



GRACE NEWS

Grace Community Church
An *Evangelical* Presbyterian Church
16165 W. Mountain View Blvd.
Surprise, AZ 85374
(623) 975-9038
November 2014



SHARING THE GOOD THINGS HAPPENING IN THE LIFE OF OUR CHURCH

"In Everything Give Thanks!"

It seems only appropriate that in this calendar month of November we should devote a newsworthy article devoted to Thanksgiving. Once again this year the Worship and Music ministry will once again sponsor our annual Homecoming celebration for our returning "snowbirds". But let's be mindful of what this word meant to our forefathers, and just as importantly, what it should mean to us, today.

For instance, did you know that this Thanksgiving observance, which we celebrate on the fourth Thursday each year is viewed worldwide as strictly an American holiday tradition? But how can a tradition start if it's not repeated? According to historical sources, the Pilgrims never held an annual autumn Thanksgiving feast. The Pilgrims did hold a feast in 1621 near Plymouth, Massachusetts, following their first harvest, which has become known as the "First Thanksgiving." However, this feast was never repeated again! Because these early settlers were devoutly religious, they considered a day of thanksgiving should be reserved for praying and fasting; and not a day for indulging themselves with turkey, dressing, and pumpkin pie!

In point of fact, as Christians, we should be thankful at all times and in every way. Paul writes: ***"Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, and in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you"*** [1 Thessalonians 5:16-18]. Notice, Paul does not offer a qualifier. Whether you find yourself in a financial hardship, or suffering from a physical, mental or spiritual affliction, Paul tells us that we should be thankful in all things!

And the best way we can express our thankfulness to God is by demonstrating our trustworthiness. In other words, have we really entrust *everything* to God – our possessions, our family, our health and welfare? If we commit ourselves to God in Christ each and every day and genuinely thank Him for every blessing that He sends our way, then our confidence in Him will withstand the most difficult of trials. Or, as God said, ***"Trust Me in this."***

And so regardless of how or where you spend Thanksgiving this year, please spend time with the Lord in thankfulness for what He has done, is doing, and shall do in both your own life and in the lives of those whom you love.

Have a care,

Pastor Cooper

Financial Committee Report

For the month of September our unrestricted contributions were \$20,709.00 and our expenses were \$36,176.89. Contributions for the first three Sundays in October were \$22,262.00. Please help us catch up with last year.

Facilities Maintenance Fund

Contributions to the Facilities Maintenance Fund totaled \$300.00 for the month of September. This fund is used for building and maintenance expenses and to cover emergency costs that may arise.

Reminder! Budget meeting information!

The budget process is beginning and all committees will be given their year to date budget information at the close of September so you can plan. The meeting will be Tuesday, November 4 when you will submit your budgets to the Finance Committee.

Women's Ministry "The Ruth Experience"

Ladies please mark your calendars for this very special Christmas Luncheon/Program Friday, December 5, 2014 at 10:00 am. We are very excited to bring to you Patty Bivens as "Ruth". Patty's favorite way to communicate God's word is through the use of drama and in the "The Ruth Experience" she reenacts the story of Ruth in costume in two sessions. Session 1 will begin at 10:00 AM which will be followed by a catered lunch. Session 2 will follow lunch. Please note our change in schedule.

Patty presents how Ruth's story is a picture of Christ and the church. Biblical characters and events spring to life as Patty becomes the character of Ruth and relates to us in a personal way. One attendee remarked, "I felt as if Ruth was speaking to me personally." It is Patty's prayer that we will all be lead closer to Jesus as we hear "Ruth" share her exciting story.

Please feel free to invite your friends to join you for this most unique, inspiring and motivational program! The cost is \$15.00 and the sign-up sheet will be in the Resource Center.

Operation Christmas Child

Once Again Grace Community Church members are showing the spirit of giving by participating in Franklin Graham's Shoebox children's gift event. Last year we donated over 125 shoeboxes of toys, and other items to thrill and help underprivileged kids in impoverished parts of the world. This is one great way for this Body of Christ to spread God's Word and the love of Jesus Christ to those innocents who will now know there are other people in the world who care about them. For years this Box has led, through its children, whole families to the Lord in lands that need Jesus Christ more than ever!

Since 1993, Samaritan's Purse has delivered over 69 million gift filled shoe boxes to boys and girls in more than 130 countries. Also, a financial gift to **Operation Christmas Child** helps cover processing and shipping expenses and allows our teams to share the Good News of God's love with children and their families. A small shoebox can have a big impact. What goes into the box is fun, but what comes out of it is eternal. Be a part of changing children's lives all over the world in Jesus' Name through the power of a simple gift with Operation Christmas Child.

If you are unable to shop for items to fill this shoebox, Samaritan's Purse will gladly accept financial donations of any amount. Look for the Donations shoeboxes in the Narthex. God Bless you for your generous donation! Please return the packed-full shoe boxes to the church by November 16th.

God Bless you,
Nelsine Ellsworth

Notes of Thanks

To the people of Grace,

Sammie and I wish to thank you so much for the beautiful cards, gifts and your kind words. Most especially we thank you for your friendship, love and encouragement. We pray for God's blessings to each of you and for this wonderful church community called Grace.

Have a care,
Pastor Cooper

Notes of Thanks continued

Dear Caring People,

You all are so special! Thanks for: praying for me, grieving with me, giving food and being so caring and loving. God's blessings on you as you serve Him.

Frances Lewis

To all of the Angels at Grace Community Church,

Thank you from the bottom of my heart for the love and blessings you have given me over the past 11 years. I have been blessed to be a part of your family and will take that with me on my journey and into the next chapter of my life back in New Hampshire. I will keep Ella informed of my address change and feel free to find me when you get a minute!

Love you all, Sherry

Dear Grace Church Family,

I wish to thank you all kind, caring, loving, people who were there for me during my recovery. Your many prayers, visits and gifts were greatly appreciated! "Thank You, Thank You".

May God Bless You Always, Henney Gewelke

Art and I wish to thank everyone for all their prayers, phone calls, cards, and beautiful prayer blanket he received during his recent surgery and recovery. He is now in need of prayers that the blood clots found in his lungs will soon dissolve on their own.

Blessings to all, Joan and Art Johnson

To The Family of Grace,

The Sleeman family thanks our extended church family for its constant prayers for my brother Tom's extended illnesses. Tom's battle with cancer has ended, and he rests at peace with his Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Tom's life was a life well lived, and he was truthfully a blessing to many. We thank you for your countless spoken and written expressions of your unfailing love for us.

Altha and Dick Sleeman

Grace Community Church

Blessings to our Dear Church Family,

There do not seem to be adequate words to show our thanks and appreciation to our precious Grace Church family. We are extremely grateful for your numerous expressions of love and caring during our recent medical challenges. We have been truly blessed through your cards, prayers, meals, phone calls and many expressions of your concern. We are reminded of Galatians 5:6 "The only thing that counts is faith expressing itself through love." We are so richly blessed by belonging to a loving church family!!! Please know we thankfully hold you in our hearts and prayers.

In His precious love, Dorothy & Ralph Cleaver

Dear Ones at Grace,

Thank you for the wonderful outpouring of your love, prayers and cards during my surgery. You have blessed me beyond words.

With a grateful heart, JoAnne Williams

To Our Church Family.

JoAnne and I want to thank you so much for the cards and gifts. We had a great time reading your notes of encouragement which blessed our hearts.

Thank you, Pastor Bob and JoAnne

Jesus Station

CELEBRATE JESUS' BIRTH by giving cards to fellow Grace Community Church members and friends. Bring your cards with the receiver's name on the envelope to the Jesus Station in the Narthex beginning November 30, December 7 and 14. The cards will be sorted alphabetically, and you can check to see if there is one for you on the following Sundays (December 7, 14 and 21). It is voluntary and the Deacons will make certain cards will be distributed to those not able to pick them up at Church. There will also be a Donation jar to give to our Missionaries and/or Grace Community Church. May this gifting be blessed. Let us share the joy of our Savior's birth

Deacon, Linda Schooley

November Birthdays

11/01	Diane Smith
11/02	Shirley Peebles
11/09	Art Johnson
11/10	Larry Laursen
11/16	Roy Carpenter
11/17	Joan Johnson
11/18	Betty Lundeen
11/19	Ralph Cleaver
11/21	Verla Atwell
11/23	Doug Robinson
11/25	Ken Reid
11/27	Ava Daley
11/28	Donna Bice
11/28	Richard Urwiller
11/30	Alana Mraz

Happy Birthday to each of you!

November Anniversaries

11/10	Jack and Jan Gossett
11/22	David & Carolyn Craig
11/27	Bill & Barb Marting
11/29	William & Mary Ann Malotte
11/29	Dave & Bette Storhaug

Happy Anniversary to each of you!

Aluminum Tab Recycling Project

Please save your aluminum tabs and bring them to the church. Deposit them in the marked container in the Resource Center. The collected tabs will benefit the Ronald McDonald House of Phoenix.

Reminder! Budget meeting information!

The budget process is beginning and all committees were given their year to date budget information at the close of September so you can plan. The meeting will be Tuesday, November 4 when you will submit your budgets to the Finance Committee. Each committee has been assigned a specific time to be here. Please bring your paperwork including your proposed budget for 2015.

Your Finance Committee

Church Event Procedures

The following procedure has been established for non-scheduled church events. The person who will be the coordinator of the event will contact the church secretary to verify that the desired date does not conflict with other church events or activities. If no conflict exists, she will enter it on the calendar. A **"Procedure for non-scheduled events"** form will then be filled out and given to the church secretary. Copies will be distributed to concerned parties. All of the required details should be taken care of by the appropriate committees and if there are questions the event coordinator will be contacted. If, however, it is an outside event, prior approval by Session is required.

If there are questions please contact the church secretary.

Thanksgiving Day Prayer

Lord, so often times, as any other day
When we sit down to our meal and pray
We hurry along and make fast the blessing
Thanks, amen. Now please pass the dressing.
We're slaves to the olfactory overload
We must rush our prayer before the food gets cold.

But Lord, I'd like to take a few minutes more
To really give thanks to what I'm thankful for.
For my family, my health, a nice soft bed
My friends, my freedom, a roof over my head
I'm thankful right now to be surrounded by those

Whose lives touch me more than they'll ever possibly know.

Thankful Lord, that You've blessed me beyond measure

Thankful that in me lives life's greatest treasure.

Thank You, dear Jesus, reside in that place
And I'm ever so grateful for your unending grace.

So please, heavenly Father, bless this food
You've provided

And bless each and every person invited.
Amen!

Author – Scott Wesemann

November 2014

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
26	27	28	29	30	31	1
2 8:45 AM Bible Study 10:00 AM Worship 4:00 PM Inquirer's Class	3 8:00 AM - Men's Breakfast @ Denny's 10:00 AM Women's Bible Study	4 8:30 AM Bible Study 9:30 AM Budget Finance Meeting	5	6 9:00 AM - Choir 11:30 AM Women's Ministry Luncheon	7 Veteran's Display Set-Up	8
9 8:45 AM Bible Study 10:00 AM Worship Veteran's Display	10 8:00 AM Men's Bible Study 10:00 AM Women's Bible Study	11 8:30 AM Bible Study 9:45 AM Prayer Service 1:00 PM Session Meeting	12	13 9:00 AM - Choir 11:00 AM Worship / Music Meeting 12:45 PM Mission Meeting	14	15
16 8:45 AM Bible Study 10:00 AM Worship 4:00 PM - Last Inquirer's Class Veteran's Display	17 8:00 AM Men's Bible Study 10:00 AM Women's Bible Study	18 8:30 AM Bible Study 9:45 AM Prayer Service	19 9:00 AM Deacons Meeting 9:00 AM Ministry Council	20 9:00 AM - Choir	21 6:00 PM HOMECOMING PIE SOCIAL Featuring His Messenger's	22
23 10:00 AM Worship	24 8:00 AM Men's Bible Study	25 8:30 AM Bible Study 9:45 AM Prayer Service 1:00 PM New Beginnings Bible Study	26	27 HAPPY THANKSGIVING TO ALL!	28	29
30 8:45 AM Bible Study 10:00 AM Worship	1	2	3	4	5	6