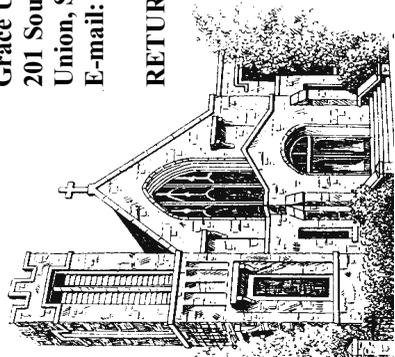


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THE GRACE MESSENGER
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GUMCEP News

During the month of February, there are many activities that will take place at GUMCEP. On Friday, February 6, at 6:30 pm, there will be a Dinner/Painting Class, for adults and children. The classes will have Valentine Parties on Friday, February 13. A Valentine Supper will be held on Friday, February 20th, for parents and students of GUMCEP. Lots of learning and fun activities go on each day. Come and visit any time.



- Feb. 1 - Susan Dunbar
2 - Elwood Eason
3 - Pat Scoggins
4 - JoAnne Lipscomb, Pat Owens
6 - Greyson Day, Jeremy King, Angie Vassey
9 - David Beavans, Joseph Beavans, Todd Brooks, Bill McCall
12 - Gage Ham
14 - Jack Flynn
15 - Tuttie Sheorn
16 - Jacob Arnold, Sissy Matthews
20 - Ben Johnston, Jenny Williams, Stewart Wagner
22 - Maurice Cordell
24 - Grayson Fallaw, Kinsley Vassey
26 - David Bauknight
27 - Donna Kell

THE GRACE MESSENGER

Grace United Methodist Church

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

P. O. Box 446, Union, South Carolina
Rev. David Bauknight., Pastor

Office: 427-1266
Cell Phone: 803-480-2153

From the Pastor

February 2015

Lent 101

(from the Upper Room)

Lent is a season of the Christian Year where Christians focus on simple living, prayer, and fasting in order to grow closer to God.

When is Lent? It's the forty days before Easter (excluding Sundays because every Sunday is like a little Easter.) Basically, it's about one-tenth of a year (like a tithing of time). Lent begins with Ash Wednesday (February 18th) and ends on Easter (April 5th).

Mardi Gras? What does that have to do with JESUS? Mardi Gras means "Fat Tuesday." It refers to the day before Lent starts. Since Lent always starts on a Wednesday, the day before is always a Tuesday. It's called "Fat" or "Great" because it's associated with great food and parties. In earlier times, people used Lent as a time of fasting and repentance. Since they didn't want to be tempted by sweets, meat and other distractions in the house, they cleaned out their cabinets. They used up all the sugar and yeast in sweet breads before the Lent season began, and fixed meals with all the meat available. It was a great feast! Through the years Mardi Gras has evolved (*in some places*) into a pretty wild party with little to do with preparing for the Lenten season of repentance and simplicity. But Christians still know it's origin, and hang onto the true Spirit

of the season.

The real beginning of Lent is Ash Wednesday. Ash Wednesday, the day after Mardi Gras, usually begins with a service where we recognize our mortality, repent of our sins, and return to our loving God. We recognize life as a precious gift from God, and return our lives towards Jesus Christ. We may make resolutions and commit to change our lives over the next forty days so that we might be more like Christ. In an Ash Wednesday service, the minister marks the sign of the cross on a person's forehead with ashes.

Why ashes? In Jewish and Christian history, ashes are a sign of mortality and repentance. Mortality, because when we die, our bodies eventually decompose and we become dust/dirt/ash/whatever. Repentance, because long ago, when people felt remorse for something they did, they would put ashes on their head and wear "sackcloth" (scratchy clothing) to remind them that sin is pretty uncomfortable and leads to a sort of death of the spirit. This was their way of confessing their sins and asking for forgiveness.

Where do the ashes come from? On Palm Sunday, Jesus rode a donkey into Jerusalem while people waved palms and cheered him on. Less than a week later, Jesus was killed. The palms that were waved in joy became ashes of sorrow. We save the previous year's palms (from Palm Sunday) &

Continued from front page.....

burn them to make the ashes for Ash Wednesday.

What do Christians do with ashes? At an Ash Wednesday service, folks are invited to receive the sign of a small ash cross on their foreheads. While the ashes remind us of our mortality and sin, the cross reminds us of Jesus' *resurrection (life after death)* and forgiveness. It's a powerful, non-verbal way that we can experience God's forgiveness and renewal as we return to Jesus.

So what is LENT? At Jesus' baptism the sky split open, the Spirit of God, which looked like a dove, descended and landed on Jesus, and a voice from heaven said, "*This is my Son, My Beloved, with whom I am pleased.*" Afterward, as told in Matthew 4:1-11, Jesus was sent into the wilderness by the Spirit where he fasted and prayed for 40 days. During his time there he was tempted by Satan and found clarity and strength to resist temptation. Afterwards, he was ready to begin his ministry. The Lenten Season is our reminder that we, too, are tempted by Satan & with God's strength we can live faithfully like Jesus.

Why "DO" Lent? How do I start? Are you searching for something more? Tired of running in circles, but not really living life with direction, purpose or passion? It's pretty easy to get caught up in the drama of classes, relationships, family, and work. Our lives are filled with distractions that take us away from living a life with Christ. We try to fill the emptiness inside us with mindless TV, meaningless chatter, stimulants, alcohol, too many activities or other irrelevant stuff. We run away from life and from God. Lent is a great time to "repent" -- *to return to God and re-focus our lives to be more in line with Jesus.* Lent offers us 40 days to reorient our life and to have a change of heart. Some practices we can use for Lent:

FASTING: Some people have days. But that's not the only out some of the things in your Christians use the whole 40 drinks, cigarettes or meat as You might skip one meal a Or you can give up to spend time outside you need to let go of or "fast" clutters your calendar and



been known to go without food for way to fast. You can fast by cutting life that distract you from God. Some days to fast from candy, TV, soft a way to purify their bodies and lives. day and use that time to pray instead. some *activity* like worry or reality TV enjoying God's creation. What do from in order to focus on God? What life? How can you simplify your life in

can also take up something that brings us closer to God. **SERVICE:** Some Christians take something on *for* Christ. You can collect food for the needy, volunteer once a week to tutor children, or work for reform and justice in your community. You can commit to help a different stranger, co-worker or friend everyday of Lent. Serving others is one way we serve God.

PRAYER: Christians also use Lent as a time of intentional prayer. You can pray while you walk, create music or art as a prayer to God, or savor a time of quiet listening. All can be ways of becoming more in tune with God. We have a wonderful opportunity to celebrate Lent as we use this time to grow closer to God. *Blessings & strength...Pastor David*

Spring Emmaus Dates – Plan Early!

On an Emmaus Walk:

You will enjoy three days of singing, learning, laughing, worshiping, reflecting, praying and participating in small groups. Discussions center around fifteen talks given by laity and clergy. These talks present the theme of God's grace, how that grace comes alive in the Christian community, and how it is expressed in the world. You'll also discover how grace is real in your life, how you live a life of grace, and how you bring that grace to others. You will have the opportunity to participate in the daily celebration of Holy Communion and to understand more fully the body of Christ. You will experience God's grace through the prayers and acts of anonymous service offered by the Emmaus community. You will leave with an experience of Christian love in action that will equip you for new levels of grace-filled service and leadership. Visit - <http://www.midlandsemmaus.com/> for more information. Applications are available on the Welcome Table!

May 21-24, 2015 – Men

May 28-31, 2015 – Women

Children's Sunday School

In February our children will continue their exciting adventure inside a video game with Ram and Rom in FLIGHT Sunday School! The eight week series, "Power-Up," awaits our participation as we learn to repent, be humble, faithful, and honest! See you there kids!

4	The children will learn that God offers us forgiveness and salvation if we will repent and choose to follow Jesus.	Repentance and Salvation (Luke 23:32 - 24:49)	I Will Choose To Repent!	"There is forgiveness of sins for all who repent." (Luke 24:47b NLT)
5	The children will learn that being prideful can be very dangerous and that we should always be humble instead.	King Uzziah enters the Temple. 2 Chronicles 26)	I Will Be Humble!	"But those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted." (Matthew 23:12 NLT)
6	The children will learn that we should be loyal to people who follow God and help them when we are needed.	David's mighty men. (2 Samuel 23:8-17)	I Will Be Faithful!	"...pursue righteous living, faithfulness, love, and peace. Enjoy the companionship of those who call on the Lord with pure hearts." (2 Timothy 2:22b NLT)
7	The children will learn that we should always be honest because of the damage that dishonesty can cause.	Man of God from Judah. (1 Kings 13)	I Will Be Honest!	"Honesty guides good people; dishonesty destroys treacherous people." (Proverbs 11:3 NLT)

A GREAT OPPORTUNITY!

Spartanburg District Lay Servant (*Lay Speaker*) School will be March 8, 15 & 22 at Montgomery Memorial UMC, Spartanburg from 2:00-5:30Pm. Courses offered are:

Basic (*Terry Sturgill*),
Preaching (*Bill Thompson*),
Worship (*TBD*) &
Polity (*TBD*).

Registration forms are on the Hospitality Table in the Ed. Building and the deadline is February 28.



The Bishop's Road Show

Bishop Holston will be touring the districts and meeting with laity of local churches in each district. He will offer insights and ideas on ways to develop healthy lay leadership teams and healthy churches. By attending you will have the pleasure of engaging in dialogue with the Bishop and other local church lay leadership. All local church lay leaders or lay servant ministry participants are encouraged to attend. It will be an enlightening time as United Methodist gather together with the Bishop and other conference staff and leadership to talk about ways churches can focus on the goal of making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. Feb. 28, 2015 is the date set for the Spartanburg District at Bethel UMC, 245 South Church Street, Spartanburg.



District Job Function Workshop

On February 8, 2015 from 3pm – 5pm the District Connectional Ministries Team will host a JOB FUNCTION WORKSHOP at Bethel UMC, Spartanburg. They will offer topics and presentations that will be beneficial to churches of all sizes.

The Topics are:

Basic Church Administration by

Rev. Robert Cox;

Church Hospitality by

Rev. Paul Harmon; and

Small Group Development by

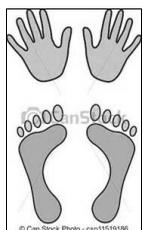
Chris Lynch.

Please mark your calendars and share this information with church leaders, Lay Servants, and others people in the church.



A huge personal thanks goes to Mike Farr who graciously volunteered his professional painting services to paint my office a soothing gray/ blue/green color! The name is "comfort gray" by Benjamin Moore. It's beautiful, Mike! I love it!

Thank you! Thank you! Thank you!
Sherry Bauknight



Hands and Feet Weekend

Want to leave your mark on the ministry at Asbury Hills? Grab your work gloves and head to the hills for

Hands and Feet 2015 Weekend, Feb. 27

– Mar 1, a weekend mixed with work and play. Discover how to be God's hands and feet while working on service projects all around the site. Afraid of power tools? That's ok. Whether you are comfortable building a house from scratch or planting a flower bed, They will have a project for you! In the evenings go wild as the band plays and experience what it really means to let Jesus make his mark. Put your youth group's hand and feet to good use and reserve a spot today! To reserve space for your group, please call 864.836.3711 or email retreat@asburyhills.org. Cost: \$40 per person.



Our New & Improved Storage Room

We would like to say a "big" thank you to the ladies who straightened the Christmas storage room by hanging our Christmas wreaths up and neatly boxing all the other Christmas decorations. It is these small acts of love that show how much our church cares!



UMW NEWS

Feb. 1: Executive Mtg, 4pm

All officers and circle leaders.

Feb. 15: "A Call to Prayer & Self Denial" General Meeting Luncheon, with a guest

speaker, 12pm with a catered meal; spouses/significant others are invited.

Feb. 17: "Am I My Sister's Keeper?"

Legislative Advocacy Day 2015 @ Epworth Children's Home.

Registration: 9-9:30am

Fee: \$20 (includes materials, lunch and parking)

Deadline: February 8

If interested, please contact Sheryl Price @ 426-2123.



MCF and Sonshiners - Prepare for an Evening of Fun!

On February 22nd at 5pm our MCF/ Sonshiner group will enjoy a 3D movie and pizza! Please come and invite a friend!!!

Do you like taking photos? Grace is blessed with two very talented photographers, Amber Ivey and Sheryl Price, who depict many church events with their professional looking photos. If you simply like to take pictures, why not give them a hand? Call Sheryl Price with your contact information, and she will add your name to our list of available photographers.



Stewardship Report 2014

Offering Report as of	December 31, 2014
2014 Budget	\$358,819.48
Budget Rec'd Y-T-D	350,133.05
Surplus/Deficit Y-T-D	+9,509.97
Weekly Offering Needed	6,900.37
Offering Rec'd 12/28 & Final Dep.	7,851.00
Expenses Y-T-D	340,623.08
<hr/>	
Unbudgeted Fund Bal. Y-T-D	47,101.73
Unbudgeted Expenses Y-T-D	73,439.87

Young at Heart

Young at Hearts will meet at noon on Wed., Feb. 11th at Andy's. Please join us for great food and fellowship.



Grace UMC Mentioned in the "SC United Methodist Advocate"

Check out the news on page 7 of the January 2015 "SC United Methodist Advocate". The article is entitled "Grace Donates Coats to 200 Kids". Way to go Grace UMC for a job well done!

Circle Corner

Circle of Hope – 10:00 AM, Feb. 2

WOMEN'S Pat Owens, hostess

Johnnie Sanders Cir. - 10:00 AM, Feb. 2, Parlor

Lucy Lee Shuler Cir. - No Meeting



Exciting New Ministry on the Horizon!

Come take a FLYTE with us!

We are very pleased to announce a new Junior High group is being formed for our 5th through 8th graders. Realizing the need for this new ministry, Pat Owens and Jane Wilkes have stepped up to the plate as coordinators and have plans well underway. **GYMS** (Great Young Men Succeeding) and **STARS** (Sisters Together Achieving Respect and Success) are the names given to the groups and Pat and Jane have identified 10 to 15 young people that are interested!

The program includes a Bible study on Jr. High level followed by activities such as sewing and cooking for the girls and woodwork and fishing for the boys. Classes begin Sunday, Feb. 1 at 5pm in the educational building. If you have talents or abilities that you would like to share with an eager group of kids, please contact Pat and/or Jane! We are asking you to hold every aspect of this ministry in your prayers! We are so excited about what God is doing at Grace!

Please come and join us. Friends are always welcome.

MUSIC



Choir Rehearsals:

7:30 pm Every Wed., in Feb.



Bells of Grace:

5:45 pm Every Sun., in Feb.

MINISTRY

Because We Care

Eden Terrace, Spbg, SC:	Mary Hodge
Providence Place, PA:	Catherine Cooksey
Savannah Grace-Palms, of Mt. Pleasant, SC:	Judith Eversman
NHC, Laurens, SC:	Cornelia Huggins
Easley, SC:	Eleanor Hawkins
Heartland Residential:	Ruth Gregory,
	Betty Lidkea & Mary Jo Rogers
Heartland Nursing:	Betsy McCall,
	Lib Ruff
Ellen Sagar Nursing:	Lib Johns

New Christmas Costumes "in the making" for Grace UMC!

We are so grateful to the Circle of Hope who have decided to undertake the project of replacing some of our adult's and children's Christmas costumes. Rumor has it that some of our costumes are 50 years old! This gracious group of ladies plans to meet on March 2nd and April 13th at 10 am in the Fellowship Hall to embark on this much needed project!

If you would like to help with this endeavor by volunteering your sewing talents, please call Janet Sherbert, chairman of the Circle of Hope at 427-9253.

No Family Night Supper In February/March

Due to our Lenten services and lunches, family night suppers will be postponed until after Easter. Watch your newsletter/bulletins for the next supper which will be Wednesday, April 22nd at 6:30 PM.



We are well into the new year and with that comes the excitement of spring and summer. At Grace we are celebrating having a growing and active Youth Group. We have a wonderful problem here at The Connection - not enough seats on Sunday evenings!

Our study on "Mysteries of the Bible" is triggering lively conversations on subjects like: who is Abraham? did his two sons' become the founders of world religions? And why the Jews and Muslims are fighting over Israel? Also of interest is the role Israel played in the Old Testament as well as the evidence that modern archeology is bringing to light. This series will continue through the life of Jesus. Come join us and discover answer's to "Mysteries of the Bible".

Grace Youth are going to Winter Jam in Greenville, S.C. on February 6th. The cost is \$10.00 plus food money. The bus will depart the parking lot at 4 PM. Doors open at 6 PM and the show starts at 7 PM. Youth will hear Skillet, Jeremy Camp, and NewSong in concert in addition to a message from Tony Noland. If you are interested in chaperoning, please contact Preston.

Thanks Carolyn!

We want to say thank you to Carolyn Turner for continuing to share her extraordinary musical talents with GUMCEP. We deeply appreciate you and all that you do for our church!



Leaders gear up for 1,000-man-strong retreat that reflects revitalized ministry

By Jessica Brodie

It started last year, when what had always been a much-loved but sparsely attended men's retreat morphed into an event 264 percent bigger than it had ever been before. Now, a year after what leaders call "a wild success," they're gearing up for more than 1,000 participants when they gather in Myrtle Beach Feb. 20-22—six times the attendees they had in 2013 and so big they've literally outgrown their venue. The 2015 retreat will now be held at Christ United Methodist Church, Myrtle Beach, which accommodates 1,900 with a huge stage and screens, high-end sound system and all the amenities needed to produce a first-rate lineup.

Group registrations are available (register five men and get the sixth free), plus discounted hotel rates. For more information or to register, or for more information on how to get involved with men's ministry, visit www.ummsc.org. There is also a registration form available on our welcome Table.

Cutie Pie Bulletin Board

Several members have commented on our "cute" bulletin board with the snowman! Next time you see Pat Owens, thank her for using her talents to adorn our hall with her creative talents. Pat clips newspaper articles and decorates the first bulletin board on the right past Pastor David's office.

Lenten Lunch Planning Meeting

On February 5th our diligent Grace Hostess Committee will meet in the church parlor at 10am to ensure all the plans for our 2015 Lenten Lunch Ministry are underway. Thanks to Brenda Childers and her Hostess Committee for providing this much appreciated ministry.



Our schedule for this year is as follows:

Wed. Feb. 18 th	12pm	Pastor David
Wed. Feb. 25 th	12pm	Rev. Keith Morrison, 1st Presbyterian
Wed. March 4 th	12pm	Rev. Merritt Wentz, Duncan Acres
Wed. March 11 th	12pm	Fr. Louis Miller, Episcopal Church of the Nativity
Wed. March 18 th	12pm	Fr. Mike McCafferty, St. Augustine
Wed. March 25 th	12pm	Rev. Rick Pendleton, 1st Baptist
Wed. April 1 st	12pm	Rev Dr.. A. L. Brackett, St Paul Baptist



Notice:

There will not be a Family Night Supper on Wed. Feb. 25th due to the Lent season!

Top Ten List: THINGS YOU CAN TRY FOR THE LENTEN SEASON

10. Try an electronic fast. Give up TV, Guitar Hero, texting, tweeting, e-mail and all things electronic for one day every week (or everyday of Lent!) Use the time to read & pray.
9. Start a prayer rhythm. Say a prayer every time you brush your teeth, hear an ambulance, or check your e-mail. Before you text someone, pray for them.
8. Read one chapter in the Bible each day. (Matthew's a good book to start with. Psalms, too.)
7. Forgive someone who doesn't deserve it (maybe even yourself.)
6. Give up soft drinks, fast food, tea or coffee. Give the money you save to help folks in Haiti or others in crisis.
5. Create a daily quiet time. Spend 30 minutes a day in silence and prayer.
4. Cultivate a life of gratitude. Write someone a thank you letter each week and be aware of how many people have helped you along the way.
3. Be kind to someone each day.
2. Pray for others you see as you walk to and from classes or drive to and from work.
1. Volunteer one hour or more each week with a local shelter, tutoring program, nursing home, prison ministry or a Habitat for Humanity project.