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GRACE COVENANT
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH



January 2020 — Volume 63, Issue 1

A Fresh Start

A new year offers opportunities to make a fresh start. It's a time of new beginnings and new possibilities. A chance to do new things in new ways.

Many people begin the new year resolved to make their lives healthier—to eat better, exercise regularly, catch up on sleep, come to worship more often. Others set goals for living the life they've always wanted—making time to be with family and friends, going to new places or trying something creative. For some, it's letting go of things—like bad habits, dead-end jobs, and unhealthy relationships—to make room and energy and excitement for doing the things we want. The new year offers Grace Covenant a wide-range of possibilities. An interim isn't just about searching for a new pastor, it's about figuring out who we are as a congregation.

Over the next several months, there will be opportunities to weigh in on what you want the future of Grace Covenant to look like. Session will be hosting a series of Mission Study Focus Groups at different times to involve as many people as want in the conversation. We will also gather information about the community which is changing rapidly along with the church. And to assist the Pastor Nominating Committee once the search begins, everyone will be invited to complete a short survey on the characteristics and leadership traits the congregation would like to see in the next pastor.

Mission Study

Survey:

Want to be able to have a say about pastoral characteristics and leadership traits of the next pastor at Grace Covenant? Well, you can

beginning January 1, 2020.

Go to <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/KW355XL> to take a short on-line survey. . Or send an email request to the church office to have the survey link emailed directly to you. Need assistance getting on-line or don't have a computer? Call the church office and we will arrange for you to take the survey at the church. Assistance will be available on Sundays and throughout the week.

The survey consists of just ten questions and should take less than 10-15 minutes to complete. All who have an interest in the future mission and ministry of Grace Covenant are invited to take the survey. You don't have to be a member. Everyone in your family is invited to take the survey separately. The survey will remain open through January 31.

Focus Groups:

Before you fill up your 2020 calendar, set aside a Sunday afternoon or Wednesday evening (between January 26 and February 26) to attend a Mission Study Focus Group. Watch the bulletin for more information about locations, host elders and topics.



Looking Ahead

January

5 - Installation and Ordination of
New Officers

26 - Congregational Meeting

February

9 - Youth Sunday

23 - Scout Sunday

26 - Ash Wednesday



Thanks to all who celebrated my retirement on Sunday, December 8th. It is so nice to be recognized by people that I consider both my friends and family. I am truly grateful for the cards, golf balls and gifts.

With much gratitude!

Joe Waddell



To my wonderful Church family, Thank you!...for your love and care...for your support both personally and professionally...for allowing me to walk with you through your celebrations and challenges.

No words can express how much this church family means to me. You have been a blessing to me and I give thanks to God for His direction that led me to Grace Covenant and that he opened the door for me to be His servant in the life and ministry of this special church family. I treasure each and every memory as I treasure each of you. Again, thank you! I will continue to keep Grace Covenant and each of you in my thoughts and prayers as you move forward to bigger and better ways to serve.

Blessings,

Candy

Fourth Thursday Returns

On January 23, 2020, the Fourth Thursday at the Garden returns after a holiday break. Join with family and friends at the Olive Garden Restaurant on East Colonial at 6:30 pm for good food and fantastic fellowship with one another. No agenda...just a time to relax and be together.

Christmas Alternative Giving Report

A special thank you to those who chose to give "gifts that keep on giving" to those on your Christmas List this year. Because of your generosity, we are sending checks for over \$3400 to the different highlighted organizations to help them continue in their ministry. What a blessing to be able to be a support and to help others. Again, thank you.

We extend our Christian love and sympathy to

Syd Hooks and family whose wife, Jean, died
November 27, 2019.

Mike Mascaro and family on the passing of Mike's
brother, Francis Joseph Mascaro, November 28, 2019.

Jo Blair and family whose husband, Dwight, died
December 5, 2019.

Wilma Beekman and family whose husband, Dick,
died December 9, 2019.

The family and friends of Harvey Oster, III who
died on December 15, 2019. A memorial service
will be held at 2 PM on Friday, January 3, 2020 at
Grace Covenant.

Ruth Circle:

Ruth circle concluded 2019 with a wonderful holiday luncheon at which time a collection of children's toys were donated to Servant's Heart. Chip Hanna  director of Servant's Heart was a guest at the luncheon and we were all happy to be able to present him with the toys for the children his organization serves.

We look forward to 2020 when we will continue our study of the Ten Commandments under the direction of the wonderful Winnie Rutherford.

All are welcome to join us in the new year as we pursue the study of the Bible and continue to serve those in our community

Barbra Hart

Lynne Knorr

Mariah Polak

Mike Mascaro



New Officers

New elders and deacons will be ordained and installed on Sunday, January 5 at both worship services. Four new elders (Laurie Feddon, Tom Kelly, Sally Kest, and John Tracy) and four new deacons (Jane Barry, Carolyn Castagno, Minnette Mullings, and Mary Widick) answered the call to serve and have been trained and examined by Session. They are an energetic group with a variety of gifts and talents to serve the church. Pray for and support these fellow church members as they step up to lead Grace Covenant.

New Committees

You don't have to be a new officer to serve the church during 2020. We're looking for volunteers to bring new vision, energy and excitement to the ministries of the church by serving on all of the standing committees. There are opportunities of varying levels of commitment on different days and times to accommodate every schedule. Be praying about how you can serve during this important time in the life of the church. Contact the Elder Liaison, Committee Chair or Pastor Melanie.

We're hiring!

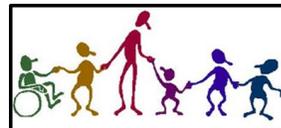
We are looking for a couple of highly motivated, enthusiastic, and out-going persons to be our next Children's Ministry Director and Facilities Manager. Contact Jim Malcolm, Personnel Committee Chairperson, or the church office at churchoffice@grace.to for more information about how you, or someone you know, can become a part of the Grace Covenant staff family. Thank You!

Come Meet Our Mission Partners from Haiti!

The Outreach Committee is hosting a pot luck dinner at 6:30 PM on Monday January 6 to meet Charlie and Mary Scott, founders of the Good Shepherd School, and Chedrick Caneus and others from the school. Chedrick, the school Director, is the son of Pastor Tito Caneus, the school's co-founder, and is also the director of Young Life Haiti. This is a great

opportunity to hear first-hand how our donations are being used to help children in Haiti. Contact Trudy Phelps to help by bringing a covered dish and call the church office to sign up to attend.

Improving Relationships



The Earl Tyson Sunday school class will be studying Peter and Geri Scazzero's Emotionally Healthy Relationships course starting January 5th, Smith Hall, Room 3, 9:30 a.m. This is a spiritually and psychologically sound program designed to give participants "the skills that are foundational for building healthy churches... workplaces, families, schools, and neighborhoods, where our love for one another is so distinct that the world will know Jesus is truly alive today." This is an eight to twelve-session DVD course, depending on interest. Participants will be supplied with a course textbook and a Day by Day devotional. Newcomers to the class are welcome. Please contact Herschel Hughes, Jr. or Marian Bauer so we can order the correct number of materials. We can all do better in our relationships, lets explore together how we can do that and demonstrate God's grace a little better.

ROOTED Student Ministry Schedule

January

- 2-5 College Montreat Conference
- 5 Rooted Youth Group at 5:15 p.m.
- 12 Rooted Youth Group at 5:15 p.m.
- 18 Give Kids the World
- 19 Give Kids the World
- 20 Equine Angels
- 25-26 Rock the Universe and Lock-In

Please submit articles to churchoffice@grace.to by January 15th.

January 2020



**GRACE COVENANT
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**

Rev. Melanie Ruta
Interim Pastor

Sunday Worship
8:30 & 10:45 a.m.

Office Hours

Monday–Thursday: 8:30 a.m.–3 p.m.
Friday: 8:30 a.m.–noon

1655 Peel Ave., Orlando, FL 32806
Phone: 407.898.6571
E-mail: churchoffice@grace.to
WWW.GRACE.TO

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To:

Grace Covenant Weekly

Coming in 2020

We are launching a weekly on-line news service for the congregation called Grace Covenant Weekly. Grace Covenant Weekly will provide a short preview of the coming week's events delivered to your email inbox. One of the things we hear most often in the church office is that news doesn't get out quickly enough sometimes to those who missed the Sunday bulletin or who aren't on Facebook. Grace Covenant Weekly will be a way for us to get connected and stay up to date.



Grace Covenant Weekly will supplement, not replace Grace Notes which will continue to be sent to you every month.

Want to receive Grace Covenant Weekly? Let Pastor Melanie know you want to subscribe and give her the email address to which you want your weekly updates sent. You can email her at GraceCovenantOrlando@gmail.com. Don't want to receive Grace Covenant Weekly? No problem. We won't sign you up without your permission..