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GRACE COVENANT
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH



October 2019 — Volume 64, Issue 9

Growing in Grace

We are called as Christians to practice spiritual disciplines: worship, prayer, study, service, sharing the good news, and giving. Athletes and musicians get better by practicing. We grow spiritually by practicing spiritual disciplines—by coming to church to worship; by being part of a prayer or Bible study group; by serving in the community; by sharing our faith; and by being generous in our giving.

We are called as individual disciples to practice the spiritual discipline of giving year-round. But most churches also set aside several weeks in the fall for a pledge drive or stewardship campaign. During this time individuals may give a testimony about how they have grown spiritually by challenging themselves to greater generosity; pastors may preach sermons about how we are called to be good stewards of what God has entrusted to us; and pledge forms may be sent to homes and stuffed in bulletins along with reminders to return them to the church office. Most of us know the routine. And because it does become routine, we may forget the reason why we are called to give in the first place.

- It's NOT about doing our part or carrying our share. As commendable as that might be.
- It's NOT about balancing the church budget or raising funds for a new building or project. As important as that is to the future viability of the church.

- It's NOT even about supporting local ministry programs or our mission partners around the globe. Although we are certainly called to do so.

We give because God has given to us to give to others. We are blessed by time and talents and treasure, not for our own sake, but so that we can be a blessing to others.



Looking Ahead

October

- 6 - World Communion Day
- 12 - Food Packing for Bahamas
- 19 - Yard Sale
- 27 - Youth Great Pumpkin Chase
- 30 - Trunk or Treat

November

- 3 - Christmas Alternatives
- 10 - Annual Picnic
- 28 - Thanksgiving Dinner
- 29 - Hanging of the Greens
- 30 - Parents Christmas Shopping Day Out

December

- 1, 8, 15, 22 - Caroling on the Lawn
- 5 - Blue Christmas Worship Service
- 8 - Holiday Brunch
- 15 - Christmas Caroling
- 18 - Reindeer Games
- 24 - Christmas Eve Candlelight Services



THANK YOU ALL – for help making our Rooted youth group annual spaghetti fundraiser such a success!!!

Monies donated help defray the costs of our summer trips where we'll be Christ's messengers for those who need to hear it, and at the same time we'll be strengthening our own relationship with Him.



Dear Grace Covenant Friends,

I am writing to thank you for the generous scholarship. I am very appreciative that I was selected to be a recipient of this scholarship. I am a Business major with an emphasis in finance. Thanks to you I am one step closer to accomplishing my goals. By awarding me this scholarship, you have helped me to focus on learning rather than the financial struggles that college tends to bring. Your generosity has truly helped and inspired me.

Sincerely,
Kiersten Diaz



Grace Covenant,

Where would I be without your help and prayers! I am so blessed to have a partner like you to help me do GOD'S WILL. You always respond immediately to our school's

Send Grace Notes items to notes.grace2019@gmail.com

Please submit articles for the November issue by October 15th.

need and most of the time anticipate early those needs. I thank God every day for your willingness to jump in and help. As a Title 1 School, our needs are great. You make sure our children are equipped with what they need to learn and that our classrooms have the necessary supplies. And, thank you for purchasing uniform shirts and shoes for our needy students. Your incentives inspire students, teachers and parents alike.

As the school's Community Outreach/Parent Engagement Coordinator, I am able to keep achieving because as my partner, you encourage and motivate me to press on for the higher goal. You always have my back! Together, we care that our Eccleston students succeed at school and in life. Thanks, thanks and thanks again!!! We look forward to working together again this school year and in the future. We surely need and appreciate your help!

With Much Love,
Betty D. Chandler



Thank you for opening your doors for our community health screening in your community. It is because of your generosity that Life Line Screening continues to be able to bring these health screenings into your area and for that, we are very appreciative.

We look forward to working together again! We appreciate all your help and support with hosting this community outreach event.

Sincerely,
William Haas, Lifeline Screening

REMINDER

When you make a purchase on Amazon, go to <https://smile.amazon.com/> and you can designate GCPC as the non-profit group you choose to support.



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*Still Stitchin’
with Grace*

The ladies at “Still Stitchin’ with Grace have been very busy since March. A total of 72 quilts and 60 pillowcases were delivered September 12th to Winnie Palmer. The next delivery will go out to Harbor House in December.

We have a total of 25 members, with a few who live out of state and quilts are received from them also, we thank each of you.

The quilters meet every Thursday from 10 AM to 2 PM. If anyone wishes to visit with us we would love to have you drop in, you can’t miss us, just follow the laughter.

Blessings,

“Still Stitchin’ with Grace”



The Annual Alternative Christmas Celebration will be held on Sunday, November 3 from 9:30 am – 1:00 pm. Watch for more information on this in the bulletin, on the Kiosk and in the November Grace Notes.

Operation Christmas Child Boxes and instructions to fill them will be on the Kiosk beginning October 20. These boxes are due back to the church by November 10.

Ruth Circle

Ruth Circle began the fall schedule with the beginning of our wonderful Bible study of the Ten Commandments led by Winnie Rutherford.

Our next meeting will be on Monday, October 14th at 10 AM in the conference room by the office.

We will have a presentation by Chris Hanna who is the new director of Servant's Heart which is the community program that we support. Chris will give us an update and overview of operations.

Please join us as we continue our special time of study and fellowship! If you have any questions please do not hesitate to call Barbara Hart.



Grace Notes

Holiday Deadline

October 15

November 8

December 8

*Packing Food
for the
Bahamas*

Mark Your Calendars

October 12th

Conway Hall Gym

Time - TBD



Small Blessings News!

Small Blessings opened on August 12th with a full house of children, closed for hurricane Dorian to pass and started the school year again on September 4th. It has been a fantastic two months complete with excitement and jitters, tears and giggles. We've had VPK (Four Year Old State Program) testing, Open House and the first monthly coffee served by the Small Blessings Child Care Board to the morning parents as they bring their children to school.

Give a big welcome to Mrs. Ruby, who is the new school cook and kitchen supervisor. She fit in with the staff right off the bat and the children love her! Her son went to SBCC ten years ago, so she feels like she's come home!

September 8th Pastor Melanie gave a great sermon, "Small Blessings," using the Bible verse Matt. 18:2-4, ..."Truly I tell you, unless you have the faith of a child, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Therefore, whoever takes the lowly position of a child is the greatest in heaven." Sharing our campus with SBCC certainly gives us a small blessing that produces big blessings to our community! Thank you Grace Covenant for supporting this wonderful mission of our church!

Surveys

If you took the Congregational Vitality Survey home to complete, please remember to bring it back to worship no later than Sunday, Oct. 6. Surveys will be available that day for those who have not yet received one.

Family Fun Nite

Tuesday, October 15, 6:29 pm

Join us in Conway Hall for a time of food, fellowship and fun!

Covered dish dinner (drinks, dessert and bread are provided)

Everyone is invited to join us!

Fourth Thursday at the Garden

No program, no agenda....
just a time to gather with friends and family
for dinner together.

The time is 6:30 pm, October 24th, at the Olive Garden restaurant on East Colonial Drive. Mark your calendars and make plans to come. *This is the last one until January due to the November and December holidays.*

Book Talk

The book discussion group meets in the Grace Covenant Library on Tuesday, October 22, to discuss the book, *In the Field of Grace*, by Tessa Afshar. Based on the biblical account of Ruth, *In the Field of Grace* is the story of a love that ultimately changes the course of Israel's destiny and the future of the whole world. Destitute, grief-stricken, and unwanted by the people of God, Ruth arrives in Israel with nothing to recommend her but Naomi's love.

Book for the December 3 discussion is *Prayers of a Stranger: a Christmas Story* by Davis Bunn.



ROOTED Student Ministry Schedule

October

- 6** Rooted Youth Group - 5:15pm-7pm
We'll have awesome dinners, games, music, prayers, announcements, and a lesson. Bring your friendz!!!
- 13** Rooted Youth Group - 5:15pm-7pm
We'll have awesome dinners, games, music, prayers, announcements, and a lesson. Bring your friendz!!!
- 19** Mission Day @ Equine Angels
11:45am - 4:30pm
We will meet at the church parking lot, and carpool to help them with painting, brushing horses, pasture maintenance, seeding grass, etc. Earn community service hours, AND be the hands and feet of Jesus!

27 **THE Great Pumpkin Chase** 4:15pm-7pm.
It's a city-wide scavenger hunt complete with finding someone dressed as The Great Pumpkin. We'll have games, food, drinks, and prizes galore!!!! **DEAD**line to sign-up is Thursday, Oct. 24th.

30 *Trunk or Treat*

Oct. 30 from 4:45pm-6:30pm. Come help Pastor Candy by leading games, and shepherding our lil' chee-wees around this Fall festival in the gym. Earn community service hours!!!

Sunday School meets every Sunday in the Youth Room with FREE, yessiree Bob, FREE donuts, juice, and Jesus!!! Sunday School runs 9:30-10:30 a.m. We also feature a monthly Walk to Wawa.

For more details on our events and other news....

**you can friend us on Facebook at: Grace Covenant PC Youth,
and on Instagram at: rootedgpc.**

Driving with Grace

The church is reaching out to all who use the church property to re-double their efforts to protect the safety and well-being of others. Singers and scouts and support groups and sports leagues and all the rest (it's a long list!) are being reminded to drive slowly, park with caution, and to make a full stop, looking both ways before moving across the sidewalk and into traffic when exiting the property. No cutting across grassy areas to get from one side of the church to the other. No driving across the sidewalk to exit the property. We are counting on the members of our own family of faith to do the same. Please make others' safety your first priority.





CAN YOU HELP?

Knowing that calendars fill rapidly, the Christian Education committee asks you to see the listing of activities

below that need helping hands. If you would be willing to help, please call Candy 407-898-6571, email candy@grace.to or fill out one of the forms on the Kiosk and drop it in the offering plate.

It's guaranteed fun....come join us! Just check on the line and circle what you can do to help.

___October 30 *Trunk or Treat*

Monitor a game or help in the kitchen serving dinner 5 – 6:30 p.m.

___November 29 *Hanging of the Greens*

Help with crafts or help in the kitchen from 5:30 – 6:30 p.m. or read a part in the service at 7 p.m. Provide a pot of chili or a pan of brownies

___December 18 *Reindeer Games*

This is a time of simple games that the members of Grace Covenant offer to the children of Small Blessings. Monitor a game or help with a craft activity, 9 a.m.

___December 1, 8, 15, 22 *Carols on the Lawn*

Help to serve hot chocolate and cookies to friends and neighbors at the Carols on the Lawn and lighting of the outdoor Advent wreath. Time TBD, probably sometime in the 5 - 7 p.m. timeframe.

Thank you!

**EAGLE SCOUT
PROJECT FROM TROOP 23**

Russel Moore, a senior at Boone High School and a member of Scout Troop 23 which is sponsored by Grace Covenant is currently working to earn his Eagle Scout rank.

His project is to assemble and deliver a minimum

of 250 hygiene kits for men and women to the Boone High Kemosabe Kloset which is available to students in need and to organizations supported by the Grace Covenant family as identified by our Outreach Committee.

If you would like to support this project by donating the following items for the kits:

Toothbrushes, toothpaste, dental floss, hand sanitizer, tissues, moist wipes, disposable razors, shaving cream, body soap, soap bars, deodorant, hairbrushes, combs and feminine products (travel or small sizes, please). Supplies may be brought to the Narthex on Sundays, or to the church office by October 21. Thank you, in advance, for your help and support.

H 2 O for Haiti Church Yard Sale!

Saturday, October 19, 2019

GCPC Front Yard

10AM-2PM



Collection time is now for the Yard Sale.

Bring your items for the sale to Sunday services Oct. 6th or 13th. Joe and "M" Waddell will be at the Smith Hall main doors to assist you. Bring items Monday - Friday during church office hours. Come on Tuesday or Thursday mornings if help is needed by Joe to get the items into Smith Hall. Call the church office for more information.

We are collecting items in good condition that will sell! The only clothes we will accept are children's jackets or coats. Attach a suggested value if you believe that knowledge will help us during the sale.

We need you.....

Your Sale Items and Your Presence at the Sale!

See You There!

Session Summary

Stated Session Meeting, September 19, 2019

Session is working with the Finance Committee and staff to prepare the church budget for 2020. Worshipers are encouraged to make their pledge towards the support of the church by Sunday, Oct. 13. Pledge forms will be mailed to the congregation and available in the pews.

The Interim Pastor provided an overview of the Mission Study that will be completed by the congregation over the next several months. A congregational vitality survey will be conducted over three Sundays, Sept. 22-Oct. 6. Worshipers will also participate in other activities designed to gather congregational preferences about the next installed pastor and the future vision of the church. This information will be used by the Pastor Search Committee to complete the church profile that will be matched with potential candidates.

The safety and well-being of those who come to the church as well as the neighbors who use adjacent sidewalks and roads is of utmost importance. Ideas for making parking and driving safer were discussed with several actions proposed. Members of the congregation are urged to be especially mindful of coming to a full stop and carefully proceeding through the south exit; and using paved roadways instead of cutting across grassy areas.

Outreach is scheduling a food-packing event on Saturday morning, Oct. 12th to send non-perishable meals to the Bahamas. Session also approved a request for an Eagle Scout project to solicit supplies for hygiene kits to be distributed at Boone High School and other Outreach Committee ministry partners

Two new members were added to the church rolls; and the eight new elders and deacons elected at the Congregational meeting have

been trained and will be examined by Session at the October meeting.

The McKenzie/Bravo wedding to be held at the church on February 22 was approved.

Death Café

Drink tea, eat cake and talk about death. Death Café is a movement that began in Britain (hence the tea and cake) to make space for people to talk about what remains a taboo subject in our society—that is, death. Death Café events are hosted in pubs and restaurants where people are already gathered. Death Café is not a support group; there is no agenda or products for sale. Just talk moderated by a facilitator with interest or experience—like a pastor.

Grace Covenant is hosting Death Café events at Roque Pub on Oct. 22 at 6:30 p.m. and at Cilantros Taqueria on Nov. 18 at 6:30. Please pray that members of the community who need to have this conversation will be led to participate.

CONTEXT

Wednesdays

6-7:15 PM

Conway Hall

October 9, 16 and 23 (no class on October 2)

Get more out of the Bible by learning about the people, places and cultures of the Ancient Near East. This topical study on Wednesday nights is open to all and can be joined at any time. Attend as you are able. No RSVP required. No cost. Bring your own "bag" dinner. Drinks and light snack provided.

Remaining topics: Religion; History & Politics; and Anthropology.

SEPTEMBER 2019



GRACE COVENANT
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Rev. Melanie Ruta
Interim Pastor

Candy Vander Weide
Commissioned Lay Pastor

Sunday Worship: 8:30 & 10:45 a.m.

Office Hours:

Monday–Thursday: 8:30 a.m.–3 p.m.

Friday: 8:30 a.m.–noon

1655 Peel Ave., Orlando, FL 32806

Phone: 407.898.6571

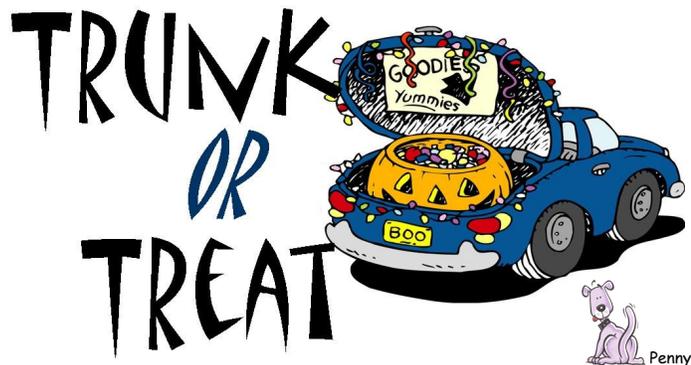
E-mail: churchoffice@grace.to

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Wednesday, October 30
5:30 - 6:30 pm
Dinner and games in Conway Hall
6:30 - 7:00 pm
Trunk or Treat in the drive

Come in Costume!

Everyone (whether you have a child or not) is encouraged to bring your car, decorate the open trunk and hand out candy to the little "trunk or treaters."

We also need people to help with the games and in the kitchen.

If you are able to help, please email candy@grace.to or call 407-898-6571.

