

DECEMBER 2022

# GRACE NOTES

No. 12 [pekingrace.org](http://pekingrace.org)



## highlights

December 2022

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*Romans 15:13*

*'May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.'*

*Merry Christmas!*

# PASTOR'S CORNER

*Thoughts, dreams, and ramblings of someone who just wants to connect you to Jesus*



## Grace Family

December is always a full month with all the things that lead us to Christmas. We seem to be eating, traveling, decorating, and celebrating from Thanksgiving weekend all the way through the new year.

With all that going on, it can be easy to blow past the importance of time with God and time spent on doing God's work.

This Christmas, we are looking to be ambitious. We are praying that we fulfill all our Angel Tree family needs. We are taking part in a bigger ask for our Christmas offering than ever before. We are breaking up our singular day of multiple Christmas programs to multiple days. We are even going to experiment with an extra Christmas Eve worship at 1pm to try and reach out to our families that struggle with 4 and 11.

For us to try and reach all of these goals, we need you!

We need you in our weekly worship services. We need you to invite your family and friends to all the programs that would reach their faith needs. We need you for the regular volunteering that is needed to pull off everything. We need your financial support for the regular budget to be fulfilled, and for your support of our God sized goals for the community this year. We need you to help us light candles and sing silent night.

Our theme is "Miracles Happen at Christmas." God is using you and the entirety of Grace UMC to make this Christmas a true miracle!

*Eric Swanson*

# CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

**Emmy Thies**  
Director of Children & Family Ministry

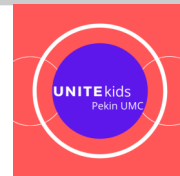
The kids have been working hard to prepare for this year's Christmas program!

Please join us:

**Saturday, Dec. 3<sup>rd</sup> at 6 PM**

*for a performance in the Family Life Center, treats, and activities*

The songs will remind you of The Best Gift Ever – JESUS! It has been heart-warming to see the kids connect to the true celebration of Christmas, recognizing that it's all about Jesus arriving on earth.



If your family would like an Advent poster to follow along throughout December, please reach out to Emmy at [ethies@pekingrace.org](mailto:ethies@pekingrace.org) and she will get one to you! If you would like to use the advent wreath litany from last year, it has been posted to the web-site.



**NO UNITEKIDS**  
**ON DECEMBER 28th**  
**DUE TO CHRISTMAS BREAK**

*UNITEkids will resume at Grace January 4*



### Giving and Envelopes

Grace Church survives and runs off of the generosity of it's members. We thank each of you who have given contributions this past year. Together, the donations have helped to spread the love of Christ.

We encourage you to save time by electronically transferring your monthly gift to Grace United Methodist Church. Your gift will appear on your bank statement and Grace United Methodist Church will e-mail you quarterly giving statements.

If you prefer the act of giving in person, we do offer privacy envelopes. 2023 giving envelopes are available to be picked up. This will save us some postage. If you aren't able to pick up your envelopes by the end of the year, please call the office and we will mail yours to you. Pick up the envelopes with your name at the counter top of the hospitality area. If you do not currently get giving envelopes, please call Nanette in the office.

If you would like to sign up for the ACH giving, please go to, <https://pekingrace.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/Financial-Form.pdf>, print the form, fill out the information, and give to the office. The ACH giving is taken out once a month.

# Thank You!

### From the Union Mission newsletter....

#### Special Thanks to Grace United Methodist:

*With our building still under construction, the Mission was not able to host basketball again this winter. Grace United Methodist is allowing us to have basketball at their facility! We are still accepting clinic registration for boys & girls in preschool and kindergarten and girls 1st – 3rd grade. Check out our Facebook page for more info!*

### UMF Bake Sale

United Women in Faith want to say thank you for supporting the UMW bake sale. Many women were heard expressing an appreciation for the generosity of the members of Grace Church! Thank you!

### Hunger Walk

Thanks to everyone who either walked or donated to this year's Mike Caringello's Hunger Walk held in September at Mineral Springs Park! The total raised for the event was an unbelievable \$3,128. It's amazing what we can accomplish together. Pekin Outreach Initiative, Salvation Army, Carol House of Hope, and GUMC Food Pantry each received \$782!



### December Altar Flowers

December 4

Given by Joanne and Marjorie Miller in loving memory of Doug Miller

December 11

Arranged by Jane Evans before her passing. It was to be in memory of her anniversary.

### Calendar Dates

Please make sure when your group schedules activities at the church, you let the office know all the details, especially when and where in the church the event is happening. It is preferred that you give the information to the office in writing. We do have a form you can fill out to make sure all information is included.

Please be direct about any needs the event may have or extra spaces that might be used. With outside groups using our facilities, we want to make sure the church members spaces are reserved. If you go to the **website**, <https://pekingrace.com/>, **and** do not see your event on the calendar, it is likely that the space was not reserved. Please let the office know.

### Kroger Rewards

If you shop at Kroger, did you know you can link your reward card to the Grace Church organization? Once you do this, Kroger donates a certain percentage to Grace United Methodist Church. For the third quarter, the church received \$61.50 from those who have signed up and shopped at Kroger. The community rewards sends out payments 4 times a year. This amount may not seem like much, but it helps to create the amazing programs we offer here at Grace. If you haven't already registered it would be an easy way to up your financial giving. For more information or to sign up go to:

<https://www.kroger.com/i/community/community-rewards>

**Amazon also offers a program similar to this called Amazon Smiles.**

### Charge Conference

We made it through the charge conference! If you are interested in seeing the forms that were given to the leadership this information is available to you-just ask at the office for a packet. At Methodist Churches, the information is considered public; you just need to ask.

The conference opened with praise and worship, followed by our very own Pastor inspiring the conference to look outside of the usual, be creative, and work together to make connections that God can use in a phenomenal way.

Our packet of forms was approved and turned into the bishop. In addition, Grace Church received a certificate for being a Five Star Mission Church for 2021. Not all churches are able to do this. We are thankful for the people of Grace working together to achieve this.

A five star church does the following:

- Pays 100 percent of its apportionments
- General advance or UMCOR Projects
- Conference Advance Special Projects
- Methodist Missionary support
- Three or more UMC Special Sundays

For more information on what this means check out <https://www.igrc.org/fivestar>

### Sermon Series

The Christmas sermon series is called "Miracles Happen at Christmas". We will be taking a closer look at the Christmas Story. This series reminds us of the miracles of Christmas in the simple and the profound.

### Book Club

Book Club will meet on Tuesday, December 13 at 10:00am in the library at Pekin Estates. For the December meeting, everyone can choose their own Christmas themed story to share with the group. For more information or if you have any questions, please call Sandy Isenburg at 309-241-1411.

### East Bay Winter Camp

December 9-December 11  
Who: youth in grades 4-12  
Where: at East Bay!  
Register online at:

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

Join them for campfire, games, bible study, snacks, swimming, and hopefully snow!  
Call 309-365-7531 for more information.

### District Restructuring

IGRC is going through a restructuring process. It has been approved that our group will be going from 10 districts down to five districts. Our leaders continue to ask that we pray for them as the restructuring process continues.

*Gracious and merciful God, we come before You acknowledging that Your ways are higher than ours and Your wisdom is greater than ours. While we love and care deeply for our communities and congregation, Your Love for the people of and in IGRC is greater than ours. We also know that You do nothing except in believing in prayer. So, we are calling out to You and asking for You to breakthrough in new and fresh ways. Reveal to us and our leaders Your will, Your guidance, Your direction. Bring Your wisdom as we seek to restructure in ways that will allow us to be more faithful and fruitful in making disciples of Jesus the Christ that will lead to our world being transformed in God-glorifying ways. Thank You, in advance, for working in and through us to accomplish Your plans and purposes. Please speak for Your servant is listening. Amen*

### The Current

The Current is a publication put out by the United Methodist Church. We receive a certain number of copies free based on our in person worship attendance. The church is not utilizing all of these copies. If you are interested in reading and receiving *The Current* please let the office know. We will sign you up! Sign-up will be on a first come, first serve basis.

### Grace Café Correction

Grace Café will be moving to the first Saturdays of the month and will not start until March. If you are interested in more information, please talk to Brenda Nelson or Kyle Nelson. The program is still in need of a few people to help serve and clean-up after this program.

### Townhall Meeting

December 4 will be the final townhall meeting of the year. The meeting will be held between the services. If you go to second service you will need to be to the church by 10:00 a.m. for this meeting. In order to keep people of the church informed, the board has agreed to hold four question and answer meetings over the year. They will talk about what they have been focusing on, where they are in the established goals, and the vision for the future.

### Angel Tree

The angels went out on the angel tree November 27. There still are a few left. If you take an angel, please make sure to return the gift by Sunday, December 11. You may return the gifts next to the tree in the lobby. All gifts will be moved into the office for safe keeping. The gifts will be sorted into their family groups the next week. Volunteers will deliver all gifts on December 18. If you are interested in helping to deliver gifts, please let the office know by December 11. They can pass along your contact information.

### UMW General Meeting

All women are welcome to attend the UMW General Christmas Meeting. It will be December 8, in the hospitality area at 1:00pm.

### Grace Food Pantry Dates

Grace Drive-Thru Pantry dates have been set and posted to the website for the 2022-2023 season. <https://pekingrace.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/Food-pantry-single-sheet-2022-2023.pdf>

### Upper Rooms

We still have a few Upper Rooms that are not being utilized. Remember these are free to pick up. They are located on the rack in the entry way by the office. January and February are now available along with a few December issues. Please help yourself to this daily devotional! We have regular and large print options.

### Christmas Eve Offering

As you look for the North Star this holiday season, we hope you open your hearts to our two holiday projects. We contacted the administrators at Pekin District 108 to get their ideas on needs/ wants and were told shoes and socks! We have hopes to supply Pekin District 108 students with much needed socks and shoes.

Our goal is a pair of socks for every student...that is 3,000 pairs!! There will be boxes in the hospitality area for your donations of socks. We will gather these the month of December. Last date to donate socks will be Sunday, January 1.

The second project is the new mental health facility being built at Unity Point for youth. This facility will service young people from Tazewell, Woodford and Peoria county.

Our Christmas Eve offering will be divided between these two projects. Pekin District 108 will use the money received to purchase shoes and we will donate the other half to the Unity Point Mental Health Facility.

Our hope is that you will open your hearts to these two very worthy projects and help us put smiles on the young people in our community.

Your Christmas team,

Sue Crowell  
Jan Darnell  
Brenda Nelson  
Linda Stoner  
Chelsea Tennel

### Radical Winter Break

Radical will not be meeting December 25 and January 1 due to the holidays. They will not meet December 8 due to a winter retreat opportunity. Ask Greta for more information if you are interested in attending. The regular Radical schedule will resume January 15, 4:00pm-6:00pm in the Mason Building.

### Christmas Activities

**Children's Program**, December 3, GFFLC, 6:30PM

**Evening by the Fire** Contemporary Program, December 11, GFFLC, 7PM

**Choir Cantata**, December 18, Sanctuary, 11AM

### Christmas Eve Services

1:30pm, GFFLC

4:00pm, GFFLC

11:00pm, Sanctuary

### Holiday Services

Christmas Day we will only have one service in the sanctuary at 9:00am. It will be Pajama Christmas! Feel free to come in your Christmas Pajamas!

### Christmas Eve Service Options

We will have the usual traditional services here at Grace. We will have a 4pm service in the GFFLC and an 11pm service in the sanctuary. We will also be trying out a new service time this year. There will be a 1:30pm service in the GFFLC. There will be no 5:30pm chapel service this weekend due to the special Christmas Eve services.

### No Tuesday Email December 27

Tuesday email or mailing will not be sent on December 27. Look for the mailing schedule to resume the following week. January Grace Notes will be published late due to the holiday. Look for it the second week of January.

### Office Hours Over the Holidays

The offices hours for the staff between Christmas and New Years will be flex hours, so they can spend time with their families. Please call ahead and make appointments during this time so that you are guaranteed someone will be in the office. The office phone is 309-347-7131.

### Office Closed

The office will be closed on December 26 and January 2. We hope you all have a wonderful and blessed holiday season!

<b>Braden Spears</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>Jerry Dunbar</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Theresa Wicker</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>Patrick Burks</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Gloria Johnson</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>Drake Wallace</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Jerry Potts</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>Mason Tennell</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Marianne Oltmann</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>Patricia Knight</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Luke Stoner</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>Jimmy Byrd</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Tyler Kennemer</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>Jim Harrison</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Linda Garman</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>Jane Smith</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Connie Disney</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>Gary Heiser</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>Randy McDaniels</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>Mary Ellen Bevenour</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>Edgar Sandoval</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>Cynthia Spicher</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>Jack Wyman</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>Jodi Trombini</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>Jeremiah Thies</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>Mike Gazza</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>Brittany Cox</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>Gene Horton</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>Morgan McDaniels</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>Tom Booth</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>Sarah Hunter</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>Jill Powell</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>Lainey Volz</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>Kathy Brush</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>Bailee Allsup</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>Bruce Burks</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>Mathieu DeCanter</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>Ron Weyhrich</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>Belen Alexander</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>Greg Ries</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>Danielle Towne</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>Ory Patterson</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>Kelly Orrick</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>Cassandra Towne</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>Katie Bashary</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>Janet Ray</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>Tana Collins</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>Adam Towne</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>Kenny Wiggins</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>Jillian Plunkett</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>Rachel Marsden</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>Logan Betzelberger</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>Chris Booher</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>Carla Jacobson</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>Leila Bashary</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>Barbara Faichney</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>Mike Williamson</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>Mike Burks</b>	<b>31</b>
<b>Jessica Kennemer</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>Christina Lenox</b>	<b>31</b>
<b>Nancy Hangartner</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>Emily Ranney</b>	<b>31</b>





# Connect!

601 N. 4th St.  
Pekin, IL  
309-347-7131  
secretary@pekingrace.org  
pekingrace.org

**Worship Times**  
**Saturdays 5:30pm**  
**Sundays 9:00am & 11:00am**

## Prayer Concerns

Brittany Sharp

Carol Moorhouse Dahlgren

Duane Hill

For the family of Joyce Antonini on  
her passing

Kyree Travis

Lee Oltmann

Charlie Stroemer

Les Seman

Margarete Hall

Mark Weber

Nancy Ridgeway

Norma Bell

Paul Pearson

Ronald Weyhrich

William Keltner

**Saturday, December 3**  
Kids Program, 6:00pm-7:30pm

**Sunday, December 4**  
Townhall Meeting, 10:00am-11:00am

**Thursday, December 8**  
United Women in Faith General Meeting  
Hospitality Area 1pm

**Sunday, December 11**  
Return Angel Tree Gifts  
Evening by the Fire, 7pm, GFFLC

**Thursday, December 15**  
Drive-through Food Pantry at 4:00pm

**Saturday, December 17**  
Cantata Rehearsal, 9:00am-12:00pm

**Sunday, December 19**  
Choir Cantata, 11:00am

**Saturday, December 24**  
Christmas Eve Services  
1:30pm, 4pm, 11pm

**Sunday, December 25**  
Christmas Day Service, 9:00am, Sanctuary  
Only one service this day

**Saturday, December 31**  
Drive-thru Food Pantry at 11:00am

**Saturday, December 31**  
Chapel Service is cancelled

**Sunday, January 1**  
Only one New Years Day Service, 9:00am,  
GFFLC