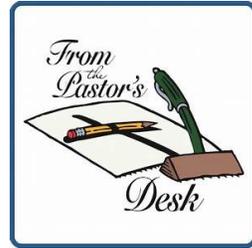

November
2021

GRACE NOTES
YOUR ACCESS TO
GRACE CHURCH



A
*Thanksgiving
Day Prayer*

*Bringing
Down the
House*

GRACE NOTES

Challenges in the Second/Third Century

Our inquiry of seeking the origin of the canonization of the Bible is a difficult task. Why?

First, the early Church after Paul's time was not one single church in one city. Through Paul's missionary work, the Good News was spread across the Mediterranean Sea and many churches were established in Egypt, Syria, Asia Minor (Today's Turkey), Greece and even Rome.

The first Christians also did not have one single volume of the Bible. As the Hebrew Bible, the Old Testament, was not fully recognized yet until at least 90 CE, they read fragments of documents, witnesses and letters. Some of those writings were widely circulated and read in various assemblies across a wider geographical area, while some others - known and unknown - were lost.

Second, no one in the first century CE was planning the canon. There was no selection Committee with an absolute authority to make the decision for which documents should be included into the canon. No one had mapped out a timeline to finish the project, and of course, no secretaries and no minutes existed. Much of the process was unofficial and uncoordinated. It is, therefore, extremely difficult to trace back the precise process of how the canon was formulated. Some parts of the process remain elusive to us.

The idea of creating a canon, or collection of authoritative writings, emerged gradually over centuries. The New Testament canon was ratified in 397 CE at the Council of Carthage in North Africa.

There was a significant component that pressured the early Church. Several heretical groups and persons had great influence on the church life, teaching and mission.

These heretical groups were not insignificant in number and their writings may have outnumbered those in so-called orthodox churches throughout the second century. According to some scholars argument, the early church was moved to identify its sacred Scriptures, the New Testament, because of those heretics.

By the mid-second century, in response to heretical movements, the church gradually recognized the usefulness of a body of Christian literature for its life and worship.

The different teachings of the gospel had already been spread out during the second half of the first century. Yet that was just the beginning. More serious challenges threatened the apostolic early Church. Three groups were prominent: 1. Marcion and Marcionites; 2. Gnostics and Gnosticism; 3. Montanists.

Beginning in January 2022, we are going to learn about those heretics' belief and teachings.

Your Pastor Kyu

November Worship and Ministry Schedule

November 7 : All Saints Sunday with Communion

November 14 : Stewardship Sunday

November 21 : Christ the king/ Thanksgiving Sunday

November 28 : 1st Advent & Annual Church Conference

Capital Campaign Update

In October we have raised \$9,076.00!!

The finance team wants to send our thanks and blessings to the congregation for the money raised so far. The campaign "Bringing Down the House" is on going until we reach our goal of \$30,000. Again, thank you for your ongoing support and prayer!

*** Lay Leaders Report ***

November is here! The grayest, cloudiest month we are told. The colorful leaves of October are almost all on the ground, the empty limbs of the hardwoods reveal busy squirrel activity every day as they scurry to gather food for the coming winter months. Preparations for snowy weather are evident for little creatures and people alike. There's wood to stack, windows to seal, plants to protect, snowblowers to get ready, winter tires to put on our vehicles, etc.

I find myself bringing out comfy, fluffy blankets to drape on sofas and chairs and candles are lit as the sun disappears so much earlier.

I don't find November gloomy at all! I think it's a time to slow down a little after very full outdoor summer days and busy early fall weeks of raking and cleaning up. I like the excuse that some gray, chilly days give of enjoying the cozy warmth of being inside. I like to look forward to Thanksgiving at the end of the month by thinking of reasons I'm thankful to God each day. So many blessings surround us, choosing to notice them each day dispels any possible gloominess.

The festive season of Advent will arrive before we barely blink. Don't let November be just a place holder month, why not turn the whole month into a thankful celebration? Choose at least one thing to thank God for each morning, then focus on that one thing all day! I bet your thankfulness will transform the gray days to ones brightened by God's smiles and warmed by His love.

Blessings, Laurie

A Thanksgiving Day Prayer

Gracious God, You are good. You can be nothing else but good...even when life doesn't feel so good to me. And I'm so grateful! I'm so grateful for those special someones you put in my life. I'm so grateful for warm hugs and kind words. I'm so grateful for work to do and time to rest. I'm so grateful for mouths to feed and hands to hold. I'm so grateful for each one who cheers me on and lifts me up. I'm so grateful for a church to worship in and Christians to fellowship with. I'm so grateful that in my weakness, grace abounds. I'm so grateful that in my brokenness, mercy reigns. Oh, Lord, this Thanksgiving Day, I'm so grateful for all the goodness in my life...the obvious and the masked. I'm so grateful for You! Please accept this humble sacrifice of thanks-giving I'm offering today and transform it into a life of LIVING thanks every day. **Amen**

Grace UMC Administrative Council Minutes

Present: Pastor Kyu, Chair Joan Wollrath, Laurie Bedard, Peter Bedard, Bob Carpenter, Cathy Conte, Charlotte Hutchins, Beulah McGinnis, Bart Selle, Pam Smith, Bernie Timson, Lisa Wood, Carolyn Wright

The meeting was opened on September 30, 2021 at 7 pm with a devotion, Bless Others With Your Talents read by Joan Wollrath

Minutes: The June 24, 2021 minutes were read and approved as written.

Committee Reports

Finance/Treasurer/Endowment report: Shawn reviewed the financial status on handouts he provided for attendees, reporting the current years income and expenses are in good shape. The Endowment funds budgeted trustee advances have not been needed to date. Thank-you to those faithfully giving; pledges in are about at 91+ % for the year. The snow removal/sanding expense may exceed the budgeted amount if Nov/Dec are heavy snow months. Cathy Conte reported there is \$199,889.00 in Endowment contingency funds.

Trustees: Parish House Bernie has received a general estimate of \$30,000 required for the Take Down the House (Parish) project; to include state and local permits, demolition, fill in the cellar hole, reseed or pave. Also, salvageable items like radiators and furnace will need to be removed. When the monies are available and the ground not frozen final bids will be sought as contractors, understandably, don't want to be held to a bid for a project that may be occurring months later. There are \$2301.00 in donations in this account. Financing could involve borrowing from United Methodist Foundation, using our Endowment Funds (& repaying for future contingencies), starting a Capital Campaign. Members elected to start a Capital Campaign beginning this Sunday the 3rd of October as borrowing would require pay back. The Finance committee meets November 10th and will further discuss this issue. Bart Selle, Finance Chair, will speak to this on Sunday. Sanctuary lights have been replaced and look good. Harry Byrnes, Bob's friend volunteered to climb the high step ladder to change the bulbs.

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 shares her Bible app and on-line daily devotion with follow-up discussion with interested folks with several using it. Prayer & Share Thursday morning group is back in person. Laurie hopes to restart the weekly evening Bible study about the end of October when she returns from vacation.

Community Luncheon: Lisa reported attendance had slightly increased and they are now feeding 20 plus folks. There is a new cook, Kirk Fenner, from the Baltimore area who started 3 months ago on a trial basis to see if it's a right fit for both parties. Lisa is hoping to start dining in the end of October or the first of November, but will need more volunteers; some servers (ability to stand for an estimated hour plus) and drivers to pick up produce and breads from local stores. Pick-ups take about 1 ½ hours and boxes may be heavy. They can come into the church via the elevator as needed. The more folks who pick up food on a rotational basis, the less frequent it needs to be done.

Ministry: Pastor Kyu asked for input: Opportunity to improve: Sometimes Pastor Kyu's voice gets too quiet especially during prayers and thus cannot be heard. Request is to try and remain louder spoken. Positive: The livestream broadcast has improved. There were no other comments re Pastor Kyu.

Other: Live stream ministry. Nicquelle stated that the Facebook live steam will continue but the slides projected on the church wall will not. After our free 3-month trial using the slides, the cost would be \$180 monthly or \$2,160 a year and it's felt there are better uses for our limited financial resources, members of the AD council agreed.

Old/New Business:

Internet: Bob and Pastor Kyu stated the new contractor is less expensive and works better

