

GRACE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
100 Central Avenue
Oil City, PA 16301
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GRACE NOTES

September/October 2023

Grace United Methodist Church

100 Central Avenue

Oil City, PA 16301

Pastor: Rev. Dr. John D. Miller

Lay Pastoral Ministry: Barbara Dittman

Church Office: 814-677-3013

Church Office Hours: Mon. - Thurs. 9:00 AM - 2:30 PM

E-Mail: church@graceoilcity.org

Website: www.graceoilcity.org

Facebook: Grace United Methodist Church in Oil City

Worship Service Online: <http://www.graceoilcity.org>

Weekly Sunday Worship Service: 10:45 AM

Sunday School: 9:30 AM

*You are Invited to a
Welcome Luncheon
for
Rev. Dr. John D. Miller
and Diane Miller,
Barbara and Gary Dittman*

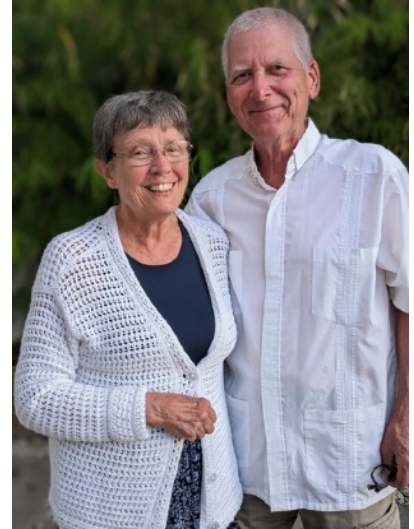
Sunday, September 17



**Welcome to Rev. Dr. John D. Miller
Newly appointed minister at Grace United
Methodist Church**

John and Diane Miller live a very busy life in Rockland following retirement from full time ministry in the WPA Conference of the United Methodist Church. Additional biographical information is available on the Grace UM website.

www.graceoilcity.org



"How has the Bible been important in your life?"

Apparently, the tradition has been that the pastor writes an inspirational lead article for the monthly Grace Notes. However, learning that the first mailing of my new ministry with you would cover two months, September & October, I paused. One article by me, two months of inspiration – impossible!

However, the title's question, "How has the Bible been important in your life," is an invitation, maybe a challenge, for you to experience your own inspiration through holy scripture. The question starts in the "past tense" intentionally because I'm convinced, that when we reflect on the past, we can learn. Without reflection on "how has the Bible been important in my life," emphasis on HOW in the past, we may miss inspiration that is hidden between the covers of our Holy Bible today.

People often struggle with how to describe the Bible. The mergers of the Methodist & Evangelical United Brethren denominations in 1968 united two foundational documents for United Methodists today, "The Articles of Religion" (Methodist) and "Confession of Faith" (EUB). The historical Methodist "Article V - Of the Sufficiency of the Holy Scripture for Salvation" begins; "The Holy Scripture containeth all things necessary to salvation...." The EUB Confession, "Article IV – The Holy Bible" starts; "We believe the Holy Bible, Old and New Testaments, reveals the Word of God so far as necessary for our salvation. It is to be received through the Holy Spirit as the true rule and guide for faith and practice...."

Throughout these historical foundational documents, we find that Holy Scripture contains what is necessary for "salvation," i.e., being healed and made whole. The Bible directs our return to the humanity created in the image and likeness of God. The "in-spired" (in-Spirited) Word reminds us that the Holy Spirit will guide our faith and practice as we use the Bible. Jesus, the Christ, was the Living Word that the first followers, disciples and apostles, experienced in the flesh. (I'm envious of their direct experience of Jesus, but I'm glad I am not in their culture, lifestyle or their struggles.)

Back to the first question: "How has the Bible been important in your life?" Expand the question. Consider not only how you answer that question from your past experience, but how you answer it this fall. ***How is the Bible important for your life now?***

Throughout September and October as you use, or return to, our Holy Scripture, how is the Holy Spirit drawing you nearer to the wholeness/salvation, God hopes for us? Be open to the Spirit's inspiration. Respond to God's invitation in daily practice. That's the gospel of our life being formed by God through the Bible. (Now, what to ponder first?)

Pastor John

What is an Engaged Member – Practically Speaking?

Worship! Grow! Serve! Connect! Give!

Practically, what would be healthy and reasonable expectations for an ENGAGED MEMBER for Grace UMC? *

Consider these EXPECTATIONS for each member:

Worship – weekly worship: corporate and/or personal

Grow – participate in a class, study, or event

Serve – in an outreach ministry – periodic or on-going

Connect – in a fellowship event or experience

Give – practice “proportional” giving, e.g., 1%, 5%, etc.

I believe Grace UMC will be stronger if each of us becomes engaged in these five commitments, at least annually. **Worship!
Grow! Serve! Connect! Give!**

*The United Methodist Church has two memberships - baptized and professing. Professing is when people “join” the local church. We used to say we’d be loyal to and faithfully participate in the church with our “prayers, presence, gifts and service.” Recently, “witness” was added. In *The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church, 2016*, ¶1217, you can find the full official expectations. Worth reading.

MINISTRY, NEEDS and POSSIBILITIES

Ministry is what the congregation, the “Body of Christ,” does together using the unique gifts God has given each of you.

Few will get done without your involvement.

Even as a part-time pastor, my imagination, hopefully inspired by the Spirit, gets excited as we start ministry together this fall.

Below are some possibilities I envision.

Weekly worship: Music, art, creativity, writing prayers. Any ways God leads you to enhance our worship of God in awe inspiring ways.

Special Worship:

Communion Sundays, e.g. different styles, serving our home bound

Seasonal:

Thanksgiving;

Advent – Christmas season;

Epiphany;

Unique/periodical:

“Blessing of the Pets” around St Francis feast

All Saints Day: remembering those “losses”, especially deaths, of past year

Blue Christmas: worship experience acknowledging the season can bring out sadness, depression, loss, isolation

Taizé, or meditative worship, with scripture, readings, song and silence (no preaching)

Hospitality and Invitation:

Invitational Events: for example, invite different interest/age groups

The “Nones” – those who identify as “spiritual”

Young/middle age adults – Does church have any ways to help you?

Topics – Dying well; spirituality of imperfection; how to communicate Bible values and stories to children as a parent/grandparent

Study a book, a theme, etc. – host and invite

Service Projects/Ideas:

Mission: What do you feel called to do, and want to present to others, to see if they have the same calling?

If any of the above or other “inspired” ideas, speak to you, contact me, or church leadership. Let us together respond to where God is leading.

Pastor John



Welcome to Barbara Dittman Lay Pastoral Ministry at Grace United Methodist Church

Also joining our pastoral team is Barbara Dittman. Barbara and her husband Gary live in Knox, PA. Barbara is the daughter of Paul and Vinnie Lehman. Barbara grew up in Grace Church and is a lay speaker for the WPA United Methodist Church. For 20 + years Barbara was a speech pathologist for Riverview IU. She has been both a leader and a participant in caring, communication, and music ministries. She feels right at home in the Grace Church sanctuary surrounding by many long time friends. She is praying to have more opportunities to work with children, teens, and adults making disciples for His Kingdom! Welcome back to Grace, Barbara and Gary Dittman!

Please join us at a luncheon to welcome John and Diane Miller and Barbara and Gary Dittman in Asbury Hall on Sunday, Sept. 17 following the worship service.

Sunday School Begins September 10 at 9:30

Adult Sunday School class will begin on Sunday, September 10 at 9:30. This class will be held in Grace Hall and will begin with praise and prayer. The class will be participating in a video study by John Ortberg entitled ***"If You Want to Walk on Water, You Have to Get Out of the Boat."***

Prayer Concerns

Our Bishop, Cynthia Moore-Koikoi.
Our District Superintendent, Rev. Deborah Ackley-Killian.
The ministry of Grace United Methodist Church.
Jim Whaley is at Sugarcreek Station for rehab.
Diane, Judy Hards' sister-in-law, who has a tumor on her spine.
Ruth Woolcock as she recovers from a broken leg.
Kate Ziegler Shaffer as she progresses through cancer treatment.
Ginny Taylor as she progresses through cancer treatment.
Bob and Ginny Taylor's daughter-in-law, Tina, diagnosed with uterine cancer.
Denny Perry who needs a kidney transplant.
Joe Womer who is recovering from hip replacement.
Jim Schott, Judy Blooms' husband, who has liver cancer.
Patty Borland on her upcoming surgery.
Blaine Beers diagnosed with cancer.



Prayer Requests

INVITATION TO A LUNCH MUNCH: Thursday, September 14th – noon to 1:00

Join me, John, (yes, the new pastor), on Thursday, September 14th for the first of a ZOOMED three-part lecture series by renowned scholar **Dr Luther E. Smith** entitled: ***“The Vision and Work of Hope.”*** Provided without charge by the WPA Conference Discipleship team, Dr Smith will challenge us to remember that “hope is more than a desire or an uplifting emotion. A deeper understanding of hope enlivens us for a faith journey inspired by God’s dream for us.”

Luther E. Smith, Jr. PhD is Professor Emeritus of Church and Community at the Candler School of Theology of Emory University. He writes, teaches, and speaks extensively on issues of church and society, interfaith cooperation, child advocacy, congregational renewal, Christian spirituality, and the thought of Howard Thurman. He is an ordained minister of the Christian Methodist Episcopal Church, cofounder of the Interfaith Children’s Movement, cofounder of the International Community School, and Coordinator for the “Pan-Methodist Campaign for Children in Poverty.” He lives in Stone Mountain, Georgia with his wife Helen Pearson Smith. Forthcoming this fall is his book, ***Hope Is Here! Spiritual Practices for Pursuing Justice and Beloved Community.***



Bring a bag lunch and drink, and join me in the church office (or someplace with a bigger screen) and let’s use this time to get introduced to each other and be inspired.

Future Zoom Sessions for a Lunch Munch:

(Plan to attend now)

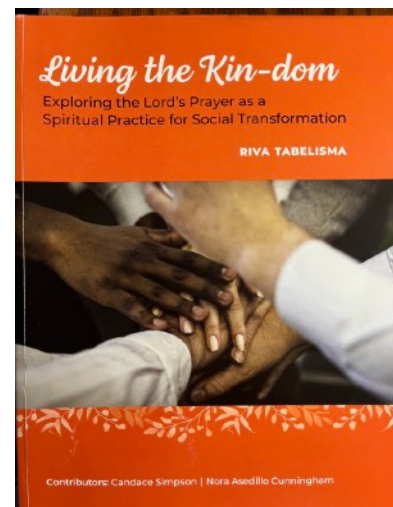
October 12: *Spiritual Practices that Prepare and Empower*

November 9: *Celebrating Community*

Luther E. Smith, Jr. PhD, Professor Emeritus at Emory University

Spiritual Growth Study

A women’s spiritual growth 8 lesson study on the **Lord’s Prayer** will be led at Grace Church by **Diane Miller** on Wednesdays at 10:30 am during September and October beginning September 13. This will be open to the community. If you would like to participate, please add your name and contact information to the group by calling the church office at 814-677-3013.



Church Calendar

Sundays, September 10, 17, 24

Sunday Worship service at 10:45
and live on line via our website and Facebook.

Adult Sunday School 9:30 am, Grace Hall.

September 13: Spiritual Growth Study,
“Living the Kin-dom” a study on
The Lord’s Prayer with Diane Miller 10:30 am.
Wednesdays through October.

September 14: Lunch Munch with John at Noon
“The Vision and Work of Hope.”
a Zoom presentation with Luther E. Smith, Jr., PhD

September 17 : Sunday Worship at 10:45 am
Sunday School at 9:30 am
Final Day for Cleaning Bucket project.
Welcome Luncheon for Dr. John Miller and
Diane Miller, Barbara Dittman and Gary
Dittman following worship. **All are invited!**

September 21: Ad Council Meeting, 7:00 pm.

Sundays, October 1, 8, 15, 22, 29:

Sunday Worship at 10:45 am
Sunday School at 9:30 am

October 12: Lunch Munch with John at Noon.
“Spiritual Practices that Prepare and Empower”

Cleaning Bucket Mission Project

For the past several weeks, Grace members and friends have been donating items to fill cleaning buckets for UMCOR Mission Barn. These items will be packed and delivered to the new Mission Barn in New Castle at the end of September. Mission Barn director Katie Peterson will be visiting Grace on November 12 to tell our church family more about how these cleaning buckets will reach those who have experienced loss from natural disasters. The need is tremendous! Thank you to all who have contributed to this mission project.

Grace Servants

September:

Counting Team: Amy Ziegler, Rhonda Cubbon

Ushering Team: Judy Guyton, Captain
Tom Peebles

Sharing Grace Ministry
Director/Graphics/Audio/Power Pt.
John McCullough, Captain
Sept. 10: Bill Lamberton, Chris Salvo,
Wesley Scheer
Sept. 17: Bill Lamberton, Rodney
Campbell, Rob Ziegler
Sept. 24: Bill Lamberton, Charlie Motter,
Wesley Scheer

Greeters: Linda Stine, Captain
Sept. 10: Gayle and Darrell Smith
Linda Stine
Sept. 17: TBD
Sept. 24: TBD

October:

Counting Team: Amy Ziegler, Rhonda Cubbon

Ushering Team: Judy Guyton, Captain
Sharing Grace Ministry

Director/Graphics/Audio/Power Pt.
John McCullough, Captain

Greeters: Linda Stine, Captain



Grace UMC: at the
"Corner of Life and Learning"

Here are my suggestions to enhance our faith as "life-long learners," aka, "disciples" of Christ.

Pastor John

Evans, Rachel Held, *Searching for Sunday: Loving, Leaving and Finding the Church*, 2015, Thomas Nelson, Inc (also in e-version/digital)

McClaren, Brian D., *Do I Stay Christian: Guide for Doubters, The Disappointed, and the Disillusioned*, 2022, St Martins Publishing Group (also in e-version/digital)

Evans, Rachel Held, *A Year of Biblical Womanhood: How a liberated woman found herself sitting on her roof, covering her head, and calling her husband 'master'*, 2012, Thomas Nelson, Inc. (also in e-version/digital)



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| Record of Our Faithfulness | 2022 | 2023 |
|---------------------------------------|-------------|-------------|
| | July | July |
| Avg Sunday School Attendance | 0 | 0 |
| Average Worship Attendance | 70 | 49 |
| Ministry/Operations Offering received | \$17,681.00 | \$21,402.00 |
| Ministry/Operations Expenses paid | \$14,724.00 | \$5,846.00 |
| Mission Offering received | \$3,295.00 | \$2,735.00 |
| Mission Expenses paid | \$0.00 | \$0.00 |

Thank you for your generosity!

Your routine giving supports the ministry of
Grace Church.

We encourage your online giving on our website:
graceoilcity.org/giving



September 2023

BIRTHDAYS and ANNIVERSARIES



OFFICE HOURS
Monday - Thursday 9:00 AM to 2:30 PM
Closed for lunch noon - 12:30 PM

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|--|---|---|---|--|--|---|
| | | | | | 1 Bob Taylor Doug/Kim Eberle | 2 Charles Benton Dave Morris Zachary* Wyatt |
| 3 Carla Wheeler Don/Sandy Hartwell Melanie Myers | 4 | 5 Gordon* Galla Claire Henderson | 6 Jay Warner | 7 Roger Baker John Jeffers Kelle Warner Jerry Young | 8 Dave Hipwell Katherine Turban Mike/Paye McKean | 9 Dede/Trish Baker |
| 10 Judy Elwinger Linda Hoffman DeAnna Mable | 11 Charlie Motter Sheryl Gibson Cynthia* Kenemath Shawn/Roberta Beightel Cecy/Jamie White | 12 | 13 Dave/Kathleen Lisco | 14 | 15 Rob Montgomery Judy Guyton Ed/Paula Pless | 16 Jim Fink Carter* Granda Elizabeth* Stoltz |
| 17 Brenda Chapin Michael Coggan Jerry/Mary Young | 18 Sydney* O'Neill Dennis/Kelly Alcorn | 19 Phillip Atkins Asta Eberle Patty Jo Gilmore Karen Greene | 20 Jason* Campbell Stephen Kelley Charles/Mary Ann Benton Justin/Debbie Westcock | 21 Diane Carroll Tage* Mable Kate Montgomery Louis Stuck Jamie* White | 22 Nicole Gougher Rhonda Morris | 23 Ron Black Mary Link |
| 24 Walber Cook Jr. Norrine Coppage Herbert/Sandy Barnes | 25 Hope* Winger | 26 Linda Brown | 27 Joe Beyer Leann McCullough Susan Munoz | 28 Thomas Berry Ethan* Lloyd Carol Shaffer | 29 Marcus/Nicole Morris Herb/DenMarsha Anderson Marcus/Nicole Morris | 30 Brook Blake Laura Saffell Autumn Zook |

October 2023

BIRTHDAYS and ANNIVERSARIES



OFFICE HOURS
Monday - Thursday 9:00 AM to 2:30 PM
Closed for lunch noon - 12:30 PM

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|---|--|--|---|--|--|--|
| 1 Herb Anderson Jakes Carethers Roy Gray Linda Zamora Jim/Amy Middleton Fred/Katherine Truhan | 2 Loraine Puleo William/Beth Ann Beller Greg/Linda Hoffman | 3 Lisa Ristau | 4 Jane Britton Kayle Kish Tom/Penny Lehnert Aaron/Sarah Sells | 5 Gisela Campos Joyce Jeppesen | 6 Loretta Beary John/Leann McCallough | 7 Mark/Jamie Kriewood |
| 8 Sean/Brenda Harck Ken/Galla Vogan | 9 Shannon Wyatt Jim/Nora Heber | 10 Marsha Anderson | 11 Mike/Jamie Rybak | 12 Shawn Jones | 13 Manda Bush Roberta Edwards Betty Kahle Lucy/Tracy Shaffer | 14 R. J. Lehman Jr. Lee Mehlburger |
| 15 | 16 Sarah Sells Ed/Maggie Rogers | 17 David Telfer Lucas/Lauren Sultz | 18 Mike Campbell | 19 Stairley Baughman Mason Myers Loren/Amy McCarthy Steve/Kim Scheer Charlie/Amy Scow | 20 Richard Byham Bill Harry Jason/Jodie Taft | 21 Chad Beck Curt Nagel Cindy Zerbe |
| 22 Mark Kulling Taylor Swedson Chad/Gail Beck | 23 Gail Mauro John/Karen Greene | 24 Jacob Middleton | 25 Rick Moyer Jr. Alexis Ziegler Tom/Anita Eberle | 26 Eunni Knox Sal Knox | 27 Dale Bennett John Downing Maggie Rogers Mark/Gail Mauro | 28 Judy Bloom Deborah Welch |
| 29 Randa Bridge Bob/Kate Montgomery | 30 Judith Harbo Dave Lantz Marli/Hanna Lepley | | | | | |