

GraceNotes



A Monthly Publication of the Congregational Activities of Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church in Newton, NC
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Volume 226, Number 12 **DECEMBER 2023**



WREATHS ACROSS AMERICA
SATURDAY, DECEMBER 16TH AT 11:00 A.M.
GRACE CEMETERY



CHRISTMAS EVE CANDLELIGHT AND COMMUNION WORSHIP
DECEMBER 24TH AT 4:00 P.M.

WREATHS ACROSS AMERICA
SATURDAY, DECEMBER 16 AT 11:00 AM
GRACE CEMETERY

THE GRACE CONGREGATION IS URGED TO ATTEND & ASSIST

On Saturday, December 16 at 11:00 AM, The Daughters of the American Revolution and the Daughters of the Confederacy will come to Grace to honor those who gave their lives in the service of our country with the Wreaths Across America.

Each December on National Wreaths Across America Day, our mission to Remember, Honor and Teach is carried out by coordinating wreath-laying ceremonies at Arlington National Cemetery, as well as at more than 2,500 additional locations in all 50 U.S. states, at sea and abroad. Wreaths will be placed on each grave of veterans who fought in the wars to protect our freedoms. There will be full military honors and a brief order of prayers and commemoration. Wreaths Across America's mission touches the lives of thousands of school, scout, civic and religious groups across the country through wreath sponsorships. These groups help us ensure that we reach our goal to place a wreath on each hero's grave. Because this is a national event, many people not connected to Grace will hopefully be in attendance on December 16. The Grace Cemetery is listed on the national website for Wreaths across America as one of the 1,200 locations taking place on December 16 for this ceremony. This will be a wonderful witness to the Grace Congregation and Cemetery Ministry.

The Grace congregation will be hosts to all who come as we will serve coffee, hot chocolate, cookies and doughnuts in Union Church following the Rite of Commemoration. Grace disciples are urged to help host with the serving coffee and refreshments. Contact Herb Travis if you are willing to help.

CEMETERY AND UNION CHURCH CLEAN-UP IN PREPARATION FOR WREATHS ACROSS AMERICA will be held on Saturday, December 9th, at 11:00 a.m. Please volunteer to help make this ceremony a success! Also, volunteers are needed to provide refreshments for the event which is scheduled for Saturday, December 16th at 11:00 am.

HANGING OF THE GREENS! **On Saturday, December 2nd at 10:00 AM,** the faithful will gather to participate in the Hanging of the Greens as we prepare the Sanctuary for the Advent/Christmas Seasons. The tree will be placed, as well as all of the banners and decorations needed to get us into the spirit of the season. We will need some strong hands to put up the tree, so please plan to join us!

THE GRACE PRAYER BREAKFAST will be held on **Saturday, December 9th at 9:00 AM** at Four Peas in a Pod Restaurant on Highway 70 in Conover. Great food and great fellowship! Please come and bring a friend!

CEMETERY AND UNION CHURCH CLEAN-UP IN PREPARATION FOR WREATHS ACROSS AMERICA will be held on **Saturday, December 9th, at 11:00 a.m.** Please volunteer to help make this ceremony a success! Also, volunteers are needed to provide refreshments for the event which is scheduled for Saturday, December 16th at 11:00 am.

THE GRACE PRAYER LUNCHEON will be held on **Wednesday, December 20th at noon in the Fellowship Hall.** This is a time for any adults from Grace and the community to come together for Christmas fellowship! The menu includes soups and finger foods. The festivities include The Gift Game (please bring a \$5.00 gift), singing Christmas carols, and enjoying tales from everyone about their childhood Christmas experiences. Please give Betty Wilfong a call at (828) 461-6604 and let her know if you plan to attend.

STEPHEN MINISTRY TRAINING will be held during the month of December on the following dates. If you have any questions, please contact Herb Travis, Stephen Ministry Leader.

Tuesday, December 5th at 6:00 p.m.

Tuesday, December 12th at 6:00 p.m.

Tuesday, December 19th at 6:00 p.m.

THE NEXT MEETING OF THE LEADERSHIP MINISTRY BOARD is scheduled for **Monday, December 18 at 6:00 pm.**

CHRISTMAS EVE CANDLELIGHT AND COMMUNION SERVICE will be held at Grace on December 24th at 4:00 p.m.

CHRISTMAS CARD “MAILBOXES” will be available on Sunday, December 2nd. There will be folders on the back pew of the church to put Christmas cards in for those that ***regularly attend worship, whose family attends, or are homebound***. No addresses are needed as ***nothing gets mailed***. It is asked that you place the cards for your friends in their folders. It is also requested that you check YOUR folder on a regular basis and take home any cards you may have received. This is a way for you to save some postage while you send greetings to your church family.

THE DISCIPLES OF GRACE DONATED 1041 POUNDS OF FOOD TO EASTERN CATAWBA COUNTY COOPERATIVE CHRISTIAN MINISTRY TO DATE THIS YEAR!

Suggestions for the month of December include, but are certainly not limited to: cereal, peanut butter, mac/cheese, canned fruit, canned tuna, soup, rice, and canola or olive oil. Other needed items include large recycled grocery bags and shopping bags, gallon and quart sized zipper bags, egg cartons (dozen size only) and hangers for pants. Thanks be to God for your generosity in feeding the poor!

NEW LEADERSHIP MINISTRY BOARD

At the Annual Congregational Meeting held on November 5th, the following were elected/re-elected to serve as our leaders: Alan Shull and Libby Travis. They will join the current members of the Board – Ricky Bivens, Sheila Drum, Jason Yoder, Todd Childers, Tim Eckard and Jeff Scronce. Installation of the Leadership Ministry Board will be on Sunday, January 7, 2024 during worship.

SAMARITAN’S PURSE CHRISTMAS SHOEBOXES – FINAL COUNT!

The final count for Christmas Shoeboxes donated from the disciples at Grace is 60! Thank you for your support of this great ministry! More than the little gifts given, the Gospel is shared with children around the world!

A NOTE OF THANKS FROM THE CORNER TABLE

“Dear Members of Grace Lutheran Church,
Thank you for your recent monetary contribution to the Backpack Program in the amount of \$300.00. Your generosity allows us to focus on our mission and feed children across Catawba County. I appreciate your support and so do the children we serve daily!”

ADVENT SEASON

Celebrating Advent involves spending time in spiritual preparation for the coming birth of Jesus Christ at Christmas. The Season of Advent begins on the fourth Sunday prior to Christmas Day. Many Christians celebrate Advent not only by thanking God for Christ's first coming to Earth as a baby, but also for his presence among us today through the Holy Spirit, and in preparation and anticipation of his final coming at the end of the age.



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MINUTES

Of Leadership Ministry Board Ad Hoc Meeting
Sunday, October 29, 2023

Call to Order

Called to order at 11:45 am following worship by Tim Eckard

Roll Call

Present: Pastor Gary Coble, Tim Eckard, Sheila Drum, Jeff Scronce, Jason Yoder, Rick Bivens, Libby Travis, Todd Childers

Absent: Gary Leatherman

New Business

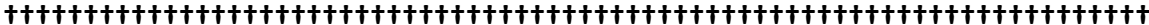
- A. A motion was made and seconded to receive Kevin Adams as a new member next Sunday, November 5, 2023. MOTION CARRIED.
- B. Also, Christy Adams will be received into membership by baptism on the same day.
- C. Pastor Coble has resigned and November 5, 2023 will be his last day at Grace. He will make that announcement to the congregation on that Sunday.
- D. Rick Bivens announced that he received confirmation from Allen Biggerstaff that a person who was seeking a burial plot in the old section of the cemetery had paid for that plot some time ago.

Adjournment - There being no further business, a motion to adjourn was made and seconded. MOTION CARRIED.

Next Meeting

Monday, November 20th at 6:00 pm

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MINUTES

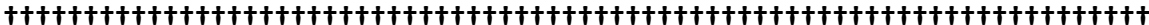
Annual Congregational Meeting
Sunday, November 5, 2023

Call to Order Called to order at 10:25 am by Tim Eckard

New Business

- A. The proposed Spending Plan for 2024 was adopted on a voice vote.
- B. Libby Travis and Alan Shull were elected to full 3-year terms on the Leadership Ministry Board on a voice vote.

There being no other business for the Congregation to consider the meeting was concluded.



MINUTES

Of Leadership Ministry Board Regular Meeting
Monday, November 20, 2023

Call to Order Called to order at 6:05 pm
Devotions by Libby Travis and Opening Prayer by Tim Eckard

Roll Call **Present:** Tim Eckard, Libby Travis, Jason Yoder, Todd Childers, Jeff Scronce, Sheila Drum
Absent: Rick Bivens, Gary Leatherman

Minutes October minutes were read and approved. Minutes of the Annual Congregational Meeting were also approved.

Old Business

- A. Weather stripping on the front doors still needs to be installed.

New Business

- A. Pastor Marty Ramey will be here on November 26 and December 3. Pastor Harvey Mozolak will be here on December 10. Pastor Brack East will be here on December 17 and December 31. Tim Eckard is reaching out to Pastor Ramey about December 24.
- B. There was a discussion of the meeting with Pastor Ramey that took place on December 13.
- C. Pastor Ramey will be invited to attend the regular board meeting on December 18.
- D. The installation of the Leadership Ministry Board will be done on Sunday, January 7, 2024.
- E. Hanging of the Greens is scheduled for Saturday, December 2 at 10:00 am.

Ministry Team Reports

- A. **Property/Facilities**
 - 1. The ice machine needs to be serviced/cleaned on an annual basis. We will need to locate someone who can perform this work.
- B. **Outreach/Crisis Assistance**
 - 1. We did not reach our goal for Christmas Shoeboxes this year. Next year we will explore different strategies to support this ministry better.

C. Cemetery

1. Cemetery cleanup is scheduled for Saturday, December 9 at 11:00 am.
2. Wreaths Across America event is scheduled for Saturday, December 16 @ 11:00 am

Adjournment - There being no further business, a motion to adjourn was made and seconded. Motion carried. The meeting was closed with a prayer by Tim Eckard.

Next Meeting: Monday, December 18 at 6:00 pm

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Grace Notes

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