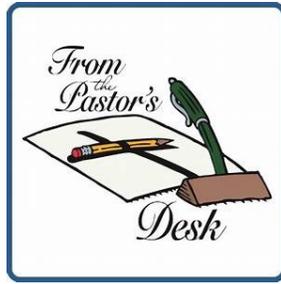

January
2022

GRACE NOTES
YOUR ACCESS TO
GRACE CHURCH
NEWS & EVENTS



*Lay Leader
Report*

*Grace UMC
Administrative
Council Minutes
for November
2021*

GRACE NOTES

Gnosticism

When we read Paul's letters, we find that he often warned of "different gospels" and of those who followed false teachings.

"How can some of you say that there is no resurrection of the dead. . ." (1 Corinthians 15:12-19). "See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the elemental spiritual forces of this world rather than on Christ" (Colossians 2:8).

"I am astonished that you . . . are turning to a different gospel - which is really no gospel at all." (Galatians 1:6).

In 1 John 4:2-3, John also clarified that many false prophets do not acknowledge that Jesus Christ had come in the flesh from God.

Who were they pursuing in these other gospels and what were their messages?

Answering these questions is an important part of our learning about the canonization of the New Testament, because those heretics in the second century significantly influenced the early Christian Church.

One of the chief heretical belief systems was Gnosticism. Derived from the Greek word for "knowledge," gnosis, the term Gnosticism developed in the religious pluralism of the Hellenistic world and flourished from the second to the fifth centuries.

The primary information about the gnostic community was discovered in 1945. A local farmer named Muhammed Al-Samman discovered a pottery jar containing thirteen leather-bound papyrus codexes at Nag Hammadi on the east bank of the Nile in Upper Egypt.

These gnostic documents, dating from about 400 CE, have for the first time permitted scholars to view the gnostic community from the gnostic perspective. Until that time, the Gnostics were known from the accounts of Christian opponents, namely the early church fathers.

According to scholar James Robinson, the texts Nag Hammadi may have belonged to a nearby Pachomian monastery and were buried after Saint Athanasius condemned the use of non-canonical books in his Festal Letter of 367 CE.

Gnostics saw themselves as Christians and produced a vast amount of literature. Much of their literature consists of their allegorical or spiritual interpretations of the OT and NT Scriptures.

One of the most striking Gnostic teachings was dualism, in which a radical distinction between good and evil, darkness and light, spirit and matter, and mind and body were made. The gnostics devalued the material world and believed that nothing from the material world could play a role in salvation.

Based on the dualism, Christ can never truly have taken flesh by a human woman and he can never have felt human suffering. His Passion and Resurrection in history were therefore not fleshly events. From the Gnostic point of view, most Christians were captive to a materialist blindness that kept them from seeing the truth.

The Gnostics' unique view of Jesus made them believe that Jesus had secretly communicated to his disciples and thus they produced "other (different) texts."

The Gospel of Thomas in Nag Hammadi is a good example. The Gospel of Thomas rendered Jesus' familiar parables but added additional words of teaching as they represented the devaluation of the material world.

In the Gospel of Thomas, those who fail to accept the invitation to the Wedding banquet include one who is buying a house and another who is collecting rent on a farm who he had just purchased. This parable concludes with Jesus' pronouncement: "Businessmen and merchants will not enter the place of my Father. (Gospel of Thomas 64. Quote from Encyclopedia of Early Christianity, 374). Ouch!

The Gnostics also tended to deny significance to the sacraments of baptism in water and the eucharist. They regarded the sacraments either as magic or as mere symbols for a subjective psychological state within the individual believer.

As Gnosticism became a real and serious challenge to the early Church during the second and third centuries, the leaders of the church attempted to determine more carefully the canon of scripture pondering what really constitutes a true gospel and a genuine apostolic writing.

Pastor Kyu

Sermon for January

January 16— Baptism and celebration of New Members
Born Again: Finding New Identity

January 23— Born Again: Why

January 30— Born Again: How

A Prayer for America

Father in Heaven, We, the people, in the land of the free and the home of the brave, desperately need You. Oh that we would leave our ways of seeking to be blessed and instead seek to bless others. We beg for Your guidance and wisdom for our leaders. We ask You to protect our land from enemies, both within and without. And we praise you for the freedom we have through the blood of Your Son. May Your plan be the desire of our nation. ***Amen***

*** Lay Leaders Report ***

Happy New Year! 2021 is done woohoo and 2022 here we come!! Wait, I'm not sure I'm ready to dive into a whole year, maybe the new month? Perhaps just this week? Ok, I'm content to tackle today!

Seriously, everyone on social media and the news are wiping 2021 away and with expectations for a better year are plunging into a new year. It's good to look forward with hope for our world and our own lives but I find in my own experience that I can't just wipe out 2021, especially the lessons that God allowed into my life. I shared this quote last week on Facebook from Oswald Chambers, his words are better than mine!
Wise words for looking into a new year.

"Our yesterdays hold broken and irreversible things for us. It is true that we have lost opportunities that will never return, but God can transform this destructive anxiety into a constructive thoughtfulness for the future. Let the past rest, but let it rest in the sweet embrace of Christ.

Leave the broken, irreversible past in His hands, and step out into the invincible future with Him."

I don't know what the New Year will bring for me or for you! Heck, I'm not sure what today holds! But I know that God holds each moment of today and of all the tomorrows that He gives me.

I will choose hope for the future because my Hope is in Him. He sees our past, our present and our future. What security, what confidence we can have when we trust Him with it all.

Happy New Day, Happy New Week, Happy New Month, Happy New Year!

Be blessed,

Laurie

Present: Pastor Kyu, Chair Joan Wollrath, Laurie Bedard, Peter Bedard, Mary Berlejung, Bob Carpenter, Durward Ellis, Kay Ellis, Charlotte Hutchins, Bart Selle, Pam Smith, Lisa Wood, Carolyn Wright

The meeting was opened on November 16, 2021 at 7 pm with three prayers by Joan Wollrath: Cherokee Blessing, Chinook prayer and Thanksgiving prayer.

Minutes: The September 30, 2021 minutes were read and approved as written.

Committee Reports

Finance/Treasurer/Endowment report: Peter reported for Shawn; financial status on handouts were reviewed and questions answered. Thanks to faithful supporters, things look good for us to break even without utilizing budgeted borrowing from the Endowment funds for the second year; allowing those contingency funds to continue to grow. The proposed 2022 budget was presented. After discussion Laurie motioned and Kay seconded that it be accepted as presented knowing the final figures would change, (not drastically) as we had not received the missions shares information from the district yet.

Trustees: Peter reported for Bernie: The Parish House was evaluated for asbestos and it was found to be present and falling thus an estimated removal is \$25,000 to 30,000 bringing the total estimate of tearing it down to near \$60,000. Since this is an asset of a nonprofit institution an outside agency must remove the asbestos versus if it was owned by an individual person. Federal, State and United Methodist Foundation grants are being researched to help with the costs. Since a grant would only partially cover costs the Capital campaign will continue. Parsonage: Today the sewer line failed and had to be partially dug up and repaired. Bernie, Peter and Gary Lunderville did the work with all donating labor; thus, the costs were renting a small backhoe and trailer to transport it plus replacement piping. However, it looks like the some of the problem is the leach field is failing so there is a follow-up evaluation next week. Depending on the extent this could be an expensive or very expensive fix requiring Endowment funds. Church roof: A section of the roof is leaking again. Roofers have returned twice and the fixes haven't lasted. Last week pictures were taken using a drone so no one would have to climb up there. Needed repairs will be evaluated with follow-up at our next meeting.

Staff-Parish: Pam reported there was a joint meeting with Danville 10 November to evaluate Pastor Kyu and request he be reappointed (or not) for 2022. After discussion all present voted to seek reappointment of Pastor Kyu. The reasons will be in the SPRC report for the upcoming Annual Conference 28 Nov. Compensation was also discussed with both salary and reimbursements remaining the same as 2021. This was Pastor Kyu's request as he stated he had an increase last year. From the finance committee (I am a member) the hourly wage for Carol (secretary 12 hours/week) and Bob (sexton up to 20 hours per week – he completes task in less than that time) will increase due to mandatory increase in minimum wage. They currently receive \$12/hour and the increase will be rounded up to \$13/hour.

Lay Leader/Prayer/Small Group Ministry: Laurie reported the Prayer ministry continues very active and is being used by non-members – a great outreach. Laurie reminded us that the Facebook AGG group used for prayer requests is a closed group. *It can only be seen* by members that she, as administrator, approves. For information to be seen by the “public” someone has to copy and post as the contents are not sharable. The On-line down loaded devotions, and study is going well, all are welcome, see Laurie for information.

Community Luncheon: Lisa reported the recent numbers are down slightly (15-20) and the meals continue as take out. They are sometimes sandwiches and other times hot meals such as stews. The main course is made at Grace with some sides/desserts donated by White's Market and Kingdom Community Services (KCS). The potential cook, mentioned last month, served once and did not return.

Lisa's in contact with KCS who fill the position. A volunteer is out with health issues so currently its Lisa and Aime Labounty preparing and distributing meals which is ok, but tiring; thus, she is contacting other volunteers for assistance.

Ministry: Pastor Kyu asked for input: sermons produce learning and the current series of looking at the Parables in a different way is especially liked. Music is always good, and duets by Jill and Denelle are enjoyed. The live stream service is coming across well and great for viewing when on vacation or at a later date. Thank-you Niquelle, Shawn, Curt and Bob. A concern was that when there is a one-time service time change (i.e. joint) KATV cannot adjust to, so future joint services at Grace will be at the time Grace meets.

Old/New Business:

Banner: Due to back orders a banner isn't available at this time; Pastor Kyu will continue to follow-up.

Small group Counseling At the last AD council, members approved Elizabeth Acito, a Mental Health Coach for mature teenagers/young adults, starting a small group counseling session one evening a week. Follow up: Pastor Kyu stated she is looking for referrals from Human Services and currently there are none for this program. The group will probably not occur until Spring or later with updates at that time. **Sunday School:** Marie Sullivan volunteered to work with the younger children and Nicquelle Timson with the preteens-teenagers. Laurie Bedard is mentoring them. Assistants may be needed such as last Sunday with additional children attending – what a blessing to have that need! Pastor Kyu and Laurie will recheck with folks that were able to assist on an as needed basis before COVID and see who is still available. **Leadership appointments for 2022:** COVID has thrown off the cycles for committees and their chairs position fillings. Pastor Kyu would like members, especially chairs to continue for 2022 if possible, so please let him know if this is a conflict. There are some openings, plus if anyone is interested in a committee do not hesitate to speak with him or the current chair. If members know someone who would be a good fit for a committee, please mention it to Pastor Kyu and/or suggest it to that person.

Schedules:

Annual Conference is Sunday Nov 28th, with District Superintendent Jill, by Zoom or phone. DUMC Special charge Conference is at 1:00, Joint SPRC at 1:30, Joint Church Conference at 2:00 and GUMC Special Charge Conference at 3:00. Pastor Kyu will provide the contact information when he has it.

Pastor Kyu will play for the **North Country Chorus Concert** held at Union Baptist Church at 3pm on 4 & 5 December. This will not affect his responsibilities at Grace.

Christmas: Church greening is Monday 22 November at 1030, Volunteers are always welcome. We hope to have a Christmas pageant Sunday December 19th. There will be a narration and hymns and no speaking parts so last-minute children and adults are encouraged and welcome to participate. The Christmas Eve service at Grace is at 7 pm. Masks will be available, but optional pending state guidance.

Meeting closed with Pastor Kyu asking attendees to state something they were thankful for. He started by stating he was greatly blessed by ministering at both Danville and Grace and that it feels like one team. Their different ministries are a blessing to him and the local communities. Working with Bob and Carol is also a blessing for the care and support they provide the church. He then said a prayer and led attendees in the Lord's prayer.

The next meeting is January 28, 2022 with a snow date of February 3rd.

Pamela L. Smith, Recorder

January 2022

December 2021							January 2022							February 2022						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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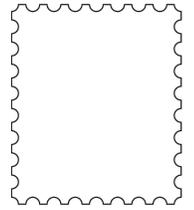
- Anniversaries
- Church
- Birthdays
- US Holidays
- Found in Mail
- Untitled
- Pastor's Schedule

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
26 Kwanzaa Pastor Kyu - 10:30 AM 1st Sunday after Christmas Day	27 Don and Ruth Bostic - 11:00 AM Community Luncheon	28 Nicquelle Timson Michael McGinnis	29 Gavin McGinnis Don Cota	30 - 7:00 AM Prayer & Share	31 Watchnight New Year's Eve	1 Feast of the Holy Name of Jesus New Year's Day
2 Emma Carlson - 10:30 AM Epiphany Sunday	3 Pastor Vacation					8
9 Pastor Vacation Gladys Konstantin - 10:30 AM Baptism of the Lord	10 - 11:00 AM Community Luncheon	11 Human Trafficking Awareness Day	12 Curt & Jill Geiger	13 - 7:00 AM Prayer & Share	14	15
16 Baptism and New Members - 10:30 AM 2nd Sunday after the Epiphany	17 Martin Luther King Jr. Day - 11:00 AM Community Luncheon	18 Gary Parker - 9:00 AM Week of Prayer for Christian Unity	19 Roger Damon - ... Week of Prayer for Christian Unity	20 - ... Week of Prayer for Christian Unity - 7:00 AM Prayer & Share	21 Sue Timson - ... Week of Prayer for Christian Unity	22 - ... Week of Prayer for Christian Unity
23 Ecumenical Sunday - ... Week of Prayer for - 10:30 AM 3rd Sunday after the	24 Julie Nadeau - ... Week of Prayer for - 11:00 AM Community Luncheon	25 - ... Week of Prayer for Christian Unity	26	27 - 7:00 AM Prayer & Share	28	29 Jean Maleski
30 - 10:30 AM 4th Sunday after the Epiphany	31 - 11:00 AM Community Luncheon	1 Lunar New Year	2 Groundhog Day	3 - 7:00 AM Prayer & Share	4 Pam Franchek	5



Grace

United Methodist Church
36 Central Street
St. Johnsbury, VT 05819
www.stjgracechurch.org



Join us for Worship — Sunday at 10:30 am

