

# Grace Messenger

January 2021



## PASTOR'S REFLECTION

On many days, my brain needs to take a break. Today was one of those days. As I often do, I strolled down the long narthex hallway toward the youth wing. I went out those glass doors and sat on one of the benches on that patio. It's a beautiful view. The sunsets are wonderful from that vantage point, by the way. You really should come and enjoy them sometime.

Even though, as I write these words, we are not totally through Advent and Christmas yet, the leadership side of my brain is straining to focus on 2021. It wants to know: Where are we going? What would God have us do? What is His plan for our congregation? What will the New Year bring? These were the same questions I pondered at the end of 2019. Wow! How different my thoughts were from what we had actually experienced.

A year ago, the coronavirus was an easy-to-ignore story in the center pages of the newspaper, one worthy of only a few words during the nightly newscast. Today, like it or not, it dominates the conversation. Lives are changed and plans are altered because of it. We may not have seen it coming, but we can be assured that God did.

This is the essential truth that always resonates for me when I sit on that back patio. I look across the field, and see, in the distance, the cross. Wherever we are and wherever we are going, we know that our future involves the cross. God is always leading us toward the cross.

I am very eager to walk with you through 2021. I hope that it is in person, but no matter what, I am excited to walk there with you. Let's embrace what this new year holds, knowing that God is always leading us forward.

Happy New Year!

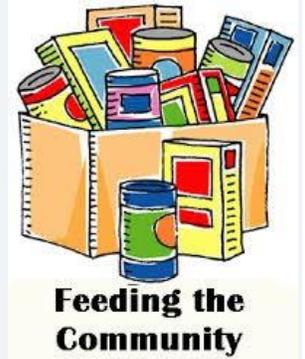
Pastor Tom Brodbeck

## JANUARY OUTREACH CORNER



Home for the Holidays: The Fuller Center for Housing will be having its annual fundraiser to provide one lucky family a home for the holidays. When the blue house-shaped banks become available, pick yours up and fill it with your spare change. Watch for more details as you may be able to donate online as an alternative option.

Let's help restock the shelves of our local food pantries, especially St John's, Enon and Second Harvest. Please bring in any of the following items to help Grace support feeding our community: Ramen Noodles, canned vegetables and toilet paper. All donations are due by January 24th.



Grace Harvest Table 2020: Our Grace Harvest Table changed location this year to the bell tower and was made available to our surrounding community. The residents were so generous that we were able to distribute \$9,552.56. Recipients of distributions this year were as follows: HOPE ministries: \$500; Open Hands Free Store: \$1,000; Children's Rescue Center: \$2,500; Springfield Soup Kitchen: \$2,775; and Jefferson Street Garden Ministries: \$2775. Thanks to Terry Fredrich, Jerry Angst and their team for their efforts. Kudos for a wonderful ministry. Thank our Lord for a great harvest season.

## NALC's Disaster Response

The NALC Disaster Response Mission Program is always in need of good used home furnishings (not clothing) to be given to needy families that have been displaced or hurt by hurricanes, floods or other disasters. Grace can continue to have an impact through these "Stuff the Truck" or other coordinated fundraising functions or events. One of the NALC's efforts is to Pray with and give Bibles to the families receiving aid. This is one of their actions that sets them/us apart from other organizations offering relief, working through God's Grace, to help others not only with physical and material aid, but with Spiritual aid as well.

Think about those pieces of home goods that are collecting dust in: Your closets, attic, basement, garage and RENTED STORAGE SPACE.

This collection drive is not for clothes, but for household hard goods and good bedding.

Drop off times at the Grace Community center will be Saturday 1/16 and Sunday 1/17 2PM to 5PM, or by appointment.

Call Steven Schumacher if you have any questions or plans to drop off goods at 937-624-7074. Tax donation forms will be available.



## **ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL**

What is in store for Adult Education in 2021? Well, hang on! In January you will experience an ending, an opportunity, and a journey to a distant land.

January 3 sees the ending of our Advent series "An Unexpected Christmas." This series was bumped back a week from its original schedule due to technical difficulties. This series features Pastor Andy Stanley (from North Point Church in the Atlanta area). It is available on Right Now Media as well.

On January 10 we will welcome Susie Rastatter, co-director of the Children's Rescue Center. Susie will update us on her ministry, especially in light of the modifications they've had to make this past year. Grace has supported the CRC for many years.

On January 17 we will launch a new five-part series, excerpted from the video series "That the World May Know." This series is hosted by Ray Vander Laan and shot entirely in the Holy Land. We will be guided to specific locations in the Scriptures and learn the importance of each location from a discipleship perspective. The class will be a combination of video and small group discussion, and will be facilitated by a team of Grace volunteers (along with Pastor Brodbeck).

Each of these Sunday School classes meet from 9:15 – 10:15 a.m. in the Community Center.

As a side note, there will be no Wednesday evening Bible study class or Wednesday night dinner offered in January. Instead, we invite you to form your own Life-to-Life group to build relationships with other Grace members and to reach out to your unchurched friends and neighbors. This will be a great way to engage them in conversation about the Scriptures as we move our way to the season of Lent.

## **PRAYER SUPPORT TEAM**

The Prayer Support Team meets in the Grace library at 6 p.m. on the third Thursday of the month. (We are separate from the prayer email chain.) We pray for churchwide concerns and significant events as well as individual requests. We include prayers for our community and our nation. Occasionally we facilitate activities such as a neighborhood prayer walk, the Prayer Breakfast, praying over the rooms of Grace and praying with our pastors. There is a prayer mailbox for our neighbors to use to request we pray for them.

Do you believe in the power of prayer? Do you want to experience prayer in a small group setting? We invite you to join us. You can attend one of our meetings to try us out before making a commitment to join the team. You can talk to any of our members to find out more. Please call the church office, 399-6257, for contact information.

Come pray with us!

## **COUNCIL RETREAT**

The Grace Congregation Council will hold its annual retreat on Saturday, January 9. This is always a key event for this leadership team of the church. The event will include a time for Bible study, an intense time of wrestling with key leadership issues facing our congregation, and the regular monthly council meeting. It is also a time to acclimate the newly elected council members.

Among the key issues to be discussed is the timing for calling a new associate pastor. Joining the team this year are Kristin Cline, Michelle Kouse, Jake Rembold and Cathy Zernechel. They join eight other leaders: Mark Klopfenstein, Bill Stapleton, Amy Fraker, Steven Schumacher, Judy Cary, Kevin Kreider, Joe Jordan and Melanie Petree. Pastor Brodbeck is also a voting member of the council.

Newly elected officers for the 2021 Council are: President – Mark Klopfenstein; Vice-President – Bill Stapleton; Secretary – Amy Fraker; and Treasurer – Kristi Leeth.

With this transition, the council also says goodbye to Craig Witker, Gene Rousculp, Jim Rolfes and Kristi Leeth who have completed their terms of service. (Note: Although Kristi is not a voting member of the council, because this position requires a special skillset, the Grace Constitution allows for this officer to be elected without vote.)

On January 9, and throughout the year, we encourage you to pray for this dedicated group of people.

## **Inclement Weather Information**

The policy for how and when Grace worship and/or other ministries might be closed or cancelled due to inclement weather is as follows: Pastor Brodbeck will contact at least two members of the executive committee for consultation and assistance. If they decide to cancel activities or worship, we will use the One Call Now service that allows each of our households to receive a phone call when we cancel services and a cancellation notification will be sent on the Grace app. Television station WHIO channel 7 and radio station WEEC will also be alerted. A response message will be placed on our telephone answering machine system at Grace.

Another option for receiving notification is through the WHIO channel 7 web site, by registering to be notified via e-mail if Grace is closed or worship cancelled. For more information, go to [www.whio.com](http://www.whio.com).



children's  
rescue center, inc

### Grace Outreach Break

Join us for our next Outreach Break. Save the date, Sunday January 10th at 9:15am or immediately following first service. Susie Rastatter from Ark Children's Rescue Center will be speaking to us about her ministry serving the children on the south end of Springfield. She will update us on how they have made changes through this time of pandemic and let us know how we can still support the good work they are doing. Please join us live or on Zoom from the link on Grace's website.

CURRENT RESIDENT OR

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