



## Counting our Blessings

November is traditionally the month for giving thanks. We give thanks here in Florida for relief from the heat after six or more months of summer. We give thanks in our families for the opportunity to gather for the holidays—even if some of those gatherings will be virtual this year. And we give thanks at Grace Covenant for the many ways in which God has blessed us as a congregation.

In the past, we might have taken Sunday worship and our various ministries and church events for granted. Not anymore! We're grateful just to be able to worship, to pray for one another, to serve and support others in the community, and to continue to share the timeless truth of the gospel in a world undergoing breathtaking, even bewildering change. We're grateful for the faith that has sustained us through the past seven months; and we're grateful for the faith that will guide us in the months to come.

We've been able to continue so many of our ministries uninterrupted because of the faithfulness of the members of this faith community. For everyone's generosity and creativity and energy and patience when things that used to be obvious and easy aren't any more. We're grateful that despite everything, we are still able to plan and prepare for a new pastor to be called to join us for the journey.

As we look to the future, we do so with gratitude. For all that we are, for all that we have, and for all that is to come, we give our thanks to God.

Counting it all joy.



### Looking Ahead Events May Be Postponed or Moved Online

#### November

- 1 - Youth - All Saints' Fun Night
- 4 - Wednesday at Grace
- 8 - Annual Congregational Picnic
- 11 - Wednesday at Grace
- 18 - Wednesday at Grace
- 22 - Chili Cook Off
- Hanging of the Greens
- 26 - Thanksgiving Dinner
- 26, 27 - Office Closed

#### December

- 2 - Wednesday at Grace
- 9 - Wednesday at Grace - Blue Christmas
- 13 - Christmas Pageant
- 16 - Wednesday at Grace
- 20 - Lessons and Carols
- 24 - Christmas Eve Service Online
- Christmas Eve Candlelight Outside

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### **Thank You**

Many thanks to Rob Cumbus, Susie Findell, Londra Mead, Frank Quiett, Susan Smith, Pat Teal, Donna Throneburg and Tracy Umpierre who volunteered to prepare "To Go" boxes at Daily Bread on October 8th and 9th. Over 200 people were served a meal each day!

### **Cooking With Grace**

Something new is coming your way in November. It's Cooking With Grace, a once a month Zoom cooking group. Our first Zoom gathering will be on Monday, November 16 at 6:00 PM. Those who sign up will receive a list of ingredients and steps to get them ready ahead of time and the Zoom link to join in. Then at 5:55 PM on November 16, you can join in via Zoom. We will begin promptly at 6:00 preparing a delicious meal for our families, or individuals, together. When we finish our cooking session you can sit down with your family (or others online) and enjoy the meal you prepared. Carolyn Castagno will lead the first month with a delicious chicken dish and sides. Sarah Lein will lead in preparing multiple appetizers for the holidays during our December gathering. Anyone who wishes to share with the group can sign up for a specific month to share your dish or you can join in the fun and learn to make new dishes with friends.

To sign up, email Carolyn Castagno at [carolyn@findingnewjoys.com](mailto:carolyn@findingnewjoys.com)  
Can't wait to get cooking!

**Come SHINE  
with us!**



Are you searching for safe activities for your Kindergarten through Fifth Grader? Has your child always wanted to take an acting or improv class? How about beginning watercolor art? Starting January 2021, we will be offering these and many other enrichment opportunities for children ages Kindergarten through fifth grade. Check out the next issue of Grace Notes for a complete listing of opportunities and get ready to register your child. Space is limited and masks required.

### **Ruth Circle**

Ruth Circle meets the 2nd Monday of each month at 10 AM in Conway Hall where we can social distance and wear masks. With the use of two mics, everyone can be heard.

Winnie Rutherford continues to lead us in our wonderful study of *Joshua - A Journey of Faith*.

Ruth Circle continues to support Servant's Heart, an organization that feeds over 200 families a week. We are still involved in supplying diapers. Their turkey drive helps give families holiday food. The members of circle contribute \$10 Publix gift cards which allow families to buy food as some do not have the equipment to cook a turkey.

If you get a flu shot at Publix and get a gift card, think about passing it forward to Servant's Heart. We will make our final donation November 14th.

Gift cards can be brought to the church office or given to me (Barbara Hart) in church just labeled for Servant's Heart.

All are welcome to join us at Ruth Circle.

Blessings to all, Barbara Hart

### **Baptism**

October 4, 2020

Isaac Thomas Fulbright, son of Thomas and Kathleen and brother of Nora and Olivia.

### **Birth**

Harper Noelle Lee was born October 2, 2020.

She is the daughter of Rob and Sarah Lee, the sister of Elliot and the granddaughter of David and Rhonda Edmiston

### **In Sympathy**

We extend our Christian love and sympathy to the family and friends of Anne Bohannon.

### **Change of Address**

Maggie Thomas

Lynne Knorr

Nathaniel Lalla

### ***ROOTED Youth Turkey Drive***

We will be taking cash/check donations at the end of each service on Nov. 1<sup>st</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> for our annual Turkey Drive!! If you can't make it to church, you can either mail it or drop it off. Please **clearly** mark for Turkey Drive. The monies donated will be turned into gift cards, then given to the Dover Shores Elementary School PTA so they can hand out the gift cards, or buy turkeys for needy families in their district. Thank you in advance for your generosity!

### ***Chili Cook-Off***

### ***Christmas Cookie Bake-Off***

### ***Hanging of the Greens***

We have a **NEW** date for our *Chili Cook-Off/Christmas Cookie Bake-Off* after the 10:45am service on Nov. 22<sup>nd</sup> held in the courtyard outside Conway Hall. There is a \$5 donation to sample all entrees. Prizes awarded so if you're interested in cooking/baking, please contact Mike at: mike@grace.to

After sampling food and voting on the best chef, come to the Sanctuary to help decorate the church for Christmas!

### ***Family Promise***

Volunteers are needed to provide supper for Family Promise the week of November 15-21. Contact Diana Ibarra for details.

### ***Anne Hallum of AIR Guatemala***

### **Special ZOOM Presentation**

Thursday, November 19, 7:00

As one of the five ministries we support through our PCUSA Five Cents a Meal special offering, we have a long and important connection with AIR Guatemala and founder, Anne Hallum. An acronym for Alliance for International Reforestation, AIR is planting thousands of life-giving trees on the mountainsides of Guatemala. Without AIR, those mountain forests are decimated, allowing for devastating mud slides that make the land uninhabitable. With AIR's strategic assistance, village after village is assured that their crops have cover. They are also building fuel-efficient stoves which use only a fraction of the wood previously needed for cooking and eliminate carcinogenic smoke. AIR educates school children of the necessity

of forest preservation, and works hard with the villagers to help them become self-sustaining in their efforts to produce bountiful crops. Learn about how AIR is making a huge difference in the lives of the indigenous Mayan villagers.

Sponsored by our Outreach Committee, we will also be joined by other churches, so plan to sign up early for our special ZOOM presentation to be held on Thursday, November 19<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 PM. Special instructions will be available if you are new to the ZOOM platform. Please call the church office by Tuesday, November 17<sup>th</sup> to receive the code you need to get you into this special virtual presentation.

### ***Turkey Time is Thornwell Time!***

Each November, Grace Covenant receives a special offering to support Thornwell. Begun as an orphanage in Clinton, S.C., in 1875, today Thornwell provides services to children and families in South Carolina, Georgia and Florida. Programs include residential care, foster care, support services for families and teen moms and other programs. The pandemic may have changed some of the ways services are delivered, but the work continues. There are also free, downloadable resources for all parents helping children navigate the pandemic at their website, [thornwell.org](http://thornwell.org). The offering will be received any time during the first three weeks of November. It's easy to give: leave your donation in the offering box if you are worshiping in person, mail a check to the church office with your tithe, or donate on-line. Thank you!

### ***ROOTED Youth Group News***

**ROOTED** in November meets on the 1st, 8<sup>th</sup>, and 15<sup>th</sup> from 5:15pm-7pm. We'll have awesome turkey-lurkey-dap dinners, games, music, prayers, announcements, and a lesson. Bring your friendz!!!

Those needing [community service hours](#) can help at the Chili Cook-Off/Christmas Cookie Bake-Off from 10:45am-1pm, and/or stay afterwards for the Hanging of the Greens in the Sanctuary. Contact Mike for more information.

For more details on our events and other news, friend us on Facebook: Grace Covenant PC Youth, and on Instagram: @rootedgpcp

## *Wednesday's at Grace*

Wednesday, November 11, 2020

6:45pm – 7:30pm

Outside in the Courtyard

Wear your Red, White & Blue and join us at Wednesday's at GRACE to honor those that served in our military!

### ***Enjoy Reading***

Grace Covenant's library books are still available for checkout. They are just in new locations.

Fiction books are located in the Earl Tyson room in Smith Hall.

Theology, Religion, Book Club, Research and Reference books are in the Conference Room across from the office.

Children's books are in the Children's Library, Room 13, upstairs in Smith Hall.

Here's to some good browsing and reading! Enjoy!

### ***Calendar Sale 2021***

ROOTED Youth Group will have their annual calendars for sale starting in December after church services. There is no need to pre-order, and the cost remains \$10. If you are unable to attend worship, you can mail or drop off your money along with your address and we'll deliver it to your house!

### ***Pecans and Stockings***

Due to the pandemic, the Presbyterian Women's Council will not be selling pecans or participate in the Salvation Army Stocking program. There are frozen regular and chocolate pecans still available, just call Jo Blair. The Outreach Committee will send a donation to Salvation Army.

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Please submit articles to  
churchoffice@grace.to

**Next Deadline - November 10**

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## **November**

Please contact the church office  
if you would like a copy of the  
birthday and anniversary list.



## **Session Summary**

October 2020

New elders and deacons, having been trained last month, were examined by Session. Installation and ordination is scheduled for the second Sunday in January.

The Pastor Nominating Committee has been trained and begins its work with an organizational meeting on October 20.

Session received a draft of the Mission Study Report which will be supplied to the PNC for its use in completing the Ministry Information Form (online church profile.) The Mission Study Report includes the results of the surveys and focus group discussions regarding the congregation's preferences about pastoral characteristics and skills.

Reports were received from Christian Education, Outreach, Worship and Youth regarding programs and event schedules through the end of the year. Reports were also received from the Small Blessings Board and Foundation.

Finance and Stewardship gave an update on the Stewardship 2021 budget process. Thanks to the faithful giving of members and the efforts of Session and staff to hold expenses down the finances of the church remain steady.

Session removed Anne Bohannon, who passed recently, from the membership rolls. Also removed were ten members who have not been active in the life of the church for a number of years.

### ***Christmas is Coming!***

This year many of our Christmas benevolent traditions have to be modified because of the pandemic. The Outreach Committee thought long and hard about how we can create some Christmas cheer while still staying safe. So, we won't be doing some of the things we usually do, like collecting donations of food, toys etc.

 We DO plan to make up gift bags for the clients at Share The Care, but instead of church members taking home a bag to fill, we are asking for donations at \$20 per bag (40 bags needed). The committee will buy the items and fill the bags. Donations are requested by December 6.

Instead of the usual Christmas Alternatives program, we are accepting donations to purchase items from the Presbyterian Giving Catalog (<https://presbyteriangifts.pcusa.org/gifts/>) such as chickens, goats, etc. For example, a family of chickens costs \$25 and a family of goats \$178. Training for their care is provided. The Presbyterian Giving Catalog is filled with gifts that exemplify the work prayerfully carried out by ministries of Presbyterian Mission. Every gift has the power to fulfill a need, change a life and foster hope and faith. Collectively, we are making a difference. Various groups of young people in the church will decide exactly which items to buy. Donations can be made all through November and December. Of course, if you are led to make a donation to any of the organizations that were included in Christmas Alternatives in the past, please do that.

Donations for the gift bags and for Presbyterian Gifts can be made online or added to your offering check, just note the amount for a particular project. Thank you!

Maybe one good thing about the pandemic is that it will make us "be still" and eliminate some of the busyness that often distracts us from the REAL point of Advent and Christmas.

### ***Zoom Prayer***

I would like to thank the Prayer warriors for the continued prayers. In a time like this we need to stay connected especially in prayers. Pastor Karen Estes has a prayer group that meets on Mondays at 10:00 am on Zoom. If you would like to pray with the group, call the church office or Pastor Karen for details. You can also be included on the email prayer chain. Just call or email the church office. It is so rewarding to pray for each other.  
Minnette Mullings

### ***Book Club***

4th Tuesdays                      7 PM                      Meets by Zoom  
We'd love to have you join us for informal discussion and fellowship! Contact Jane Heppner.  
November 24: ***Fierce Compassion: The Life of Abolitionist Donaldina Cameron*** by Kathryn Wong and Kristin Wong.

**November 2020**



**GRACE COVENANT  
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**

**Sunday Worship**  
8:45 & 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](mailto:churchoffice@grace.to)

**WWW.GRACE.TO**

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To:

## *Annual Church "Take - Out" Picnic*

Sunday, November 8<sup>th</sup>  
After both church services  
Outside in the Courtyard

2020 has been a very different year! Which calls for a very different kind of church picnic. This year the Fellowship and Outreach Committees are combining efforts to host a "take-out" annual picnic which is ALSO an outreach of the church.

Here's how it will work: Gift cards to local restaurants and goodies from local businesses have been purchased for you. On Nov. 8, come to the Courtyard to enjoy the refreshments and pick up

a gift card. If you're worshipping online, no problem, gift cards will also be available for drive-thru pick up in the Sanctuary circle. Everyone will be wearing masks and maintaining social distance.

Use the gift card at the restaurant for your "take out" meal. Tell the wait staff about our "take-out" picnic and that the church supports their restaurant during this time. Feel free to pay the free meal forward by leaving a big tip.

Please continue to support the work of the church by mailing your tithes and offerings to the church or by making a donation through the church website. Go to the "Online Giving" page at [www.grace.to](http://www.grace.to) and click on the "Give Now" button.