



GRACE

www.graceri.org

Sunday Service

Sundays at a 10:00

Services will be posted on Facebook and our website following the Sunday service.

Reach Us

Feel free to contact Grace with your prayer requests, questions, comments... anything at all.

Grace United Methodist Church

10 Park Avenue

Westerly, RI 02891

401-596-8000

Follow Us

@graceumcRI



GraceUMCRI



Special Services

February 19, Configuration Sunday

February 22, Ash Wednesday 5:00pm
(Ashes available from 5:00-6:00pm)

February 26, First Sunday in Lent



The Pastor's Desk

The COVID-19 crisis has brought many challenges to our faith community over the past couple of years. As we adapted to the struggles of separation and found new ways

to connect, we have made many positive changes. All Bible studies, meetings, and other gatherings have been offered in a hybrid environment. The people at Grace continue to support and reach out to our community through our 'Giving Fence,' which supports our local children. We also continue to hold many outreach drives. I am very pleased that you, the parishioners at Grace, continue to have a heart for outreach. Other ministries include our Community Garden and our Narthex Nook. Our call to Open Hearts, Open Minds, and Open Doors is lived out in our worship, studies, and mission. I am happy to announce that the recovery programs that meet at Grace have fully returned. Our vision of opening our hearts wide to the community has led us to the development of new and trusted relationships. These honored fellowships have led us to come together in small group gatherings.

We are living our call to love and care for each other and our neighbor. This past year I completed my Master of Divinity at Wesley Theological Seminary in Washington DC. I am grateful for all the support the congregation has given me over the years that led to this achievement. I have been recently

accepted to American University in Washington DC as I will work towards a Master in Ethics with a concentration in Social Justice. I continue to praise God, and thanks to all those at Grace who support me as I continue to grow into God's call. I praise God our Savior for all my sisters and brothers in Christ.

As this year comes to an end, it marks for me fourteen years of service at Grace. Fourteen holds with it a biblical significance that I would like to share. For it marks the second time I have celebrated the year of Jubilee as your pastor. In Leviticus 25, we find the first reference to Jubilee, as part of the law given by Yahweh to the Israelites describing God's intent that the Israelites should remain free from bondage for all time.

As such, God instituted a Sabbath year every seven years. Reflecting upon this new year, my Sabbath year, I wish to share with all of you a reading from Ecclesiastes 3:1-12

There is a time for everything,
and a season for every activity under the heavens:

a time to be born and a time to die,
a time to plant and a time to uproot,

a time to kill and a time to heal,
a time to tear down and a time to build,

a time to weep and a time to laugh,
a time to mourn and a time to dance,

a time to scatter stones and a time to gather them,
a time to embrace and a time to refrain from embracing,

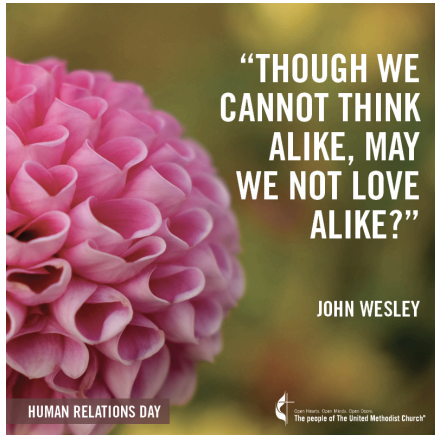
a time to search and a time to give up,
a time to keep and a time to throw away,

a time to tear and a time to mend,
a time to be silent and a time to speak,

a time to love and a time to hate,
a time for war and a time for peace.

What do workers gain from their toil? I have seen the burden God has laid on the human race. He has made everything beautiful in its time. He has also set eternity in the human heart; yet no one can fathom what God has done from beginning to end. I know that there is nothing better for people than to be happy and to do good while they live.





As I have shared this moment of reflection, I wish to thank all of you for the opportunity to be your pastor. I love you all and look forward to a new year with new hopes, dreams, and possibilities. A time of devoted prayer, hard work, and Divine worshiping that is always centered in the celebration of this great gift of life! And may you always remember...

Christ is Risen. He has Risen, indeed! Amen!

Blessings,
Pastor Barry



Sunday School Scoop

By Catherine Theberge Burdick and Danielle Burdick Burns

Our Sunday School students have been busy planning for spring. They painted bird houses to add to the bee sanctuary while learning how to protect the bees by eliminating pesticides, and leaving them alone in their habitat. Remember, don't pick those dandelions until they go by. Bees begin their season early.

In December, students learned about the birth of our savior, Jesus Christ. During advent,, children took turns lighting the advent candles and appreciating the symbolism.

I can't wait to see what our children will do in January. Blessing to them and our teachers, Danielle, Olivia and Noah. 🥰

Outreach and Service

By Theresa Gregal

November was our food drive for the Pawcatuck Neighborhood Center. Thank you to all who donated.

The LaFazia Project continues to help the students at State Street School. As winter approaches, the LaFazia Project will reach out to the Grace family via Sunday service, social media, and the website about upcoming drives.

The Giving Fence will host the Winter Warm Up Campaign again. Mittens, gloves, scarves, and hats will be hung up on the fence for those in need. Right now we are looking pretty



good for donations. However, it is supposed to be a cold winter this year, so keep a lookout on our social media for donation needs. Also in February we are thinking of valentines on the fence again this year and/ or something for Lent. Have an idea?

All birthday money continues to go to a *Dollar Makes a Difference* campaign where WARM “receives contributions designated for heating assistance to help financially struggling men, women, and children.” (<http://warmcenter.org/dollar-makes-a-difference/>).

Trustees’ Beat
By Pastor Barry

Board of Trustees Report

We want to share our annual report.

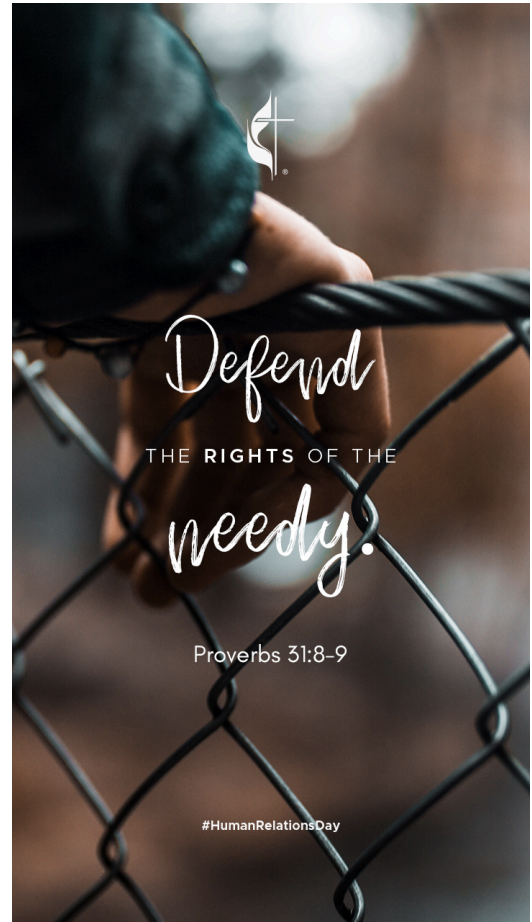
The board of Trustees has completed many improvements and repairs to the church and the patronage.

Our Church:

The new furnace has proved to be a wonderful investment. We are saving tremendous money by converting to an energy-efficient gas system. We want to thank MIKE MURPHY’S LANDSCAPING, (860) 599-5981, for his wonderful job plowing our church’s parking lot. All the church’s downstairs bathroom water valves have been replaced or refurbished. The Board of Trustees attached a cable system in the sanctuary by the stained-glass cross window for the Worship Team to attach beautiful draperies. They also added colored led lights behind the same cross. Trustees have repaired the roof at the church that suffered some minor wind damage that occurred over the winter. We have added new outside water spigots and building sealant.



The back hall of the church has been painted a beautiful new bright blue. The playground has a new roof and has been stained. Our new outside library space on the front Narthex porch, called the “Narthex Nook,” now has cards with community internet access and a charging station. There is now a bench and birdbath next to the playground in our flower garden. The Narthex floor is repaired, and the heat is now working. We purchased a small refrigerator for our gatherings after Sunday’s Service.



The Pastor's Parsonage:

We have replaced the front and back doors. New plumbing in the upstairs bathroom and a new kitchen ceiling. New drainpipe in the basement. Replacement of all screens in the windows. And repairs were made to the garage. Trustees are pleased to report that all major repairs we had on our list for the past year have been fixed. Next year, we must address repairing and painting the ceilings and walls. The wood floors may need refinishing. Considering the savings the Church has received from the new furnace and the fact that a natural gas line is already supplied, we should also consider replacing the parsonage with an energy-efficient gas system. Long term, we will need to think about updating the electrical service.

Hello Fellow Gardeners!


It's time to do some digging at our church.

Did you know working in the dirt creates a happier mood!

Please join our garden club and bring ideas!
Contact Ellen via text at 860-938-0201




Gardening with Jesus

By Lois Fulton 

"Roses will bloom again," a quote from Oral Roberts, a well known evangelist of years gone by. A phrase of encouragement that never meant as much to me as this past year when August's drought devastated my garden, drying up blooms of all kinds and preventing the reblooming of the hardiest types of roses.



Then at the end of September things cooled off, temperatures dropped, and we finally

had rain. Suddenly within days flowers were everywhere! Oddly, unseasonably lower temps in October somehow caused tender vines like Clematis and Thunbergia, better known as Black-eyed Susan vines, to flourish

Surprised and amazed this set me thinking: "Roses WILL bloom again"

There are many strange changes in life but there are more consistent reoccurrences, steadfast to God's plan for this earth and His creation.

Trusting in our creator, changing our wayward and thoughtless ways to follow His plan as shown in the living word, the Bible, will bring us to a peaceful life. Free of doubt and fear.

I am encouraged to spend more time with Jesus in this new year. Praying and seeking His plan for my life and watching for roses to bloom again. As you make your New Years resolutions, won't you think about what is truly important and what can make your life better?

Spend time with Jesus and watch your life bloom.



Worship & Membership Team
By Theresa Gregal

The Worship & Membership Team has been busy during the Christmas season. The Grace Craft Club led us on a really cool ornament making journey. We hope you picked one up; they came out really well. Thanks Barbi for leading us. Glitter and bows for everyone! The Hanging of the Greens had the sanctuary looking

fabulous, and we had a lovely Christmas Eve service. The luminaries looked awesome.



If you are interested in what we are doing, our monthly minutes and agendas are available through our page on Grace's webpage or join us after service for coffee and goodies and chat with us. We are taking a break this January and will meet again in February. We are looking forward to the Easter season. Do you have any ideas? Want to be part of the team? Let us know.



 Open Hearts, Open Minds, Open Doors.
The people of The United Methodist Church*

DON'T REMEMBER THE PRIOR THINGS;
DON'T PONDER ANCIENT HISTORY.
**LOOK, I'M DOING
A NEW THING...**

I'M MAKING
a way
in the **DESERT,**
a path
in the **WILDERNESS.**

ISAIAH 43:18;19B (CEB)