

Word of Grace

For a child has been born—for us! the gift of a son—for us! He'll take over the running of the world. His names will be: Amazing Counselor, Strong God, Eternal Father, Prince of Wholeness. His ruling authority will grow, and there'll be no limits to the wholeness he brings. (Isaiah 9:2-7, The Message)

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Finance Ministry

We are behind in our apportionments and the financial picture for 2010 looks bleak. How do we live our faith in these circumstances?

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Angel Tree Christmas

An opportunity to reach out in Jesus' name and help make a child's Christmas a little brighter.

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Calendar of Events

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Chili Feed - A Fundraiser

**Saturday, Dec 12 from 4 to 6:30 pm
- \$5 donation**



Under the Christmas Tree

Growing up, Christmas was always an exciting time for me. My father was a big Christmas person. He loved the season and always found a way to have lots of wonderful presents under the tree. He enjoyed watching us children open the gifts and would often take 8mm movies of us. In one film, I had just gotten out of bed, still in diapers with those pajamas with the feet in them, and when I spied the tree full to the brim with gifts, I jumped with joy.

The first Christmas was the same way. The earth for that moment was full of a gift. The earth could hardly hold the bounty of such a gift. It was wrapped in swaddling clothes and came to us, not under a tree but underground in a cave. For that moment in time, all of heaven and earth jumped for joy, proclaiming, "Peace on earth and good will to all." God's bounteous gift

overflowed the world and for a moment, the world experienced the salvation of the Lord.

Christmas can be that way this year. This time the tree is a spiritual one that reaches all around the world. Repeating what God has done is impossible, but offering again the gift of life, love, caring and blessing is something we can do as God rests His claim upon our lives. With the resources God has already given, we are called to respond to the greatest gift, Jesus Christ, and extend His realm beyond the doors of the church. What has God called you to give? Can we make this the greatest Christmas ever? Remember your church in a special way. It will go to extend the realm of Jesus Christ. AMEN.

Pastor Earl



Preparing Our Hearts and Minds for the Coming of Christ

2009 Advent Study

The Purpose of Christmas by Rick Warren is a three-week DVD/Book Study. You are invited to join a group on Sunday morning at 9:15 in the Lighthouse room or on Tuesday evenings at 7 in the parlor. Contact Kathy for more information.

Finance Ministry

Conference Apportionments

There are many ministries and activities that go on outside of Grace but are just as important to the United Methodist Church's mission. As part of the Flint Hills District and Kansas East Conference, our congregation helps support district and worldwide programs such as youth activities, disaster relief, Bridges to the Future, general operating costs, and dozens of outreach

programs designed to bring forth disciples of Jesus Christ.

Unfortunately, as Grace has experienced a decline in our membership pledges, we have also fallen behind in our commitment to support the above programs. Each year, just as you have filled out your pledge card, Grace church also makes a pledge commitment to the Flint Hills District and Kansas East Conference. And for the last three months, due to low pledges, we have not been able to follow through on our promises. The trickle-down effect of these actions can be devastating to those who rely on our support each month.

Please take some time to pray and strongly consider your dedication to your 2009 Pledge. If you have found yourself falling behind, consider making an effort to catch back up. If you find that God is calling you to provide more, please strongly consider this opportunity. Anyone who gracefully would like to make a second-mile pledge and give beyond their normal pledge so that we may properly pay our conference apportionments, please write "conference apportionments" on your check or pledge envelope and include it along with your normal pledge in the offering plate each Sunday.

2010 Budget

Grace Church, the Finance Committee and Church Council have recently gone through a difficult review of our projected finances for 2010. Thank you to all who have turned in your pledge cards and made a commitment to support the wonderful ministries Grace provides.

Unfortunately, the financial situation looks bleak. While 2009 has been a

difficult year for pledges, 2010 looks to be even more severe with our overall pledges forecasted to drop below the 2009 level. After making all the cuts that we think are possible, and continuing to dig into our dedicated funds, we are projecting a budget shortfall for 2010.

If you have not yet turned in your 2010 pledge card, please take the time to make your grateful commitment. Additionally, we welcome any member who finds they wish to go beyond their traditional pledge so that Grace may continue supporting the more than 50 missions and ministries our community and the world around us have come to rely on.

If you have any particular questions, feel free to contact me directly.
Grace and Peace,
Brent Windsor, Finance Chair



Angel Food

Ministries December delivery & order times:

Mon-Thurs 10 am-4 pm

Fri, Dec 4 4-6 pm

Sat, Dec 5 11 am-1 pm

No orders may be placed after 1 pm on Monday, December 7

Delivery date is Saturday December 19 at 8:30 am

The December menu may be picked up in the church office or you may go to emporiagrace.org and follow the link to angelfoodministries.com.

Angel Tree Christmas

Prison Fellowship Angel Tree is a ministry that provides Christmas presents to children who have a

parent in prison. The Grace Church family has participated in this ministry for a number of years by purchasing gifts for area children and giving these gifts on behalf of the incarcerated parent. Each child receives two gift packages valued at approximately \$20.00 each. One gift is a fun package, usually a toy or game and the other is a clothing package. These gifts are delivered to the homes by church volunteers along with a gospel message, thereby sharing not only our love for them but also the love of Jesus Christ and the hope for everlasting life. The gift package information will be available at church Dec 6. Please consider being a part of this opportunity of outreach and ministry.

Riverside School-We will also be adding a few names to this group that are from Riverside School. Part of the Riverside program is warmth. They will have tags of clothing sizes and they will provide the fun gifts themselves.

Christmas & the Children of Grace-We have in the past always tried to provide the children of Grace with a small gift from the church. This year, due to the economy and watching our pennies, we need your help. A member has donated these gift bags and we would like for you to provide a gift for one (or more) of our children. We are only going to fill them with baked goods, cookies, brownies, fruit or candies. Purchased bakery items will be just fine. When you start baking your holiday treats, just add a few more to your batch! The gift bags will be handed out to the children on Wednesday, December 16. **We will need the gift bags back by noon on December 16.**

Let us rejoice in giving!

December Events

Our regular weekly schedule:

Sun

8:45 am Sunday School Music
 9:15 am Sun School
 10 am Worship Service
 6:30 pm Interactive Worship Service

Mon

6 pm Cub Scouts
 7 pm Boy Scouts

Tues

9 am Bible Study
 5:30 pm Girl Scouts

Wed

5:30 pm Worship Planning Ministry
 6 pm Youth Group
 7 pm Voices of Grace

Thursday December 3

10-4 pm Angel Food orders
 6 pm Staff Parish Relations Committee

Friday December 4

2-6 pm Angel Food orders

Saturday December 5

12 pm UMW General Luncheon
 11 am- 1 pm Angel Food orders

Sunday December 6

11:30 am Health & Wellness Ministry
 12 pm Membership Ministry

Tuesday December 8

7:00 Phebe Group

Wednesday December 9

2 pm Abigail & Joanna
 5 pm Abundant Harvest

Thursday December 10

7 pm Finance Ministry

Saturday December 12

4 - 6:30 pm Chili Supper \$5 donation

Wednesday December 16

10 am Cookie Day - Create to Share

Saturday December 19

7 am Angel Food Distribution

Sunday December 20

11:30 am Church Council
 1 pm Education Ministry

Wednesday December 23

No Youth Group meeting

Thursday December 24

7 pm Christmas Eve Service

Friday December 25

Alleluia, Alleluia Christmas Day

Sunday December 27

4 pm Prayer Shawl Ministry

Monday December 28

5 pm Abundant Harvest
 6 pm Pinewood Derby

Wednesday December 30

No Youth Group Meeting

Thursday December 31

7 pm Service of Healing

Special Events in December

Sat, Dec 12 Chili Feed 4-6:30 pm
 Suggested donation \$5 for chili, crackers & light dessert. Stop by for chili before you go to the ESU game!

Wed, Dec 16 Cookie Day at 10 am, annual cookie delivery to shut-ins. Note: Create to Share will not meet in Nov. or Dec.

Thurs, Dec 24 Christmas Eve Service, 7 pm

In the Word

Dec. 6 John 3-9
 Dec. 13 John 10-16
 Dec. 20 John 17-21 & Acts 1-2
 Dec. 27 Acts 3-9

Flint Hills District Prayer Calendar

Dec. 6 Westmoreland/Olsburg
 Dec. 13 Climax
 Dec. 20 Junction City:First
 Dec. 27 Eskridge

Let us pray. *Heavenly and merciful Father, we lift up the Flint Hills District of the United Methodist Church. Always we seek your guidance as we strive to make disciples of Jesus Christ. We pray for the churches, ministries, and United Methodist organizations, that they will listen to your wishes for them so that their activities will be pleasing to you and help them to foster discipleship. We pray this in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior. Amen.*

UMW News

Please come to the United Methodist Women potluck luncheon on Sat, December 5, at 12 pm at Grace Church. We'll be installing the new Officers for 2010.

Come and find out what UMW is all about.

Help Wanted

The Communications Ministry is responsible for maintaining the church website and editing and producing the newsletter. Both projects are guided by the ministry's focus, to help Grace Church communicate its ministries' activities to help make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. If you have website management skills and/or editing and layout skills and can work within the Communications Ministry's parameters, please contact the church office at 342-2240.