

# G R



# C E

notes

GRACE COVENANT  
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH



November 2019 — Volume 64, Issue 10

## Blessed to Be a Blessing

Thanksgiving Day is set aside as a day of rest to reflect on the many ways in which we are blessed in our lives. We give thanks at gatherings of family and friends that traditionally include food and football games. As in past years, Grace Covenant will be gathering as a family of faith on Thanksgiving Day at a traditional meal of turkey and fixings to give our thanks to God for the many blessings in our lives. We may even toss a football around.

Of course, Thanksgiving Day isn't the only day that we are called to gratitude. We give thanks every day as individuals and every Sunday as a congregation for the many ways in which God has blessed us to be a blessing to others. Grace Covenant will be gathering as the body of Christ at our Annual Church Picnic on Sunday, Nov. 10, to give thanks and to celebrate those who serve our church, community and nation.

Over the next two months the church will also be setting aside time to celebrate Commissioned Lay Pastor Candy Vander Weide and Facilities Director Joe Waddell. Both have announced their retirement effective December 31. Plans are underway for receptions in December; but all are invited to

thank Candy and Joe now for their long-time faithful service to the church in ways that far exceed their job descriptions. They will be sorely missed on staff but never missing from our hearts and prayers.



### Looking Ahead

#### November

- 3 - Christmas Alternatives
- 10 - Annual Picnic
- 28 - Thanksgiving Dinner
- 29 - Hanging of the Greens
- 30 - Parents Christmas Shopping Day Out

#### December

- 1, 8, 15, 22 - Caroling on the Lawn at Grace
- 8 - Holiday Brunch
- 8 - Making Memories
- 15 - Christmas Caroling at Care Centers
- 15 - Blue Christmas Worship Service
- 18 - Reindeer Games
- 24 - Christmas Eve Candlelight Services

#### January

- 5 - Installation and Ordination of  
New Officers
- 26 - Congregational Meeting



Many thanks to all those who helped pack food for the Bahamas! Ten thousand meals were prepared in just one morning!



Donations for shirts for Eccleston Elementary School totaled \$1043.00! Thank you for your generosity!



Dear Friends;

In recent weeks, when surgery became my limiting factor, an amazing thing happened. The mailman on my route was walking much slower than usual when he came to my house, and he could hardly stand up straight. He had so many cards, notes and other messages from my friends and associates that he could barely manage them all. Is this an exaggeration? - only slightly - as it took him quite a while to get them all out of his bag each day, and into my mailbox each time he came. And this happened more than once, because I received so many cards, notes, and other good wishes that it was a struggle for him for many days.

The cards were bright colors, cheerful, and had encouraging messages. They helped me keep my smile while I worked to get better each day. Phone calls, visits, favors done to help me, and even food, were part of the many efforts made, and each was special, and appreciated more than words can say. I appreciate and will long remember all of them with lasting appreciation in my heart. Many came from my church friends, as well as from other friends.

Additionally, help with my transportation needs was often requested, and that, too, was offered willingly and frequently. Friends who step forward and help so willingly are real gems, to be cherished forever. From the bottom of my heart, many thanks to each of you, until I can do more to help you in the future.

Lynne Knorr



*We extend our Christian love and sympathy to*

Mike Parks and family whose mother, Betty Parks, passed away on September 25, 2019.

Glenn and Mary Widick and family whose daughter, Catherine, passed away on September 25, 2019.

Debbie and Gary Munson and family.  
Debbie's mother, Zenta Goss, passed away on October 17, 2019.

### **Baptism**

Daniel Scott Vander Weide was baptized on September 8, 2019.

He is the son of Scott and Janet Vander Weide, brother of Jacob, Noah, Micah, Hannah, Sarah, and grandson of Candy Vander Weide.



### **Grace Prayer Focus**

The Care committee invites you to pray with them each week for businesses in our community.

- 10/20 A Dramatic Change Hair & Nail Salon
- 11/3 La Fiesta Mexican Restaurant
- 11/17 Gametime Barber Shop
- 12/1 F&D Woodfired Italian Kitchen

Send Grace Notes items to  
churchoffice@grace.to

Please submit articles for  
**the December issue by November 8th.**

### **Inside this issue:**

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## TURKEY DRIVE

Students from the Youth and Family Department will be accepting cash and check donations on Sundays, November 3 and 10 for their annual turkey drive..

## ANNUAL TURKEY DRIVE FILLS NEEDS

Greetings to my Grace Covenant family,

As I meditated and thought about the gift of giving, you all came to mind. A year ago, I spoke in your church about our homeless students and families in our school and in our community. I also mentioned that one student out of every five goes to bed hungry, and of how we send thousands of dollars out to different countries, and do not realize that hunger and poverty is all around us. I personally can attest to that, not because I see it every day, but because I am a product of poverty. I believe that when we all come together with one purpose, we can accomplish a world of good. When we give, it gives us a sense of joy and satisfaction that we are really helping someone and empowering them to the importance of generosity.

Your donations have put many smiles not only on our children but also on their parents. There are no words to express the gratitude that I personally feel when you open your hearts to donate to my school and our families that are in need. Your Turkey Drive has been a success in helping put a meal on a table that otherwise would not have been able to. Remember this: Whoever sows generously will also reap generously. God loves a cheerful giver.

Thank you from the bottom of my heart for all the you do for our students and families here at Dover Shores Elementary School.

Carmen Velazquez  
Registrar/Homeless Liaison  
Dover Shores Elementary School



## Ruth Circle

At our October meeting Chip Hanna presented an update on Servant's Heart , our community service project. We all appreciated his comments and welcome the opportunity to support this worthy organization which includes feeding families and the elderly in need while helping to give them a hand up.

Our November meeting will be at 10 AM on the 11th . We will continue our excellent study of the Ten Commandments led by Winnie Rutherford. See you then - Barbara Hart

## Grace Notes

### Holiday Deadline

November 8

December 8



## Support GRACE when holiday shopping online!

When you make a purchase on Amazon, go to <https://smile.amazon.com/> and you can designate GCPC as the non-profit group you choose to support.

**amazon**smile

## Annual Alternative Christmas Celebration

Sunday, November 3rd Conway Hall

9:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

This annual event provides an opportunity for you to choose gifts that will not remain hidden in the bottom drawer or on the top shelf of a closet, but instead will be a gift that will keep on giving. The celebration will provide information and opportunity to select ways to complete your gift list by giving a gift in the name of one you love. You will be given a gift card to send to the person you have gifted in this way.

Plan to spend some time in Conway Hall on that day and see the displays and learn more about some very special ministries that the Grace Covenant family supports. You can choose your gifts that day, or take home an informational booklet to study, decide on the “gifts” you’d like to purchase, and return your order to the church any time before Christmas.

Boxes and instructions for Operation Christmas Child and bags to fill for the Share the Care residents will also be available on that day. Christmas Child Boxes are due back by November 10 and the bags for Share the Care are due back by December 1.

### Family Fun Nite

## ANNUAL THANKFUL SOUP NITE

Tuesday, November 19

Conway Hall 6:29 pm

In November, we do something a little different. This is our annual Soup Nite. For this month only, instead of a covered dish, bring a vegetable, (canned, frozen or fresh) to add to our soup stock. By each one adding a little, working together, we will share a delicious, bountiful soup together. Drinks, bread, crackers and dessert will be provided. Join us for this time of thanksgiving.

### Fourth Thursday at the Garden

There will *not* be a Fourth Thursday at the Garden in November due to the Thanksgiving Holiday.

## Cookie Sunday

On the fourth Sunday of each month we accept donations from the congregation. These cookies are served at the hospitality time after the second worship service each week. Thank you for all your contributions

## You Are Invited to Thanksgiving Dinner

Thursday, November 28

Noon

Conway Hall

You are invited to celebrate this holiday with friends and family. Turkey, ham, rolls and drinks are provided. Please bring a traditional covered dish to share (potatoes, salad, vegetable or dessert).

Come with your family, or a friend, or just bring yourself, but plan to join in fellowship for this holiday meal.

Let us know if you are coming...and how many to expect...so we can plan. Fill out the bulletin insert or call the church office at 407-898-6571, or e-mail [candy@grace.to](mailto:candy@grace.to).

## Hangin' of the Greens

Friday, November 29

Crafts at 5 p.m.

Dinner at 6 p. m.

Conway Hall

Decorating service in the Sanctuary at 7 p.m.

Come take a break from turkey leftovers and have chili and hot dogs as you start your Advent season in a special way. Make some crafts to take home and some to use in decorating the sanctuary. During the service, learn of the traditions and meanings of the decorations we use each year. Enjoy friendship and fellowship and fun! Each family is requested to bring a pair of socks as a gift to be given to someone in need.





### 3<sup>rd</sup> Graders Receive Bibles

On Sunday, October 27, the third grade students in our Church family received a Bible as a gift from the Church. The students received their Bible and were treated to a time of refreshments.

The third grade students in our church family are:  
 Adrianna Alchin, Kaitlyn Demarco,  
 Memphis Osborne, Kirk Pesquira  
 and Caroline Ward.

### Caroling on the Lawn

Sundays

December 1, 8, 15 and 22

5:00 pm

Gather around the outdoor Advent Wreath on the front lawn of the Church for a short devotional, carol singing and some



light refreshments of the season. If you would like to bring an instrument and accompany the carol singing or would be willing to help with the refreshments, please email [candy@grace.to](mailto:candy@grace.to) We have invited our neighbors to join us. Come and welcome them and spend time with others for this brief time to focus on the reason for the season.

## ROOTED Student Ministry Schedule

### November

- 3** Rooted Youth Group - 5:15pm-7pm  
We'll have awesome dinners, games, music, prayers, announcements, and a lesson. Bring your friendz!!!
- 10** Rooted Youth Group - 5:15pm-7pm  
We'll have awesome dinners, games, music, prayers, announcements, and a lesson. Bring your friendz!!!
- 17** Rooted Youth Group - 5:15pm-7pm  
We'll have awesome dinners, games, music, prayers, announcements, and a lesson. Bring your friendz!!!

**30 Parents Christmas Shopping Day Out**  
 November 30 from 10 AM - 2 PM.  
 Youth room and the gym.  
 Students need to arrive by 9:45 AM



**Sunday School** meets every Sunday in the Youth Room with FREE, yessiree Bob, FREE donuts, juice, and Jesus!!! Sunday School runs 9:30-10:30 a.m. We also feature a monthly Walk to Wawa.

For more details on our events and other news....  
**you can friend us on Facebook at: Grace Covenant PC Youth,**  
**and on Instagram at: rootedgcpc.**

## Welcome New Members!



The church recently welcomed several new members.

Betty Robinson has been worshipping at Grace for some time as a former member of Orlando Presbyterian. She is a long-time resident of Central Florida and active church and community member. Judy Gore is new to both the church and Central Florida, having recently re-located from South Florida. She looks forward to getting involved at Grace Covenant and her new community. Mike Parks is renewing his membership after worshipping at Grace with family in recent years. We are glad to welcome him home again.

## READ! READ! READ!

Grace Covenant has an INVITING library of various titles on the first floor of Smith Hall. It is open on Sundays from 9 AM - 12:30 PM. Books are asking you to come in , browse and check them out. HOWEVER, please return your books in a timely fashion to the basket on the floor by the door. Others may want to read the same books.

Children's books are in the library and on the rack in the hall by the nursery. A basket on the hall rack holds the check out cards. Please return the children's books in a timely fashion, also. In returning children's books, cross out the name, place the check out card back in the book and return it to the rack. Books may also be returned to the church office. Happy Reading!

## Thornwell

The Thornwell offering will be received Sunday, November 24th. Founded as a Presbyterian ministry in 1875, Thornwell provides innovative and effective solutions to help children and families in need. They provide Christian love and support to hundreds of children and families at 20 locations throughout Florida, Georgia and South Carolina. Their mission involves a complete continuum of care that enables Thornwell to fully support the child and the family wherever they are in their journey to wholeness and healing. With over 140 professionals on staff, Thornwell is committed to continuing our ministry to meet the growing need. In 2018, 3,179 children and families were served. Eighty-two cents of every dollar given to Thornwell goes directly to programs for children and families. All of the great things happening at Thornwell are because of YOU! They count on people like YOU to help provide the best quality of care and support. Their 144 year history of faithful stewardship, coupled with Charity Navigator's highest Four Star rating, is your assurance they use your gifts wisely to serve children and families.

## Food and Toys

The Holidays are just around the corner! As is our custom, we will be collecting extra food to take to our adopted schools, Eccleston and Dover Shores before Thanksgiving. Please bring non-perishable food to the church by Sunday, November 17.

Also, Eccleston is in need of new, unwrapped toys for their "Breakfast with Santa" party. The toys can be donated through Sunday, December 1.

Thank you for your generosity!

## Small Blessings Child Care

What a fun month for SBCC! Everyone has settled in with teachers and friends. Pumpkin Parties will be happening on Halloween, Oct 31. The VPK four year old classes will show their costumes off for Share the Care as they parade through the facility.

SBCC board needs one more Grace member. The board meets six times per year. Please pray and consider being a Board Member. Talk with "M" Waddell if you want to join us!



## *Session Summary*

Stated Session Meeting,  
October 17, 2019



Session took up a provisional budget proposal from Finance for consideration. The budget discussion will continue at the next Session meeting in November after additional pledges from the stewardship campaign have been received. Pledges for the 2020 church year are running consistent with the past two years—in number of pledges and dollars pledged.

The Treasurer's Report reflects that the church has a modest positive net income year-to-date. However, there remains the obligation to repay moneys transferred to meet prior year deficits.

A recommendation from the Finance Committee regarding the process relating to the allocation of Endowment Funds was taken up for consideration and tabled.

Reports were received from the standing committees of Session. A recommendation from the Administration and Personnel Committee to approve posting part-time positions for Director of Children's Ministry and Facilities Manager were approved.

Upcoming Mission Study activities will include small group discussions in late January and early February instead of the congregational meal at the Annual Meeting this year

The passing of members Betty Parks and Catie Widick was noted with sympathy. Six members were removed from the roll.

Four of the new elders and officers were examined by Session with the remaining four scheduled to attend the November meeting for examination.

### **VETERANS DAY 2019**

Veterans Day was established by Congress in 1954. The holiday is observed on Nov. 11 which was originally Armistice Day commemorating the end of WWI. The transition from Armistice Day to Veterans Day in 1954 was made to honor US Veterans from WW II and the recently completed Korean War, as well as those from WW I. I remember during WW II when we sat at the kitchen table at my grandmother's house in Pittsburgh on Armistice Day 1944, and held a moment of silent prayer for my 5 uncles fighting in WW II on the 11<sup>th</sup> day, of the 11<sup>th</sup> month at precisely 11 am (they all survived the War). Armistice Day was very popular in Pittsburgh, where after the end of WW II, we would have parades, marching bands, veterans color guards and some local politician speaking on a topic that bored a 7 or 8 year old! We were enjoying the festivities and awaiting the end when we got free hot dogs and soda pop.

On Sunday, Nov. 10, Grace Covenant will honor veterans with the fervent prayer that those currently serving in the uniform of the US Military will be safe from harm. If you served in the uniform of the US Military and still have that uniform, we encourage you to wear it and be recognized.

Bruce W. Johnson, USAF Retired  
Vietnam, Korea and Bosnia Veteran

**November 2019**



**GRACE COVENANT  
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**

Rev. Melanie Ruta  
Interim Pastor

Candy Vander Weide  
Commissioned Lay 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

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# **ANNUAL PICNIC**

**Sunday, November 10**

**Noon**

Make plans to attend the Church Picnic which will be held on the drive.

The picnic will be prepared for you.

There will be donation baskets on the tables to cover expenses.

**Everyone is asked to bring a dessert to share.**

Don't miss out! This is always a special event for our church family.