



Winter 2026 Edition  
February - March

# GRACE METHODIST CHURCH NEWS

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## *From the Pastor's Desk ...*

As I write this, the world outside my window is frozen. On January 25th we cancelled church due to the winter storm and days later, the ground is still covered in a sheet of ice. I've only slipped once – took out a plastic lawn chair like a professional wrestler leaping from the top rope onto a battered opponent – while poor Bone (my dog) has had the unfortunate job of trying to relieve himself with his legs sliding out in four different directions. Much of our time has been spent indoors, Bone snoozing as Krista studies and I try to catch up on some reading, research and writing (like this article that Martha kept hounding me to finish).

Sadly, I also have spent a fair share of time tracking the constant stream of news stories coming out of Minneapolis and noticing how differently my fellow Americans interpret and react to these events based on their own political leanings and ideology. It is wearisome. I watch clips of the various media talking heads making themselves out to be the prosecutor, judge, and jury for the American public, spewing out their divisive rhetoric. It is wearisome. I watch the politicians huddle up and point fingers while ignoring the fingers pointing back at them. It is all so wearisome. What do we do when we can't trust anything that is being shown to us? When we feel forced to choose between two narratives when we know that life is more complicated than that?

May I offer you some refreshment? Listen to Paul's instruction to the Galatian church: *"Make no mistake, God is not mocked. A person will harvest what they plant. Those who plant only for their own benefit will harvest devastation from their selfishness, but those who plant for the benefit of the Spirit will harvest eternal life from the Spirit. Let's not get tired of doing good, because in time we'll have a harvest if we don't give up. So then, let's work for the good of all whenever we have an opportunity, and especially for those in the household of faith."* (Galatians 6:7-10, CEB)

Don't worry about what others are planting, what are you planting? As a follower of Jesus, as one who knows that Christ is Lord and King, what seeds are you planting in the soil of your life? What are you putting out into the world? What we see in the news and read on social media is not the full picture of reality. There are certainly many others out there in Minnesota and across this land who are planting good seed. They are doing good each and every day – trusting that their efforts will bear a great harvest. I watched a hostile interview with a man whose worship service at church was interrupted by protestors. He responded, even in his agitation, with love. *"I just need to spend time with my son, we came here to worship our Lord and now sadly we need to go, but I want you to know that I love all of you."*

Don't grow weary of doing good. Listen to the words of your Lord. *"I've said these things to you so that you will have peace in me. In the world you have distress. But be encouraged! I have conquered the world."* (John 16:33)

*Pastor Chris*

# Upcoming Events / Meetings

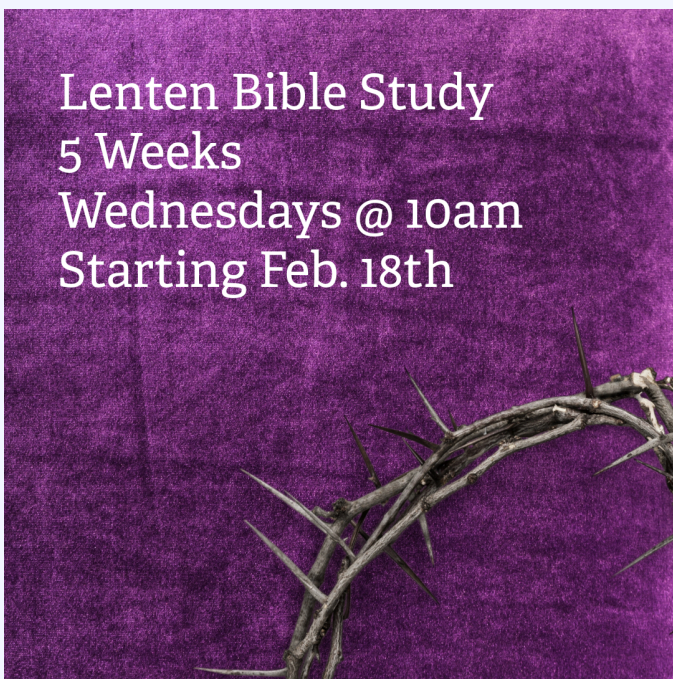


**FAT Tuesday**

**Tuesday, Feb 17th**  
**5:00-6:30pm**  
Gumbo, Cornbread & Bread Pudding  
Come Join the Festivities!

**Wednesday, Feb 18th**  
**Service at Noon**  
**in the Sanctuary**

**ASH WEDNESDAY**



Lenten Bible Study  
5 Weeks  
Wednesdays @ 10am  
Starting Feb. 18th



**GOOD FRIDAY SERVICE**  
**GRACE METHODIST CHURCH**  
**APRIL 3RD, 6PM**



**church council**  
**MEETING**

**TUESDAY, MARCH 10**  
Committees meet @ 6:30 p.m.  
Full Council convenes @ 7 p.m. in the Dr. Hines Rm

Your Finance Committee extends its blessings to all of our Grace Church brothers and sisters in Christ.

The following is a brief update of Grace's operating results for the full year ended December 31, 2025:

- Collections from tithes for the full year of 2025 were approximately \$269,000, which compares very favorably against collections of \$249,000 for the full year of 2024 (a year-over-year increase of \$20,000 or 8.2%) and favorably against the 2025 budgeted collections of \$267,000 for the same period.
- Overall collections (i.e., tithes plus donations for Church Sunday School, Missions, WIGGLES (aka WinGS), building fund, Christmas Offering, and Memorials) for the full year of 2025 totaled \$310,000 (a year-over-year increase of \$27,000 or 9.5%), which is emblematic of the incredibly generous and giving nature of the Grace Church congregation.
- Operating expenses for the full year of 2025 were approximately \$280,000 (excluding Mission grants of \$44,000 and capital improvement projects totaling \$65,000), which compares unfavorably against expenses of \$267,000 for the full year of 2024. The vast majority of this increase was attributable to an increase in the cost of utilities (i.e., gas and electric), salary increases for Church staff, and expenses associated with 503 Race Street. Importantly, disbursements for the full year of 2025 were only slightly higher (about \$10,000 or about 3.7%) than budgeted operating expenses.

The Church Council recently approved the 2026 Budget. We have budgeted an increase in tithes of 5% (about \$13,500) and total collections will be slightly higher (about \$1,400 or 0.5%) than in 2025. Budgeted operating costs (excluding Mission grants and capital improvement projects) will increase slightly over 2025 (about \$3,000 or 1.1%). We also expect to incur meaningful capital improvement expenditures as we embark upon much-needed updating and renovations to our aging facilities.

Lastly, and importantly, our budget for Mission giving has increased meaningfully as we expand our Church and community outreach initiatives. With all of this in mind, the Finance Committee respectfully asks that you give prayerful consideration to your tithes and offerings for calendar 2026. God is blessing Grace Church and its members abundantly, and our joyful giving should be a reflection of these blessings.

Once again, we are incredibly thankful and grateful to the Grace Church congregation for your generous support of God's work in calendar 2025. We wish all of you blessings and health in the New Year.

***God is blessing Grace Church and its members abundantly, and our joyful giving should be a reflection of these blessings.***



# Grace Missions Team

Vicki Hayden

Diane Twilley has agreed to serve as Chairperson of the Missions Team. Thank you, Diane, for stepping into another leadership position in the church.

The Campaign for Grade Level Reading (CGLR) showing of the movie 'Sentenced' held on November 17 had over 20 volunteers sign up to help children with their reading skills.

The Christmas party and Christmas caroling held at Mallard Bay Nursing Home in Cambridge on December 7 was a huge success. Our Children's Church kids, parents and the patients had a great time, and the patients were very thankful.

The Dorchester Temporary Shelter (formerly the Cold Weather Shelter) is now run by Delmarva Community Services. Grace Missions team will continue to provide up to 25 dinners for the shelter on the first Sunday of the month as well as something for breakfast the following morning.

Kerry Walters and Pastor Chris continue to serve on the men's Kairos Prison Ministry team.

Thank you for your generous donations each month on Missions Sunday. As you can see, they help fund a large variety of worthy causes. We couldn't serve God's people without your help.

# Staff-Parish Relations

Vicki Hayden

*"Renew our minds, our hearts, and our spirits. May we be transformed by the power of Your Holy Spirit, leaving behind the old and embracing the new". Romans 12:2*

Three new members have joined our committee and we thank them for serving: Celeste Bennett, Gene Skinner and Susan Walters.

The Worship Team met in December and made plans to provide music for Sunday services through February. The SPRC's next step will be to finalize the job description for a Worship Leader, and then to advertise on the church website, Facebook, and possibly on Indeed.

If you have any concerns relating to Graces' staff, the congregation, or housekeeping, please share them with me or another member of the SPRC. We are here to work for you and Grace to make this the best church family we can in honor of the Lord.

Members: Allen Nelson, Charlene Stagg, Carol Coulbourn, Celeste Bennett, Penny Wheatley, Gene Skinner, Cindy Love, Susan Walters and Vicki Hayden.

Susan Dickinson  
11/27/25

Anna Ruth Penn  
11/28/25

Barbara Edgar  
01/07/26



Since the last newsletter, the Trustees have been actively working to prepare for 2026. A significant focus has been on developing the budget and identifying key projects that are important and necessary for the ongoing care and improvement of our church.

The Trustees also held elections for new officers. We are pleased to announce the following appointments:

- Chair: Kerry Walters
- Co-Chair: Ben Doyle
- Secretary: Corey Rubadue

Several projects have also moved forward since our last update. Plumbing work has been completed, the Baraca Room renovation is now finished, and the stained glass restoration project has officially begun.

As I step into the role of Co-Chair, I want to sincerely thank everyone for their help, support, and dedication over the past year. Please keep Kerry in your prayers as he begins his new role as Chair. And don't worry—I will still be here to support Kerry and continue helping in any way I can.

*“For we are God’s fellow workers; you are God’s field, God’s building.”  
– 1 Corinthians 3:9*

## Nursing Home Ministry

*Vicki Hayden*

On December 7<sup>th</sup> we hosted a Christmas Party and our Children’s Church sang carols for the patients at Mallard Bay. The patients were so happy and appreciative. It was a team effort that turned out very well.

We continue to go to Mallard Bay on the third Tuesday of the month at 10 a.m. to sing hymns, share a devotion, have Holy Communion, and pray with the residents. They enjoy our visits and thank us repeatedly. All are welcome to join in this ministry.

In October when we expanded this ministry to include “Adopting” a patient we started out with 10 patients being adopted. That number has increased to 16 patients being adopted so far! Please contact Vicki Hayden if you would like to “adopt” a patient. This could be as simple as sending them a card on their birthday and Christmas, and/or other holidays. Parishioners can stop in and visit with them or call them and have a chat as well. They can even provide a gift or needed toiletries, etc. if they wish.

Dear Lord,

Today our prayers need to focus on the world. We must stop the bickering that causes dissension and leads to conflict and war. We need to stop!

Oh Lord, may You come and straighten out the evil in the world an touch the hearts of sinners. How horrible are the street killings, the hatred and fighting. If they would only let you handle their problems, all this would stop.

We need to find peace in our hearts; to lay down our prejudices and notice the good in others. We need to remember the sacrifice that Your son made for our sins.

Jesus left us with two important commandments ... “to love God with all your heart” and “to love your neighbor as yourself.” When we stop and pray for Your guidance, we are then able to show love to one another and set an example for how to treat others. Then this would be a perfect place to live and raise our families.

AMEN!





# February 2026



*Sunday      Monday      Tuesday      Wednesday      Thursday      Friday      Saturday*

**SUNDAY SCHEDULE**

9:15 a.m.—Adult Sunday School Class  
 10:00 a.m.—Coffee Fellowship  
 10:30 a.m.—Traditional Worship



It bears all things,  
 believes all things,  
 endures all things.

*Love never fails*

I Corinthians 13:7-8

1 Mission Collection Communion 10:30 a.m. 	2	3	4 Prayer Warriors for Cancer 12 N	5	6	7
8 Communion 10:30 a.m. 	9	10	11 Prayer Warriors for Cancer 12 N	12	13	14 Sacred HIGH Tea / 12 noon Baraca Room <i>Valentine's Day</i> 
15 Communion 10:30 a.m. 	16  President's Day	17  DINNER 5:-6:30 p.m. Come Join the Fun	18 Lenten Study 10 a.m. ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICE @ NOON SANCTUARY 	19	20	21
22 <u>1st Sunday in Lent</u> Communion 10:30 a.m. 	23	24	25 Lenten Study 10 a.m. Prayer Warriors for Cancer 12 N	26	27	28



# March 2026



*Sunday      Monday      Tuesday      Wednesday      Thursday      Friday      Saturday*

**SUNDAY SCHEDULE**

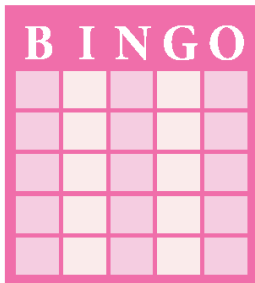
9:15 a.m.—Adult Sunday School Class  
 10:00 a.m.—Coffee Fellowship  
 10:30 a.m.—Traditional Worship



1 <u>2nd Sunday in Lent</u> Communion 10:30 a.m. Mission Collection  ONE MISSION PURSUE BINGO  save the date	2	3	4 Lenten Study 10 a.m. Prayer Warriors for Cancer 12 N	5	6	7
8 <u>3rd Sunday in Lent</u> Communion 10:30 a.m. Daylight Savings Begins	9	10 CHURCH COUNCIL MEETS Committees 6:30p Full Council 7 p - Dr. Hines Room	11 Lenten Study 10 a.m. Prayer Warriors for Cancer 12 N	12	13	14 8:00 a.m. Women's Prayer Breakfast , Immanuel Church, 5401 Whitehall Rd., Camb.
15 <u>4th Sunday in Lent</u> Communion 10:30 a.m. 	16	17 St. Patricks Day	18 Lenten Study 10 a.m. Prayer Warriors for Cancer 12 N	19	20 First day of Spring 	21
22 <u>5th Sunday in Lent</u> Communion 10:30 a.m. 	23	24	25 Prayer Warriors for Cancer 12 N	26	27	28
29 <u>6th Sunday in Lent</u> Communion 10:30 a.m. 	30	31				



# 3<sup>RD</sup> ANNUAL DESIGNER PURSE BINGO



**DOORS OPEN AT NOON | GAMES BEGIN AT 2PM**



Cambridge Elks Lodge #1272  
5464 Elks Lodge Rd

Lunch provided by the Elks for an additional purchase

**\$30 IN ADVANCE  
\$35 AT THE DOOR**



**TRICKY TRAY  
DOOR PRIZES  
50/50 RAFFLE**

<http://weblink.donorperfect.com/OMCBingo2026>

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