

Inside this issue:

The Grace of God 1, 3

Prayer Requests / Announcements 2

New Year's Greeting from Bishop Ough 4

Nurses Notes 5

Devotion 6

Special Points of Interest:

- February Monthly Meetings, Back Page
- February Birthdays and Anniversaries included with Calendar

Administrative Assistant Office Hours

Mon. through Thurs. 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Fri. 8:30 a.m. to Noon



FEBRUARY

*Faith United Methodist Church
"Engage, Equip, and Empower!"*

**Volume 2018.
Issue 2**

The Grace of God

We often talk of the grace of God and claim it as part of our faith but do we understand it. Do we know "What is the grace of God?"

Grace is a constant theme in the Bible, and it culminates in the New Testament with the coming of Jesus (John 1:17) *17 For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.* The word translated "grace" in the New Testament comes from the Greek word *charis*, which means "favor, blessing, or kindness." We can all extend grace to others; but when the word grace is used in connection with God, it takes on a more powerful meaning. Grace is God choosing to bless us rather than curse us as our sin deserves. It is His benevolence to the undeserving.

Ephesians 2:8 says, *"For by grace are you saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves."* The only way any of us can enter into a relationship with God is because of His grace toward us. Grace began in the Garden of Eden when God killed an animal to cover the sin of Adam and Eve (Genesis 3:21) *21 And the Lord God made for Adam and for his wife garments of skins and clothed them.*

He could have killed the first humans right then for their disobedience. But rather than destroy them, He chose to make a way for them to be right with Him.

That pattern of grace continued throughout the Old Testament when God instituted blood sacrifices as a means to atone for sinful men. It was not the physical blood of those sacrifices, per se, that cleansed sinners; it was the grace of God that forgave those who trusted in Him (Hebrews 10:4) *For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.* Genesis 15:6) *And he believed the Lord, and he counted it to him as righteousness.* Sinful men showed their faith by offering the sacrifices that God required.

The apostle Paul began many of his letters with the phrase, *"Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ"* (Romans 1:7; Ephesians 1:1; 1 Corinthians 1:3). God is the instigator of grace, and it is from Him that all other grace flows.

God shows both mercy and grace, but they are not the same. **Mercy withholds a punishment we deserve; grace gives a blessing we don't deserve.**

(Continued on Page 3)

Prayer Requests

Remember our church members & friends who are less mobile and are unable to join us as often as they would like, including:

Colony Court Memory & Care Suites: Ann Swenson

Colony Court: Ardella Draheim, Nina Youngberg, Leona Quast, Muriel Jenkins

Lakeshore Inn: Florence Gutknecht, Liz Corchran

Latham Place: George and Lucille Kubista, Elaine Westrum

Oaklawn Health Care Center: Jim Keller

Koda Living Community: Chuck Youngberg

Emmetsburg Care Center: Peter Fog

Prayer Requests from Sunday Worship: Leona Quast, Don Paulson, the family of Fern Papke, Connie Moran, the family of Jeff Kath



Thank You

To the choir:

Thank you for thinking of me this Christmas. Your kindness was truly appreciated.

Marlys

Faith Crafters & Stitchers

Faith Crafters & Stitchers will meet **Thursday, February 8** from **1:00 to 3:00 p.m.** in the Fellowship Hall. You may bring a project of your own to work on or ideas for Bazaar 2018! If you have not been to crafters and stitchers in the past, come check us out! Coffee and treats provided. Call Sandy Voshell at 835-4122 with questions.

2018 Pledge Update

Pledges received through January 8 has been a disappointing total of 12. This means that we will have to estimate the individual giving by the rest of the members in order to prepare the 2018 budget for Council approval in late January. We will still accept your pledge form and encourage you do prepare it and turn it in as soon as possible. Thank you!

December Pancake Mix Sunday

December donations for Pancake Sunday totaled 135 pounds! Great job everyone! Thank you for your contributions.

Annual Church Conference

The annual Church Conference previously scheduled for January 28 has been rescheduled to **February 11**. Please watch bulletin announcements for the time.

The Grace of God

(Continued from page 1)

In mercy, God chose to cancel our sin debt by sacrificing His perfect Son in our place (Titus 3:5) *he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit.*

(2 Corinthians 5:21) *21 For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.*

But He goes even further than mercy and extends grace to His enemies (Romans 5:10) *10 For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life.*

He offers us forgiveness (Hebrews 8:12; *For I will be merciful toward their iniquities, and I will remember their sins no more.*) (Ephesians 1:7) *In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, reconciliation (Colossians 1:19-20) 19 For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, 20 and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross. abundant life (John 10:10) The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly. eternal treasure (Luke 12:33), Sell your possessions, and give to the needy. Provide yourselves with moneybags that do not grow old, with a treasure in the heavens that does not fail, where no thief approaches and no moth destroys. His Holy Spirit (Luke 11:13), If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!"and a place in heaven with Him some day (John 3:16-18) "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. 17 For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved ...when we accept His offer and place our faith in His sacrifice.*

Grace is God giving the greatest treasure to the least deserving—which is every one of us.- Got Questions?.org

As we ponder on these things may our hearts be encouraged.

Pastor Victor

New Year's Greeting from Bishop Ough

From Bishop Ough's New Year's Greeting:

Grace and peace to you as we embrace the New Year.

The joy of Christmas and the gift of Emmanuel—God with us—gives us the confidence to face the future with hope....As United Methodists, we are at a precipitous moment, uncertain about our denomination's future. Yet, we do know that we have been raised up as a people to share in God's mission by spreading scriptural holiness across the globe. And we know that God knows what form this mission will take in the future. As a Council of Bishops, we have been in unceasing prayer, asking God to open our hearts and minds to discern what God would have us do to lead our global movement. We thank you for your earnest prayers and invite you to continue to pray for the Commission on a Way Forward and the Council as our work continues and we prepare for the 2019 Special Session of the General Conference.

Likewise, every part of the world where our United Methodist Connection is present is in the throes of dramatic upheaval, conflict, poverty, migrations, or natural disasters. As we enter 2018, let us resolve to be tireless in our efforts to bring health, healing, recovery, and transformation to a broken world. Let us be unflagging in our commission to reach new people with the gospel of Jesus Christ. Let us be fully available to grow in our love of God and neighbor. Let us renew our commitment to always and everywhere practice our Rule of Life—do no harm, do good, and attend to the ordinances of God.

The new year is a time for renewing the covenant. John Wesley clearly understood that covenant cannot be manufactured or maintained by structural, administrative, or compulsory means. He knew that covenant-making and covenant-keeping were spiritual matters—a function of offering one's life to God and to God's purposes above all else.

The first celebration of the Covenant Service in the Methodist movement was held on Monday, August 11, 1755. In short order, covenant renewal services were being held on New Year's Day in class meetings and societies of the Methodist revival movement. Many United Methodist churches utilize this service in their own Watch Night or New Year's Day worship. Many United Methodists can recite all or portions of Wesley's invitation to his Covenant Service as deftly as they can recite the Lord's Prayer, the Apostle's Creed, or Psalm 23. The words are powerful and provocative. I believe they may hold the key to our seeking a way forward. They invite a measure of humility, integrity, denial, and surrender that is often discomfiting and disorienting to our pre-conceived, siloed positions. They clearly remind us that we belong to Christ, and that to give ourselves to Christ in all things is the heart and soul of all covenantal relationships within our great United Methodist Church.

So, as we enter into 2018 and trust that God will provide a future with hope, I invite all United Methodists to renew our covenant with God and one another. May God add God's blessing to our journey together as a covenant people and grant us a blessed new year.

Nurse's Notes—What About Our Money? A Faith Response

Author Susan K. Taylor

You may wonder, why is she talking about money? The answer is - stress and anxiety about money can and does lead to health problems. It often is a major stressor.

Do we connect material with spiritual? Do you feel guilty about the money you have? Do you worry about having enough money? How many of our conversations with family are about money issues?

Paul's first letter to the Corinthians "...for earth and everything that is in it belong to the Lord." (1 Corinthians 10:26) Where do we put our trust? In God or money? Are we centered on God?

God's economy of enough for everyone, in which no one has too much and no one has too little is referred to many times in the Bible; such as, God providing the manna for the people of Israel in the exodus. The practice of gleaning fields. The foundations of God's economy are sufficiency and love. "Security is what allows us to decide how much is enough because without a sense of security, there can never be enough." (page 43) "When we learn to depend on each other, we can begin to trust that our lives are supported by God's good sufficiency." (page 48)

Think about this, "the drive to consume" is actively displacing "the psychic space once fueled by religion, family, and community." (page 57)

So what are we to do? Our culture is money driven, in stark contrast to God's teachings. Do we actually have enough? Is it time to say "I have enough"? Is it time to share God's generosity with others? Do we really believe God will make provision for us?

Where do you stand? How have you used your resources to help others? God knows we can do better if we put our trust in Him and not our pocket book.

Your Parish Nurse,
Sherry Scholljegerdes

*Swallowing angry words is
much better than having to eat them.*

A SMALL-town newspaper developed a column specifically to interview couples who had reached their golden wedding anniversary. A brief history of the couple celebrating fifty years of marriage was outlined. Then, the newspaper posed the same question to each spouse: "To what do you attribute the success of your marriage?" Many of the couples approaching this milestone knew they were going to be interviewed and they gave long thought to the wisest and most practical advice they could give. Some advocated total honesty, others shared faith, and others abundant communication.

One man lovingly glanced at his wife and then replied: "The secret of our fifty years of marital harmony is quite simple. My wife and I made an agreement the day we were married. If she was bothered or upset about something, she was to get it off her chest and out in the open. And, if I was mad at her about something, we agreed I would take a walk. So, I guess you can attribute our marital success to the fact that I have led largely an outdoor life."

In finding a way to release anger and frustration, make sure your loved ones don't become your targets.

*A fool uttereth all his mind: but a wise man
keepeth it in till afterwards.*

Proverbs 29:11

From "God's Little Devotional Book"

Love Word Search

1 Corinthians 13:4-8

Find the hidden words.



K Y D S N G E G I P B E E E H
 U P A E M L G A A V E A B O N
 W R T V Q F P R R J A T P W E
 U E I E Z J R B R Z R E O P Z
 U N R I G H T E O U S N E S S
 N E B L B Q P P G F M H C J K
 N S Q E K E R S A V P P R P X
 E J E B C O P T N C M L C X Q
 R N S C V O N E T N X J J T C
 D P D O I E M D E R E F F U S
 Y N K U I O R I J E A L O U S
 R E I T R D J O N F L C G V K
 D R A K F E Z E A G X M K O F
 Z P Y Z D A S R R R L S R A W
 Q T K X B W R E V E N Y Y C N

Is **PATIENT**

Does Not Take Into Account A Wrong **SUFFERED**

Is **KIND**

Does Not Rejoice In **UNRIGHTEOUSNESS**

Is Not **JEALOUS**

REJOICES With The Truth

Does Not **BRAG**

BEARS All Things

Is Not **ARROGANT**

BELIEVES All Things

Does Not Act **UNBECOMINGLY**

HOPES All Things

Does Not Seek Its **OWN**

ENDURES All Things

Is Not **PROVOKED**



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Change Service Requested

Come Worship with Us
We have room.

MONTHLY MEET-UPS:

Elizabeth Circle

UMW Elizabeth Circle will **not** meet in February. We will see everyone at the UMW Unit Meeting on Monday, February 19!

Ruth Circle

UMW Ruth Circle will meet **Tuesday, February 13**, from **10:30 a.m. to Noon** at the home of Lorraine Wick. All are welcome to attend.