



Grace Notes

News from Grace United Methodist Church
Carbondale, Illinois 618-457-8785

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Church Office Hours : M-F, 8:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

10:30 a.m. Worship

February 2

“Dare to Go”
Matthew 28: 19-20

New Sermon Series: “Awesome Relationships”

February 9

“Awesome Relationship”

February 16

“Awesome Marriage”

February 23

“Awesome Friendship”



Grace UMC Mission Statement

"Love God, love people, make disciples of Jesus Christ."



Early this year, some people approached and asked me what was happening in the United Methodist Church, and where do we go from here? It came to my attention that an amicable separation protocol (“*Protocol for Reconciliation and Grace Through Separation*”) has been submitted to the upcoming General Conference (GC) to be held in May of 2020, in Minneapolis, MN.

Unlike other dockets, this plan received national media attention, because it was represented by traditionalists, centrists, and progressives in the UMC, and the plan was mediated by the famed attorney Kenneth Feinberg who was widely known as the special negotiator of 9/11 Victim Compensation Funds (hence nicknamed after his name). At this point, NOTHING has been decided, and the “Feinberg Plan” is only but one among other 10 or more dockets to be presented on this issue. So, please, NO PANIC here. Again, this is a regular session of the General Conference, meaning, there are hundreds of other dockets and sub-committees that go over other issues as well.

Last year, we voted by a 54% margin to uphold the church’s teaching on marriage at the Special Called Session of the GC, in Feb. 2019 in Saint Louis, MO. We thought that would settle the 40 years of exhaustive debate. Instead, here in the U.S. it brought up resistance, and disarray. At Grace, we have lost a third of our members, guests, friends and families we love because of this. And again, NOT ALL of them were on the progressive side on the issue. But unless there’s a miracle, how can we be an effective witness at Carbondale?

A progressive branch in our UMC believes we should offer same sex weddings and appoint non-celibate gay clergy and bishops, whereas the other orthodox branch believes this to be contrary to the Scripture and the teachings of the church. The difference between the two makes it difficult to coexist and be effective in our ministry. Our fellow clergy Rev. Dr. Chris Ritter says “It has become clear that the GC no longer governs the denomination. Something has to give. The debate is distracting us from mission, depleting us of resources, and providing a poor Christian witness to the rest of the world. Although the church is growing worldwide, here in the U.S. we have experienced fifty years of unbroken decline.” (Dr. Ritter is a proud Saluki alum by the way.)

I believe many of you have had access to some of the discussions going on in our denomination on this topic. At some point, if the Feinberg Plan or similar separation plan is approved, our church may have to make a decision. But again, NOTHING has been decided yet, and these are speculations at best. I believe and teach the orthodox tenants of the church in marriage, but I do not presume to speak for all of us with the future choices. Therefore, all of us must get together in a season of prayer, even fasting if God willing, and see ourselves with a renewed vision and focus on the purpose and mission of our church. With that in mind, I'm opening up three opportunities for us:

First is that **we all will be loving, welcoming, caring, and ministering** to everyone, even to those who have different lifestyle than what the Bible teaches. None of us are better than others, but God sent His Son to us, when we were yet sinners. And we are to live in the world, not to be an inclusive insiders' club. That is the foundation of our faith, and we affirm that. Let's be fair to ask: "Do you go to heaven just by being a heterosexual?" Absolutely not. Jesus said only the "repentant" will enter (Matthew 18:3), and we affirm and teach that.

Second, our fellow retired clergy, Rev. Bob Phillips has joyfully agreed to visit Grace. Bob has been a Navy Chaplain for decades, and recently retired from Peoria First UMC, which is one of the flagship churches in our conference. On **March 1, Sunday, after service, around 11:45am**, he will be available for any questions you may have on the issue, the separation protocol, the future of our denomination, and help us gain insights on the next steps. He recently joined the Wesley Covenant Association, which represents the evangelical orthodox teachings of our church. Though he was not part of the formation of the Feinberg proposal, he would be knowledgeable to give insights of the future of our church and what's at stake. Please mark your dates and attend this informational meeting.

Third, we'll have a time to join in a concerted effort of **"Fasting and Praying" for 21 days during the time of Lent.** More information on this, and prayer materials will be included in future bulletins, and on the information desk as date approaches. So be on a lookout.

Your servant,

pastor Rhee



Lent at Grace 2020



Join us in our Lenten season of renewal, prayer, and peace in Christ. Lenten prayer guides will be available at the information desk.

Swing by and kick off Lent at the Ash Wednesday Service, February 26th, 12pm @ Grace church sanctuary.



Pray for Carbondale! Starting Wednesday, February 26 until Tuesday, March 19, 2020 we are invited to pray along with other churches. A Fasting & Prayer guide will be available in the bulletin, and information desk as the date approaches.

MaTT Club is a place for kids and adults to gather with friends, old and new, at the table with Jesus.



We continued our world travels in January, visiting Madagascar and India. In Madagascar we learned about the importance of mosquito bed nets in preventing malaria. We also talked about missionaries who are reforesting the country by planting fruit and other trees. The children put coins in the One Great Hour of Sharing fish bank for fruits they had eaten that grow on trees. During craft time they made eucalyptus trees from paper bags. We added a few drops of essential oil so they children could smell eucalyptus.

On Jan 19 we traveled to India. Jennifer brought several items from India for the children to see and touch. She also served a “Taste of India”. The children tried several foods that were new to them. After that we played *Uffangali*, a game children in India play that requires blowing seeds. Then we played a game that tested the children’s knowledge of cows.

The women in our story tonight cooperated with one another and used money from OGHS to help them buy cattle. By using their talents and working together these women raised healthy cows that produced enough milk for their families and extra to sell for an income. The children listed their God-given talents on milk carton pictures for their Binder book. We finished the evening using clay to make tiger magnets or keychains.

Thank you May and Jennifer for providing snacks in January.
 Thank you Jennifer for taking pictures.
 Thank you Holly and Mary Louise for helping at each meeting.
 We have no February birthdays.

-Flossie

Please have articles for the March 2020
 Grace Notes newsletter to the church
 office by February 17, 2020.





The Grace United Methodist Women wishes to thank everyone who helped us have another successful year of giving in 2019. Thanks to everyone who contributed to our Christmas Yard and Bake Sale, we made \$1,821. Everyone enjoyed those delicious pies, cakes, breads, candy, etc.

The slightly used Christmas items also sell well.

We are also grateful for the monetary donations we receive, which increase the amount of dollars we are able to distribute to missions and local charities.

Because we had a successful soup fundraising event, Christmas Yard and Bake Sale, and donations, we were able to distribute \$2,900 throughout 2019. We gave to the following missions: Murphysboro Food Pantry, Victory Dream Center Food Pantry, UMCOR—World Hunger, Wesley Foundation, Feed My Sheep, Good Samaritan—Soup Kitchen, Grace Church—Mission Meals, Newman Center—Thanksgiving Meal, Habitat for Humanity, Cunningham Children's Home, Lessie Bates Davis Neighborhood House (East St. Louis), Jesus Es SI Senior United Methodist Church (Cobden), Carbondale Senior Center, Carbondale Women's Center, and Dr. Fasa.

We have been blessed and I am sure those receiving our donations feel the same way.

Thyra Russell, Treasurer,
Grace United Methodist Women

I want to thank all of you who sent cards to mom at Christmas—she enjoys them everyday. Also thank you to the choir or carolers who wanted to visit but she wasn't well that day. She is better now but still has good and not so good days. So many of you have been so sweet to send cards and call her—Thank you!

Linda McCowen and Marty Searcy



*Thank
you!*

(Cards can be sent to Mary Ellen Searcy at 1411 McCowen Lane, Carterville, IL 62918.)

Birthdays (by date)

- 1 - Mary Ellen Searcy
- 8 - Marjorie Blessing
- 8 - Violet Fager
- 9 - Mary Ann Ruph
- 13 - Randy Stark
- 16 - Elijah Moore
- 19 - Jill Booker
- 23 - Roger Smith III
- 25 - Moon Chan Bae
- 25 - Debbie Meador
- 29 - Alivia Berkel
- 21 - Gail Ayala



Early March Birthdays

- 3/4 Timothy Park
- 3/5 Lily Morthland

Feb. 14 Robert & Cynthia Oetjen

Circle of Friends Potluck

Noon - Tuesday
February 11, 2020

Bring a dish and join the fellowship.



Grace United Methodist Church

Rev. Jungil Rhee, pastor

9:30 a.m. Sunday School

10:30 a.m. Worship Service

