

Start your New Year with inspiration and purpose! ***Serving My Lord*** is a heartfelt piece that encourages us to reflect on how we can honor God in our daily lives. Through prayer, kindness, and trust in His plan, this poem reminds us of the joy and peace that comes from walking in faith. Let it guide you as you set meaningful goals for the year ahead, keeping His love at the center of all you do.

Source:

<https://www.stresslesscountry.com/apoemaboutserving.html>

Serving My Lord

How can I use this New Year ahead
To serve my Lord in all I've said?
I'll read His Word each day with care,
And live my life with Him in prayer.

I'll look for ways to help and share,
To show my neighbors I truly care.
I'll focus on giving, not seeking for me,
In all that I do, His love they'll see.

I'll let go of anger, forgive with grace,
And seek to bring peace in every place.
Loving my enemies may not come fast,
But with God's help, I'll make it last.

This year I'll aim to build, not tear,
To lift others up and show I care.
I'll fill my heart with joy each day,
Let God's light shine in all I say.

I'll release my worries, trust His plan,
For He holds the future in His hand.
I'll strive to follow where He leads,
Obey His Word in thoughts and deeds.

These goals are lofty, they may be tough,
But His grace reminds me, it's enough.
If I love my Lord with all my heart,
He'll guide my steps, His strength impart.

With Him in control, I'll find my peace,
And my trust in Him will only increase.
This New Year's journey, I'll walk with cheer,
Serving my Savior throughout the year.

Unknown

GRACE NOTES

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

JANUARY & FEBRUARY 2025



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](mailto:graceumcmiddletown@gmail.com)

Lay Leader News

Happy New Year! Last year at Grace we celebrated our Mission Statement. We will be focusing on missions for 2025. What are missions? They are anything you do for someone! Each month we will have a mission focus to help you get started, but any mission at any time is perfect. There are lots of ideas on the Missions bulletin board, and there are so many organizations that need exactly the time and skills that you have to share. And remember, anything you do for anyone in need, you do for Jesus.

We have had people coming to the church several times just in the last month asking for assistance. Fortunately, we were able to provide them with hygiene kits, snacks, socks, a coat (Thank you, Thrift Shop!), and non-perishable food. But we have been scrambling to do that. We are a church. Helping others is what we are to do. So, in 2025, the communion offering is going to be used to keep items such as these on-hand to help those in need.

January brings two ideas to the front. One is our **blood drive** on Friday, January 17. If you haven't signed up to donate yet, you still have time. If you need help signing up online, talk to Diane. She will gladly help you. If you aren't sure about donating, there are many blood donors in our congregation who would be glad to talk about their experiences with you.

The other idea is **Random Daily Acts of Kindness**. The little things we do for others on a daily basis can mean so much more than we will ever know. Be on the lookout for our Kindness jar where we will be collecting acts of kindness. What does this mean? Write down your acts of kindness on separate slips of paper – no names, dates, or anything identifying – and put them in the jar. Not only will we see how often we are really helping others, but these will also be ideas for someone who could use some suggestions on what they can do. They could also be a good talking point for children to show them how easy it is to be kind.

February brings us Valentine's Day and Heart Month. What a perfect time to **show how Christians love their neighbors!** Your neighbors are all the people around you wherever you may be. How about clearing a neighbor's driveway, helping someone carry their groceries, visiting a shut-in, or even just holding a door open with a smile? Let someone with a small purchase get in line in front of you. Lend a listening ear. Invite someone to church with you. You get the idea. It isn't the size of kindness, it's the doing!

Shenandoah River District of the UMC Leadership Training Workshops

If you are coming onto a committee in 2025, you need to check to see if that position requires training. The information about who needs training, when the training is, and how to register was sent out in an e-mail and is on the Laity bulletin board. Please attend the training, even if you have served and been trained in the past.



Prayer Shawl Committee

Thanks once again to all who have donated to the Prayer Shawl Committee. The hats and scarves that were blessed in October have been distributed and well received by the recipients. Many heads are being warmed this winter thanks to your generosity. We are already starting on hats and scarves for next year!

Also, we do have plenty of prayer shawls available. If you know of anyone who could benefit from one, please let Michelle or Pastor Mary know, and we will get one ready for you to present.

PAST EVENTS

Thank you to everyone who took a box! We collected 20 boxes for **Samitarian's Purse Operation Christmas Child!** Thanks to Michelle Cissell for delivering them to a local church for distribution.



Kingsway Apple Tree Project – we collected gifts for 36 boys and girls whose father or mother is participating in the Kingsway Prison and Family Outreach based in Harrisonburg. We also collected wrapping paper, tape, many tubes of toothpaste, and monetary donations for purchasing notepads and lip balm to give as gifts to the parents. With our donations they were able to meet their goal of providing for 7,000 inmates throughout Virginia!!

Middletown Community Thanksgiving Meal

Grace UMC, along with 3 other local churches, Middletown Presbyterian, Mt. Olive Baptist, and Valley Assembly of God, served over 200 meals on Saturday, November 23rd. This was the third year GUMC participated in the event. Thank you to Tersesa Cutlip and Diane Wittreich for their help organizing this event along with other GUMC church members who volunteered their time during the event. Special thank you's go to local donors in their support of this event: Middletown Volunteer Fire Co., Shaffer's BBQ, Vault & Cellar, Italian Touch, Pan D Endz, Texas Roadhouse, Reliance UMC, and Judy's Excavating & Construction.



THANK YOU'S

Thank you, Mary Lou Stallings, for sharing your talents in preparing our Thanksgiving altar display! Your time and effort are truly appreciated!



Thank you to Ted Dix, Amanda Scheetz, Anne Legge, Barbara Steele, Betty White, Kimbyrlie Copeland, Lucy Peters, Mary Lou Stallings, and Michelle Cissel for providing their musical talents throughout the end of 2024 especially during Advent!

Thrift Shop

Happy New Year from Grace UMC Thrift Shop Volunteers: Joyce Tucker, Lisa Higgs, Amy Beall, Betty Callis, Mary Lou Stallings, John Copeland, Tom Cirrani, and Lucy Peters.

The Thrift shop has enjoyed a most profitable 2024 and we thank all of you for your generous donations. All Thrift Shop money is used for missions which include but not limited to: UMCOR, ABBA, Bright Futures, Middletown Elementary School, church utilities, and Thrift Shop supplies.

We are open Thursdays from 10 am to 3 pm, Fridays from 10 am to 3 pm, and Saturdays from 10 am to 1 pm. Please stop in for a visit; we have coffee and snacks available.



Save the Date

The **Administrative Council** will meet on Wednesday, January 15th at 6:30 pm.

Our next blood drive will be **Friday, January 17th**, 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. We will need volunteers to help, please let Diane know if you are interested. To schedule your donation, click [here](#) or at <https://www.redcrossblood.org/give.html/drive-results?zipSponsor=graceumc>

The deadline for the March/April Grace Notes Newsletter articles is February 24, 2025.

Lenten Season

The Lenten season begins on Wednesday, March 5, 2025. We will announce specific activities closer to the end of February.



Spring Bazaar 2025

Grace will be holding a Spring Bazaar on March 22, 2025, from 9 am to 3 pm (snow date is March 29th). We will have breakfast and lunch available to sell from 9 am to 2 pm. Please talk with Teresa Cutlip or Diane Wittreich if you are interested in providing food for the event. We will need volunteers to assist, a sign-up sheet will be available in February. If you would like to be a vendor, please let Diane Wittreich know and she will send you an application.



Finances At a Glance

A financial summary for 2024 will be available in early January.

BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES*

January	Date	February
	1	Leandra Hahn
Rosalie & Doug Cornwell*	2	
	3	
Michael Cutlip, David Garrett, James Reilly	4	
	5	
Joyce Owen	6	Sandra Good
Keller Cooley	7	
	8	
Alice Compton	9	
	10	
	11	Nell Lunde
	12	Lisa Higgs
	13	Myra & Steve Stewart*
	14	Mabel Frye Wetzel
	15	Diane Carper, Lisa & Charlie Higgs*
Rosalie Cornwell	16	Mary & Russ Shull*
	17	Susan Garrett
	18	Karson Rust
	19	
	20	
Landon Rust	21	
	22	Elise Paul, David Zimmerman
	23	Madison Roberts
	24	Linda Scothorn
	25	Avery Lunde
	26	Rachel Clowser
	27	
Tim Roberts	28	
Lisa Beauchamp, Joseph Lunde	29	
Mary Lock	30	
	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>