

Grace United Church of Christ

# Shalom

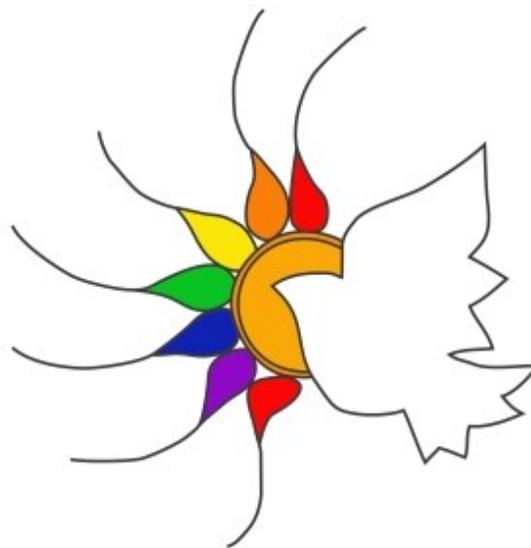
November 2014

**Intentional Interim Pastor:** Rev. Chris Hart

**Editor:** Lynn K. Miller

**Mailing Coordinator:** Mary Ann Kimmel

Thank you to proofreaders, volunteers who fold and collate, and story contributors.



---

## Seasons of Light and Hope

We are well into fall now, one of my favorite times of year. This week I was astounded by the fall colors. The richness and diversity of color seemed especially sharp this year. More than once I was awestruck by the change in season.

I always thought leaves changed colors because they died and were drying up, but recently I learned this is not the case. Trees produce and store in their leaves three different pigments: chlorophyll is green, carotenoid is yellow to brown, and anthocyanin is red. All year long all three pigments are produced and stored in a tree's leaves. As our planet tilts some parts of the planet will get fewer hours of sunlight. Trees in turn slow their production of chlorophyll until it stops. When this happens the other colors can finally be seen. Leaves become a bright rainbow of glowing yellows, gleaming oranges and warm browns.

Have you ever noticed how some years there is more red (anthocyanin) than other years. It's true! When we have many warm, sunny days, and cool, but not freezing, nights, there is more red! Why? Because the cool nights of fall stop the sugar from flowing down into the tree trunk. But red to the rescue: anthocyanin helps the tree get much of that sweet sugar so the tree is ready to take off and grow in the spring. Warm days and cold nights means a lot more red.

I know that was a pretty hefty science lesson so I will leave off explaining why leaves fall (but you can ask me about it). I found this fascinating for two reasons. One, when I looked at fall in the past I saw death, and that's not the case! Two, what an even better metaphor for this church season. As we prepare for Advent and the birth of light and hope, as we hunker down for the cold, the beauty of the fall was already present. We just could not see it. All summer the trees have been producing all three pigments, but all we saw was the one on the surface. The tree is not experiencing death but simply adapting to change happening around it. Just like our church, all the resources, all the talents are here waiting for their turn to be part of the rainbow that makes us Grace. As we face times of challenge, times that look like death, let's remember the trees. What we need is already here. God is, has been, and will be here with us, helping us to adapt to the change going on around us.

***Shalom***  
***Pastor Chris***

## Advent and Christmas Music Happenings at Grace

Things are progressing well musically at Grace UCC. The choir is off to a great start with weekly rehearsals in the church Tuesdays at 7:30pm. Since everyone is so busy, I am trying something new. We will rehearse as a scola cantorum school of singers, for the Christmas season only, beginning the first Sunday of Advent. This is to help people who would like to sing for Christmas, but don't feel like making a permanent, year-long commitment. Of course if you decide to stay, I will be overjoyed.

I am hoping to add instruments (strings, woodwinds, guitars, ukuleles, and dulcimers) to our Christmas worship, so stay tuned for further details about rehearsals. Pastor Chris and I have been hatching an original celebration of the Christmas story starring our children, teens, and adults. It is sure to surprise and delight all!

Finally, I am delighted to be collaborating with Jeffrey Clouser and the Memorial Bells of Grace as accompanist and substitute bell-ringer, something new for my resume. We will be performing in November, and again during Advent with a special selection. Hope you are all enjoying the new sounds at Grace UCC; I am delighted to be here!

~ Suzanne Delahunt, Director of Music

## What We Say, How We Say It!

Have you ever said something out loud, thought about it, and then immediately wished you could retract everything you just said because it all came out the wrong way? I don't know about you, but it happens to me all the time. I am guilty of letting my mouth speak before my brain has a chance to deliberate if what I am saying and how I am saying it will affect the listener.



In our world today, we have endless means of communication. From Facebook, to Skype, to old-fashioned telephone calls and face-to-face conversations, what we say and how we say it matters. Emails and Facebook posts seem to present the greatest challenge because tone and intentions are left to the reader.

What we say and how we say it impacts others and reflects on our image as a church. The psalmist prays for deliverance from this very act in Psalm 120 stating "our words can be like a warrior's sharp arrow". If we claim to be a people of grace, peace and mercy, then shouldn't our words reflect who we are?

I challenge all of us to be reflective on our image as we communicate with one another, whether through face-to-face conversations, email or Facebook. Choose peace, love and mercy over the warrior's sharp arrow.

Peace be with you,  
Amy Southall, council president

## Centennial Capital Campaign Update

### Let's Finish Strong!



*Grace upon Grace  
for a second century*

The end of the second year of our three-year capital campaign is approaching. Much has been accomplished so far:

- ✓ Benevolences paid to First Reformed UCC for the renovation of the community meal facilities Grace uses on the second Saturday of each month, and to the UCC-affiliated Ephrata Manor nursing home.
- ✓ New roof completed over Fellowship Hall and the Christian Education wing.
- ✓ New handicapped-accessible church entrance completed. (Two handrails are being added.)
- ✓ Sidewalks connecting all church entrances completed.
- ✓ Memorial Garden completed and dedicated September 7.

Contributions of \$110,421 received from Grace members and friends as of September 30 have made all this possible. In addition, we secured a line of credit from the Cornerstone Fund, but have limited borrowing to minimize interest expense. Our loan principal is about \$7,000. All projects listed above have been paid in full!

What's next? We owe \$9,000 for materials for a much-needed organ repair. Director of Music Suzanne Delahunt reports deteriorating leather is causing the organ pipes to produce a droning, discordant sound. When R.J. Brunner Co. repairs the organ we will owe the balance of about \$18,000. The last capital campaign project to be completed will be re-roofing the sanctuary. About \$40,000 will be needed for this.

To accomplish our capital campaign goals in 2015, those who have made pledges should have given about two-thirds by the end of this year and contribute the remaining one-third in 2015. Anyone who has not yet pledged and is able to do so now, should talk with Witnessing Stewards Jeff and Jessie Dombach, or Denise Pfeiffer.

A 2014 year-end gift to the "Grace upon Grace" Capital Campaign would be timely now. Green capital campaign envelopes are in the sanctuary pews and on the capital campaign bulletin board outside Fellowship Hall.

As we have received grace upon grace in this community of faith, let us give back for our future ministry together. Thank you for your gifts!

~ Centennial Capital Campaign Committee

---

### Stop the Stigma, Start the Conversation

Starting Sunday, November 9 at 6:30pm several members of Grace are starting a mental health support group. If you or a loved one is impacted by mental health challenges, or want to support others, please join us for a time of conversation and support. Snacks will be provided. The group will meet the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Sundays of each month at 6:30pm. Everyone is welcome. If you have any questions, feel free to contact Cathy Hainley or Marilyn Miller.

## Chime In to Help Expand Handbell Choir

The Memorial Bells of Grace are looking for supporters/donors for this worthwhile music ministry at Grace UCC. We would like to expand our handbell choir by adding hand chimes to the program. Do you know anybody looking to pay it forward? Our upcoming outreach to the community includes a fundraising event for Wisdom's Table next month at Lancaster Theological Seminary (see article below) and the Lancaster/Lebanon Handbell Festival March 14, 2015 at Palm Lutheran in Palmyra. If so moved please gift from the heart by clicking on [www.gofundme.com/GraceUCChandchimes](http://www.gofundme.com/GraceUCChandchimes), and sharing the link with others. Speak with Jeff Clouser for more information or to make a gift. We thank you for your continued support.

~ Memorial Bells of Grace

---

## "Just Peace" Concert Held for Social Justice

The Music Ministry of Wisdom's Table at St. Peter's United Church of Christ invites you to "Just Peace," a holiday concert fundraiser at Lancaster Theological Seminary for the social justice ministry of St. Peter's UCC. Enjoy desserts, warm beverages, spoken word, and music from a variety of traditions as we reflect on how the coming of Jesus brings peace and justice to the earth. Musical guests include the 4Grace Ringers handbell quartet of Grace United Church of Christ, Christian fusion jazz band Salt N Light, and folk artist Mindy Nolt.

Date: Thursday, December 18 at 7pm

Tickets: \$20; students w/ID: \$8

Place: Dietz Refectory at Lancaster Theological Seminary, 555 West James Street, Lancaster

For more information or to purchase tickets, email [PastorNaomi@wisdomstableucc.org](mailto:PastorNaomi@wisdomstableucc.org) or call the church office at (717) 397-8912.

### Lifesavers Wanted

CPR and First Aid classes will be held Saturday, November 8. The CPR class is from 2-4pm and costs \$25; First Aid is from 4-5pm and costs \$15. Sign up in the narthex.

~ Shawn Robbins

---

### Did You Know...

Emma Grimm has a new address at Quarryville Presbyterian Retirement Community:

Long Building, Room 328  
625 Robert Fulton Hwy.  
Quarryville PA 17566

Her new phone number is 786-8807. Cards, phone calls and visitors are welcome.



### Coming Soon: Christmas Flower Orders

Help beautify the church sanctuary for Advent and Christmas by ordering cyclamen flowers. Orders will be due by Sunday December 7, and payment is due when the order is placed. Watch for details in future bulletins and the December issue of *Shalom*.

~ Worship Team

## Upcoming Events from Congo Life

Thanks to everyone who has been coming out to the events planned by Congo Life in September and October. We hope you've been having as much fun attending the events as we have had planning them. The Congo Life Committee continues to plan activities to celebrate fellowship and enjoy the holiday season that is just around the corner.

If you haven't looked at the calendar, Advent starts Sunday, November 30. Congo Life, along with Property Committee, is calling all elves to come and help decorate the church after worship that day. Of course we'll feed you first. Bring a covered dish to share if you can (Congo Life is providing the drink) then help us deck the halls of Grace for Advent.

Warm up your voices and come caroling with us on Saturday, December 6. We'll meet at the church at 6pm for caroling through the neighborhood behind Grace. No musical ability is needed, just a desire to spread the joy of the season. We'll be led by our Director of Music Suzanne Delahunt. After entertaining the neighbors, plan to stop at Fellowship Hall for fresh baked cookies, hot chocolate and fellowship.

Congo Life has more activities coming in 2015 so stay tuned to *Shalom* and the Sunday announcements for details.

~ Congregational Life Committee



### **An Advent Gathering For When the Holiday's Not Joyful**

For some people, the season many find filled with joy and positive memories are anything but. Perhaps they – or even you – have had life events this year that make this holiday season painful. The deaths of loved ones can make Advent a time of missing, more than a time of singing.

To walk with the people who may find this season difficult, Grace Church is offering a support group. The group will meet before and after Christmas...people can come for all or only a few...or even one of the gatherings. Together, we will offer support and companionship during a time that feels perhaps awkward and lonely. It will be very informal – a time of companionship, story sharing and support.

The group will be led by Jeffrey Hamilton – a member of Grace Church, a United Church of Christ minister, licensed clinical social worker and pastoral counselor. We will meet December 7 and 21, and January 4 at 4:30pm at Grace Church. We will meet for about 90 minutes.

Please, if you feel the gathering would be helpful, join us...and pass the word to those you know who may be needing this support as well.

~ Dr. Jeffrey Hamilton



## Building an Inclusive Church Training Offered

Hosted by Embrace Lancaster and Equality Pennsylvania

Friday, December 5, 6-9pm and Saturday, December 6, 9am - 5pm  
Grace United Church of Christ, Eden

“Building an Inclusive Church” training helps design and implement a process for your congregation to start a conversation about publicly and intentionally welcoming people of all gender identities and sexual orientations, as well as other marginalized groups. Learn useful skills and practical steps to guide a healthy, effective process for your congregation no matter where you are on your journey. Even welcoming congregations learn ways to expand their welcome using these skills.

Anybody who wants to be more informed and more equipped to make a difference for LGBT people in their congregation and/or local community is welcome. The fee is \$45; scholarships are available. Lunch will be provided on Saturday.

Ammon Ripple, Faith Organizer from Equality Pennsylvania, will facilitate the retreat. A graduate of Union Theological Seminary in New York City, Ammon is vice-president of the Open and Affirming Coalition in the United Church of Christ. He works with hundreds of clergy and congregations from more than 20 denominations in a coordinated effort to improve the lives of LGBT people in Pennsylvania. For more information, contact Ammon at (484) 612-3657 or email [aripple@equalitypa.org](mailto:aripple@equalitypa.org).

### **PFLAG’s Lancaster Chapter is Back**

PFLAG is Parents, Families and Friends of Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender Persons. If this description fits you, join us Tuesday, November 11 at 7pm at the Unitarian Universalist Church, 538 West Chestnut, Lancaster.

The Lancaster chapter will explain PFLAG, its goals and practices; outline plans for future meetings, develop and approve a budget, and make introductions. A brief support group session will be held. PFLAG will meet the second Tuesday of each month. For more info contact [pflaglancaster@gmail.com](mailto:pflaglancaster@gmail.com) or visit [www.pflagoflancasterpa.org/](http://www.pflagoflancasterpa.org/).

### ***Help, Thanks, Wow* Author to Speak in Lancaster**

Bestselling author Anne Lamott will speak Saturday, November 22 at 7pm at Lancaster Bible College, an event sponsored by the Parish Resource Center. She will focus on a message of hope and the promise of light in our lives. Lamott is the author of bestsellers *Travelling Mercies* and *Help, Thanks, Wow*. Tickets are only \$25 because Grace supports the PRC as a subscriber church. A copy of Lamott’s next book, *Small Victories*, is included in the ticket price.

For tickets call the PRC at 299-9932 Monday through Friday between 10am and 4pm (remember to tell them you belong to a subscribing church), or buy tickets online at [www.parishresourcecenter.org/events/evening-with-anne-lamott/](http://www.parishresourcecenter.org/events/evening-with-anne-lamott/).



## Parish and Community Health Resources

### Ask Dr. Trudie: *"To Be Rather Than to Seem to Be"*

---

I go to my Ursinus College reunions every five years, and can still identify my classmates, even if I don't always remember their names. Last reunion, however, I was sitting by a fellow science major when we noticed a tall, striking woman I thought was a classmate's wife, but who very much resembled a classmate we'll call Mark (not his real name). I made the comment that often spouses start to take on the mannerisms, etc., of their mates, when my friend said, "Trudie, she IS Mark!" You could have knocked me over with a feather.

While a student, Mark was a member of the football team and belonged to what passed for Ursinus' Animal House frat. Fircroft House was legendary for its goings on. (I try to keep these articles PG at worst, so I can't really tell you about the way these guys partied and treated women, but suffice it to say my silence speaks volumes). I can't imagine what it was like going through college hanging out with a group that tended to treat women as sex objects, while all the time knowing he was a woman. It's truly amazing that he didn't crack up.

So what makes a man a man or a woman a woman? Gender identity starts in the uterus, where we're all primed as females. However, at the eighth week, fetuses with Y chromosome and testicular determining factor (TDF) develop testicles. After assignment of a sex at birth, the child is given a gender-specific name, toys and clothes. Gender identity is reinforced by interactions with other people. However, it remains unproven as to whether there is an absolute final point beyond which gender identity is irrevocably fixed.

Gender dysphoria is a diagnosis made when for at least six months there's a marked

difference between a person's assigned sex and his or her expressed/ experienced gender, and the condition must cause "clinically significant distress or impairment in social, occupational, or other important areas of functioning." The diagnosis is far from easy to make, since psychological testing is not conclusive. After a diagnosis is made, risk factors are evaluated to be certain the individual can tolerate the life changes that SRS (sexual reassignment surgery) will bring. Then the ability to live in the desired sex role is tested; the family is informed, a new name is selected, and the decision of whether to administer hormone therapy is made. Family, group, and marital therapy is mandatory. For those who do undergo SRS, their new lives are not always easy. In my classmate's case, she had fathered a family and is a medical professional. Some of her patients stayed, some left, but her children stood by her.

I often listen to talk radio with its succession of hosts. It seems there's much controversy involving accommodation for transgender individuals when it comes to such things as showering in health clubs. If a biologic man identifies as a woman, which facility should that person use? While I can appreciate the sensibilities of that individual, I can also understand others using the facility could feel uncomfortable. And what about public restrooms? Remember how freaked the kids in the movie were when they realized Mrs. Doubtfire stood up to pee? I don't know how this will be resolved, but at least we're at the point where we can have the discussion. We owe nothing less to those who've suffered by living as what they're not.

*(Dr. Trudie welcomes readers' comments and suggestions for future columns. She can be reached c/o [graceucc@comcast.net](mailto:graceucc@comcast.net)).*

## Want *Shalom* in Your Mailbox or Your Email Inbox?

December's *Shalom* will be the last bulk mailing for the newsletter of Grace United Church of Christ. Thank you to the volunteers who worked on the mailings. A special thank you goes to mailing coordinator Mary Ann Kimmel for her many years of dedication.

Starting with the January issue, *Shalom* will be mailed to everyone who wants a paper copy, and emailed to people who have provided email addresses. Church members without email will continue to receive the paper newsletter by postal mail. Members and friends may receive the newsletter in a number of ways: having a copy mailed by first class to their home; by email; picking up a paper copy in the church lobby; or reading it on the website ([www.gracechurchlancaster.org](http://www.gracechurchlancaster.org)).

Shalom!

## Advent Book Group Offered

*Tear Open the Heavens* is 40 pages of unique devotionals that encourage you to cry out for deliverance and celebrate the answer to that cry. God did tear open the heavens and come down, not in the way anyone predicted, but in vulnerable flesh to love, heal, and suffer with us as one of us. Find meaning in Christmas! See Pastor Chris for a copy of the book.

## Join Pastor Chris for a Candlelight Vigil

Memorializing those who we have lost due to suicide or who were killed due to anti-transgender hatred or prejudice, a Candlelight Vigil will be held Thursday, November 20 from 5:30 to 6:30pm on the 3rd Street (front) steps of the Pennsylvania Capitol Building in Harrisburg.

### Questions? Concerns? Suggestions?

Talk with a Council member:

President: Amy Southall

Secretary: Ve Wolfe

Congregational Life Committee: Jessie Dombach

Endowment Committee: Karen Wentz

Evangelism and Outreach Committee: Nick Santaniello

Property Committee: Rob MacGregor

Spiritual Life and Growth Committee: Carol Welsh

Stewardship–Mission Committee: Denise Pfeiffer

Member-at-Large: Suzy Luber

Intentional Interim Pastor: Rev. Chris Hart

*Grace* United Church of Christ

*Welcoming All  
Sharing Love  
Proclaiming God's Grace*

1947 New Holland Pike  
Lancaster Pennsylvania 17601

(717) 397-1012

[www.gracechurchlancaster.org](http://www.gracechurchlancaster.org)