Flyers advertising our VBS were available at the Welcome Desk in May for GPC children and families to hand out at school and in their neighborhoods, etc. During the last week of June, a color advertisement was placed in the Pequea Valley Penny Saver. Then, in the beginning of July, an email invitation/flyer was sent out to all of the families of children who attended VBS or BLAST in the past two years.

Dinner

Dinner was provided for staff and their families before VBS Monday through Thursday. A donation basket at both the Welcome Center on Sundays and serving counter each evening of VBS helped cover the meal costs.

Closing Social

Thursday, the final evening, ended with a special closing assembly that parents and family members were invited to attend. The closing assembly included songs, a skit, and a slideshow highlighting the week's events. At the conclusion of the closing assembly, families were invited to the church parking lot for an ice cream treat and time of fellowship.

Directors: Abby Tyrrell and Kristen Gentzler