

HOPEWELL

UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

'A Place to Find Hope and Be Well'

20220 Hopewell Road

Mount Vernon, OH 43050

*Our mission is to make and mature disciples of Jesus Christ
and minister to the needs of others in His name.*

February – March 2023

Pastor's Ponderings -- *Pastor Mearle Griffith*

Grace Upon Grace

A few years back, I had the privilege to work with the denomination-wide effort to develop a missional understanding for the United Methodist Church. It involved several Bishops, Seminary Professors and other church leaders, The outcome was a document called "Grace Upon Grace", which has been studied widely across the church. It will take several months to break it down and highlight it in these upcoming columns for your study and enjoyment,



At the heart of Wesleyan/Methodist theology and practice is a profound understanding and vital experience of *grace*. While John and Charles Wesley shared an understanding of grace deeply rooted in Christian teaching and tradition, they provided distinctive emphases, which came to characterize Methodist teaching and preaching.

The drafters imagined that God's grace was constant like the waves of the ocean coming to shore in a never ceasing flow. That powerful image helps to understand God's action on our behalf.

Grace, as understood, experienced, and proclaimed by the United Methodists and others in the Wesleyan tradition, remains as relevant and transformative in the 21st century as in the 18th century.

GRACE: God's presence and power

John Wesley defined *grace* as God's "bounty, or favor: his free, undeserved favor, ... man having no claim to the least of his mercies. It was free grace that 'formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into him a living soul,' and stamped on that soul the image of God, and 'put all things under his feet.' ...

For there is nothing we are, or have, or do, which can deserve the least thing at God's hand."

The Book of Discipline defines grace as "the undeserved, unmerited, and loving action of God in human existence through the ever-present Holy Spirit."

Grace pervades all of creation and is universally present. Grace is not a gift that God packages and bestows on us and creation. Grace is God's presence to create, heal, forgive, reconcile and transform human hearts, communities and the entire creation.

Wherever God is present, there is grace! Grace brought creation into existence. Grace birthed human beings, bestowed on us the divine image, redeemed us in Jesus Christ and is ever transforming the whole creation into the realm of God's reign of compassion, justice, generosity and peace.

In his sermon "[The Scripture Way of Salvation](#)," John Wesley summarized his understanding of the work of grace in saving and transforming human existence. The sermon, published in 1765, contains parts of three earlier sermons — "[Salvation by Faith](#)," "[Justification by Faith](#)" and "[The Circumcision of the Heart](#)." In "The Scripture Way of Salvation," Wesley describes three movements or expressions of grace to create distinctive emphases for living fully in response to God's creating, healing, reconciling, and transforming activity.

In my next columns we will discuss the three types of grace.

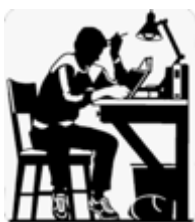
Wreaths Across America...including Hopewell – Donna Spinks



The Wreaths Across America was held at Hopewell to Honor those that have served our Country to, Remember those that have fallen, and to Teach the next generation the value of freedom. In all, 27 Veterans were honored with placement of wreaths. Ceremonial wreaths for each of the eight branches of service plus a wreath for the local First Responders were laid to include the Fire Department, Police officers, and Health Care workers. Attendance was great, and all donations were greatly appreciated.



Barnabas Project—Encouraging Our College Students – Donna Spinks/Linda Joseph



In the New Testament, Barnabas was known as the Encourager (Acts 11:22-26). The Hopewell congregation encourages our post-high school students—we know of at least five—through the Barnabas Project. During February, we will gather various and sundry snacks, candy, gift cards for gas or food, pens, highlighters, gum, facial tissues, microwave macaroni & cheese, notes of encouragement, and the like. Then in March, "We Care" packages will be sent to our students: Aidan, Jessie, Gina, Seth, and Emma—and others as they become known to us. Please place donated items in the box in the Sunday school room before Feb. 26.

United Methodist Scholarships Available -- Apply by March 1

Applications are now open for scholarships from the United Methodist Higher Education Foundation. Every year, UMHEF awards \$2+ million to students planning to attend one of the 100+ UM-related colleges, universities, and seminaries across the country. Don't let finances get in the way of achieving your dreams of a quality education! Learn more about UM Scholarships at <https://umhef.org/resources/media-resources/> or contact Pastor Griffith. Apply by March 1 at <https://umhef.org/apply>.



Valentine's Day & Love Divine –*Steve Manskar, Doctor of Ministry, retired pastor (submitted by Rev. Mearle Griffith)*

Love Divine, All Loves Excelling – Beloved hymn by Charles Wesley, 1747

Love divine, all loves excelling,
Joy of heaven, to earth come down,
Fix in us thy humble dwelling,
All thy faithful mercies crown!
Jesu, thou art all compassion,
Pure, unbounded love thou art;
Visit us with thy salvation!
Enter every trembling heart.

Come, almighty to deliver,
Let us all thy grace receive;
Suddenly return, and never,
Never more thy temples leave.
Thee we would be always blessing,
Serve thee as thy hosts above,
Pray, and praise thee without ceasing,
Glory in thy perfect love.

Finish then thy new creation,
Pure and spotless let us be;
Let us see thy great salvation
Perfectly restored in thee;
Changed from glory into glory,
Till in heaven we take our place,
Till we cast our crowns before thee,
Lost in wonder, love, and praise.

In this great Wesley hymn we sing of the power of love. Wesley reminds us that God is the source of all love. There is no love apart from God. Any love we humans are capable of giving and receiving is pure divine gift, whether we realize it or not. Sin renders humans incapable of love. But love is more powerful than sin. God freely shares the gift with us because he loves all of us as his own children. We need to be reminded that the love we receive today has its source from God. How we respond, and what we do with this gift, is entirely up to us.

Love is the power of God that saves, liberates, heals, and makes all things new.

God is love, and those who abide in love abide in God, and God abides in them. Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness on the day of judgement, because as he is, so are we in this world. There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear; for fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not reached perfection in love. We love because he first loved us. Those who say, 'I love God', and hate their brothers or sisters, are liars; for those who do not love a brother or sister whom they have seen, cannot love God whom they have not seen. The commandment we have from him is this: those who love God must love their brothers and sisters also. (1 John 4:16b-21).



Hopewell Birthdays

February

- 11 Brad Coon
- 13 Paul Helser
- 14 Karen Steinmetz
- 18 Leah Gourley

March

- 11 Sam Laymon
- 14 Mike Cedoz
- 14 Joanne Purcell
- 18 Penelope Wells
- 27 Dave Douglas



"Good for your heart, all the essential nutrients, controls cholesterol, and has antioxidants."

Hopewell Prayer Chain – Marsha Clayborne

The Prayer Chain is a way for us to share our joys and concerns in the congregation. Here is how it works: If you or someone you know needs prayer, call Pastor Mearle or Marsha Clayborne and they will get the prayer chain started. If you call someone and they don't answer the phone, please leave a message about the prayer request and call the next person in the prayer chain. Thank you.

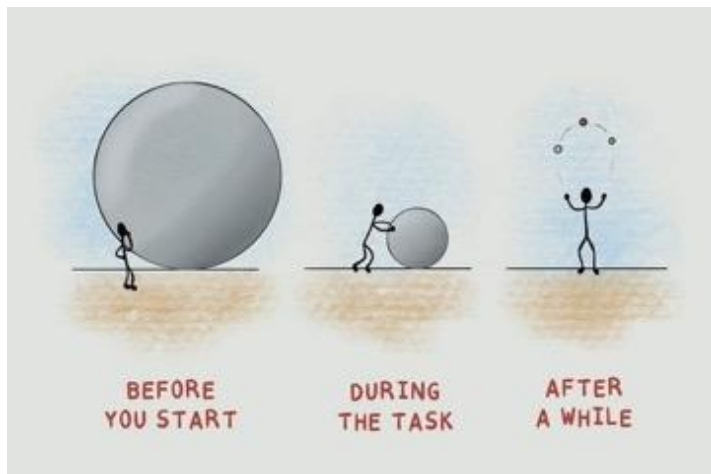
If someone wants to be added to the prayer chain list, please give Marsha Clayborne a call.

- | | |
|--------------------------|--------------|
| Pastor Mearle Griffith | 937-903-0912 |
| Marsha Clayborne | 740-501-5841 |
| Donna Spinks | 740-501-8616 |
| Joan Coon & Eleanor Doup | 740-504-6496 |
| Bev Lahmon | 740-397-2906 |
| Phyllis Gourley | 614-946-9489 |
| Bitsi Gourley | 740-975-0995 |
| Julie Britton | 937-243-5672 |
| Bob & Linda Joseph | 614-565-1102 |
| Jade Laymon | 740-398-6785 |
| Vicki Needham | 419-708-1562 |
| Cheryl McCracken | 740-398-1311 |
| Cary & Joanne Purcell | 614-570-7809 |
| Ellen Kaiser | 740-501-0023 |
| Erika Kanuckle Wolfe | 740-397-5515 |
| Bill Lawhon | 614-309-4350 |

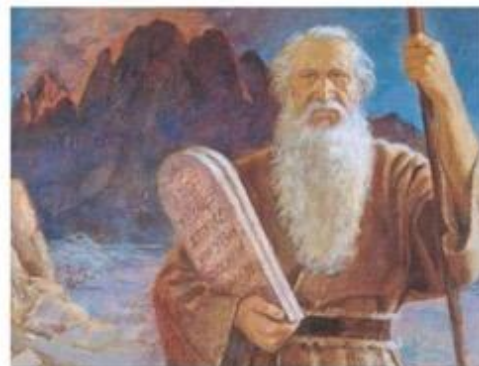
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...on the Web: www.mvhopewellumc.org

...on Facebook: www.facebook.com/HopewellUMCMtVernon



Technically, Moses was the first person to download files from the cloud to a tablet



Farewell to Pastor Lee

The Hopewell family bids a fond farewell to Pastor Lee and Audra Cubie who served this congregation with caring and compassion, humor and hard work since 2014. We wish Lee and Audra much happiness. They will always have a special place in our hearts. In addition to the photos below, please find others at the HUMC Web site www.mvhopewellumc.org.



Youth Yak 8-31-2014



Congregation home visit 8-2-2014



Sunrise service 4-21-2019



Candle lighting 5-2-2021



Last Sunday at Hopewell
1-1-2023

Lovely parting gift



Hail to Rev. Dr. Mearle Griffith

The Hopewell Church welcomes Rev. Dr. Mearle Griffith and his wife Jane to our little country church. We are honored by 'Pastor' Mearle's presence and humbled by the qualifications he brings to Hopewell and to South Vernon churches. His introductory brochure, outlining his life of service to the Lord will be posted to the HUMC Web site www.myhopewellumc.org.



First worship service at HUMC
1-8-2023



Introducing Rev. Dr. Mearle Griffith

Personal Information

In 1968, the Rev. Dr. Mearle Griffith married Mary Jane Batchelder, a now retired educator. They have two adult daughters. After an active life of service throughout the United Methodist connection, higher education platforms and other Christian agencies, Rev. and Mrs. Giffith have retired in Mt. Vernon, Ohio. They are blessed to have their granddaughters nearby as both their daughters' families live in Knox County. Rev. Griffith is the current executive director of the Hope Now Furniture Bank in Knox County.

Rev. Griffith has been the recipient of numerous awards for excellence in communications, marketing and public relations. And in 1992, he was honored as the Alumni of the Year with the Herbert W. Manning Award from University of Dubuque Theological Seminary.

Rev. Griffith is an asset wherever the Lord directs his path. His skill set includes working with nonprofit organizations, team building, fundraising, leadership, and preaching. Under his pastoral leadership, congregations of all sizes experience both growth in numbers, discipleship and service. He has led churches in mission and outreach to their communities and beyond.

Kroger Community Rewards – Donna Spinks

This is a reminder to enroll in the Kroger Community Rewards program to benefit HUMC.

The web site to enroll is www.krogercommunityrewards.com, and the church ID is TE721. If you have any problems, call 1-800-KROGERS.

In 2022, Hopewell received \$269.35 from Kroger Community Rewards!

February 2023

◀ Jan 2023

Mar 2023 ▶

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 -Nat'l Freedom Day	2 Groundhog Day -National Tater Tot Day	3 -Nat'l Missing Persons Day	4 -Nat'l Thank a Mail Carrier Day
5 -Ice Cream for Breakfast Day 9:30 Worship/Holy Communion	6 -Nat'l Frozen Yogurt Day	7 -Nat'l Send a Card to a Friend Day	8 -Nat'l Kite Flying Day	9 -National Pizza Day	10 -World Pulses Day	11 -Thos. Edison's B'day B'day: Brad Coon
12 Super Bowl 9:30 Worship/Refreshments	13 -World Radio Day B'day: Paul Heiser	14 Valentine's Day B'day: Karen Steinmetz	15 -Singles Awareness Day	16 -Nat'l Almond Day	17 -Random Acts of Kindness Day	18 -Pluto Day B'day: Leah Gourley
19 -Int'l Tug of War Day 9:30 Worship	20 Washington's Birthday	21 -Shrove Tuesday	22 Ash Wednesday	23 -Nat'l Banana Bread Day	24 -Skip the Straw Day	25 -Nat'l Pancake Day
26 -Nat'l Pistachio Day 9:30 Worship	27 -World Non-Governmental Org. Day	28 -World Spay Day	-Nat'l Cancer Prevention Month -Black History Month -Nat'l Fasting February -Free and Open Source Software Month -American Heart Month			

March 2023							Abr 2023 ▶
◀ Feb 2023	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
-Women's History Month -American Red Cross Month -National Nutrition Month				1 -World Music Therapy Day	2 -Read Across America	3 -World Wildlife Day	4 -Nat'l Hug a G.I. Day
5 -Learn What Your Name Means Day 9:30 Worship/Holy Communion	6 -Nat'l Oreo Cookie Day	7 -Nat'l Be Heard Day	8 Int'l. Women's Day	9 -Nat'l Get Over It Day	10 -Nat'l Hug Your Dog Day	11 -Nat'l Worship of Tools Day B'day: Sam Laymon	
12 Daylight Saving Begins 9:30 Worship/ Refreshments	13 -Nat'l Good Samaritan Day	14 -Pi Day B'day: Joanne Purcell B'day: Mike Cedoz	15 -World Consumer Rights Day	16 -Nat'l Corn Dog Day	17 St Patrick's Day	18 -Nat'l Biodiesel Day B'day: Penelope Wells	
19 -Int'l Read to Me Day 9:30 Worship	20 Start of Spring (Spring Equinox)	21 -World Poetry Day	22 -Nat'l Goof Off Day	23 -Nat'l Tamale Day	24 -World Tuberculosis Day	25 -Nat'l Medal of Honor Day	
26 -Purple Day 9:30 Worship	27 -Nat'l Joe Day B'day: Dave Douglas	28 -Respect Your Cat Day	29 -Nat'l Vietnam Veterans Day	30 -Nat'l Doctors Day	31 -Nat'l Crayon Day		

Hopewell United Methodist Church
c/o Bob & Linda Joseph, newsletter editors
12511 Thomas Road
Monroeville, OH 44847



Quilt by Joanne Purcell, presented to retiring Pastor Lee Cubie by Mickey Gourley.