

Grace Vine

Grace United Church of Christ

An Open and Affirming Congregation

25 East 2nd Street

Historic Downtown Frederick, Maryland

JANUARY 2017

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Important Dates at a Glance

Sunday, January 1

Happy New Year!

11:00 a.m.

Worship and Carol-sing

NO Communion

Saturday, January 7

Men's Fellowship Breakfast

Details on page 6

Sunday, January 8

11:00 a.m.

Worship and Holy Communion



FROM THE PASTOR

Dear Friends,

A resolution is defined as: intention, resolve, decision, intent, aim, plan. This is the time of year when we make resolutions of many kinds. Maybe it's to quit smoking or start dieting. For some people it may be a cut back in the spending and put a little more in savings. Most resolutions don't see full follow-through. We start, we try, but most of us don't really succeed. Whatever the purpose, even if they don't work out as we planned, resolutions can be good things for us.

Resolutions can help give us focus. What are the things we need to give up so that we can have more of what is really important to us? What habits or actions may be doing us more harm than good? What areas of my life need to see improvement?

What about your spiritual life? What areas need to see a bit of improvement? Sometimes we intend to pray or meditate but time just gets the best of us. Maybe we can try to set a particular time each day for prayer, meditation, and reflection. We have monthly devotional booklets in the narthex at church that are wonderful resources for daily devotions. They have one scripture and a reflection written by ordinary people of faith, meant to inspire and challenge us each day.

Perhaps we could focus more on serving others by committing to one social action item each month. Help serve at the soup kitchen or volunteer to read to someone in a nursing home. Go walk doggies at the shelter or fold and stuff bulk mailings for a non-profit in your area.

Why not risk trying something new at Church while you are at it? We need people to usher or serve communion. We need people to read scripture in the services or to act as acolytes. We are in serious need of folk who want to serve on Mission and Outreach to help with the mission activities at Church.

My point is that resolutions do not always have to be about giving something up, they can be about taking something on. This time of year allows us to really look at our lives and see which areas are ones in which we can still grow.

May 2017 be a year which sees growth and blessings for us all!

Pastor Rob†

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: **A Pastoral Care note:** Due to the current HIPAA (Privacy) laws, hospitals are :
: not permitted to contact churches on behalf of patients. If you know of a :
: church member who is hospitalized, please inform the church office. In the :
: case of an emergency hospitalization (whether yourself or a family member), :
: please call Pastor Rob at 240-217-2767. :
:.....

FROM THE CHURCH OFFICE



Let's keep in touch!

Each week, the Grace Church eNews is sent out to our members and friends to keep everyone up-to-date on upcoming events. If you haven't been receiving these updates, please call or email the church office to be added to the list.

Mark your calendar now! The submission deadline for the February issue of the *Grace Vine* newsletter is Monday, January 23rd. The newsletter will be ready for pickup from the Narthex on Sunday, January 29th.

If you currently receive a paper copy of the *Grace Vine* newsletter, but would prefer to receive the newsletter by email, or read it online, please call or email the church office so that we can save the postage. Thank you!

Just a reminder that we have many outside groups who use space in our church building throughout the week and on the weekends. If you are planning an activity in the church, please remember to check with Tara in the office **before scheduling an event** to make sure the space you need is available. Thanks!

CENTRAL ATLANTIC CONFERENCE NEWS

A letter from Rev. Denise Bullitt -

December 15, 2016

Dear Central Atlantic Conference Pastors, Members and Staff:

Greetings to you all in the glorious name of Jesus Christ, whose birth we will soon celebrate as the gift of Christmas!

I am honored to have received the invitation to join the CACUCC staff as your Interim Conference Minister effective January 17, 2017. To have the opportunity to give back to each of you, a portion of the blessing I have received, as one nurtured into my faith and knowledge of God, Christ and the United Church of Christ under your banner—is pure joy. In 1997, when I was ordained at Peoples Congregational United Church in Washington DC, by the Potomac Association—none of us would have ever foreseen my path, 20 years later— leading me back to the place I call home.

Please know that your dedicated, Christ-centered Executive Committee has done a wonderful job orientating me to the challenges that lie ahead, as we work together to shape the future of our church. Having served on the Executive Committee that called Rev. John Deckenback to CAC, I know full well, his love and impact on this conference. Together, our work will honor his legacy even as we invite God's Holy Spirit to guide us to new possibilities only God, herself, has imagined.

Until your work with me begins in earnest, I join with you in thanking both the Board of Directors, Rev. Sheldon Culver and the staff of CAC for the tireless work they have done on behalf of this conference and our beloved United Church of Christ, through the unexpected challenges gone by. Their faithfulness to God, each of you, Christ's church and the UCC will provide the strength and hope needed to fortify us for the road ahead.

Please know that my husband, Jon, and I send our utmost wishes to each of you for a joyful Christmas and a blessed new year—In Christ!

See you soon!

Denise

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CONGREGATIONAL LIFE

Caring and Sharing

The following is a list of members and friends of our Grace Church family who are currently ill, home-bound, or hospitalized. If you know of anyone who should be added to this list, please call the church office or speak to Pastor Rob.

Harold Wenner
615 Biggs Ave.
Frederick, MD 21702

Millie Davis
801 Pine Ave.
Frederick, MD 21701

Joe Free
1117 Rocky Springs Rd.
Frederick, MD 21702

Betty Linton
814 Trail Ave.
Frederick, MD 21701

Paul and Miriam Himes
9810 Masser Rd.
Frederick, MD 21702

Pat Lowry
12 Rothschild Ct.
Gaithersburg, MD 20878

Bill Failor
Meadows Health Ctr.
7407 Willow Rd.
Frederick, MD 21702

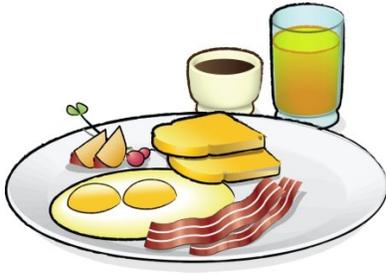
Pam Kehne
1632 Wall Dr.
Pasadena, MD 21122

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• **Lay Caring Ministry at Grace**
• Many of the folks on our Caring & Sharing list really miss coming to church
• and would greatly appreciate cards, phone calls or visits from members of
• their Grace Church family. If you would like to get involved in the Lay Caring
• Ministry, please speak to Pastor Rob or Mike Stockman.
•

Greeters and Fellowship Hosts

We have made a change to our fellowship schedule; snacks and drinks will be provided by volunteer hosts only on the first and third Sundays of each month. However, **we do still need greeters for every Sunday** morning. If you would like to serve as a greeter or host the fellowship time one Sunday, please sign up on the sheet in the Good Shepherd Room.





Men's Fellowship Breakfast

(meets the first Saturday of every month)

Saturday, January 7th

9:00 a.m.

Bob Evans on Route 40 (the Golden Mile)

Please join us!

Church Directories

Do you need an updated copy of our member directory? Please contact the church office or speak to an usher on Sunday morning. Due to privacy concerns, we do not publish our directory on the church website.

Volunteer Opportunities at Grace Church

Are you ready to get more involved in your church? We have plenty of opportunities for you! With only 5 part-time staff members, Grace Church relies heavily on volunteers to keep the church running smoothly.

We have many volunteer opportunities for people of all ages, abilities, and interests, such as:

Acolytes, Altar Guild, Children's Sermon volunteers, Eucharistic Ministers, Lay Caring Ministry, Scripture readers, Ushers, and Youth Ministry - *please speak to Pastor Rob*

Senior and Joyful Noise Choirs - *please speak to Jonas Dawson*

Fellowship Hosts and Greeters - *please speak to Matt Bonin*

Children's Church leaders, Nursery volunteers, and Sunday School teachers - *please speak to Jean Barrick*

Offering Counters - *please speak to Lloyd Taylor*

Outreach and Missions - *please speak to Sarah Travis*

Free Blood Pressure Screenings

On the first Sunday of every month, our Faith Community Nurse, Mike Stockman, will provide free blood pressure screenings during fellowship.





Time to work off all those holiday goodies! Join us on Thursday evenings at 6pm for our **FREE** drop-in Zumba class! Men, women and teens of all fitness levels are welcome! Invite a friend!

FINANCE AND PROPERTY



**A LOOK
at the
BUDGET**

Treasurer's Report

	<u>November 2016</u>		<u>Year-to-date</u> (as of 11/30)
Income:	\$37,453.00	Income:	\$196,868.23
Expenses:	<u>\$15,125.27</u>	Expenses:	<u>\$214,426.22</u>
Difference:	\$22,327.73	Difference:	- \$17,557.99

Giving Options at Grace Church

Boxes of offering envelopes are available in the Narthex for anyone who would like to use envelopes for regular giving. Simply pick up a box and write your name on the sign-up sheet next to the envelope number that you've chosen.

If you would rather skip the checks and envelopes and give electronically, we now have 2 options:

1. You can sign up for our super-convenient *UCC e-Giving* program and have a regular, recurring donation drafted out of your checking or savings account, or charged to your credit card. (To get started, simply pick up an authorization form in the Narthex or the Library, or call the church office.)

or

2. **You can now make donations on our website using PayPal!** Simply click the button at the bottom of the home page - www.grucc.com!

If you decide to participate in our electronic giving programs, you can pick up some "I give electronically" cards to place in the offering plate on Sunday mornings.

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY
<p>1 New Year's Day 9:45 a.m. - Christian Education classes 11:00 a.m. - Worship and Carol-sing (NO Communion) 5:00 p.m. - Redemption City Church (S)</p>	<p>2 Church office closed 7:30 p.m. - N.A. meeting (DR)</p>	<p>3 6:00 p.m. - Man-Kind Project (DR)</p>
<p>8 The Baptism of Christ 9:45 a.m. - Christian Education classes 9:45 a.m. - Choir rehearsal (Room 12) 11:00 a.m. - Worship with Holy Communion (S) 3:00 p.m. - CPRCNA meeting (DR) 5:00 p.m. - Redemption City Church (S)</p>	<p>9 7:00 p.m. - Finance & Property (Rm. 3) 7:30 p.m. - N.A. meeting (DR)</p>	<p>10 6:00 p.m. - Man-Kind Project (DR)</p>
<p>15 Second Sunday after Epiphany 9:45 a.m. - Christian Education classes 9:45 a.m. - Choir rehearsal (Room 12) 11:00 a.m. - Worship (S) 5:00 p.m. - Redemption City Church (S)</p>	<p>16 Martin Luther King Day 7:00 p.m. - TFC mrktg comm. (3) 7:30 p.m. - N.A. meeting (DR)</p>	<p>17 6:00 p.m. - Man Kind Project (DR)</p>
<p>22 Third Sunday after Epiphany 9:45 a.m. - Christian Education classes 9:45 a.m. - Choir rehearsal (Room 12) 11:00 a.m. - Worship (S) 5:00 p.m. - Redemption City Church (S)</p>	<p>23 7:30 p.m. - N.A. meeting (DR)</p>	<p>24 6:00 p.m. - Man-Kind Project (DR) 7:00 p.m. - Council meeting (Room 3)</p>
<p>29 Fourth Sunday after Epiphany 9:45 a.m. - Christian Education classes 9:45 a.m. - Choir rehearsal (Room 12) 11:00 a.m. - Worship (S) 5:00 p.m. - Redemption City Church (S)</p>	<p>30 7:30 p.m. - N.A. meeting (DR)</p>	<p>31 6:00 p.m. - Man-Kind Project (DR)</p>

WEDNESDAY THURSDAY FRIDAY SATURDAY

<p>4</p> <p>6:30 p.m. - TFC Youth Group (DR) 7:00 p.m. - PFLAG (Room 3)</p>	<p>5</p> <p>6:00 p.m. - Zumba class (GSR) 6:30 p.m. - GAM-MA (2nd floor)</p>	<p>6</p> <p>2:00 p.m. - Noel Lester memorial service (Hood) 8:30 p.m. - N.A. meeting (GSR)</p>	<p>7</p> <p>9:00 a.m. - Men's Breakfast (Bob Evans)</p>
<p>11</p> <p>6:30 p.m. - TFC Youth Group (DR)</p>	<p>12</p> <p>6:00 p.m. - Zumba class (GSR) 7:00 p.m. - TFC board (Room 3)</p>	<p>13</p> <p>8:30 p.m. - N.A. meeting (GSR)</p>	<p>14</p>
<p>18</p> <p>6:30 p.m. - TFC Youth Group (DR)</p>	<p>19</p> <p>6:00 p.m. - Zumba 6:00 p.m. - FCHD support grp (DR) 6:30 p.m. - TFC support grp (Rm 3)</p>	<p>20</p> <p>8:30 p.m. - N.A. meeting (GSR)</p>	<p>21</p>
<p>25</p> <p>6:30 p.m. - TFC Youth Group (DR)</p>	<p>26</p> <p>6:00 p.m. - Zumba class (GSR)</p>	<p>27</p> <p>8:30 p.m. - N.A. meeting (GSR)</p>	<p>28</p> <p>9:00 a.m. - Redemption City Church training (S, GSR)</p>

DR = Dining Room
GSR = Good Shepherd Room
S = Sanctuary

January 2017

IMPORTANT REMINDER REGARDING BUILDING SECURITY:

After worship each Sunday, the main doors to the Sanctuary (the Narthex doors) are locked from the inside. If you stay for the fellowship time after worship, please remember to exit by the side doors rather than the Narthex doors. Thank you for your cooperation!

THE GOOD SAMARITAN FUND

The Good Samaritan Fund is designated for emergency financial relief to members and friends of Grace Church. Only the pastor and person in need know who receives assistance from the fund.

Donations to the Good Samaritan Fund can be made at any time, in any amount. If you would like to help, please place a check in the offering plate made out to Grace Church with "Good Samaritan Fund" on the memo line. Thank you!

If you or someone you know from our church family is in need of assistance, please contact Pastor Rob directly.

WORSHIP AND EDUCATION

The Adult Sunday School is discussing the late Marcus Borg's last book, "Convictions, How I Learned what Matters Most." Borg, a prolific writer, was canon theologian at Trinity Episcopal Cathedral in Portland, Oregon and described by the New York Times as "a leading figure in his generation of Jesus scholars."

The adult Sunday School class meets every Sunday morning from 9:45 to 10:45 and all are welcome, so don't feel shy - we have a very friendly, accepting group.

John Brehmer, facilitator

NOW AVAILABLE!

We now have large-print versions of the Upper Room devotionals! The Upper Room devotionals are available to anyone who would like to use them as a personal prayer and worship resource. You may pick one up from the Narthex free of charge.

Music Notes

An Update from the Grace Church Choir

As you already know, we have been invited to perform in Wittenberg, Germany at the World Reformation Exposition on August 25, 2017! 2017 marks the 500th anniversary of the Reformation, and Wittenberg is the place where Martin Luther nailed the *Ninety-five Theses* to the door of the cathedral, beginning the Reformation. It is a HUGE honor to be a part of this celebration!!

We will be in Germany for about a week. Our housing will be provided by members of the German church, but we will be paying our own airfare for the trip. We have been holding fundraisers since October, and will continue them over the next several months. Thank you to everyone who purchased candles, soaps, Thirty-One Gifts items, and candy! And a special thanks to Roadsney Ceballos and Tony Hemler, and all of their volunteer helpers, who set up a gift wrap table at Barnes and Noble in December and raised over \$185 for us!

In total, we have already raised more than \$3,000! And thanks to a very generous anonymous donor, an additional \$2,500 was contributed in the form of a matching donation! We are so grateful for the generosity and support of our fellow church members! Thank you all!

OUTREACH



**Feeding the
Community**

THANK YOU!

Our Grace Groceries collection for November was **37** items
and our collection for December was **48** items!

*Thank you for your continued support of this
local mission project!*

Although non-perishable food items are always needed - and appreciated! - at the Food Bank, now that the cold weather is here, please also consider donations of gloves, hats and scarves for those in need.

Lex Orandi Lex Credendi

Linking Faith and Worship

Sacraments. Different churches have differing views and practices depending on with whom you are speaking. A sacrament is defined as “An outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace.” There is an outward sign (water, oil, bread, wine) which convey to us an inward reception of divine grace (the presence of Christ, the forgiveness of sins...). They are outward symbols through which the Holy Spirit does something inside us. They are mysteries of God’s love, *not* our acts toward God.

At one time in church history there were as many as 13 sacraments, including prayer. The fact is that nobody really counted them until the reformation when the Reformers said there were only 2 sacraments: Baptism and Communion. The others were good and holy, but did not have the same importance in the Christian life since they did not have “Dominical Imperative,” which means to say that Jesus did not command us to do them. He said we must be Baptized (Matthew 28) and that we must celebrate and receive Communion.

The Catholic and Orthodox churches recognize 7 sacraments: Baptism, Communion, Confirmation, Marriage, Ordination, Confession and Anointing. Protestant churches widely recognize that while these were not explicitly commanded by Christ, they are important and good things that help us to recognize and receive God’s grace in significant ways. We call them Sacramental Rites. They are sacramental in that they convey grace, but are not commanded by Christ as are Baptism and Communion. For example, you CAN get married or be ordained, but you don’t have to and not everyone should! But EVERY Christian must be baptized and receive Holy Eucharist (Communion). These are the non-negotiables.

Some churches believe that what we call sacraments are not God’s acts but ours. They are promises we make to God through symbolic rituals. These are not referred to as sacraments but rather as “Ordinances,” a promise or covenant we make with God. Baptists, for example would fit in this category. And for these Christians, the only two ordinances would be Baptism and Eucharist. The others do not hold the same spiritual weight.

In the UCC, especially in the former German side of the UCC, we hold the sacraments in very high esteem. At the very center of our chancel is the altar, reminding us that we are a people whose faith is centered around and nourished by the presence of Christ in the Holy Meal. The Baptismal Font is prominent, reminding us of the importance of our own covenant of Baptism.

Outward signs of an inward Grace, Sacraments enrich our lives, unite us as a people and help us focus on the presence of our Lord Christ who calls us in turn to become living sacraments, broken and poured out for the world. We are to become the outward signs of God's amazing grace for those around us.

- Pastor Rob

JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

1 Pamela Kehne
 8 Norine Haas
 15 Mary Walsh
 16 Lester Slick III
 17 Jerry Princler



18 Debbie Kula
 21 Virginia Taylor
 25 Tiffany Fiore
 26 Robin Haak
 29 Erica Powell

It's that time of year again...

Wondering if church events and activities are canceled due to the weather? There are several ways that you can find out:



CALL the church office (301-662-3312) and press 7 for the Inclement Weather Hotline. This voice mailbox will be updated as soon as a decision is made to cancel any services or activities.

CHECK your email. (Make sure we have your current email address!)

VISIT the church's website, www.grucc.com or our Facebook page.

We will make every effort to get these methods of communication updated as early as possible.

For All the Saints

Antony of Egypt - January 17 (356)

Antony was born to affluent Christian parents who farmed along the Nile river village of Coma in Upper Egypt. At age twenty, shortly after the death of his parents, he entered a village church and heard the saying of Jesus to the rich man: "If you would be perfect, go and sell all that you have and give to the poor, come, follow me and you will have treasure in heaven." Seized by these words, he sold the farm, gave his money to the poor, and moved to the edge of town to live among local hermits and ascetics.

Directed by the wisdom of older hermits, Antony was schooled for a life of discipline and solitude. Overtime, Antony moved further and further away from the village, into the wilderness of the desert. His days were occupied with prayer, fasting, and the recitation of scripture. In 286 Antony entered a period of absolute solitude at Pisper at a desert fort near the Red Sea. For some twenty years, he fought the demonic powers and overcame the forces of evil on their own turf: the interior life of the self.

In 306 he emerged from the desert to a flock of followers seeking his wisdom and guidance. He moved to Alexandria where he earned an income gardening and making mats, all the while encouraging persecuted Christians under the tyranny of Maximinus. It was during this time that he met Athanasius from whom most of our biographical information about Antony is based. In his *Life of Antony*, Athanasius, the devoted disciple, describes his master Antony as one restored to the glory of original creation.

During the middle ages, Antony became the embodiment of the spirit of early monasticism. He was a patriarch to monks and was very popular among medieval Christians. Sayings attributed to Antony were collected and taught. Like darts, they pierce reality with the sting of insight and discernment:

A certain philosopher asked St. Antony: Father, how can you be so happy when you are deprived the consolation of books? Antony replied: My book, O Philosopher, is the nature of created things, and any time I want to read the words of God, the book is before me.

Antony died in 356, well over 100 years of age. According to the legend, he left his only possessions, his mantle and a sheepskin tunic, to his favorite student, Athanasius.

- J. S. Hudgins

Grace Church Leadership Directory

COUNCIL OFFICERS

President	Patti Flanders-Lombardi	301-865-2984
Vice President	Jerry Princler	301-898-3877
Secretary	Vonnie Crum	301-898-5755
Treasurer	Lloyd Taylor	301-898-9259
At-Large	Donald Toms	240-446-7378
At-Large	Lisel Powell	240-651-5380

COMMISSION CHAIRS

Administrative	Steve Robeson	301-639-7039
Congregational Life	Matt Bonin	845-326-7468
Finance and Property	Eric Black	724-910-9295
Outreach	Sarah Travis	
Worship and Education	Jean Barrick	301-663-1203

CHURCH STAFF

Rev. Dr. Robert Apgar-Taylor, Pastor
Jonas Dawson, Director of Music and Organist
Tammy Eyler, Nursery Attendant
Tom Tobery, Caretaker
Tara Plyler, Administrative Associate

Telephone: 301-662-3312
Email: admin@grucc.com
Web Site: www.grucc.com

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS:
9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
Monday through Friday

SUNDAY WORSHIP:
11:00 a.m.

Holy Communion is celebrated on the first Sunday of every month.

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