



# THE GRACE MESSENGER

Grace United Methodist Church

*Mission: To love God completely and to serve Jesus Christ unselfishly*

201 S. Church Street, Union, South Carolina 29379

Rev. David Bauknight, Pastor



Office: 427-1266

Cell Phone: 803-480-2153

## From the Pastor

December 2020

### Advent/Christmas Message



*"...for to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord." (Luke 2:11).*

With these words the angel announced to the shepherds the good news of the long awaited Messiah's arrival. This season is a time to reflect upon the great love our heavenly Father has for us. He saw fit to send us His only Son to be born into this world and then Jesus was sacrificed for our sins. There is no greater gift than the gift of God's only child. Jesus' birth is a true celebration of the infinite love of our heavenly Father.

The materialism that accompanies Christmas can make it challenging to keep our families focused on remembering the *'reason for the season'*. It takes forethought and planning to preserve the meaning of Christmas for our families. Here are a few ideas on how to keep the spirit of Christmas alive for our families:

1. Decorate the Christmas tree together, but prior to putting on the star (or angel) and lighting the tree have a 'tree dedication' service. The children can be given candles to hold and a simple prayer can be shared such as, *"This tree is a blessing to our home. It reminds us of all the beautiful things You have created. Let it, Lord, remind us of the Tree of Life You placed in the Garden of Eden, and of the tree that You made into the new Tree of Life, the cross of Christ."* Then read Titus 3:4-8.
2. Have a Christmas Manger. Consider drawing and coloring the manger and its' contents with your children. Put the wise men across the room a week before Christmas and have them gradually approach the manger arriving on Christmas day. Put Mary and Joseph in the manger on Christmas Eve and put the Jesus figure in the manger on Christmas day (as opposed to having him there days or weeks before).
3. Before opening gifts on Christmas morning read the birth narrative (Luke chapter 2). Pairing a reading of the arrival of God's gift with the receiving of other Christmas gifts helps children remember that gift giving is done to imitate what our heavenly Father gave us on Christmas day. Pause to recognize the special gifts God has brought to your family this year, and to recognize the special gifts each person brings to the family. And be sure to thank God for giving Jesus, the greatest Gift, on the first Christmas Day.
4. Read the birth narrative just prior to Christmas dinner. At the moment of the announcement of Jesus' birth light a special 'Christ candle' in the center of the Christmas dinner table.
5. Attend Advent and Christmas Services at church and ask if you can assist in any way.
6. Give a gift to the church. Explain to your children that Christmas is Jesus birthday. When someone goes to a birthday party they bring a gift. This year bring a gift for the church in honor of Jesus' birthday.

May your Christmas be filled with the joy in the birth of our Savior. Merry Christmas! Pastor David



## Stewardship Report November 2020

Offering Report as of:	Nov. 29, 2020
2020 Budget:	\$ 379,325.00
Needed for 2020 Budget YTD:	\$ 350,146.15
Budget Rec'd YTD:	\$ 283,795.16
Surplus/Deficit YTD:	\$ -66,350.99
Weekly Offering Needed:	\$ 7,294.71
Offering Rec'd in November (4 weeks):	\$ 15,984.00

Please put Grace as a priority in your financial planning. Our combined gifts keep the Church's



There are two ways to continue tithing during this time: mail to the church or use Vanco (Grace UMC QR Code for online giving on left)



**NO Young at Heart  
In December  
Due to the Holidays  
and COVID-19 Pandemic**

**NO Family Night Supper  
in December  
Due to the holidays  
and COVID-19 Pandemic**



This year as we prepare for our White Christmas, we have over 30 families in need. We want to fill each White Christmas box, so once again we ask for donations of any food items as well as monetary donations to purchase hams, fresh fruit, and bread. The food donations are needed by Sunday, December 13. White Christmas deliveries will be made on Thursday morning, December 17. Thank you for helping to make Christmas brighter for these families. You will be blessed and so will they.



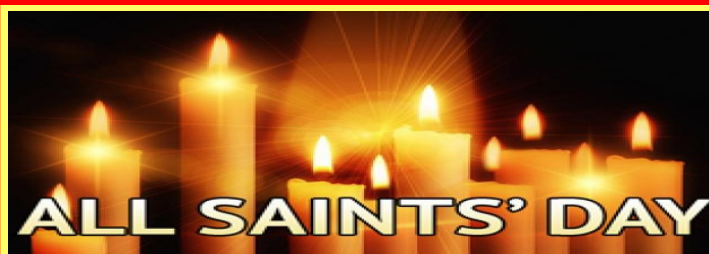
## UMW NEWS

**No In-Person Meetings  
until It's Deemed Safe**



## Neighbor Helping Neighbor

NHN continues to help build ramps and porches for those in need. They work one Saturday a month and meet in Grace's parking lot at 8:00 am. There is always plenty of work to be done. Plan to come out and help. They would be glad to see you. David Turner, treasurer, thanks everyone for their continuing support of this ministry. Call David at **864-427-5571** or e-mail at [icarve@bellsouth.net](mailto:icarve@bellsouth.net) if you are interested in helping.



Sunday, November 1, 2020

Jesus, Dear Savior,  
On this day we prayerfully remembered  
all our loved ones who have died  
in the past year.

Please give them comfort and hope  
and may they be at peace,  
knowing that they will rest  
in God's arms eternally.

Thank you for our memories of them  
and for the good times we shared.  
We ask you, please, through this intercession,  
to deepen our faith, strengthen our hope,  
and increase our love that we, too,  
may someday stand before You,  
ready to enter Your Holy Kingdom.  
Amen.

Betty Rash  
Maurice Cordell  
Ralph Greer  
Dr. Michael Mahan  
John Flynn  
Jane Bishop

Tuttie Sheorn  
Raye Hellams  
Rachel Mitchell  
Ginger Buchanan  
Mary Jo Rogers  
Walter Harvey



## Because We Care



Ellen Sagar:	Bernard Bishop
Summit Hills, Sptbg:	Elwood Eason
White Oak, Sptbg.:	Dr. Bob Kincheloe
Home:	James and Ruth Roof
Inverness, Sptbg.:	Hazel Howell
Cumberland Village,	
Aiken:	Carolyn and Johnny Turner
Amy Bruce: P. O. Box 15, Fingerville, SC 29338	

### Chancel Choir

### Bells of Grace



We will continue to have no rehearsals until it has been decided it is safe to resume.

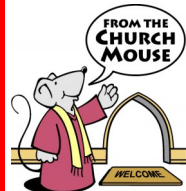


### TITHING ENVELOPES ARE NOW AVAILABLE

The church tithing envelopes are available at the double door entrance for Sunday worship services. You will be able to pick yours up as you leave the service. If not, please call or come by the church office and we will be glad to assist you.

#### Let's Honor the Lord With Our Giving

"Remember this, whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, And whoever sows generously will also reap generously."  
2 Corinthians 9:6



The Grace Messenger is attempting to bring you as much information as possible each month while we deal with the COVID-19 pandemic. That means I really could use your help. Please help by responding to requests, give us any kind of suggestions, or let us know if you or your family is involved in something the church would enjoy hearing about. As always, we are deeply appreciative of any newsletter submissions, because it takes all of us working together to have the best possible newsletter.

**REMEMBER:** Send in your admissions by the middle of the month! **Deadline for the January, 2021 Grace Messenger will be December 16th.**

## December

- 3 Melodi Gault
- 4 Mike Zimmerman
- 5 Jeff Love
- 10 Harriett Berry, Sue Keith
- 12 Mallory McGee
- 13 Nell Hart
- 14 Audrey Ham, Jan Thompson, Libby Williams
- 15 Will Balkum, Lisbeth Kelly
- 17 Mary James, Destiney Vanderford
- 18 Anne Hames
- 19 Kathy Arnold
- 20 Reagan Turner
- 21 Tommy Lawson, Paul Wilkes IV, Lisa Robbins
- 25 Allie Owens, Doris Russell, Sharrie Wallace
- 28 Ren Turner
- 29 Jennings King
- 31 Cooper Turner, Missy Wilkes



Wishing you all the wonders of the season and beautiful new memories throughout the coming year.

*Happy Birthday!*



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"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased" Luke 2:14



## Christmas Letter to our Grace Congregation

It occurred to me as I settled down to write this Christmas letter that the greatest thing we need in our lives, this and every season, is to know God as our Father and that His Son, Jesus our Savior, is always with us. This truly is the message of Christmas and the bedrock of our faith. I love the way one writer put it: ***“What begins in the stable ends in our salvation. That’s why we celebrate Christmas, and it’s the best and only reason the human heart needs.”***

Think about it, Jesus is with us! He is the Word we need to know. Jesus is not only the Babe of Bethlehem, but He is also the Son of God who was born to live for our righteousness and to die for our sins. Christ is the missing piece in many lives. Without Him we are incomplete. With Him, even the most complex or disappointing parts of our lives make sense.

Jesus is with us! This is what our preschool, elementary, middle, high school, college age and all people need to know. In the midst of trials and troubles, identity issues, betrayals by friends, struggles to find the right way in the world, and dreams for a great future, the Babe of Bethlehem who is the Christ of all Creation is always with us. His salvation gives everyone hope.

Jesus is with us! This is the message of hope to single people, single-again people, young marrieds, families with or without children, empty-nesters, young, retired folks, and senior saints. People of every profession need this message! The light we long for is the Light God has graciously given in His love. To receive Him is to be warmed by the Light. He brings light to the darkness of our trials and sorrows while spotlighting the joys of our faith walk.

As our Christian journey continues, we are thankful to be walking with those who are searching for the better way as we grow in a closer relationship with Jesus Christ. We have become the recipient of the most wonderful gift of all times. It comes in a very lowly way, but Jesus, the babe, the Shepherd of our souls and our Savior triumphant is right here with us!

This Christmas we again want to bow before Him with you, blessed and confident that in Him, all things turn out for our good and His glory. Jesus reminds us that ***“I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness but have the light of life.”***

Our dear Grace family, we have received the most wonderful gift of all. As we strive to make disciples for Him, our Christmas hope and prayer is that the whole world will also receive Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior.

Grace and peace,

Sherry and David Bauknight



## 'The Christmas Angels'

It was December 23, 1993. For a single mom who was going to college and supporting my children completely alone, Christmas was looking bleak. I looked around my little home, realization dawning like a slow, twisting pain. We were poor.

Our tiny house had two bedrooms, both off the living room. They were so small that my baby daughter's crib barely fit into one room, and my son's twin bed and dresser were squeezed into the other. There was no way they could share a room, so I made my bed every night on the living room floor.

Confused, but finding their joyous spirit contagious, I grinned right back at them.

"Are you Susan?" The man stepped forward as he held out a box for me.

Nodding stupidly, unable to find my voice, I was sure they thought I was mentally deficient.

"These are for you." The woman thrust another box at me with a huge, beaming smile. The porch light and the snow falling behind her cast a glow over her dark hair, lending her an angelic appearance.

I looked down into her box. It was filled to the top with delicious treats, a fat turkey, and all the makings of a traditional Christmas dinner. My eyes filled with tears as the realization of why they were there washed over me.

Finally coming to my senses, I found my voice and invited them in. Following the husband were two children, staggering with the weight of their packages. The family introduced themselves and told me their packages were all gifts for my little family. This wonderful, beautiful family, who were total strangers to me, somehow knew exactly what we needed. They brought wrapped gifts for each of us, a full buffet for me to make on Christmas Day, and many "extras" that I could never afford. Visions of a beautiful, "normal" Christmas literally danced in my head. Somehow my secret wish for Christmas was materializing right in front of me. The desperate prayers of a single mom had been heard, and I knew right then that God had sent his angels my way.

My mysterious angels then handed me a white envelope, gave me another round of grins, and took turns hugging me. They wished me a Merry Christmas and disappeared into the night as suddenly as they had appeared.

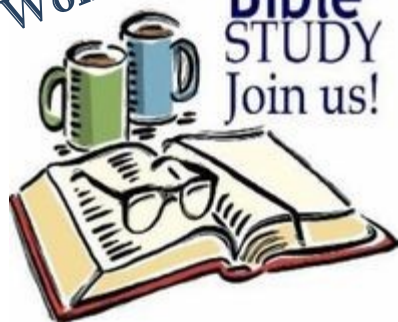
Amazed and deeply touched, I looked around me at the boxes and gifts strewn at my feet and felt the ache of depression suddenly being transformed into a childlike joy. I began to cry. I cried hard, sobbing tears of the deepest gratitude. A great sense of peace filled me. The knowledge of God's love reaching into my tiny corner of the world enveloped me like a warm quilt. My heart was full. I fell to my knees amid all the boxes and offered a heartfelt prayer of thanks.

Getting to my feet, I wrapped myself in my blankets and sat once again to gaze out the window at the gently falling snow. Suddenly, I remembered the envelope. Like a child, I ripped it open and gasped at what I saw. A shower of bills flitted to the floor. Gathering them up, I began to count the five, ten, and twenty-dollar bills. As my vision blurred with tears, I counted the money, then recounted it to make sure I had it right. Sobbing again, I said it out loud: "One hundred dollars."

I looked at my children sleeping soundly, and through my tears I smiled my first happy, free-of-worry smile in a long, long time. My smile turned into a grin as I thought about tomorrow: Christmas Eve. One visit from complete strangers had magically turned a painful day into a special one that we would always remember...with happiness.

It is now several years since our Christmas angels visited. I have remarried, and our household is happy and richly blessed. Every year since that Christmas in 1993, we have chosen a family less blessed than we are. We bring them carefully selected gifts, food and treats, and as much money as we can spare. It's our way of passing on what was given to us. It's the "ripple effect" in motion. We hope that the cycle continues and that, someday, the families we share with will be able to pass it on, too. -- Susan Fahncke

Women's



## ZOOM Bible Study This is exciting NEWS!

Ask, and ye shall receive! Jan Thompson has graciously volunteered to lead an 8 week Bible Study course beginning in the second week of January 2021. The Bible study guide is **Follow** by Andy Stanley, son of Dr. Charles Stanley. Dale Goff will provide the ZOOM link. If interested in participating, **please let us know, along with your email address and cell phone number by December 14th.** We will let you know the dates and time closer to the class beginning. If you are not able to get a ZOOM meeting, consider sharing with a friend that does. See you then!



## Santa Claus Is Coming...

He's making a list  
And checking it twice;  
Gonna find out Who's naughty and nice,  
Santa Claus is coming to town!

He sees you when you're sleeping  
He knows when you're awake  
He knows if you've been bad or good  
So be good for goodness sake!

O! You better watch out!  
You better not cry  
Better not pout  
I'm telling you why

Santa Claus is coming  
Santa Claus is coming  
Santa Claus is coming to town!



The Christmas season is upon us and one of the most beautiful services is on Christmas Eve. However, this year with COVID-19 still lurking and aggressive, Grace has decided that it would not be wise to have the service. Every year there is a large number of members and their families, and others who attend. Grace has determined that those numbers would put everyone in jeopardy. We hope that, instead, as you celebrate Christmas Eve you take a moment and reflect on what this season is all about, Jesus Christ's birth. Grace wishes all of you a very joyous Christmas filled with love and laughter.



CHRISTMAS IS THE CELEBRATION OF THE BIRTH OF JESUS, THE SAVIOUR OF MANKIND



## Newsletter By E-Mail

With the cost of stamps continuously going up in price, we would like to ask the congregation to please consider letting us use e-mail addresses to deliver the monthly newsletter and calendar. Give the church office a call, or send an e-mail, to verify your address if you are willing to let us send them to you this way. We will always respond positively to those that still prefer need mailing. Thank you!



## LOVE FOR GRACE SHINES EVEN DURING THE PANDEMIC



*It's The Most Wonderful Time Of The Year!*

Even the large Fellowship Hall can transform into Christmas! The hanging swag and wreaths, poinsettias, window candles, Advent wreath, Chrismon tree, and Nativity scene are in place. But...there's more to come! Come Sunday to see how pretty it is! Thanks go out to Pastor David, Karen and Glenn Hibbard, and Sheryl Price for making this possible in Pat and her crew's absence this year.

Grace friends ,

Many of you may already know that we sold our house in Union and will be moving closer to our daughters. We moved to Union in 1968, so this has been home to us for 52 years. Although we do not have family here, we have been so blessed with wonderful friends and a loving church family. It is going to be hard to say goodbye to so many beautiful memories that we have shared with all of you.

I have served as Hospitality Coordinator at Grace Church since 2008, and I have really gotten to know the best group of ladies in the world. We all worked tirelessly in the kitchen preparing delicious meals for our church congregation, as well as for the community during Lenten Lunches. I have never asked any of you to do anything (whether it was making tea, baking cakes, working in the kitchen) that you have not been willing to do. So, I want to say a "BIG THANK YOU" to all of you! Also, I cannot forget the ladies and men who decorated, setup, and helped with the cleanup, I cannot thank them enough for their hard work. God bless Karen for her leadership in coordinating everything! She is a jewel!

Also, we cannot forget David and Sherry for their support and guidance throughout this time. They have been supportive, and they have kept us focused on our mission to serve God, our church and our community.

God bless each member of Grace, and please keep us in your prayers!

Love, Brenda and Gene



CHILDERS, Gene & Brenda

Childers



### The Spirit of Christmas

by LENORA MCWHORTER

The joy of Christmas and the real meaning of Christmas.

At Christmas, lights burn brighter,  
and friendly hugs get even tighter.  
The spirit of Christmas fills the air,  
and people seem to really care.

Merry hearts are filled with cheer.

Families and friends all draw near.

The streets around are all filled  
despite the cold winter chill.

Everywhere there's smiling faces,  
giving and receiving warm embraces.  
And for a time, sadness disappear.  
Peace, joy and hope replaces fear.

All because God's love came down  
and filled the earth all around.

So we celebrate at Christmas time  
our Savior and Lord, holy, divine!

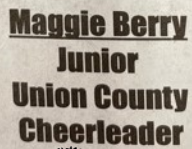
We honor Jesus throughout the year  
so the Christmas spirit will linger near.  
For the story of His birth is ours to tell -  
that Jesus became our Emmanuel!

### Christmas Riddles for Kids

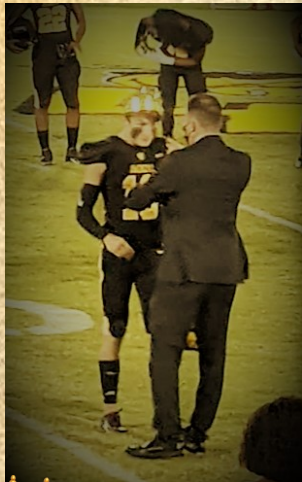
1. I come with many colors, so beautiful and bright, I turn so many houses into a beautiful sight. What am I?  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. I am a catchy carol and a tune which likes to rhyme, I contain 12 grand gifts that come around Christmas time. What am I? \_\_\_\_\_
3. If a lion had a Christmas music album, what would it be called? \_\_\_\_\_
4. What did the Christmas tree say to the Christmas stocking?  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. What does the snowman eat for a snack? \_\_\_\_\_
6. If the end of the year is on December 31st, then what is the end of Christmas? \_\_\_\_\_
7. I get chopped, decorated and on one end you'll see a star or angel on top. What am I? \_\_\_\_\_

Answers are somewhere within the newsletter. Have fun!





**Maggie  
Berry**



**Ethan Balkum**  
**UCHS 2020**  
**Homecoming King**



**Alexa Robbins**  
**Senior**  
**Union County**  
**Girls' tennis**

**Alexa  
Robbins**



**SKATE PARTY** — Girl Scout Service Unit 630 (Troops 1661 and 391) held a Juliette "GLOW" Skate Party on Oct 24 at the Union State Center. In honor of Girl Scout founder, Juliette Gordon Low's birthday the girls celebrated with their annual skating glow party. Instead of bringing a birthday gift like you do for a traditional birthday party, each guest was asked to bring a donation item. This year the Girl Scouts collected feminine hygiene products to be donated to the Union County Library System to help support their period poverty project. This year's theme was "I Love the 80's". "We skated and danced the night away! Way to go Girl Scouts," said leader Heather Carter Colson. Those who participated included: (first row) Libby Cheatham, Ari Taylor, Calee Childers, Brooklyn Stevens, Kallya Kelley, Emma Grace Libby Cheatham, Ari Taylor, Calee Childers, Brooklyn Stevens, Kallya Kelley, Emma Grace Libby, Savannah Williams, Trinity Moore. (second row) Alyssa Vinson, Caitlyn Adams, Sarah Paige Glenn, Ashley Colson, Karma Hodge, Jessia Smith, Brooke Adams, Makayla Adams, Cheyenne Flanagan. Not pictured: Abby Garner, Sydney Shroshire, Skylar Grant.

## Sarah Paige Glenn

(third from left, second row)



UCHS  
Homecoming  
2020  
Alexa  
Robbins

Escorted by  
1Lt. Jacob  
Robbins



Judy Caston and Sue Keith were honored for 10 years of service to the Union Lions Club  
(Joni Long photo)



MARY KATHRYN JAMES



Union County HS junior Mary Katherine James has been named to the All-Region tennis team for her second straight year. She finished with an 8-4 record and played at the #1 singles position.



Union Rotary Club President Leroy Kennedy presents a donation for the Union County YMCA to CEO April Hall. Looking on is Josh Freeman with the YMCA. (Anna Brown photo)



**UCHS  
Football  
#13  
Ethan  
Balkum  
Sr.**



I'm still  
King!



Union Rotarian Glenn Ivey (right) inducts Founders Federal Credit Union branch manager Toni Watkins as a new member. Looking on are Rotarian Suzanne Smith, who was Watkins' sponsor, and club president Leroy Kennedy. (Anna Brown photo)

## Secret Santa's 31st Year

Secret Santa is helping needy children have a Merry Christmas again this year. This is their 31st year and, as in the previous 30 years, they want no child to go unsponsored. This year we have just under 300 children on our list. If you have not already sponsored a child, please consider this worthy cause by calling Brooke Valentine at 426-2776 or emailing: [graceumc\\_secretsanta@hotmail.com](mailto:graceumc_secretsanta@hotmail.com) before December 12. Donations are also accepted.



### Important dates:

**Gift Drop Off:** (Please come to door and ring bell. We will come to assist you.)

**Week 1:** Monday, Tuesday, or Thursday, November 30, December 1 and 3, between 10:00 am - 2:00 pm., and Sat., December 5 from 10:00 am -12:00 pm

**Week 2:** Monday, Tuesday, or Thursday, December 7, 8, and 10, between 10:00 am - 2:00 pm, and Sat., December 12. 10:00 am - 12:00 pm

### Gift Give-Out Day:

**Tues., Dec. 15** - Parent Drive-Thru Pick-up day: 8:30 am - 1:30 pm

\*We are changing things again for the gift give-out day due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The parents will turn into the driveway on the cemetery side of the sanctuary. Secret Santa workers will be stationed to remind them to have their ID and information ready. Then they drive around to the lower GUMCEP door of the educational building. More workers will check their ID and take their parent letter. The letter is taken indoors, checked off the main list, then Secret Santa jolly elves will locate the gifts and bring them through the double doors to the parents who remained in their cars.

\*Help is needed at the check-in stations, to pull packages from the sanctuary, and to help carry out to cars.

**If you can come to help, even for a short period of time, please let Brooke or Brad know by calling 864-426-2776. Your help will be greatly appreciated!**

Christmas Riddles for Kids Answers:  
1. Christmas lights  
2. The 12 Days of Christmas  
3. Jungle Bells  
4. Aren't you sick and tired of just hanging around?  
5. A snowcone  
6. The Letter "S"  
7. A Christmas tree



### Church Office Holiday Hours

#### Christmas:

Closed Monday - Friday,  
December 21-25

#### New Years:

Open Monday - Wednesday,  
December 28 - 3  
Closed: Thursday and Friday,  
December 31 - January 1





**THE GRACE MESSENGER**  
Grace United Methodist Church  
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Union, SC 29379  
E-mail: [mail@graceunion.org](mailto:mail@graceunion.org)



### THE RECTOR DROPS IN ON THE PAGEANT REHEARSAL

