

December 2022
Volume 65, Issue 11



**GRACE COVENANT
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**

1655 Peel Avenue

Orlando, FL 32806

Phone: 407.898.6571

E-mail: churchoffice@grace.to

Sunday Worship

8:45 a.m. / 10:45 a.m. / Online

Office Hours

Monday–Thursday: 9 am – 3 pm

Friday: 9 am – noon

WWW.GRACE.TO

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Return Service Requested

To:

DECEMBER AT GRACE COVENANT

Christmas
ON THE FRONT LAWN

FUN FOR ALL AGES!

Santa, Games, Crafts, Food

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 9

4PM - 6PM

CHRISTMAS EVE
Services

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 24 | 5PM & 6PM

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Grace Notes

Grace Covenant Presbyterian Church

December 2022

Happy New Church Year!

Did you know that with Advent, we begin a new year of readings in the Revised Common Lectionary? So it's a time of resetting, even before the calendar flips. Who says the church isn't leading the way? ;)

This year, Grace Covenant will experience "The 4 W's of Advent" in our proclamation of the Word: *Waiting. Watching. Wondering. Welcoming.* You have had some experience of this of late, as you were wondering who would be the Temporary Pastor to shepherd the congregation in a fraught time. Well, I am pleased as holiday punch to journey through Advent and beyond with you. Together, we will dwell on the 4 W's and eagerly anticipate what God has in store for the church.

Looking Forward

December

- 9 - Christmas on the Front Lawn
- 9 - Buddy Break
- 13 - Lunch Bunch
- 14 - Blue Christmas Service
- 24 - Christmas Eve Candlelight Service, 5 p.m. & 7 p.m.
- 25 - Christmas Day, One service at 10am
No Sunday School hour

January

- 1 - New Year's Day
One service at 10am
No Sunday School hour
- 8 - Installation & Ordination
- 30 - Annual Congregational Meeting
- 30 - ROOTED Youth Chili Cook-Off



See the church calendar online:

<https://www.grace.to/announcements/weekly-calendar/>

Happy Birthday**Happy Anniversary**

Please contact the church office for a copy of the birthdays and anniversaries.

**Session Summary**

In November, the Session of Grace Covenant took the following actions:

- Approved one worship service on Christmas Day and New Year's Day (both at 10am)
- Approved communion dates in 2023
- Agreed to partner with United Against Poverty, allowing the church to purchase low-cost food for a new weekend feeding initiative for at-risk students from schools we support
- Elected Nancy Venable and Carole Pate as commissioners to the December presbytery meeting
- Approved moving some excess funds from other accounts into the Buildings and Grounds Reserve

Book Club

Tuesday, December 27, 7pm
Panera Bread, S. Semoran
The 13th Gift

By Joanne Huist Smith
After the unexpected death of her husband, Joanne Huist Smith had no idea how she would keep herself together and be strong for her three children. But 12 days before Christmas, presents begin appearing on her doorstep with notes from their "True Friends." This is a true story about the power of random acts of kindness.

ROOTED Youth Group

Sunday evenings
5:15 - 7pm.

Watch for details on events and news on Facebook:

Grace Covenant PC Youth and Instagram: @rootedgcpc

2023 Calendars are here and on sale for \$10.

BLUE Christmas
WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 14 | 6PM

Setting aside the tinsel and other trappings for a night, to acknowledge the darkness in life. If you have undergone a difficult loss, transition, or life change, the church cares about you and invites you to a special time of worship

Each week add some color to this image
as we wait for, watch for, wonder at
and welcome the Christ child.



Who is Pastor Jody?

Good question! I am a native Orlandoan, as is my wife, Ellen. We grew up about half a mile from each other as the crow flies, but never knew each other til our 30's.

I attended Orlando Christian School in Pine Hills from K-9th grade, then graduated from West Orange High in 1989. I am also a UCF grad (go Knights!).

When I met Ellen, she introduced me to Park Lake Presbyterian Church, which I joined in 2003. Next thing I knew, I was ordained as a ruling elder. Near the end of my term on the session, I heard a call to serve God in pastoral ministry. I graduated from The University of Dubuque Theological Seminary in 2013. While in seminary, I interned at FPC Lake Mary and Grace Covenant (as interim co-director of youth), and earned one unit of Clinical

Pastoral Education credit at Nemours Children's Hospital. I was also employed by Central Florida Presbytery in those days, serving as the administrative assistant to the executive presbyter. I think of that position as my "third internship" since it was so valuable in learning about the "wheels of the presby-bus."

My first call was to Markham Woods Presbyterian Church in Lake Mary (near Heathrow) from 2017-2022. This past summer, I served as a commissioner from Central Florida Presbytery to the 222nd General Assembly--a great honor and responsibility. I also preached all summer at Maitland PC while their co-pastors were on sabbatical, and have written articles for Presbyterian News Service, the Presbyterian Foundation, and *The Presbyterian Outlook* magazine.



Thank You

I want to take this time to give thanks to my wonderful Church, Grace Covenant, and to our minister, Rev. Jody Mask and Sheryl Chenault who both came to visit me and prayed with me following my recent accident.

I am battered and bruised but I survived thanks to all the prayers and calls I received from fellow churchgoers, flowers and cake from Sheryl, and the Lord being with me as I was thrown around in the shuttle that takes me to work.

Laurie Feddon, Elder

New Contact Info

John and Jane Neusaenger

Jane Heppner

Londra Mead

Christmas Joy

On Christmas Eve, we will receive the *Christmas Joy* special offering. This offering provides assistance to current and retired church workers and their families in their time of need, and develops our future leaders at Presbyterian-related schools and colleges equipping communities of color.

Small Blessings

“Go tell it on the mountain
Over the hills and everywhere
Go tell it on the mountain
that Jesus Christ is born.” And that Small Blessings is working on their service project, which will benefit Servant’s Heart located in Pine Castle. We have had a great response in past years collecting various items to be distributed to at risk children. Our goal is to fill 40 children’s Christmas bags. The holidays are the season of giving: giving love and giving thanks. God so loved the world that he gave his only son. Small Blessings may be filled with little people but their hearts are bigger and are full of love. Grace Covenant is thankful for all the Small Blessings parents, children and staff for always giving their generous support for those in need. Small Blessings wishes all a very Merry Christmas.

Outreach Community News

The Outreach committee purchased Thanksgiving turkeys and canned hams to bless families of Dover Shores, Lake Como and Pershing Elementary Schools. We also added to the sweet potato can count provided by the Grace Covenant congregation for our friends at United Against Poverty. The Outreach committee thanks God for the opportunity to help our neighbors, and thanks everyone for donating the canned sweet potatoes.

Grace Covenant Scholarship Fund

Trying to think of a gift for the person who has everything? Hoping to find a way to honor a loved one? Please consider making a donation to the Grace Covenant Scholarship Fund.

This non-budgeted fund provides financial assistance to members who are pursuing an undergraduate degree in a college, university or vocational program. Scholarships are awarded annually, and amounts rely solely on donations from the congregation. Consider this alternative gift to the Grace Covenant Scholarship Fund....a gift that will last a lifetime!

Share the Care

The Outreach Committee is collecting items for Share the Care. Please leave items in the Narthex or bring them to the church office by November 28 so that we can make any additional purchases if needed. Here is their wish list:

Colored pencils, Christmas ornaments, Large print word search (English or Spanish) Easy Adult/Dementia coloring books. (Search Amazon for Easy Adult coloring books) Adult squeeze balls (hand strengthening), Individual sugar-free pudding or jello cups, Hand lotion, Baby Powder, small wooden or plaster of paris shapes without paint or markers, artificial flowers.