



*Blow the trumpet in Zion; sound the alarm on my holy mountain! Let all the inhabitants of the land tremble, for the day of the Lord is coming, it is near... Yet even now, says the Lord, return to me with all your heart. Joel 2:1, 12a.*

The Apostle Paul pleads...“We entreat you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God.”

2 Corinthians 5:20b

Friends in Christ,

The season of Lent will soon be upon us and with it will come my encouragement to each of you to join with me in a spiritual pilgrimage of faith. This pilgrimage will begin on Ash Wednesday, February 17<sup>th</sup> with a service of confession and reconciliation at 7:30 PM where we will recognize our need to seek forgiveness and renewal of our innermost spirit. Lenten Devotionals “From Fear to Love” by Henri J. Nouwen will be made freely available for your daily devotional practice of scripture reading, reflection and prayer.



The church Annual Meeting on Feb. 21<sup>st</sup> will include a program on spiritual renewal and its benefits presented by Rev. David Young. The Rev. David Young is an expert in the field of Spiritual Renewal and was the leader of the Carroll UCC Spiritual Renewal Seminar last October. Please make every effort to be at this important event which will fill your hunger for food through lunch and give you a hunger for deepening your faith experience. Additional Lenten Programs of: a book study on “The Last Week...The day-by-day account of Jesus’ Final Week in Jerusalem”, and a Lenten Study on “Faithfully Facing Dying...A Lenten Study Guide on Critical Issues and Decisions for Members of the United Church of Christ” will be offered. (Copies of “The Last Week” may be purchased in the church office for the discounted price of \$10.00). Check your bulletin or call the church office for details on the time and place of these gatherings. All of these offerings are part of a plan to assist us in renewing our faith and spirit as we discern how God may be calling the Grace UCC Congregation to spiritual renewal.

May God bless us in this endeavor.

Pastor Steve

**The Grace United Church of Christ Annual Congregational Meeting is set for Sunday, February 21<sup>st</sup> following the Church Service. Lunch will be served promptly following the end of worship. Annual reports will be given out for your preview at least two weeks prior to the meeting. We hope to quickly approve the reports as printed and move into our program on *Renewing the Spirit at Grace*. Your attendance at this meeting is very important to the future of our church. Please make plans to join us. Childcare will be provided.**

**FROM THE CONSISTORY PRESIDENT,  
Happy reNEWal Year**

We are just a few weeks into 2010. A new year, a new decade, and a new set of hopes for a brighter future. By now many of you are working on your New Year's resolutions and some have already been broken or forgotten. Most people have at least one resolution that is important to them. You may already be working on it, or thinking about getting started. Whatever your resolutions, I wish you the strength to accomplish them.

Resolutions are goals we give ourselves to take care of something or change something in our lives. Completing or even working on our goals provides us with a change or renewal to our life. The Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary defines renewal as "The act or process of renewing" and "Something used for renewing; an expenditure that betters existing fixed assets." In the case of our resolutions, the asset being renewed is ourselves.

Last year Pastor Steve informed the Consistory about an event he attended where he heard Rev. Dr. David Young. Dr. David S. Young is an author and advisor on Spiritual Renewal to various churches. Several members of the Consistory and the congregation were fortunate to hear and discuss church renewal with Dr. Young at a one day seminar sponsored by the Carroll County UCC churches. His book, "Springs of Living Water (Christ-Centered Church Renewal)" was the focus of the seminar.

Based on feedback from the members attending the seminar, the Consistory agreed to begin a church renewal program. As a result of this decision, Pastor Steve made church renewal a part of his sabbatical studies. Grace Church will also be privileged to have Dr. Young as our keynote speaker at the Annual Meeting to be held following worship on Sunday, February 21, 2010. Anyone wishing to review or read Dr. Young's "Springs of Living Waters" please contact Pastor Steve or me and we will find a copy for you.

The Consistory and the members who attended the seminar pray you will join us in this renewal adventure. We know it will uplift you and renew you spiritually as an individual and us as a congregation. Please make it your resolution to join us on this journey of renewal.

I am sure that you are aware of the earthquake in Haiti. The UCC has sent a large contribution of funds to the relief effort and has started the Haiti Earthquake Relief Fund. The fund will collect donations to go for humanitarian relief efforts for the victims. There are many governmental, religious, and charitable organizations which are soliciting monies for the victim relief. Unfortunately there are also scammers working to make money from the disaster. I encourage you to support the relief effort in any way you feel comfortable, but be sure you are sending your funds to a reputable agency. Lay Life and Work is coordinating the collection of items for the assembly of hygiene kits which are badly needed.

I would like to thank the members who are going off the Consistory for their time and faithful work for the church. I would also like to thank the new members, especially those coming on for the first time, for dedicating their time and talents to the church and its work in Christ's name.

Consistory meetings are always open to members of the congregation and Consistory members are always interested and willing to listen to suggestions or concerns regarding Grace Church.

May God's Grace Go with You – Michael G., Consistory President

## CONSISTORY HIGHLIGHTS

Highlights from the January 5<sup>th</sup> Consistory meeting:

Consistory Officers for 2010: President, Mike G.; Vice-President, Anna M.; Secretary, Bonnie M.; Chief Deacon, Mike C. Bonnie M., Mike C., and Don W. are serving their first time on Consistory. Welcome, and we look forward to your involvement. Michelle V. has also joined Consistory.

The Consistory will be working to fill the remaining Elder and Deacon positions. The Elder position is a two year term and the Deacon position is for one year to fill out the term of a previous member. If anyone is interested in either of these positions please contact Mike G.

- Members agreed to repeat the Consistory Retreat that was held last year. Members who attended the retreat last year indicated it was very rewarding.
- The Annual Meeting will be Sunday February 21, 2010, following worship. We will have Dr. David Young, author of “Springs of Living Waters”, as our keynote speaker. Dr. Young is a very motivating and spiritual speaker. We pray that as many members as possible will attend.

Next Consistory meeting will be February 2, 2010 @ 7:00pm. Meetings are open to all members of the Congregation.

### **SAY GOODBYE TO:**

- ***DAFFODIL DAYS*** – The South Atlantic Division (9 states) of the American Cancer Society has decided not to participate in Daffodil Days this year but hopes we will donate to the cause in other ways. At Grace Church, we had participated since 1998 with daffodils - bunches ,pots, and 'bears'. This nationwide community-based voluntary health organization is dedicated to eliminating cancer as a major health problem by preventing cancer, saving lives and diminishing suffering from cancer, through research, education, advocacy and service.
- ***FOOD LION - SHOP AND SHARE*** – We were notified on January 20, 2010, that our Learning Center is no longer eligible under the Food Lion restructured program that was instituted January 1, 2010!!!! It now is for accredited private and public schools with kindergarten through 12th grades. Thank you so much to the 157 people who had signed up for us generating about \$500.00 yearly.
- ***TWO PAPER RETRIEVERS*** – We were notified in December, 2009, that the Abitibi Company would be discontinuing paper collection due to the economy and only be servicing sites 25 miles from their base in Baltimore. The given date for the bins removal was January 8<sup>th</sup> but they were still here as of January 24, 2010. We are actively seeking other collection agencies and will keep you posted.



## CLYDE L. AND IRENE F. HESSON SCHOLARSHIP FUND

It is scholarship time again. Any member who needs a Hesson scholarship application can pick one up in the church office (Scholarship Box) or see Ellen L. Just as a reminder...scholarships are awarded to students who desire to further their education and shall not be limited to students entering college. Applicants must be members of Grace United Church of Christ, Taneytown, Maryland, or reside within the area served by the Taneytown Post Office (i.e. Zip Code 21787). Scholarships are awarded in accordance with the following priorities:

- First - members of Grace United Church of Christ, Taneytown, Md.
- Second - ministerial students
- Third - remaining applicants

All applications are due **on or before April 1<sup>st</sup>**. If you have any questions or concerns, please call Ellen L. at 410-751-1490.

## YOUTH NEWS

The youth of Grace have some exciting events planned for the month of February. Please mark your calendars for the following events.

**Sunday, February 7, 2010** – “Souper Bowl of Caring” – the youth will be collecting canned goods and money for the needy in Carroll County. All proceeds go to local food banks so please give generously.



**Sunday, February 14, 2010** – “Festival of the Christian Home” – from 2:00 – 4:00p.m. – To be held at St. Paul’s UCC in Westminster, MD. This event is open to all families and is sure to be a fun time for all. There will be a chocolate fountain (YUM!), cultural themed snacks, dancing and crafts. If you would like to attend, please plan on bringing a snack based on the heritage/ethnicity of your family. This event is being planned and prepared entirely by the youth of various UCC churches.

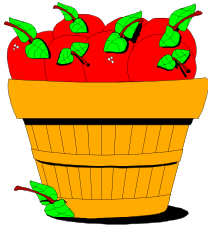
**Sunday, February 21, 2010** – 6:00 – 9:00 p.m. – tubing at Ski Liberty. Please meet at the church at 5:00 p.m. You will need money for dinner/snacks. Wear warm snow gear!

**Friday, February 26, 2010** at 6:00 p.m. – **Saturday, February 27** at 6:00 p.m. – 30 Hour Famine - this annual event is a definite favorite of the youth! We are planning to raise our biggest amount ever so be on the lookout for youth seeking donations! We will also be making many announcements in church as well as doing a presentation after the famine on **Sunday, February 28**. This event is sponsored through World Vision and helps the hungry children all over the world. This year our funds will be going directly to the children of Haiti. Please help the youth on this worthwhile mission. Please feel free to see Bonnie M. or Michelle V. for additional information.



And as always, if you have any ideas for projects, fundraising or events, please see Bonnie M. or Michelle V. If you would like to volunteer your time or talents or just want to “hang out” and see what we do, please come to any of these events and check out how much fun we have

## !!!APPLE DUMPLING ALERT!!!!



The Apple Dumpling Gang will be producing apple dumplings the first week March (5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup>). Check your bulletin! If you wish to order dumplings, either made with sugar or Splenda, call Vesta R. (410-756-2432) by **February 28<sup>th</sup>**. This is a project of Lay Life and Work. Your support is greatly appreciated.

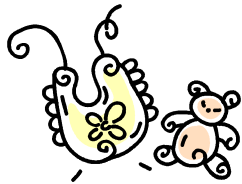
Oh, and remember to order lots as they do freeze very well!!

### HEY, MEMBERS OF GRACE!

Are you looking for a way to offer your time, talents or money? Your church can use your help in many ways. Some of the areas where we need some extra help include:

**Greeters** will greet members and visitors of the church as they enter for worship and hand them a bulletin. We need greeters at both entrances. The sign-up sheet is on the bulletin board by the elevator.

**Lay Readers** help Pastor Steve with the worship service by reading the scripture readings for that Sunday. Copies of the scripture, in large print, are made and placed on the altar ahead of time. If interested, please sign up on the chart by the elevator.



**Nursery Attendants-** contact Michelle V. to help watch the little ones during a worship service. Individuals must be 18 years of age or older and are scheduled on a rotating basis (normally you would be needed once every two months).

Sponsor the **Bulletin** in memory or honor of a loved one. Or celebrate someone's birthday or anniversary by donating \$20.00 to the provision of the bulletin.

Sponsoring the **Altar Flowers** is another way to honor a loved one or celebrate someone's birthday or anniversary. Sign-up sheet is available by the elevator bulletin board.

**Thank you!**

### YOU TOO CAN HELP!

In the wake of the current natural disaster in Haiti, we may all be feeling just a little helpless and wondering how can we help our fellow human beings who are suffering so much after the earthquake? Yes, you may make a cash donation through the United Church of Christ OGHHS Haiti Response Fund or through other reputable organizations, but there is now a more tangible way we can all be involved, even our children. Church World Service has issued an urgent appeal for Hygiene Kits that will be sent to the people of Haiti. These simple kits can mean the difference between sickness and health for these struggling people.

Lay Life and Work is challenging the members and friends of Grace Church to help us assemble 50 kits. The Committee will pay processing and shipping costs but we are asking you to donate any of the needed items as you are able. We will collect your donations through the end of February. Each kit will contain the following:

- One hand towel measuring about 16 x 28 inches
- One wash cloth
- One wide-tooth comb
- One nail clipper (no emery boards or metal nail files)
- One bar of soap (bath size in wrapper)
- One toothbrush (in original packaging)
- Six Band-Aids

Toothpaste that has an expanded expiration date will be added just prior to shipment. The items may be sealed in a one-gallon plastic bag with a zipper closure. There are boxes at the church for collecting the donated items. One is located near the elevator on the lower level and the other by the front door at the top of the stairs.

Church World Service values each kit at approximately \$10.00 so if you would prefer to give a cash donation, we will do the shopping for you. If you have any further questions, contact Sue R. or Joan R. Let us continue to pray for our brothers and sisters in Haiti and show them the caring spirit of Grace UCC in Taneytown, Maryland.

### **WOLFGANG CHOCOLATES AND SEED CATALOG FUNDRAISER**

Our Learning Center is hosting a fundraiser to support its scholarship fund for 2010. Wolfgang Chocolates has a catalog full of assorted Easter candies, chocolates, ready-to-bake cookies and brownies, nuts and trail mixes. Candy items range in price from \$4.00-\$15.00 (with 26 choices available in the \$4.00-\$7.00 range.) Additionally, there is a seed catalog offering this year as well. Beautiful pre-seeded mats, saddlebags, and seed packages are being offered at a price range from \$6.50-\$12.50 with most items being under \$10.00.

This is our opportunity to get that special Easter candy or plan to beautify our gardens while helping to support such an important ministry of our church. Orders must be placed and paid for by February 24<sup>th</sup>. So don't delay, call the office today or look for our Grace United Learning Center Support Committee members in church on Sunday. They will be the ones with the Wolfgang catalogues in their hands. Thanks for your continued support of our wonderful Learning Center.



There's a new e-mail address update for Ginny P.  
**(please contact the office for the information)**

## LAY LIFE AND WORK

We would like to thank everyone who helped with the Firemen's Banquet in December. They were very happy with the work we did.

Mark your calendars: March 6, Church Supper; April 23, Basket Bingo; May 5, Family Night.

God Bless  
Michelle V., Chairperson

*Instead of giving up something for Lent*, how about adding a spiritual discipline of prayer and faith development to our week.

To assist in deepening our faith during the Lenten Season, Grace UCC will be offering Lenten Devotionals, a book study, and a Lenten Study. Our Lenten Devotional, "From Fear to Love...Lenten Reflections on the Parable of the Prodigal Son" by Henri J. M. Nouwen, will be available in the sanctuary beginning Sunday, February 14<sup>th</sup> or can be mailed to you from the church office by request.

A book study on "The Last Week...The Day-by-Day Account of Jesus' Final Week in Jerusalem" by Marcus Borg & John Dominic Crossan, will be held on Tuesday mornings at 10:00 a.m. (location to be announced) beginning February 23<sup>rd</sup>. Books can be purchased from the church office at a discounted rate of \$10.00. Our Lenten Study program entitled "Faithfully Facing Dying...A Lenten Study" will be offered Sunday Evenings from 6:30 – 8:30 p.m. at the Church beginning February 28<sup>th</sup>. A light meal at 6:00 pm will be provided. Childcare will be available.

*I would like to express my gratitude for the big, beautiful poinsettia plant from the church, delivered by Elaine H. and Nancy K. The cookies from the youth were delicious and the crafts enclosed were lovely. It made my day more joyful – to be remembered.*

George F.



*Dear Family and Friends of Grace,*

*Erin, Addie, Luke and I wish to convey our deep gratitude for the Christmas gift you presented to our family from the church. It has brought us great joy and will be put to good use. May God bless you for your caring and generous spirit.*

*Yours in Christ, Pr. Steve, Erin, Addie & Luke Ostendorf-Snell*

*Thanks to all who participated in our Advent Study, contributing goodies to share and discussion about our beliefs to ponder. It added an additional spiritual dimension to the Christmas Season. Also thanks to Bob and Sue Rock for hosting our Epiphany Study. Your hospitality and insights are a great blessing to us.*

*Pr. Steve*

**Correction!** *Thanks to all who gave generously to the 2009 Advent/Christmas offering. The funds collected will go into the Pastor's Discretionary Emergency Needs Fund which was depleted in 2009 assisting church members and Taneytown residents with emergency needs. In January it was incorrectly reported in worship that these funds were going to Caring & Sharing. Please forgive my mistake. Also, offerings collected in the "Red' Christmas Fund" Envelopes will be sent to Conference as part of five support offerings within Our Churches Wider Mission (OCWM). Thank you for your support of these important programs that witness the compassion of Christ.*

*Pr. Steve*

*Dear UCC,*

*Thanks for the potted plant and cookies, card and visit from Vesta and David. How thoughtful it was and I appreciate you thinking of me.*

*Yours truly,  
William S.*

*Dear Friends of Grace,*

*For the beautiful poinsettia that Ms. Vesta delivered, the food prepared by Fairy (and delivered by Bob), and food sent by Sandy, the cards, phone calls and e-mails with words of encouragement and concern, I am so very thankful to all of you. You are truly a caring congregation and I feel blessed by your continued support and thoughtfulness.*

*Bev B.*