

GraceNOTES

The official newsletter of Grace United Methodist Church in Arlington, Texas

December 2018

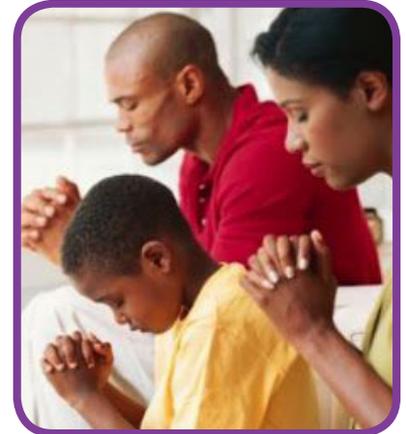
www.Graceumcarlington.org

WHAT IS THE TRUE MEANING OF CHRISTMAS? Destiny Lewis, Youth Journalist

As children, we grow up thinking that Christmas is all about getting presents. I have seen children get upset if they got the wrong thing. This is not how we should be presenting Christmas to kids. When telling the story of why we celebrate Christmas, it is because of Jesus not Santa Claus. The Magic of Christmas is not in the presents but in His presence.

Christmas is the holiday that we remember as God's children that we should be grateful for this day that brought us the man that would die for our sins. Christmas is more than presents; it is about being with the ones we love the most because we were given the greatest gift of all—EACH OTHER. The greatest gift you can ever own is not found in the shops or under your Christmas tree. It is found in the hearts of your loving family and your true friends.

Every year as Christmas approaches, we sometimes find it hard to praise Christ during the season. We could "Feed the hungry, clothe the naked, forgive the guilty, welcome the unwanted, care for the ill, love your enemies, and do unto others as you would have done unto you" as Steve Maraboli said. We should awaken on Christmas morning looking for Christ—falling down to our knees, heads bowed, eyes closed, with our hands raised to the heavens and our hearts suddenly filled with joy. We should be thanking Him for allowing us to follow His path. Now that's called having "The Christmas Spirit"!



'Tis The Season What a wonderful year of growing pains at Grace UMC! Thank you for all you do in support of the ministries at Grace. We've been moving through a sermon series on "Thanks". How we should give unscheduled thanks and how to give thanks continually (in case you missed it - they are found on the web page under Sermon Series). God is so good to us. Take a moment and just say "Thank you Lord, for all you've done for me!"

When the leadership team got together to prepare the calendar for 2019, our focus was on Prayer and the Word. Thanks be to God that we are able to designate the 3rd and 4th Saturdays for corporate prayer at Grace. I encourage you to place these Saturdays on your calendar. It is in these gatherings that we pray for the life of the church, for direction, for needs, for you! We ask that you pray for the leadership and ministry team members as we continue to focus on "bringing people into a life changing relationship with Jesus Christ". We all know that prayer changes things.

Grace UMC Arlington continues to be strengthened by the Word and continues to be doers of the Word. Our mission statement reminds us that, "**Grace UMC Arlington seeks to make disciples through our words and actions, in cooperation with God's Grace**". Thank you for being a part of the action in 2018 and we look forward to doing more in 2019. Thanks be to God for all He has done and all He is planning to do. — **Pamela Pinkerton-Whitley**

Grace UMC Arlington seeks to bring people into a life changing relationship with Jesus Christ by making disciples through our words and actions in cooperation with God's Grace.

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Grace and Peace to you!

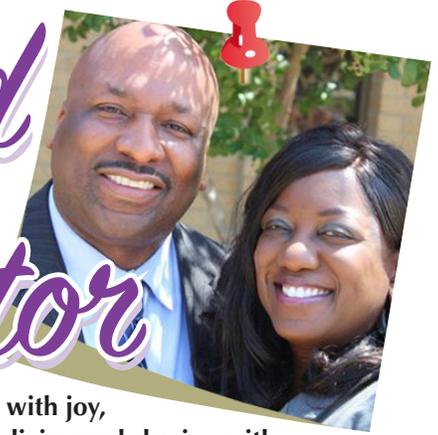
“But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law...”

Galatians 4:4 (ESV)

Seasons exist in both the natural and the spiritual world. Ecclesiastes tells us that, **“For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven:”** Farmers and skilled gardeners are keenly aware of the seasons. They know when it is time to plant or when it may be time to harvest. Only the unskilled farmer would try to plant a crop in the middle of winter. It is also my contention that the skilled spiritual person should have a keen awareness as to the “times” and “seasons” of their lives. I believe we often neglect this kingdom principle when we “decide” to do things when we are “good and ready.” We really believe that we can do things “when” we want, without taking the season into consideration. Jesus rebuked the disciples and Pharisees because they could tell when it was about to rain, but could not discern the “fullness of time.”

Galatians 4:4 shows that there was a time “and” season for Jesus Christ to be born. We are currently celebrating this “season” called Advent (Aventus in the Latin) meaning “the arrival of a notable person, thing, or event.” The time was just right as ordained by God for Jesus to be born into the world to bring light, life and the joy of heaven to those who would receive him. There is also a right time for Jesus to return (see **Acts 1:7**).

a Word from our Pastor



Advent season is filled with joy, hope and love through living and sharing with sisters and brothers in Christ, family and friends. However, let’s take the time to discern in which “season” we may be. Are we in a time of sowing, reaping, building, or tearing down? Whichever season we may find ourselves, know two things: seasons change, and God is with us in each.

I want to personally thank each of you who have completed and submitted your **2019 Commitment Cards**. We are looking forward to planning and executing the various missional, spiritual formation and educational projects in 2019 and want you to be a part of God’s ministry through your **prayers, presence, gifts, service and witness**.

Rona and I say Merry Christmas and pray that you continue to **grow in grace and in the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.** —Pastor Bates and Rona

December

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
2 Holiday gathering, St. Andrews 4 pm	3	4 Choir Rehearsal 7 pm	5 Worship Meeting 6 pm Prayer 6:30 pm Bible Class 7 pm	6 Women of Grace Prayer Call 6:30 am	7	8 College Prep Inst. 8-10 am
9	10 Finance 6:15 pm Admin 7 pm	11 Choir Rehearsal 7 pm	12 Worship Meeting 6 pm Bible Class 7 pm	13 Women of Grace Prayer Call 6:30 am	14	15 UMWUMM 10am Women of Grace 12 pm Holiday Luncheon
16 Cookies for the troops due today	17	18 Choir Rehearsal 7 pm	19 Worship Meeting 6 pm Outreach 6:15 pm Prayer 6:30 pm Bible Class 7 pm	20 Women of Grace Prayer Call 6:30 am	21	22
23	24 Christmas Eve Service 7 pm	25 CHRISTMAS DAY	26	27 Women of Grace Prayer Call 6:30 am	29	29
30	31					

Word Finder!

MERRY CHRISTMAS
Wordsearch

Search for the words going up, down, left and right.

T	U	K	E	B	S	N	Y	Y	V	G	I	I	O	X
L	D	P	Y	O	O	V	F	Q	S	N	O	G	N	U
U	S	G	N	I	T	E	E	R	G	I	W	Q	Z	B
J	D	X	D	E	J	O	W	E	I	L	L	T	K	R
J	J	O	B	E	K	T	O	D	N	O	W	N	E	Q
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Q	S	A	N	T	A	L	R	M	E	A	E	M	X	V
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I	Z	M	J	X	F	S	F	U	B	M	T	N	Y	U
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X	B	D	N	R	L	M	M	C	E	K	V	O	K	E
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H	I	H	A	N	U	T	C	R	A	C	K	E	R	D
V	R	F	A	B	K	W	T	S	E	V	L	E	N	E

VULETIDE
GREETINGS
CAROLING
PRESENTS

WREATH
NUTCRACKER
TREE
MISTLETOE

SANTA
GINGERBREAD
ORNAMENT
ELVES

www.funwordsearch.com

