

## A Message from Pastor Mary

Greetings in the Name of Christ!

I just got home from Virginia Annual Conference and a couple days of the beach. We will have reports from General Conference and Annual Conference, as well as an extensive Financial Report at a congregational meeting after church on July 14.

When I finally got home, it was all hands-on deck to do laundry, go shopping, and look through the mail. And then there was our poor peace plant! It was drooping from not enough water. The leaves and blooms were bowed down and looked quite dead, even though we had put into the pot, a globe of water.

John watered the plant, and we waited. Sure enough, the blooms started to straighten out and stand tall. Then the leaves began to perk up. This is why I love peace plants! They tell the story of forgiveness and grace.

When we have sinned and fallen short of the Glory of God, we begin to fall as well. We may not notice, but God does. We sort of droop away from God. If we continue, we look like my “dead” plant. But if we confess our sin and rehydrate with the forgiveness and grace of God, we are filled to overflowing with life giving water that will help us to walk straight and tall with God. And people will notice!

Jeremiah 2:13 states: “My people have committed two sins; They have forsaken me, the spring of living water, and have dug their own cisterns, broken cisterns that cannot hold water.”

So often we commit these same sins. We are thirsty for living water from God yet we look for something to quench our thirsty souls from other sources that cannot help. We stay thirsty. We droop. We die and life becomes hard, sad, confused, and complicated. Those other cisterns may be our family, job, books, food, medicine, alcohol, shopping, or any other thing we think makes us fulfilled...anything we use to replace God in our life.

# GRACE NOTES

A NEWSLETTER FOR  
MEMBERS AND FRIENDS  
OF GRACE  
UNITED METHODIST  
CHURCH, MIDDLETOWN,  
VA

JULY - AUGUST 2024



**Pastor: Rev. Mary Lock**

540-303-1076

marylock@vaumc.org

**Worship Services:**

Sunday Worship:

8:30 & 10:30 am

Sunday School:

9:30 – 10:20 am

**Address:**

PO Box 61, Middletown, VA  
22645

**Street:** 7882 Main St,  
Middletown, VA 22645

**Phone:** 540-869-1008

**Website:**

graceumcmiddletown-va.org

**Email:**

graceumcmiddletown@  
gmail.com

But Jesus says, "Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks the water I give him will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life."  
(John 4: 13-14)

Our soul thirst for God. And instead of trying other sources, we need to recognize that Jesus is our only true source of spiritual water.

Perhaps that is why I love going to the beach. The continuous waves that come crashing to the shore, day and night, remind me of the continuous spiritual water and grace that God provides to us through Jesus and with the Holy Spirit. It fills my soul and satisfies my thirst!

This summer, may you take the time to drink deeply from the wells of water offered from God. Take time to be with God and talk with God. Ask God to refill you and create in you a spring of water welling up to eternal life.

And also take care of yourself in the summer heat by drinking plenty of water for your physical body as well!

Blessings,

Pastor Mary

## **LAY LEADER NEWS**

**Mission Statement:** We are now focusing on the middle portion of our Mission Statement, "We will serve God." Here are some of the upcoming committees that help our church do just that. The **Finance Committee** is featured in July. **Staff Parish Relations Committee (SPRC)** is featured in August. Be sure to ask the committee chairs or any of the committee members what they do for Grace and how their work serves God.

## **THANK YOU!**

Many thanks to everyone who participated in the Mother's Day and Father's Day dedications. Your generous donations to remember and honor our loved ones was much appreciated. We deposited \$170 for Mother's Day and \$154 for Father's Day in the Flower Fund.

Helen Steele and Sherry Jenkins

# SPECIAL EVENTS



## Vacation Bible School

Camp Firelight Vacation Bible School was held June 27 – 30. We are collecting school supplies to donate to Middletown Elementary School in August. Please see the flyer on the Outreach Table in the Fellowship Hall.

**Our church picnic** was moved to the Hamilton Fellowship Hall due to increased temperatures and potential thunderstorms on Sunday, June 30, 2024. We gathered at 10 am and our service began at 10:30 am followed by a presentation from our Camp Firelight Campers! Check out all the pictures!

**A GREAT TIME WAS HAD BY ALL!**



**Counselor Sam and Lu**



**Thank you to our Camp Director, Michelle!**



**S'mores to go for Saturday's snack!**



**Two of the three fun games the Campers played!**



**Lu and the camp site where campers heard Bible stories**





*Thank you to the young ladies who presented to the church!*



*Crafts created by the VBS Campers!*



*We are gathered!*



*A familiar face came to the service/picnic today!*

## FUTURE EVENTS

The **Administrative Council** will meet on Wednesday, July 11th at 6:30 pm.

### **General Conference, Virginia Annual Conference, and Financial Reports**

On July 14<sup>th</sup> we will have one service at 10:00 am, with a light breakfast from 9:30 am to 10am. We will have reports from General Conference and Annual Conference, as well as an extensive Financial Report at a congregational meeting after our church service. We look forward to seeing everyone there!

### **Spring Craft Bazaar 2025**

We are planning a Spring Craft Bazaar for March 29, 2025 (Snow date TBD). We will be having a planning meeting in August (TBD). If you are interested in helping with the planning process, please let Michelle Cissel, Teresa Cutlip, or Diane Wittreich know.

## Outreach/Nurture Committee

Our next blood drive will be Wednesday, July 17<sup>th</sup> from 11 am to 4 pm. If you have any questions about the frequency of donating, please contact the local chapter of the Red Cross for further information. To schedule your donation, click [here](https://www.redcrossblood.org/give.html/drive-results?zipSponsor=graceumc) or go to <https://www.redcrossblood.org/give.html/drive-results?zipSponsor=graceumc> or use the attached QR code.



## Finances

A Financial Report will be given on Sunday, July 14<sup>th</sup> after the one morning service.



## Birthdays & Anniversaries\*

| July  | Date | August  |
|---|------|---|
| Mary Hahn, Mary McCarthy                          | 1    | Richard Callis, Charlie Higgs, Lucy Peters        |
|   | 2    | Jennifer Rust                                     |
| Avery Furman, Chris Helsley                       | 3    | Melissa & Thomas Shull*                           |
|   | 4    |   |
|   | 5    |   |
| Joe Lock, John Lock                               | 6    | Hal Stalcup, Landon Zimmerman                     |
| James Campbell                                    | 7    |   |
| Jennifer Carper Strosnider                        | 8    | Daniel Beard                                      |
|   | 9    |   |
| Libby Nichols                                     | 10   |   |
| Mary Shull  | 11   |   |
| Chase Roberts                                     | 12   | Wanda & James Racey*                              |
|   | 13   |   |
| Sherry & Randy Jenkins*                           | 14   | Jimmy Racey, Lisa & Clay Knick, Mary & John Lock* |
|   | 15   |   |
|   | 16   | Barbara & Ray Steele*                             |
| Brooke Lock, Frank Ritenour                       | 17   |   |
|   | 18   | Paul Cissel                                       |
|   | 19   | Steve Stewart                                     |
| Kevin LeVan Jr.                                   | 20   | Rachel Higgs & Reid Entsminger*, Zachary Newman   |
|   | 21   | Matt Hahn   |
| Amy Keller  | 22   | John Church                                       |
|   | 23   | Mary Wert   |
|   | 24   |   |
| Helen Steele                                      | 25   | Aubrie Richardson                                 |
| Joyce & Bill Tucker*                              | 26   | Ashley Carper Margiotti, Caden Rust               |
| Tammy Diggs                                       | 27   |   |
|   | 28   |   |
| Megan Bowers, Abigail Paul, Emma Wisecarver       | 29   | Jeffrey Strosnider, Chad Taylor                   |
|   | 30   |   |
| Terry Taylor, Mary Jane Downard, Gail & Rob Hahn* | 31   |   |

Please let us know if your special dates are missing or incorrect! 540-869-1008



**Grace United Methodist Church**  
**PO Box 61**  
**Middletown, Virginia 22645**

**Church Office:**

Diane Wittreich, Administrative Assistant  
Office Hours: Tues, Wed, Thurs 10 am – 2 pm  
Phone: 540-869-1008

**Prayer Requests during the week:** Call or email the church office or call Barbara Steele 540-869-2430. Please leave a message if prompted.

**Grace Thrift Shop Hours:** Thursdays & Fridays, 10 am – 3 pm; Saturdays, 10 am – 1pm. Donations accepted during shop hours.

**Electronic Donations:** Visit our website and look for PayPal Donate link, or visit:  
<https://paypal.me/GraceUMCMiddletownva>