

grace NOTES

NEXT inquirer's CLASS BEGINS January 15

New Membership and Introduction to GCPC

Our next class at Grace Covenant for those who would like to know more about the congregation and the opportunities of membership will begin on Sunday, January 15 from 12:10 to 2:30 p.m. The class will meet for only two weeks. The first week is "not quite everything you need to know" about Grace Covenant with lots of getting to know you and some time for questions.

The second week is for those who wish to join Grace Covenant and includes a meeting with session to confirm that commitment. Come or invite a friend on Sundays, January 15 and 22. Childcare is available ONLY upon request ahead of time. If you would like to join but those dates don't work for you, please let us know and we'll find a time that does work for you. Contact Kimby Young (913-345-1256; Kimby.Young@gcpc.org) for more information.

January 2012

AT GRACE COVENANT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Sunday, January 1

One Worship Service at 10:30 a.m.

Celebrate the new year in worship on Sunday morning with the whole family of faith together in one service. Communion will be observed – a perfect way to recognize the holiness of the new year, and dedicate ourselves anew. (Communion will be served by intinction, with cups and bread available for those who prefer not to move or have difficulty in coming forward.)

JANUARY 8

Star Sunday – BOTH SERVICES – 8:50 and 11:05 a.m.

Our Epiphany tradition continues as we begin the new year with words of hope, mystery, inspiration and challenge. Epiphany is about recognizing and celebrating God's new revelation to the world and to each one of us. Come to worship, receive your Star Word, and receive your gift of God's grace and blessing.

JANUARY 29

Sit Together Sunday and Annual Meeting

One worship service at 10:30 a.m.

Behold! We are doing something entirely new!

All of our annual meeting activities will be moved to earlier in the day.

10:30 a.m. – One worship service – a True "Sit Together" Sunday

In the morning Deacons will be in the sanctuary to greet their new Covenant Group members. Covenant Groups are random again this year (not geographical) – so you never know who might be in your group, but what a great opportunity for fellowship and mutual support! Be sure to welcome guests as well as old friends. The Worship service will be a celebration of God and God's activity within and through our Grace Covenant Community. It will be a time to share what is unique about Grace Covenant at this moment in time.

When worship closes, a short "business" meeting of the corporation will be held.

At noon, Covenant Groups will gather for a potluck lunch. Your Deacon will be contacting you sometime after January 10 to give you the details of the day. It's always a wonderful time to get together, to share fellowship, food and fun.

Mark your calendar and plan to attend.

Childcare will be provided during worship and the meeting and luncheon. Please refer to the Children's Ministries section for more details.





WELCOMING TEAM ADVERTISING ON FACEBOOK!

WELCOMING TEAM NOTES

Please wear your nametag!

Excuse the “shouting” above, but the Welcome Team wants you to know how important it is that we all remember to wear our nametags. Below are some nametag “facts” that will inspire and help you to wear your nametag.

-Wearing your nametag is a great way to make our church a more welcoming place to visitors. Imagine how much more at ease they will feel when they do not face the disadvantage of not knowing anyone’s name.

-Visitors are not the only people who sometimes struggle with names. Nametags help your fellow members avoid the awkward brain freeze of forgetting your name.

-Need a new nametag? All you have to do is ask for one on the pew pad and there will be one waiting for you the following Sunday!

-Forgot your nametag at home? Grab a temporary one and a pen at the Welcome Table and you are all set for that week.

-Wearing your name tag could lead to unexpected rewards...stay tuned in January for more information on this!

Please make a New Year’s resolution to wear your nametag every Sunday and help make Grace Covenant a more welcoming place!



Contact the church office
if you need a new one!

As you may know already, the Welcoming Team has been focusing more of their advertising and promotion dollars on other media that is more attractive, more effective and provides better return on their dollar!

In particular, LeAnne Stowe has been directing and monitoring the Team’s Facebook ad campaign and the following information is gleaned from her most recent report. [For interpretation and further information, be sure to visit with LeAnne!]

The congregation has been encouraged to “Like” Grace Covenant on Facebook, and increasing numbers are doing so. Actually, the more we “like” GCPC on Facebook, the more effective that makes our overall advertising efforts. LeAnne reports that 423 people have learned more about us through their clicking on our page, and another 154,000 have seen the most recent ad [with several million actually being served!].

“For brand building a church, the click thru rate is beyond my expectations,” said LeAnne. “I liken it to standing on a street corner evangelizing. It would take a long time to get 423 people to stop and say ‘ok, tell me more.’”

So, you may have missed the Christmas Eve donkey inviting folks to check us out, but visit the Grace Covenant Facebook page soon to see what new Welcoming invitations may be there! [And thanks, THANKS, to the Team and LeAnne!]

THANK YOU

The Welcome Team would like to thank Rob Jonas and Kim Krueger for their professional talents and resources in helping produce the lovely Service of Remembrance and Christmas cards. They are two incredibly talented and patient people. THANK YOU!

ADULT CLASSES AND STUDIES

SUNDAY MORNING CLASSES – 10:00 a.m

PARENTING CLASS -

Sundays at 10:00 a.m. in Room 10.

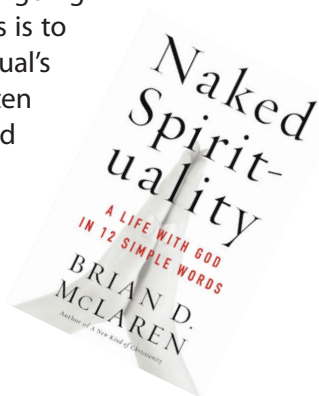
The GCPC Parenting class meets each Sunday from 10:00 to 10:50 a.m. in Room 10 downstairs. Please join us to talk about a variety of subjects - spirituality, discipline, sibling issues, friends, teachers, activities, bullying, health issues for kids and parents, and more! This is a lively group and the discussion is rich. Bring your stories, concerns, and questions to share as we explore diverse topics relating to raising young children. Check the bulletin on Sunday mornings for weekly topics. All are welcome, whether you come every week or just drop-in once in a while. We would love for you to join us!

If you have any questions regarding the class or suggestions for the topic ideas, please contact the class facilitators by phone or via email: Leigh Cummings 314-477-5561 or todd.p.goldie@gmail.com or Chris Specht 913-851-9667 or specht.chris@gmail.com We hope to see you soon in Room 10!

NAKED SPIRITUALITY

Book Discussion Group— Room 15

This group is using the book by Brian McLaren which offers an overview of the spiritual life in a framework 12 practices arranged in four stages of growth and development: simplicity, complexity, perplexity, and harmony. Then, in each stage, you'll be introduced to three practices, moves, or soul-postures that will help you deepen your life with God. Brian lodges each practice in a simple word and then offers guidance for working with each word. We hope this class will grow into a long term class that discusses various topics and books chosen by the group on an ongoing basis. Our goal with this class is to nurture and grow an individual's spirituality through written information, discussion and communion.



SPEAKER SERIES CLASS – in room 26

January 8 – Orphan Train – Tim Hayden, teaching

The Eastern cities are filled with ragged untended children, wandering the streets, begging and stealing, and sleeping where they can find any semblance of shelter. What to do? For they are not only in great need, but an embarrassment to a nation that prides itself on rising financial power. Suppose we eliminate the problem by sending them out West, where they can become productive, and perhaps find a loving home? How did that work out? Learn a little about it on Sunday, January 8. You may want to learn more, as we remain concerned today about possible unintended consequences of our philanthropy. Tim Hayden will moderate--there will be video!

January 15 – Cherith Brook: Solidarity as Sacrament – Rev. Eric Garbison, teaching

Our guest teacher on January 15 – Martin Luther King, Jr. weekend – will be Rev. Eric Garbison. Eric is a founding member of Cherith Brook Catholic Worker where he lives with his wife, Jodi and their two children. Cherith Brook is a community of Christians sharing life, resources and ministry in the Historic Northeast Neighborhood adjacent to downtown KC. They offer showers, clothing and food to the homeless. And they practice Christian nonviolent peacemaking on the streets, locally and nationally. Eric is a Minister-At-Large of Heartland Presbytery and attends Christ Presbyterian Church. There will be a display in class for more information or visit them at: <http://cherithbrookkc.blogspot.com/>. Rev. Garbison will share stories about the work of Cherith Brook, but will also express the foundational theology behind the call to live among the poor and serve those who are in need. Come to be inspired and challenged. Guests are welcome.

January 22 – Lincoln's Second Inaugural Address – Rick Randolph, teaching

President Abraham Lincoln's second inaugural address is a theologically intense speech that has been widely acknowledged as one of the most remarkable documents in American history. The London Spectator said of it, "We cannot read it without a renewed conviction that it is the noblest political document known to history...of a sacred and almost prophetic character." Join Rick Randolph as we explore this document of reconciliation amid conflict for lessons that we can apply today.

February 5 and 12 – More Images of Faith - Jan Cummings, teaching

Watch for more information next month. Save the date now for an afternoon visit to the Nelson Atkins Museum after class on February 12.

CHILDREN'S ministries

Information for ALL our members, not just those with young children!

FROM MISS CINDY

Interesting information from A Common Sense Media Research Study. Not sure what I think about some of these numbers!

Even very young children are frequent digital media users.

TOTAL DIGITAL MEDIA USE. Today a substantial proportion of the time that young children spend with screen media is spent with digital media — including computers, handheld and console video game players, and other interactive mobile devices such as cell phones, video iPods, and iPad-style tablet devices. Among 0- to 8-year-olds as a whole, a quarter (27%) of all screen time is spent with these digital devices.



MOBILE MEDIA.

Half (52%) of all children now have access to one of the newer mobile devices at home: either a smartphone (41%), a video iPod (21%), or an iPad or other tablet

device (8%). More than a quarter (29%) of all parents have downloaded “apps” (applications used on mobile devices) for their children to use. And more than a third (38%) of children have ever used one of these newer mobile devices, including 10% of 0- to 1-year-olds, 39% of 2- to 4-year-olds, and 52% of 5- to 8-year-olds. In a typical day, 11% of all 0- to 8-year olds use a cell phone, iPod, iPad, or similar device for media consumption, and those who do spend an average of :43 doing so.

COMPUTERS. Computer use is pervasive among very young children, with half (53%) of all 2- to 4-year-olds having ever used a computer, and nine out of ten (90%) 5- to 8-year-olds having done so. For many of these children, computer use is a regular occurrence: 22% of 5- to 8-year-olds use a computer at least once a day, and another 46% use it at least once a week. Even among 2- to 4-year-olds, 12% use a computer every day, with another 24% doing so at least once a week. Among all children who have used a computer, the average age at first use was just 3 ½ years old.

CHILDREN AND THE ANNUAL MEETING

January 29

We are very excited about the change in the meeting time to mid-day, because we know this will work out so much better for our families with young children. Childcare will be provided during worship, the meeting, and the potluck dinner! Very young children can be taken to the nursery at the beginning of worship, and the rest will come down after “Come as a Child.” Parents will have the option of coming to take their children to the potluck lunch or remaining in the Covenant Clubhouse for cheese pizza. Since this could involve a lot of children and a lot of pizza, we’re asking families to sign up ahead of time. We know plans can easily change at the last minute, but this will help ensure we have enough people and pizza to keep our children happy! Look for the sign-up sheet on the Sign-Up Board outside the kitchen.

AWAKENING TO WORSHIP

Awakening to Worship will resume after Christmas on January 8, 2012, but only at the 8:50 service. Children are always welcome in worship, and “Come as a Child” will continue at the 11:05 service. Children in Kindergarten and younger can come to the Covenant Clubhouse at any time during worship.

TEACHER OPENING!

Our kindergarten – 1st grade team will need one more teacher to join them starting February 5. This is a great opportunity to check out teaching since it is only a 5-month commitment. Remember, each class has 3 teachers, so it’s easy to plan around your busy schedules. If you have any questions or would like to see the easy to use Leaders’ Guide, please contact Cindy. SAIL classes will resume January 8 from 10:00 – 10:55.

THANKS

to Susan Sutherland, for completing another term as moderator of Children’s Team. We welcome Liz Albers who takes over January 1, 2012.

LIFE OF THE CHURCH

Baptism Celebrated

Natalie Paige Walker, daughter of Michala and Jason Walker, was baptized at the 11:05 service on November 27, 2011. Assisting in Natalie's baptism was elder Melanie Townsend.

Births

Christine and Sean Jeffries welcomed baby boy, Josh Douglas Jeffries, to the world on October 24, 2011.

Sympathy

Our deepest sympathy to:

- Al Hook upon the death of his mother.
- Jody Mason and her family upon the death of Jody's brother, Brian Keith Moore, Sunday, December 11, 2011.

Please keep these individuals and their families in your prayers at this time of grief.

If you wish to send a card of sympathy and don't have a church directory, you may call the church office at 345-1256 for their address.

Thank You

I want to thank everyone who sent me cards and attended the Open House for my 80th Birthday! God Bless you all!
-Iona Thraikill

MOVIE GROUP

Put Friday, January 6, 2012, on your calendar because the Movie Group will be meeting at Vern and Glenda Johnson's home to discuss the 2011 version of "The Girl With the Dragon Tattoo" which will open during the Christmas holidays. Come at 7:00 p.m. for good food, fun, fellowship and ready to discuss the movie. It is not a must to see the movie. Call at 913-469-9640 or email at ggeojohnso@aol.



PEW DWELLERS' HEALTH NOTES

Update Immunizations for the Elderly

Many of you may have to change your thoughts about the need for a specific immunization previously licensed for use in people 10 to 15 years of age. In an article published in the September 23, 2011 issue of the United States Centers for Disease Control and Preventions Morbidity and Mortality Weekly report, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration expanded age indications for Boostrix to include people aged 65 and older.

Boostrix is a vaccine used as a booster to prevent three life-threatening diseases, diphtheria, tetanus (lockjaw), and pertussis (whooping cough), in adults and children aged 10 years and older who have been previously vaccinated against these diseases. The vaccine causes the body to produce protection (antibodies) against these diseases.

Diphtheria mainly affects the airways. The bacteria can release a toxin causing complications; death is greater among the very young and the elderly. Tetanus bacteria enter the body through wounded skin. The bacteria release a toxin, which can cause muscle stiffness, painful muscle spasms, and possibly death. Pertussis is a highly infectious disease, affecting the breathing tract and causing severe episodes of coughing that often have a whooping sound. The cough may interfere with breathing. Pertussis can also cause ear infections and long-lasting bronchitis.

You should discuss receipt of the Boostrix vaccine with your physician.

SUPPORT THE TROOPS

Thank you for your donations and the time you took to write notes to our family members and friends who are serving in uniform. Last month we sent 6 boxes to soldiers and marines in Afghanistan and 30+ notes of thanks to all family/friends serving in other places. Plus, we have enough donations to get a head start on the next set of boxes. Watch the bulletin for our next mailing. If you have a family member or friend that you would like to add to the list, please contact Rich Zak at rich@zaknet.org or 913-593-8089.

YOUTH Page

CELEBRATE 2011 AND LOOK FORWARD TO 2012

As a youth group at GCPC, we had an awesome 2011 and expect 2012 to be every bit as fabulous – maybe even better! Our on-going programs are going strong and reaching students in meaningful ways and our special events have been spectacular! Below are some recent events that we celebrated and some things to look ahead to in the spring.

Past Events to Celebrate:

M&M Silent Auction

Thanks to all who supported our upcoming Mission & Music trip to Chicago by participating in our silent auction as donors and contributors! It was a fantastic success! See the music notes for more complete information.

Red Bag Project

Our youth had a wonderful time this last month purchasing and wrapping gifts for two youth as part of the Red Bag Project. Thanks to Cheryl Johnson for coordinating this wonderful opportunity for outreach!

Upcoming events to look forward to:

Youth and Parent Celebration Gathering

On January 8 from 6:00-8:00 p.m. we will have a meeting/gathering for all 6th-12th grade youth and parents to celebrate our last year and look forward to our expectations for the next. This will be an interactive event and we hope will be as fun as it is informative.

Ski and Snowboard Retreat

Our bus is full and we are ready to go to skiing and boarding! We depart for Winter Park, Colorado on the 13th!

Sexuality Education

Once again we are hosting Sexuality Education Workshops for all youth at the end of January. Please see the article *in the column to the right on this page.*

International Mission Trip to Haiti

Details are coming together for the GCPC international mission trip to Haiti next summer. We will be traveling to Haiti the first week of August to serve with the Children's Nutrition Program. The trip is for current high school juniors and seniors, college students, and adults. Registration forms are on the Youth Wall and website and are due February 1. Contact Miles or Matthew Hennek (matthewhennek@me.com) with questions.

Heartland Presbyterian Center

Summer camp registrations are now open for 2012! Register online before December 31st, 2011 for a 20% discount on all camp registration fees.

Save The Date

Coming Soon:

- Ski Retreat Meeting: Jan. 8 @ 7:30pm
- Youth & Parent Celebration/Meeting: Jan. 8 @ 6:00pm
- Ski Retreat: Jan 13-16
- 6th-8th Grade Sexuality Workshop: Jan. 28 @ 9am-4pm
- 9th-12th Grade Sexuality Workshop: Jan. 28 @ 8:30 am-12:30pm
- Youth Sunday: Feb. 26

Summer:

- Montreat (8th-12th grade): June 2-10
- VBS (all ages): June 18-22
- M&M Trip (8th-12th grade): June 22-29
- Massanetta (6th-8th grade): July 11-16 (or July 16-22)

SEXUALITY WORKSHOP

The GCPC Youth and Children's Team are once again offering the Sexuality Redefined workshops in January 2012. Registrations forms are on the Youth Wall and Website. Guests are welcome and encouraged.

These workshops will be similar but slightly different from what was presented last year and the complex and multifaceted topic of how our sexuality relates to our faith and Presbyterian values is timeless and important. Students will be provided with materials to take home.

- 4th/5th Grade: Saturday, January 21, 9:00 a.m. - Noon. Parent participation required.
- Middle School: Saturday, January 28, 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. Parent participation required.
- High School: Saturday, January 28, 8:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m., with the option of attending a highly recommended segment immediately after lunch. Students only.

There will be a Parenting Discussion during the Sunday School Hour on January 8 that will provide some background on the classes, and will provide tips on discussing these topics with your child. Please contact any member of the Sexuality Redefined Team if you have any questions or concerns: Karen Eskilson, Cindy Huston, Gay Lee Ludwig-Bonney, Gene Wilson, Lisa Cox, or Julie Hubble.

PRESBYTERIANS AROUND THE WORLD

*Praise ye Him, sun and moon:
praise Him, all ye stars of light...
Fire, and hail; snow, and vapour;
stormy wind fulfilling His word.
Mountain, and all hills;
fruitful trees, and all cedars.*

Psalm 148: 3, 8-9
King James Bible



Hope and Vapours

As stewards of the earth, many of us take time in a variety of ways to appreciate the beauty of our earth. The Psalms describe many images of the bountiful and beautiful earth, attributing these characteristics to the power of the Creator. Now, globally, there are increasing descriptions about environmental devastations, including climate change. This issue continues to raise requests for scientific, visual, current, and future evidence of climatic changes.

The United Nations Climate Change Conference met in Durbin, South Africa, with a proposed closing date of December 9, 2011. One of the issues addressed by this group is the Kyoto Protocol. This international group will seek to advance the implementation of this protocol. The Kyoto Protocol, adopted in Kyoto, Japan, on December 11, 1997, and implemented on February 16, 2005, is an international agreement linked to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. The Protocol sets binding targets for 37 industrialized countries and the European community for reducing greenhouse gas emissions (GHG). The Protocol commits these countries to the stabilization of their GHG emissions.

Watch for a brief review of the decisions made at this conference in the next newsletter.

CHURCH WOMEN UNITED, USA

Friday, January 27, Presbyterian Women will be hosting CHURCH WOMEN UNITED OF JOHNSON COUNTY for their first meeting of 2012. Registration and refreshments will be served at 9:30 a.m.



KAIROS

Kairos has a very exciting busy year planned for this 2012 year! As a recent sermon suggested – Now is the right time to join us. We invite all who are interested in any or all of our peace, justice and/or environmental issues to become involved this year. Our next meeting will be January 15, 2012, right after last service in Room 21. If you can't make it to the meeting keep tabs on us by joining our e-letter at gpcckairos@gmail.com (put subscribe in the subject line, please).

Mike Lorimer is working hard with our facilities team to 'retrofit' some of GCPC's lighting (the first step) for increased energy efficiency with one result: to reduce our utility bill in this 'money is tight everywhere' economy. Be on the lookout for a call for volunteers for a 'blitz' workday @ GCPC!

STRUT YOUR STUFF returns!! Strut Your Stuff was very successful last year. Money collected was donated to Facilities Team to use to help replace plantings in and around GCPC. KAIROS is organizing a Second Annual SYS event – FEBRUARY 11, 2012, and WATER.ORG has been identified as the designated recipient of all show fees collected. Are you a business person, tax preparer, babysitter, sell consumer products or??? Last year we learned of GCPC members that are plumbers, photographers, doctors and more! We invited all of them back and hope to learn about more talent 'hidden' here at GCPC. All GCPC Small Groups are welcome to display 'what you do' too, just contact us we'll make a space for your small group.

All members of the GCPC family and friends are welcome to submit an application – copies are available on the KAIROS bulletin board at GCPC and by contacting KAIROS at gpcckairos@gmail.com. Don't miss out on this awesome community building activity.

KID'S DAY OUT AND PIONEER PRESCHOOL

Priority Enrollment for Fall 2012 Kid's Day Out (KDO) and Pioneer Preschool will begin "priority" enrollment" for Fall 2012 on January 9, 2012. Please contact Kathy at KDO (913-345-8191) and Geri at Pioneer Preschool (913-338-4282). Grace Covenant members will participate during "priority enrollment" ending January 27. Forms are available on the church website for KDO and at www.pioneerpreschool.com for preschool.

music notes

M&M Holiday Silent Auction Success – Thanks to You!

The M&M Holiday Silent Auction was another huge success because of all who donated items and placed bids. With your help we were able to raise \$2,502.20 to help fund next summer's senior high Mission & Music Trip to Chicago, July 22-29, 2012.

Additional thanks to all who helped run the HSA: Diana Amerine, Caroline Becher, Kathy Burdette, Ashley Jeffries, Cathy Haun, Julie Hubble, Brendon Kane, Miles McDonald, Cathy Nance, Marla Schanze, Beth Scott, Shelby Scott, Chris Specht, Nancy Trussell, and Julie Webb. Finally, our hat is off to Kathy Bures who coordinated the event. "Thank you, all!"

Then there was . . . Carols Sing & Ring

"Fun" and "festive" are two words that describe our annual Carols Sing & Ring program. Thanks to each singer, ringer, and low brass player. Your songs were beautiful! In addition, we want to thank our music leaders: Cindy Huston, Beth Lillian, Susan Sutherland, Katie Hearn, Terri Monrad, Chris Krug, Celia Nicholas, and Kirk Heer; and our accompanists: Edwin Fukunaga and Ronda McDonald; and the accompanist for the program: Chris Krug. What a delight!

And what about all the other Advent musicians?

We are grateful to all of the soloists, instrumentalists, and ensembles who enriched our Advent services: Donna Goeckler, Terri Monrad, Jenna Lillian, Kat Mason, Hunter Lillian, Daniel Prater, Darryl Prater, Matthew Hennek, Gay Lee Ludwig-Bonney, Jamie Frye, Katie Hearn, Donna Heer, Kirk Heer, Lauren Bond, Bob Dover, Edwin Fukunaga, Celia Nicholas, Christine Nance, Chancel Choir, Charter Ringers, Exaltation!, Exaltation! Ringers, and Praise Team. Additional gratitude is expressed to our music staff for their dedicated and excellent leadership: Pat Adams, Linda Dover, and Denice Trawicki. What a rich gift we have been given through these musicians.

THANK YOU

- to Anne & Tom Stroud for the contribution of the anthem, "Lord, Make Me an Instrument" by Debra Scroggins to the music library.

- to Wilma Haney for the donation of a choral and handbell arrangement of "Here I Am, Lord" arr. Arnold Sherman in memory of her husband, Rev. Lloyd Haney.

Begin THE NEW YEAR WITH MUSIC!

After a well-deserved Christmas holiday break, our ensembles will resume rehearsals as follows:

Sunday, January 8

10:40 a.m. Littlest Music Makers-3s-PreK – Rm 23

12:15 p.m. New Spirit Ringers-5th-7th grade – Rm 1

4:00 p.m. Chapel Choir-K-4th grade – Rm 14

*4:00 p.m. Ex! Ringers-8th-12th grade – Rm 1

*5:00 p.m. Exaltation-8th-12th grade – Rm 6

5:00 p.m. New Spirit Singers-5th-7th grade – Sanct.

***Remember, 8th graders now move up to Exaltation!**

Wednesday, January 11

6:10 p.m. Charter Ringers – Rm 1

6:30 p.m. Praise Team – Sanctuary

7:30 p.m. Chancel Choir – Rm 6

If you haven't already, January is a great time to join a music ensemble!

January Music Meetings

Tuesday, January 10

6:15 p.m. M&M Planning – Rm 6

7:00 p.m. Music Team – Rebecca's Office

Looking Ahead to Music & Worship Events in 2012

Friday-Sunday, February 17-19 – Worship Training with Branon Dempsey & Branon in Worship 2/19

Sunday, February 26 – Youth Sunday – All youth ensembles will lead in worship

Saturday, March 31 – New Spirit Singers & Ringers Outreach & Overnight

Thursday, April 5 – Maundy Thursday Service 7:30 p.m. Ex! & Ex! Ringers provide music

Friday, April 6 – Good Friday Service 7:30 p.m.

Chancel Choir & Orchestra present *Requiem* by Mozart

Sunday, April 8 – Easter – Music by Praise Team, Chancel Choir, Charter Ringers, & Chancel Brass

Sunday, April 22 – Music Appreciation @ 8:50 & 11:05

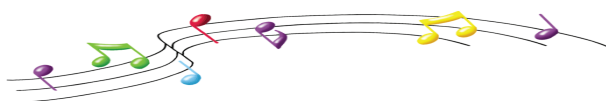
Sunday, April 29 – Chapel Choir presents the musical, "Oh, Jonah" by Pote & McCann 6:30 p.m.

Sunday, May 6 – Bell Fest 6:30 p.m.

Wednesday-Sunday, June 6-10 – members of Chancel Choir to NYC's Lincoln Center to sing Mozart's *Requiem*

Fridays, June 22-29 – M&M Trip to Chicago

Sunday, July 1 – M&M Led Worship & Lunch 10:30 a.m.



YOUR OUTREACH TEAM WISHES EACH OF YOU A BLESSED AND HAPPY NEW YEAR!

We've donated our tip money from our gift wrapping stint at Barnes and Noble to help educate girls in Pakistan and hopefully, through educated mothers, help some boys as well. This, and other schools in the area, are projects of the Presbyterian Education Board (PEB). We thought you might like some information on this Outreach partner.

The first educational work of the United Presbyterian Mission started in 1856 when a missionary took over a primary school in Sialkot, a city in the foothills of Kashmir. In 1881, the Christian Training Institute was opened as a feeder for the seminary and four missionary women faced much opposition and indifference in their service to teaching women and girls. Our tradition of educating girls goes back many years!

Pakistan is a rapidly developing agricultural country which has faced many political and economic challenges in recent years. The literacy rates in Pakistan today are still poor, averaging 65% for males and 40% for females with rural rates significantly lower. The PEB's purpose is to provide high quality education backed by its Christian values and roots. Their scope extends to primary and secondary schools, vocational and higher education, professional or technical training for students regardless of race or creed, and to hostels for Christian children. All students are educated to have a spirit of service and character that will enable them to contribute to positive changes in their society as citizen leaders.

Thanks to the many members of our congregation (and a couple of friends or family members) who spent some time wrapping and having a good time during the weeks before Christmas! Tip total will follow in a bulletin in January.

Here are some nice numbers as of Dec 13th from your Outreach Team:

November	554.00	Red Bag + Little Sisters of the Poor toiletries
November	988.25	Thanksgiving Offering
November	50.00	Peacemaking
November	25.00	Support the Troops
November	445.00	Christmas Gift Certificates
November	440.00	Chili Supper - Gifts of Grace
November	500.00	NSS Musical
December	433.00	Argentine Baby Closet
December	50.00	Support the Troops
December	2,920.00	Christmas Gift Certificates
December	90.00	Christmas Joy

At our meeting in December, we voted to disperse \$6000 as follows:

- \$1500 to JoCo Christmas Bureau for the purchase of coats;
- \$500 each to Grace United Food Closet, PEB (Presbyterian Education Board for a girl's school in Pakistan), Argentine Baby Closet, Safe Home and JoCo IHN;
- \$1250 for Presbytery/GAGM
- \$250 each to Bread for the World, Veronica's Voice and KC Passages.

Our Communion Offering Partner for January 2012 will be Church Women United in their support of Catholic Charities in their far-reaching efforts in our area. We will be donating cash. We will also be collecting blankets for the UPLIFT program for the homeless in the Kansas City area; you may leave those blankets in the Outreach Communion Offering bin by the weekday entrance.



FACILITIES SAVINGS

Grace Covenant participated again this summer in the energy curtailment program offered by KCP&L. This is our 4th year to participate in the program that runs from June through September and again we raked in the savings! This program involves reducing energy consumption on designated high demand days during a maximum of 10 business day for a maximum of 8 hours per day. The typical period is from 2:00 – 7:00 p.m. on a Monday through Friday.

GCPC was asked to conserve electricity for only 1 day this summer while in the summer of 2010 we reduced energy consumption on 11 days. This involves such energy saving measures as turning off the lights, turning up the thermostats or even turning off the air conditioning units, unplugging unused appliances, closing blinds on the south and west sides of the building and moving meetings to the lower level.

Participation in this program saved the church over \$3000 on its electric bills just this summer. For the 4 year period, GCPC has saved over \$5,700 on its KCP&L electric bills. Though not designed specifically for churches, it works well for us because the curtailment period is only on non-holiday weekdays. Just one of the ways we are stretching your dollars and saving the earth's resources. Take a look at the statistics below:

According to the EPA: Most congregations can cut energy costs by up to 30% by investing strategically in efficient equipment, facility upgrades and maintenance 30% less money spent on utilities = more money available for:

- ♦ mission trips
- ♦ charitable contributions (ie outreach)
- ♦ important building upgrades
- ♦ religious education materials, etc.

FROM THE 'RABBI'

A truly remarkable thing happened Sunday, December 11! But, . . . in an effort to "channel" Paul Harvey of "And that's the rest of the story" fame, allow me to set the context. [For those who don't recognize Paul Harvey's name, a quick Google search should tell you all you need to know! 😊

Most will recognize that the Generosity Team's theme for our 2012 Pledge Drive was "Extravagant Generosity!" And through the weeks leading up to our Dedication Sunday of our pledge commitments, the Team and Session members offered numerous examples of the congregation's faithful and generous support and commitment.

And, truly, that extravagance has been witnessed again in the consistently high average of our pledge commitments – something like \$4,000 as of this writing! Granted that's the average, meaning that there are some much larger and some smaller than that number, but it is still quite high in a per capita context!

And, at the same time, as I noted in my sermon on December 11, there have been more folks not stepping forward with a pledge commitment – of whatever amount – than has been usual, and is possible for the number of members at GCPC. I recognize that for some of us that may be due to the huge uncertainties that may surround our economic circumstances. And for others it is due in large part to your uncertainty about who the new pastor will be, when that will happen, etc. As on Sunday, it is important for me to thank those who have already stepped up and made whatever commitment you feel called and able to! And, important for me to say that it takes ALL of us participating in order to insure that our Pastor Nominating Committee has the kind of support they need to call our next pastor!

So, what a "Glimpse of Grace" to discover that an envelope placed in the Sunday morning Offering included gold and diamond jewelry!! A pair of earrings, a necklace, a watch, and a bracelet! A plain, unmarked white envelope, with no name. . . .

Stunned, your finance and pastoral staff were a bit at a loss as to what to do. [Fortunately, we have helpful wisdom on our Finance Team and they will see that this most unique gift will be appropriately handled and used for ministry and mission!] A visit to a trusted and experienced jeweler brought an evaluation of several thousand dollars!

What an incredible example of Extravagant Generosity!! Given anonymously, one can only speculate on "the rest of the story": . . . Was it the only thing of value someone had to offer? Or was it above and beyond all other gifts this person had already made? Was it their own. . . or perhaps a mother's or grandmother's? Given without a desire for recognition or acknowledgement, this Offering gift is the epitome of our stewardship theme. . . and a wondrous story for us all to ponder, and for which to be grateful!

The Lord's goodness and mercy to you, each one!

Ky

FROM THE SESSION

Session is in the midst of establishing some “Wildly Important Goals” for 2012, on the assumption that by establishing 1-3 focus goals we can actually achieve them. If you have thoughts/ideas/opinions about what these goals should be, we would love to hear from you. Our ministry teams will be involved in developing and implementing these goals.

Thanks to a lot of conscientious work on Kimby’s part, we have been purging our membership rolls of members who no longer participate in the life of this congregation. This way, when our new pastor arrives, our roll will accurately reflect our membership.

We are looking forward to trying a new format for the annual meeting this year. We hope that it will increase attendance. Please plan to be here on the morning of January 29 (details on front page.)

We try to have a Session member available for information or questions on the 3rd Sunday of each month, but are open to your comments and ideas any time.

BUDGET TEAM RECOMMENDS TO SESSION 2012 BUDGET

With 197 Pledging units in hand on December 12, the Budget Team submitted to Session a 2012 Budget that is within \$6,000 of being balanced. Included in their recommendation is a commitment to close that relatively small gap and to allow for a cost of living increase to staff compensation. [More up-to-date information on that will be available prior to the Annual Meeting on January 29, 2012.]

If you have a pledge commitment to make yet, you can do so by going to www.gcpc.org and clicking on the link in the lower-right-hand corner of the home page. Or you can email johnnie.baker@gcpc.org and send her your pledge information. In both instances she will confirm your commitment with an email response.

PRESBYTERIANS AND PER CAPITA

Description of per capita: “In order to give meaning to the interdependent nature of Presbyterian polity...” (Book of Order, G-9.0404), per capita is the responsible way of sharing the costs that equitably belong to the whole Presbyterian church community expressing the essential unity of the church. The payment of the per capita apportionment can be seen as a sign of healthy relationships within the church, giving tangible witness to the unity and wholeness promised to us in Jesus Christ.

It has been said that per capita apportionment is like a utility bill. Just as we pay for heat, light, water, and telephone in order to remain connected to the utility systems and benefit from the services provided, we also pay per capita so that the Presbyterian system can function on behalf of all of us. It is the necessary linkage in our connectional system. We, at Grace Covenant, pay a per capita assessment of **\$33.70** per member. This amounts to \$21,871 in the 2011 Operating Budget. As you know, our budget is greatly strained and each of us can help by contributing **\$33.70** per member to defray this expense. A special envelope will be included in your February packet.

UPCOMING DETOURS

The Kansas Dept. of Transportation and City of Overland Park have notified the church that we will experience numerous highway construction detours and temporary closings in the coming months – some of them on weekends. As you know, there are new exits on to College Blvd, off of I-435 at Quivira and Hwy 69, etc. The church will receive notice of those temporary closings as they occur, and we will send out email notices to you for your awareness and planned routes to and from Grace Covenant. There’s also a map on the wall near the weekday entrance.





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Johnnie Baker, johnnie.baker@gcpc.org .. ext. 21

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Contemporary Music Coord......Denice Trawicki

Contemporary Music Drummer Pat Adams

Child Care CoordinatorCarolyn Chaffin

Kid's Day Out DirectorKathy Connor

ELDERS

Maggie Blankers

Pat Collins

Pat Crorkin

Jean Nelson

Matt McBride

Mike Mattix

Laura Patton

Christine Nance

Abby Slovick

C.C. White

Dee Zak

Melanie Townsend

David Zimmermann

Rick Randolph

SUPPORT STAFF

Communication Elder.....Melanie Townsend

Deacon Moderator Linda Bridges

Executive Committee.....Maggie Blankers, Pat

Crorkin, Pat Collins, Mike Mattix

Newsletter Editor Jami Howe/Kim Krueger

Prayer Chain..... Cheryl Johnson

Presbyterian Women Moderator vacant

Wedding Coordinator..... Lara Schesser

ministry units

Congregational Nurture Unit Moderators

Connections and Care.....Christine Caseres

Endowment David Steen

Music.....John Utz

Stephen Ministry.....Jean Hampton

Generosity Team..... David Sutherland

Worship.....Jennifer Battaglioli

Education Ministry Unit Moderators

Adult Missy Taylor

Children Liz Albers

Youth..... vacant

Reach Out Ministry Unit Moderators

Welcoming Team Brendon Kane

Outreach..... Tom Stroud

Kairos.....Jo Randolph

Supportive Ministry Unit Moderators

Facility Bryan Evans

Finance..... David Huston

Personnel Linda Bridges

WORSHIP SCHEDULE

8:50 a.m. Praise Team Led Worship

10:00 a.m. Church School All Ages

11:05 a.m. Choral Led Worship

Childcare is provided during Worship.

NEWSLETTER DEADLINES/MAILING

FEBRUARY 2012 ISSUE:

Article Deadline - January 17

Newsletter folded/mailed - Jan. 24

PLEASE MAKE A NOTE OF THESE!

MARCH 2012 ISSUE:

Article Deadline -February 21

Newsletter folded/mailed - Feb. 28

CELEBRATING GOD'S ALL ENCOMPASSING LOVE