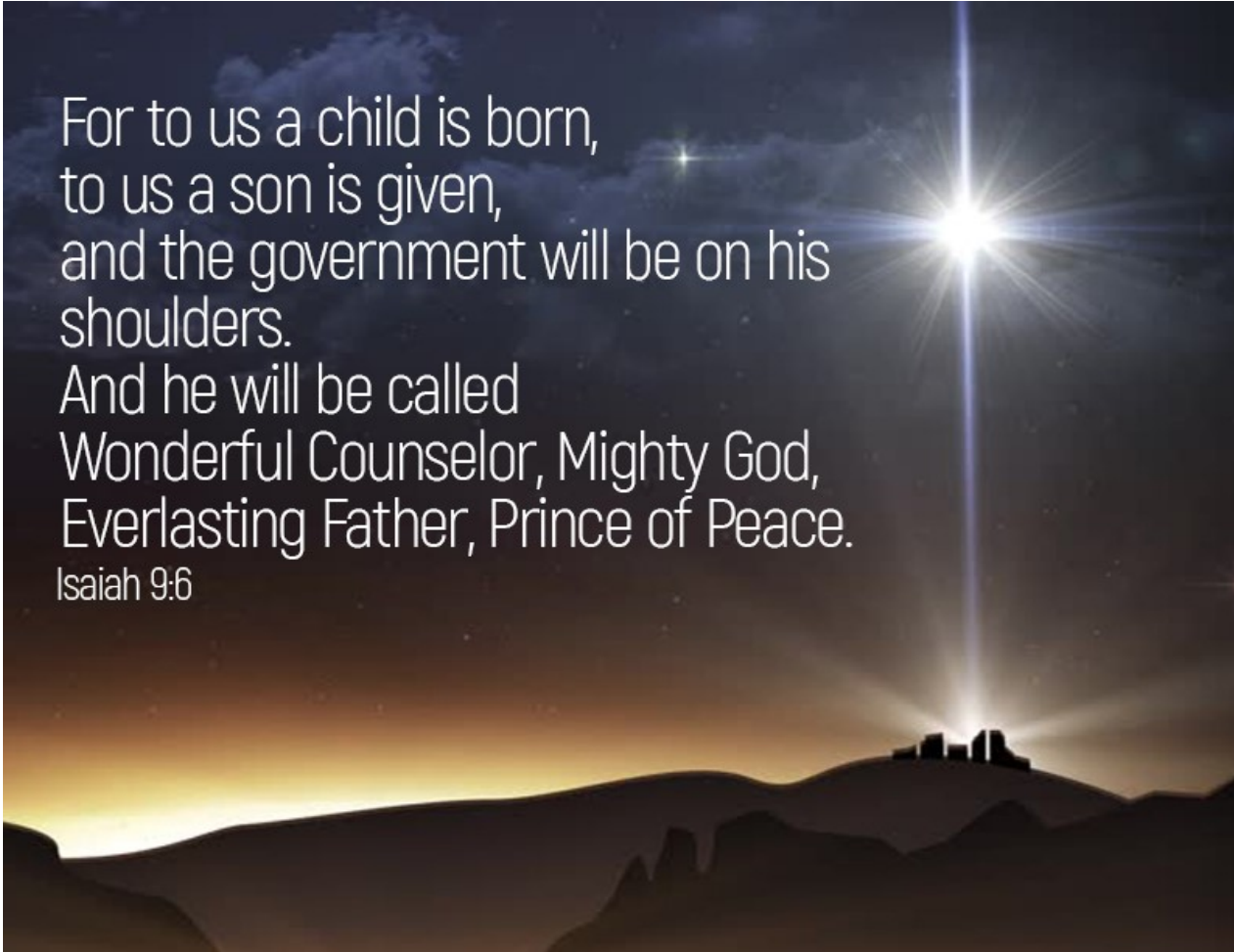


Grace Methodist Church

Grace Reporter

December 2023 / January 2024



For to us a child is born,
to us a son is given,
and the government will be on his
shoulders.
And he will be called
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.
Isaiah 9:6

Join us to celebrate the birth of Christ!

Christmas Caroling ~ Sunday, December 10 ~ 4PM-7PM

Christmas Musical ~ Sunday, December 17 ~ 9AM & 10:45AM

Christmas Eve Sunday Worship ~ December 24 ~ 10AM

Christmas Eve Barn Service 5PM (at the Waleski Farm, Richeyville)

Christmas Eve Candlelight Worship ~ 7PM and 9PM

Grace Church in Action



Join us for a Christmas Covered Dish Luncheon on Sunday, December 10.

Bring a dish to share and enjoy holiday cheer.

Remember: Jesus is the reason for the season!

Mark Sunday, January 14, as the first Fellowship Covered Dish Luncheon of 2024!



There are still a few Kindness Stones in our Prayer Garden. Painted and placed by our SWAGgers last summer, the Kindness Stones are a great way to be reminded of the love and faithfulness of God.

Keep one for yourself and share one with a friend.



December and January suggested donations:

Hooded baby towels, Washcloths, Blankets, Crib Sheets, Baby Wipes, Disposable Diapers (Newborn to 3, 4, 5)

Their greatest needs are baby wash, baby lotion and wipes

Praying for you from the computer . . . Pastor Ken

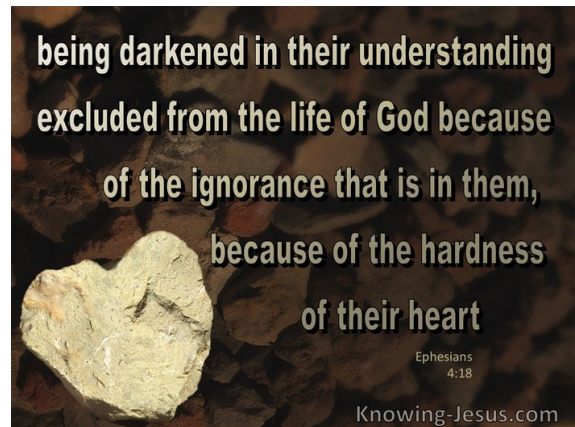
“Their minds are full of darkness; they wander far from the life God gives because they have closed their minds and hardened their hearts against him.” Ephesians 4:18 (NLT)

You probably know the Christmas story better than most.

You’ve probably heard it many times.

It is probably very familiar to you.

But it may not inspire or amaze you anymore.



You're not alone.

When I read the Scriptures about the very first Christmas, there was a group of people—spiritual and religious leaders in Jerusalem—who were a lot like me.

I think about it frequently.

They knew the Scriptures. They understood the prophecies.

Yet despite everything they knew, these leaders missed the birth of Jesus because they were very familiar with the Scriptures.

The next time you read the Christmas story take notice that when the Son of God was born, not a single religious person was invited. The people who should have known the most about the birth of Jesus didn't have a clue.

But the wise men, who had studied the Hebrew Scriptures, came from the East because they had seen the star.

They knew the Savior of the world had been born—they just didn't know where.

When the wise men asked King Herod of Israel, he had no idea.

But Herod's religious advisers knew exactly what the wise men were asking.

They'd been waiting for Jesus to come for hundreds of years.

They had discussed it, debated it, and dissected it.

But unlike the wise men, they didn't even want to check out the claim.

And one of the reasons why was because over time, they started paying more attention to traditions than waiting for the Messiah.

That sounds familiar, doesn't it? We have so many Christian traditions.

Our churches hold many of these traditions and they are important.

Continued on page 6

Give Thanks to Him & Praise His Name! Psalm 100:4



Dear Grace Church,

I want to "thank" all of my friends at Grace Church for the many birthday cards I received.

Grace Church is all about love we have for our Lord, his son Jesus and the love we have for each other.

You touch my heart with your kindness.

Thank you, Pat Hrutkay

~~~~~

Dear Grace Church,

I want to say thank you for your prayers and support during Pastor Appreciation Month and always. I am honored, humbled and grateful to be part of a church that is filled with a generosity of spirit. Thank you for both the wonderful and various ways in which you've shown me kindness and appreciation. Each and every way has been a blessing to me!

I appreciate you as well, and am so thankful to be part of Grace Church. It is a true blessing to be in partnership with each of you in ministry.

"I thank my God upon every remembrance of you." -Philippians 1:3

Godspeed

Ken

~~~~~

Hello All,

I want to thank everyone for all your cards to Bernie and myself. I still miss this great church!

Mary Groupe



Grace Church! Through your generous and giving hearts 126 boxes were provided for children in need close to home and around the world. A total of \$729 was donated toward the cost of shipping these boxes. We praise God for your faithful support!

Exploring God's World with Ross Golden

WINTER CAMOUFLAGE

Many times we have discussed the adaptations that allow animals to survive winter. Some hibernate and some migrate, but some have adaptations that allow them to continue to live in their home territories. This adaptation has to do with our old friend photoperiod. It is the day length (actually the length of darkness) that causes the fur of the short tailed weasel and varying hare to molt or shed its brown fur in the fall, leaving white fur exposed and reversing the process in the spring.

The short tailed weasel lives throughout Pennsylvania. It kills animals several times its own size. This weasel is about six to twelve inches long and weighs six to nine ounces as adults. They can catch and kill rabbits, chickens, rats, and insects. They are known to kill more than they need to eat and simply leaving what they do not want.

As the days get shorter in the fall the weasel starts to molt its brown coat for a winter white, except for the tip of the tail which will remain black. The molt starts at the head and works down the back. When it has turned white it is often referred to as an ermine. I suppose the name change is because an ermine coat sounds better than a weasel coat.

The varying hare or snowshoe hare is also native to Pennsylvania, but found much further north than we are located. Hares are not the same as rabbits, but closely related. Hares tend to be larger and have larger ears. Sometimes these



animals are miss- named. The jack rabbit is really a hare and the Belgian hare is really a rabbit (this sort of thing makes me crazy). As with the weasel in the fall the varying hare molts from the head and down the back with the brown fur shedding and leaving the white fur that has been growing in its place.

Out in the Midwest and western areas the rock ptarmigan also molts in the fall, losing its brown plumage, leaving white feathers for the winter. This bird is about the size of a grouse and eats insects, seeds, fruit, and berries. None are found in Pennsylvania.

Genesis 1:14- And God said, "Let there be light in the expanse of the sky to separate the day from the night, and let them serve as signs to mark seasons and days and years,"

Ross Golden

Military Prayer List

Hampton, Zachary ~ United States Army

Haschets, Anthony ~ United States Air Force

Levy, Chris ~ United States Air Force

Minor, Gabriel ~ United States Army

Minor, Lucas ~ United States Army

Oveson, Clayton and Hannah (Smitley) ~ United States Air Force

Paci, Jacob ~ United States Air Force

Rager, David and Cheyenne ~ United States Air Force

Rager, Josh and Audra ~ Alabama National Guard

Wonsettler, Christopher J. and Lauren ~ United States Army



Please keep our military service men and women in your daily prayers!

Praying for you from the computer . . .

Continued from page 3

But even though many of our traditions are important,
we must make sure we don't miss the real reason for the season.

Sometimes traditions can actually get in the way. We need to remember that none of the traditions can make a real, lasting difference in our lives and in the lives of others around us.

But a relationship with Jesus will make a difference.

"Their minds are full of darkness; they wander far from the life God gives because they have closed their minds and hardened their hearts against him."

Ephesians 4:18 (NLT)

Don't let your familiarity with the story this Christmas...
get in the way of what matters most.

Allow God's Spirit to keep your mind open and your heart warmed
as you prepare for the birth of Jesus this Christmas.

Godspeed

Ken

Country Six Food Pantry ~ Kristen Louttit & Jane Diethorn

November 4 and December 2 finished the 2023 year for Country Six Food Pantry's distributions. Throughout the year, God faithfully motivated sufficient volunteers to fill the needs at each distribution. The many volunteers who serve at the distributions, some arriving as early as 4:30AM, are continually blessed each month. We are thankful that our distributions were blessed with weather that ranged from perfect to acceptable. There were no downpours of rain, snow or ice storms or super intense heat days for our distributions. We are proud of the quality and quantity of food provided to our community through the Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank. The staff at GPCFB are excellent and work hard to offer the best possible products. And . . . Grace Church! You did it! You donated so generously that EACH FAMILY who attended the December 2 distribution was blessed with \$20 in gift cards to supplement their Christmas dinner table! Thank you! Most of all we thank each of you who pray for us monthly. This ministry could not happen without your prayers and support. May each one of you have a wonderful Christmas and a blessed New Year.



Country Six FOOD PANTRY



Saturday, January 6 is the first distribution for 2024.

Some of our faithful volunteers are not able to join us during the cold weather months.

If the cold does not bother you, please consider signing up as a volunteer and coming out!

Dress in layers as once you start moving you will quickly warm!

Use the QR code here to volunteer.



Grace Family Matters



United Women in Faith

Grace Women in Faith met on November 9, 2023 at 1:00 pm in the Newkirk Room of Grace Church. There were 11 members present. Mary Thompson and Carol Bobby were hostesses and presented a very delicious snack for all of us. Mary Thompson had our devotions.

Mary Jane Qualk presented our required "Thank Offering" program. Her theme was *Jesus Light of the World*. We read "Thank" scriptures and light candles. Mary Jane also showed a video on the birth of Jesus.

We discussed our required business actions for the end of our year. Everyone was in agreement of actions taken.

Many thanks to those who donated for Helping Hands for Washington County Children and Youth Services holiday gift drive.

The Christmas Party will be held on December 7, 2023 at the Nemaquin Country Club. Reservations are due November 26th. Please be at the Country Club by 5:45 pm so we can get started with our short devotions before we have our dinner. All are invited to attend.

Enclosed is a financial statement of GWIF's giving. We wanted Grace Church to know that we are committed to giving to missions and others who are in need.

The next meeting will be held on January 11, 2024 at 1:00 pm in the Newkirk Room of Grace Church. Please bring your leftover Christmas Cookies to share with others. We look forward to seeing you all in the new year.

As always, all women of the church are invited to attend our meetings.

Respectfully submitted, Jean Belski, President, Grace Women in Faith

Grace United Women in Faith 2023 Support

- Domestic Violence X2
- Gift to Mission
- Pledge to Mission
- Church A/C
- Mission U
- Church Roof
- Ruth M. Smith Home
- Memorial Fund X2
- Vacation Bible School
- Washington City Mission
- Urban Impact
- Pillows to Peace
- Sheetz Gas Cards for hospital visits
- College Student Walmart gift cards X3
- World Thank Offering
- Gift in Memory
- Legacy Fund
- Pastor Ken ~ pastor appreciation

All Saints Day Sunday, November 5

Edith Mae Cooper ~ November 6, 2022

Mary Verna Farkas ~ November 14, 2022

Patricia Sames ~ December 1, 2022

Kenneth A. Rager ~ January 28, 2023

Sarah Pivarnik ~ January 30, 2023

Deb Babarid's and Carol Polinski's mother; Ruthie Marier's sister

Wayne G. Sutch, Sr. ~ March 4, 2023

Michael Ronald Bobby ~ May 11, 2023

Louis J. Moore ~ May 16, 2023

Erma Lee Golden ~ June 6, 2023

William Clineman, Sr. ~ June 7, 2023

Paul Beatty ~ June 13, 2023

William F. Heckler, Sr. ~ July 3, 2023

Joan Dillow ~ July 17, 2023

Jennifer Westbrook's mother

HE WILL WIPE AWAY EVERY TEAR FROM THEIR EYES
AND THERE WILL BE NO MORE DEATH OR MOURNING OR CRYING OR PAIN,
FOR THE FORMER THINGS HAVE PASSED AWAY.

REVELATION 21 : 4

Grace Family Matters



Join with our Youth and church family for Christmas Caroling in the community!

Sunday, December 10 from 4PM-7PM.

Meet in the church parking lot.

Questions: Jeremy Bartrug or Marlina Hays

Come and prepare your heart for Christmas

Grace ~ Christmas Musical Sunday

December 17, 2023

9:00AM and 10:45AM services

~

*Let's celebrate the greatest birth
in the history of the world with music!*

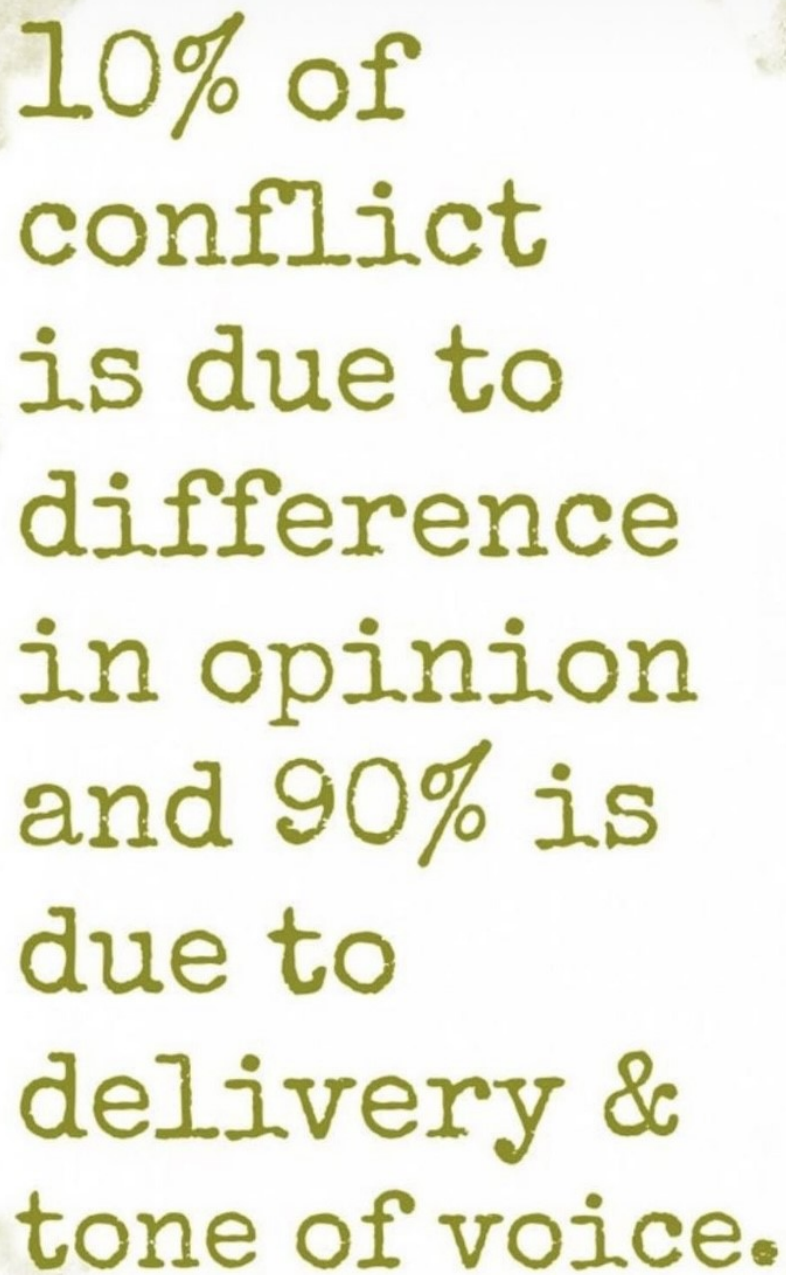


Missing a loved ones
this Christmas season?

Consider attending our
annual service for a quiet time
of remembering.

Wednesday, December 20~ 6:30PM

Grief Healing Service

A rectangular frame with a distressed, olive-green border contains the text. The text is written in a green, monospaced typewriter font. The quote is centered within the frame.

10% of
conflict
is due to
difference
in opinion
and 90% is
due to
delivery &
tone of voice.

The holiday season can be filled with love . . . and tension. Remember to speak

Autumn Round Up ~ Trunk A Treat!



Our own Naomi Custer, Washington County Dairy Princess, joined us at Trunk a Treat.

Naomi brought a friend and a delicious treat of chocolate milk to share!

Thanks, Naomi!



Trunk A Treat 2023



Trunk a Treat was a fun event! The rain held off until every child was treated by the friends who decorated their trunks and truck beds. Afterwards, a bonfire warmed the hearts and hands as hot dogs were roasted and memories made.

Autumn Round Up ~ October and November



Our Fellowship Covered Dish Luncheons continue to be a time of food, friends and fellowship!

Thanks, Jeremy Bartrug for starting this wonderful, monthly event.



Friends in Faith
Fellowship Luncheon ~
Second Sunday of each month
at noon in the Fellowship Hall.
Bring a covered dish to share.



Your audio visual team continues pursuing the best options to create a seamless worship experience. Eric Louttit climbed to the top to uninstall the former projector.

Thanks, Eric!



Work to install the carillon continues. Many hands and many hours involved. Thanks, Cliff Diethorn, for sharing your time and talents . . . and no fear of heights!

Grace Methodist Church

Making Disciples of Jesus Christ

420 California Drive
Coal Center, PA 15423

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Pastor Ken Custer

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724-330-5350 ~ office@gracecoalcenter.org

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gracechristianed@gmail.com

Board of Directors President Jim Short

724-258-9533

jshort9590@aol.com

Music & Drama Director Todd Reagan

724-628-4957

maynardtoearth@aol.com

Lay Leaders Kit Carson

724-785-2329

carsonjk49@gmail.com

Kathy Parshall

724-322-4447

k.parshall2875@gmail.com

Mission Team Chair (OMIN) Outward Missions Inward Nurturing Sherry Cramer

724-239-4508

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United Women in Faith President ~ Jean Belski

724-938-9615

jb11848@zoominternet.net

Church Council Chair Scott Sauritch

412-997-1405

shsauritch@gmail.com

Board of Trustees Chair Phil Riel

724-970-9016

priel295@gmail.com

Staff Parish Relations Chair Sean Miller

724-914-3146

seanmillermu89@gmail.com

SWAG (Saved With Amazing Grace) Middle School Kids

Keren Galis

724-562-4587

kerenjoygalis@gmail.com

Grace Youth Leaders Jeremy Bartrug

304-629-5304

bartrug05@aol.com

Marlina Hays

724-518-1763

marlinahays@gmail.com

OFFICE HOURS

*Subject to change
without notice.*

Tuesday,
Thursday and
Friday 9AM-4PM

**Join our Facebook
Live Worship
every Sunday at
10:45AM**

A recording of this wor-
ship service will be avail-
able on our website Sun-
day afternoon.

www.gracecoalcenter.org

**JOIN US FOR
WORSHIP!
Saturday Evening
5:14PM**

**Sunday Morning
8:30AM and
10:45AM**