

**A**  
**Steward's**  
**Devotional Guide**



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*Each one should use  
whatever gift he has received  
to serve others,  
faithfully administering  
God's Grace in its various forms.*

*1Peter 4:10*

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## **Daily Devotional Introduction**

With life constantly pressing in on us from all directions, only rarely do we have the time to pause to consider the big questions:

“What is my purpose in life?”

“What am I missing?”

“Could I be living a better life?”

The Committee on Stewardship of Grace Church wanted to communicate to our congregation forty different ministries, programs, and outreach opportunities that our church family is involved in that truly make a difference and help people.

This booklet is intended to be a forty-day devotional with personal testimonies of personal experiences and includes a daily Bible scripture.

This does not represent all of the ministries or mission outreach programs of Grace Church. However, the number “40” is an important symbol in the Bible - the forty years that Moses and the Israelites wandered in the desert; the forty days Jesus was tempted in the wilderness.

Our hope is that as you commit to reading this daily devotional, you will see how your life can be filled with purpose. You may find what is missing in your life through service. We pray you will discover how God can lead you into a greater and more meaningful life.

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**Monday, October 4, 2010**

## **Hanging of the Greens**

**The Angel answered, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the most high will overshadow you. So the Holy one to be born will be called Son of God”.**

**Luke 1:35**

The *Hanging of the Greens* service means so many different things to me. It means lots of preparation, lots of phone calls, lots of organization, lots of volunteers and lots of catching up with church members you too often pass when you are both in a hurry. However, none of this can compare to the fruits of the labor, the opportunity to see our congregation come together, all working toward the goal of preparing our sanctuary for the true meaning of Christmas, the birth of our Lord Jesus. I have been involved in the work behind the scenes for *The Hanging of the Greens* as a volunteer since our first full holiday season of moving into the new sanctuary. The committee does a phenomenal job of involving the youngest and the oldest of our church family, and we are always prepared to invite visitors and their children to participate. (Remember, we are known as the friendliest church in the area)!

Something very special happens during this service, something warm and peaceful, although there is a good chance you'll hear the rustle of paper bags, as members of the congregation anxiously await the cue for them to leave their seat and play their part in this special service. The music; it's time to take a short break from our traditional hymns and sing the much loved Christmas Carols (let's glorify the Lord). You can't help but look at the bulletin and wonder, “do we really need all these songs and verses for the Crismons and gold balls to be hung on the tree by the children”? ... and then you experience the joy of watching the children. They are so excited to be taking part, they know it's an important and special job they have been given. It all comes together and you can feel the peace, and love and joy of being here at Grace, being part of the Grace Church Family, where every one of us is unique and special and you just need to look around to know that the Spirit is truly alive here at Grace.

Preparing for the Christmas season, many of us get caught up in the “gifts”. Many of the most precious gifts do not cost anything, as those closest to me know that the most precious gift I received from my mother was the gift of bringing me here to Grace Church, where my life truly changed. My prayer for my Grace Church Family is that you too will share this gift with others, and when you are called upon to serve, you might recall my words here and share your gifts with Grace.

**We have different gifts according to the Grace given to us. If a man’s gift is prophecy, let him use it in proportion to his faith. If it is serving, let him serve. If it is teaching let him teach, if it is encouraging, let him encourage. If it is contributing to the needs of others, let him give generously; if it is leadership let him govern diligently; if it is to show mercy, let him do it cheerfully. Romans 12; 6-8**

**Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering Gods Grace in its various forms. I Peter 4:10**

I encourage our members to use their individual gifts, whatever they may be, so that Grace Church can continue to be a place where we grow in our spirituality and share our love for God. I hope you will take the time to look around the sanctuary at our next *Hanging of the Greens*, listen carefully to our narrator as she describes the meaning of our decorations, and you will see and feel that the peace, joy and love is truly alive here at Grace.

May God Bless my church family always,  
Carol Powell

***Read the Scripture of the Day***

***Luke 1:26-31***

***Tuesday, October 5, 2010***

**Santa Luncheon**

**He took a little child and had him stand among them. Taking him in his arms, he said to them “Whoever welcomes one of these little children in my name welcomes me; and whoever welcomes me does not welcome me but the one who sent me.” Mark 9:36-37 (NIV)**

Each year the family of Grace welcomes children into our church to celebrate Christmas at the annual Santa Luncheon. The 75-100 children that participate in the day are referred to us due to a financial need within their family. The day includes lunch, activities, gifts and a visit from Santa; however, for me, one of the more poignant parts of the day is watching the children as they view a live portrayal of the Nativity Story. For many of these children it is the first time they have connected the birth of our Savior to the secular celebration we see all around us from Thanksgiving until New Year. It is an event that helps to remind me and my family to center our minds and activities on the real reason Christmas is celebrated. My participation in Santa Luncheon is one of the most joyful and meaningful parts of my preparation for Christmas. There are numerous ways to be a part of this mission if it speaks to you as it has to me. I urge you to prayerfully consider how your specific gifts can be used to further this event.

Diana Briselli

***Read the Scripture of the Day***

***Matthew 1:18-25***

***Wednesday, October 6, 2010***

## **Living Nativity**

Among the things I do with Grace Church, nothing is more dear to my heart than helping to make the Christmas Eve 'Living Nativity' happen. As part of Grace's Christmas Eve services, we recruit volunteers to dress the parts and portray a visual expression of God's greatest gift, the birth of Jesus. It never ceases to amaze me how a group of bouncy, playful children, reluctant teens and often uncertain adults, transform into a beautiful cohesive vision of the holy nativity. I love to watch the faces of our congregation and guests as they all take in the inspiring sight, (even if it often includes the stray wiggly lamb or donkey).

In recruiting volunteers, I get to meet new, young families. It's a special treat to watch my 'baby Jesus' babies and all the children who participate, as they grow up in Grace Church.

Yes, it's a time commitment, and most of it happens on Christmas Eve, but as long as my family lovingly understands and agrees to have personal celebrations at other times, this part of stewardship to Grace church will continue to be my very favorite part of all the holiday season activities.

Linda Stuart

***Read the Scripture of the Day***

***Luke 2:1-7***

**Thursday, October 7, 2010**

## **Holy Communion**

Being a communion steward, to me, is more than a “practice” of what is done over and over throughout the life of a Christian. Communion is how I remember and obey Christ, participate in the body of Christ, and proclaims his death until he returns.

First and foremost, I have a desire to obey what He commands. *And when he had given thanks , he broke it and said, “This is my body, which is for you; do this **in remembrance** of me.”*

I Corinthians 11:24

As I participate in communion it feels as though his life becomes my life and, as a congregation, we become members of each other. *Because there is one loaf, we, **who are many, are one body**, for we all partake of the one loaf.*

I Corinthians 10:16 –17 (NIV)

Lastly, I partake of the bread and the drink to proclaim his death as a statement of my faith. *For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, **you proclaim the Lord’s death** until he comes.* I Corinthians 11:26 (NIV).

Heather Adams

***Read the Scripture of the Day***

***Matthew 26:17-30***

***Friday, October 8, 2010***

## **Last Supper Reenactment**

It has become a popular tradition at Grace Church during the Lenten Season to have the Last Supper reenactment on Holy Thursday. This has been a very worshipful experience for all who attend the service. The participants who reenact the Last Supper are honored and most humbled by the opportunity to visually aid in this most important event in our Christian life.

Next year will be the tenth time of this reenactment. The purpose is to give each participant a sense of what happened in the Upper Room and let us sit at table with Our Lord, open ourselves to His presence, and discover His Spirit among us.

Holy Communion to the early Christians did not center in gloom, disaster, or even death. It was a celebration. The Apostle Paul called it a remembrance – not a memorial. To remember Jesus Christ at this table is to bring him so vividly to mind that we relive His love, His words, His joy, His triumph, His hope.

Rev. John

***Read the Scripture of the Day***

***Luke 22:14-23***

**Saturday, October 9, 2010**

## **Way of the Cross**

Since I was a child I was fascinated with the events of Holy Week including Maundy Thursday and Easter Sunday but especially Good Friday. I enjoy Christmas, but as a Christian, the most meaningful events of our faith for me occur during Holy Week. The Hummelstown and Hershey area had a small community gathering on Good Friday in the early 2000s but nothing that really made you feel or understand Good Friday — the betrayal, the suffering, the death of Jesus to forgive our sins. In late 2005 and early 2006 Barbara Schaefer, my wife, Linda Stuart, and I began researching the materials needed to have *Way of the Cross* at Grace Church. Our first service was held on Good Friday in 2006.

This service is held at noon on Good Friday but also at several other times so that people from the church and the community can have an opportunity to attend. The service begins at the Last Supper table where Christ celebrated the first communion with his apostles. The service goes to eight other stops within the church culminating in the nailing of Jesus to the cross, his death and his burial. I find leading the service to be one of the most impacting things I can do for my congregation. We lead men, women and children on the walk, where they get to see thorns like Jesus wore, hold a cross beam and carry it as if they were carrying their own cross, see nails like those used on our Lord and smell the ointments that were used on his body at the burial. The reading, the sights, smells, the sounds of the service are both instructional and humbling. I have seen people weep. I have seen many a person stay at the altar rail and pray and reflect long after the service is over. The service really impresses on worshipers the true sacrifice Jesus made for us.

Grace Church does one of the best jobs I have seen to put together the events of Holy Week. I feel honored to be part of these services as a creator and leader of our *Way of the Cross*.

Dave Stuart

***Read the Scripture of the Day***

***Matthew 27:32-44***

***Sunday, October 10, 2010***

## **Easter Egg Hunt**

The egg was a symbol of the rebirth of the earth in celebration of spring and was adopted by the early Christians as a symbol of the resurrection of Jesus. Followers of Christ see the egg as symbolic of the grave and life renewed or resurrected by breaking out of it. The red symbolizes the blood of Christ redeeming the world and human redemption through the blood shed in the sacrifice of the crucifixion. The egg itself is a symbol of resurrection. While being dormant, it contains a new life sealed within it.

Several weeks before Easter Sunday, members and advisors of GUMY (Grace United Methodist Youth) prepare for the traditional Saturday morning Easter Egg Hunt. Hundreds of colored plastic eggs, many with treats inside, are prepared to cover the landscape of the Grace campus early Saturday morning, the day before Easter.

This great tradition continues to remind us of the immense sacrifice of Our Lord Jesus Christ, dying on a cross for our sins, only to be resurrected three days later. Each year the Easter Egg Hunt, the energy and excitement of our children, help us to celebrate resurrection, new life, and life eternal.

Say a prayer of thanksgiving for the dedication and yearly commitment of our youth and advisors for this truly meaningful ministry.

Rev. John

***Read the Scripture of the Day***

***Mark 16:9-15***

***Monday, October 11, 2010***

**Easter Sunrise Service**

The Easter Sunrise Service is the very first celebration at Grace Church on Easter morning. The service is prepared by the Youth of our Church and their Advisors.

On this special day, Christ is risen from the dead – trampling down death by death; and upon those in tombs giving life. Shine, shine you new Jerusalem! For the glory of the Lord has risen upon you! Rejoice in the dance and exult O Zion! And delight you men and women of God in the rising of His Son!

Our star, the sun, which gives light and warmth to the earth and all creation, rises this special morning as it has every morning. But this is not like other mornings. This day we celebrate the rising of the one Son, who is above all creation and whose rising truly warms our hearts and gives light to the world.

At the conclusion of the Easter Sunrise Service, participants are encouraged to place fresh flowers on the cross that first brought death and now celebrates life. The beautifully decorated cross, covered with so many different colorful flowers, serves as a joyful reminder of God's love for us.

Rev. John

***Read the Scripture of the Day***

***John 14:1-7***

***Tuesday, October 12, 2010***

## **Bible Study**

We read in the book of Ezra, “For Ezra had set his heart to study the law of the Lord, and to do it, and to teach the statutes and ordinances in Israel.” Ezra 7:10

Bible Study has always been an integral part of the faith journey for Christians. These persons who most benefit from the study of the Bible are those, like Ezra, who set their hearts to study the Word of God.

Bible Study is done best when in a small group, where at least one person has participated in a formal study under the leadership of a trained teacher.

“All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching the truth, rebuking error, correcting faults, and giving instruction for right living, so that the person who serves God may be fully qualified and equipped to do every kind of good deed.” 2 Timothy 3:16-17

I have spent most of my life studying the Old and New Testaments, both as a student, and as a leader. I continue to be amazed at the insight, power, and inspiration we receive from the pages of this Book.

John Wesley wrote, “I am a man of one book.” He understood the importance of reading and studying the Holy Scripture. We are blessed to be a part of all the Saints who have gone before us and have been dedicated to God’s Holy Word.

Rev. John

***Read the Scripture of the Day***

***Ezra 7:10 and John 5:30-47***

***Wednesday, October 13, 2010***

**Wednesday Prayer Group**

**God's Special Gift for One and All**

This life journey that we all are living is filled with the possibility of joy, happiness, pain, misery and death (plus those unexpected surprises—both good and bad). Because of our differences, each of us will handle them in our own way. When we have family or friends sharing with us in these difficult times, we can find ourselves somewhat at peace. Unfortunately, sometimes these happenings take place when we are alone. And so, God's words found in Hebrews 13:5 are very reassuring: "I will never leave you or forsake you."

The special gift of prayer time is activated for 24/7 use, and not only can be shared with others, but can be a special time for each of us alone. At Grace Church our worship services, our Sunday School time and our Wednesday evening Prayer Service are just a few wonderful times that we can come together and experience the joy, laughter, perhaps tears and best of all—to share in the love and presence of the Lord God, Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit. As the Scripture in Matthew 18:20 reminds us, "For where two or three come together in My name, there am I with them."

Ray Topper

***Read the Scripture of the Day***

***Matthew 5:43-48***

***Thursday, October 14, 2010***

**Prayer Shawl Ministry**

When I first started attending the Prayer Shawl Group, I knew just a few of the women. It was not long before I soon felt a special part of the group. In the beginning the women helped me to make the shawls as we shared our love of creating shawls and our love of the Lord. Now, talking, praying, sharing and crocheting have become a natural combination when our group meets.

It is a joy to sit and crochet a shawl and know that the love and prayers put into the creation of the shawl will soon be a comfort to a person that has pain and stress.

A group prays over the shawl and blesses it. It is then given to the person that is in need of the shawl.

I have found a way to use my “gift” and love of crocheting to serve God and His people when they need reminded of His love and care. The Prayer Shawl Ministry means so very much to me personally.

I encourage you to join us whether you can knit, crochet or would like to learn.

Elaine Fogleman

***Read the Scripture of the Day***

***Psalm 6***

**Friday, October 15, 2010**

## **Spring Children's Musical**

God has equipped each of us with a talent. Like the parable of the talents in Matthew, those who use their talents God will multiply. But if you do not use your talents, God will take them away. A little over a year ago an ad for help was placed in our church newsletter. Even though I tried to ignore God's message, I knew God was telling me to use the talent He gave to me. I literally need bells and lights to know God is talking to me. After much hesitation, I made the phone call. There was such an excitement within me! For two years now I have been working with and teaching young people to share the love of God through their talents, through the talent God gave me, dance. It is so awesome for a choreographer to see her interpretation of music come to life and to know where these thoughts come from.

Remember the song, "This Little Light of Mine"?

Luke 8:16 tells us, "now no one after lighting a lamp covers it over with a container, but puts it on a lamp stand for all to see. The lamp is the talent God gives you. Hide it under a bushel "NO", I'm going to let it shine. Through the Spring Musical, *Amazing Grace*, young people through words, song and dance have given the gospel of Jesus Christ to hundreds of people. Hide it under a bushel "NO", we're going to let it shine. Let it shine, Let it shine, Let it shine, to the glory of God!

Nancy Hart

***Read the Scripture of the Day***

***Psalm 150***

*Saturday, October 16, 2010*

### **Confirmation**

It is with love and pride that I reflect on Tyler's recent confirmation...one of the most memorable and meaningful experiences I will ever have with my son. As my husband and I laid our hands on his shoulders, I was filled with joy and thanksgiving. Early in Tyler's learning and preparation through confirmation classes, I worried that he wouldn't be ready to accept our Lord and Savior into his heart. Was he taking this commitment seriously or just attending the classes because he was told to go? He was a 13-year-old boy, after all! I prayed for God to give Tyler the wisdom, knowledge and desire he needed to take this very big step in his spiritual journey. On confirmation day, Tyler professed his faith and commitment to God. I am so very thankful to God and our church family for guiding Tyler as he continues to grow in his faith.

### **Confirmation Blessing**

May your soul be open to the presence of God,  
around you and within you.

May your prayer be open to whispers of grace,  
giving you wisdom and guidance.

May your hands be open to serving others  
through your unique gifts.

May your heart be open to infinite love  
and the joy of the Spirit alive in your life.

--author unknown

Julie Dormer

***Read the Scripture of the Day***

***Acts 2:1-4***

***Sunday, October 17, 2010***

## **Music**

Music is a universal language that can speak to anyone. Music can innately stir sentiment, express any emotion, and influence a reaction. It makes us laugh, makes us cry, makes us ponder, makes us silly, helps us to celebrate, and makes us reflect. Music speaks universally to any age, gender, or intellectual level. It's an equal opportunity medium!

Surely you have been moved at some point in your life by a song you heard in church, at a concert, or on the radio. Maybe the words of a song spoke directly to you, or an instrumental piece awakened your heart to the presence of God that day. In a spiritual or sacred setting, music has the natural ability to calm our hearts and still our minds, and can help put us in the mindset that calls us to reflect upon the unfathomable love God has for us, the sacrifice Jesus made for each of us, and our individual walk in faith and relationship with Him.

Psalm 150 calls us to praise the Lord through any and all means, including music. In God's eyes, we are all capable of praising Him and that is His desire, regardless of our opinion of our musical abilities. The scripture does not call out only to "American Idol" candidates.

Being a part of the handbell program at Grace provides me the opportunity to praise God through music, to express my love for Him, and to be His servant. It also provides an avenue for me to fellowship with other Christians. It is my hope that as one hears handbell music, the Holy Spirit will use this universal language to speak to their heart and draw them closer to the Lord.

Holly Brubaker

***Read the Scripture of the  
Day***

***Psalm 150***

*Monday, October 18, 2010*

## **Graceful Gardens**

Graceful Gardens (GG) seems to me to be unique among the ministries supported by GUMC. It receives no funding from the church, yet it contributes money to the local food bank. Also, it serves both the congregation (by providing fresh vegetables and fruits to them) and (through these members' monetary donations for the fresh goodies) helps support the local food bank.

Yet, like many ministries, it all begins with members donating their time, and then being willing to trust in God to work His magic. Surely, no one would logically expect a shriveled and seemingly lifeless seed to grow into not just tomatoes or zucchini for the GG table, but also into cans of soup or tuna for a hungry family.

We gardeners don't know when we sow our seeds whether we'll be successful; we just believe it matters that we try. With GG, God asks us to plant the seed and help it grow, but only He knows who will be served and what the ultimate harvest in lives will be. Hmm, maybe GG really is more like our other ministries than I first thought.

Chris Dunlap

***Read the Scripture of the Day***

***Genesis 2:4-10***

***Tuesday, October 19, 2010***

**Compassion International**

Compassion International is a Christian organization which connects impoverished youth to sponsors who provide financial aid and correspondence with their child. GUMY sponsors Johnson Amany, a teenage boy from Uganda who has had many hardships, such as the death of his grandmother, who was his sole guardian, and the recent move to a new household. Johnson writes to GUMY about school, chores, farming and always shares a special memory verse. Whenever a letter comes from Johnson, I am reminded how greatly we are blessed here in the United States and in our church. Johnson's chores are to fetch water, graze animals and dig. He spends the Christmas money we send him on basic clothing and food, like sugar and salt, leaving only some candy money for himself. In a town where most teenagers are trying to get out of chores and are asking for pricey presents, it's a reality check to think about Johnson's struggles and it makes you feel really grateful for everything you have. His letters also make me realize how important it is to share our blessings with those who are less fortunate than we are. I am reminded of the story of the Good Samaritan, found in Luke 10:25-37. In this passage, Jesus reminds us to love our neighbors, even people we don't know. We didn't know Johnson when we first sponsored him but now we know what a great person he is. Also, we must realize that if we were the person on the side of the road or the struggling people in Africa, we would want a Good Samaritan, someone to help us out and show us some compassion.

Caroline Briselli

***Read the Scripture of the Day***

***Luke 10:25-37***

**Wednesday, October 20, 2010**

**Second Mile Program Lunches**

The Second Mile was founded in 1977 by Jerry Sandusky. Originally a home for foster children, it has grown into a statewide organization providing nine different programs that touch the lives of more than 100,000 Pennsylvania children annually.

I became a supporter of Second Mile in 1985 when I met Justin. His dad was in prison, Nobody gave him much of a chance. A teacher knew about The Second Mile and contacted Jerry. Today Justin is a college graduate, and hardworking husband and father—thanks to the Second Mile.

Each year in June, Grace Church provides two hundred free lunches to The Second Mile families who are the guests of HersheyPark. Hershey graciously donates one thousand tickets.

Please keep the families and children in your prayers.

Rev. John

***Read the Scripture of the Day***

***Mark 8:1-10***

***Thursday, October 21, 2010***

## **Creation**

### **A Tribute to Our Creator**

The Creation Festival East event means an annual camping trip, the last week of June, to Agape Farm located a couple of miles north of the tiny town of Shirleysburg, PA some two hours west of Hummelstown.

It is a picturesque setting where some seventy plus thousand people gather annually and set up camp for four nights in fields surrounded by beautiful mountains to be inspired by some of the finest Contemporary Christian Music Artists and Christian speakers of today.

The Finley family has been fortunate enough to attend each year since 2002 and the festival has yet to disappoint. We have been attending the event with Grace UMC since 2004. Our GUMY group has ranged in number from twenty to eighty Youth and Adults in any given year during that time.

With a main stage and a “fringe” stage packed with non stop inspirational music and speakers throughout the day there is surely some genre of music that will appeal to almost everyone. The day ends in one of the following ways, a fireworks display, communion, or (my favorite) the candle lighting ceremony. The sight of some seventy plus thousand lit candles on the amphitheatre lawn is simple breathtaking.

The camaraderie established among Grace Youth and Adults while raising our camp site from a plot of vacant land, to one filled with tents, kitchen area, shower area, etc. to be used as our home away from home for 5 days, is a great team building exercise in and of itself. All that being said, the highlight of the trip for me has to be the altar call after the speaker each evening. Sitting on the lawn with thousands of others and see a couple of hundred people walk toward the Prayer Tent is the one thing I'll never tire of witnessing. I truly believe that going to this event has created a certain bond within our family (immediate and church) that is, all too often, hard to find these days in our hurry up lives. What a great environment to really get to know your kids. And, after 5 days in a hot, chilly, dusty and/or muddy field it makes you appreciate the simple pleasures of life when returning home, ie. running hot water, electricity, and a solid roof over your head. Yes, we truly are a blessed people .

Dennis Finley

***Read the Scripture of the Day***

***Psalm 121***

***Friday, October 22, 2010***

## **GUMY**

It was not long after Mike and I married when Barb Rosensteel approached us and said "Mike and you would be great Youth Advisors...would you consider joining GUMY". My first instinct was to say "Sorry...we're not interested or we just don't have time". But I thought NO...Barb is presenting this opportunity to us and we need to give it some serious consideration. So I drew up a list of the pros and cons of being youth advisors to help with my decision. You see, I was diagnosed with stage 4 uterine cancer 20 years ago and the choice to have children was taken from me. So the first "cons" on my list were biggies...1. I don't have children; 2. I have absolutely no parenting skills; and beyond that, 3. I had just joined the church...embarking on the beginning of my own spiritual journey. Really...what could I possibly offer that a more seasoned member of our church couldn't? My "con" list grew, but I continued to seriously think about this opportunity and more importantly, pray about it. It was really one of the first times I asked God for guidance & direction. Maybe I was fearful of not living up to their expectations, would I do a good job, and oh...here's a biggie...do I have the patience? I won't lie, it's not one of my strong points! But you know, the more I thought about it the more I couldn't find a good enough reason not to do it. Why wouldn't I want to start my spiritual journey with the youth? It really was a no-brainer! Mike and I feel comfortable with youth, we are excited to work with youth and we like the idea of being in ministry with young people in an atmosphere of acceptance and unconditional love. Mike & I felt that God was calling us to work with young people and we mutually decided to join. No sooner had we said "yes" that we were attending advisory meetings, eating pizza, going on retreats, eating pizza, planning GUMY events, and did I say eating pizza?! Joining GUMY changed me and my relationship with Mike and more importantly with God.

GUMY encourages our youth to develop their relationship with God through various activities. It could be anything from conducting worship services, planning & attending retreats, mission trips within and outside the community, praise & worship, or just a simple Sunday evening activity at church with the GUMY group.

One of the most memorable moments in my GUMY journey has taken me to the Gretna Glen fall retreat where we enjoy a wonderful weekend together sharing our love of God through various team building events along with praise & worship, or just a simple Sunday evening activity at church with the GUMY group. It's a spiritual-discipline retreat that also includes silence, prayer, journaling and spiritual creativity. It's an opportunity to nurture and grow in our faith. Through this event we are all challenged to respond to God's call.

GUMY is a place of joys, challenges, frustrations, meaningful conversations, new relationships with adults and youth, and new insights about God. The job is exciting, rewarding, and meaningful. I have gained many new friends (adults and youth alike) and these will be lasting relationships I'll cherish forever. Grace Church provides GUMY meaningful opportunities to youth and creates an environment to experience God's love, feel included in the life of the congregation, and have opportunities to grow in our faith. You never feel like an outsider... everyone is welcomed! And the best is that it's afforded me those same opportunities as an adult. Joining GUMY was one of the best decisions I made in my life! Whether it's as simple as giving a hug, sharing a story or smile, or working on the next big GUMY project, I always leave a GUMY event with the feeling that I can make a difference in someone's life. But equally important, the GUMY youth and other adult leaders have made a positive difference in my life. Guess I should end with a special thanks for Barb Rosensteel for reaching out to us and seeing something that we didn't. Thank you Barb!

Kelly Hubler

***Read the Scripture of the Day***

***Psalm 25:1-7***

***Saturday, October 23, 2010***

**Shut-In Ministry**

Each Sunday the Grace Family is blessed with the fellowship of our church family, beautiful flowers on the altar and a message to carry us through the week. However, we have several members who are unable to attend weekly services due to illness or the inability to travel. For those special Grace members we have persons who “bring” the Grace experience to them.

Every week, the altar flowers are divided into smaller bouquets to be shared with those who are home-bound. The weekly Worship services are also recorded and shared with those unable to attend.

The office receives calls and acknowledgements of how wonderful it is to feel connected to Grace Church even when their attendance is not physically possible.

We are thankful for those who give so unselfishly of their time to be a blessing to others. We encourage you to practice a random act of kindness to honor God today!

Office Staff

***Read the Scripture of the Day***

***Mark 3:31-35***

***Sunday, October 24, 2010***

**Pillows of Love**

The greatest commandment challenges me to put my faith into action. "Love your neighbor" can mean serving family, a friend down the street, or starving children far away. We also have neighbors right here in 30 local shelters going through perhaps the most difficult time in their life, and staying at a homeless or crisis center.

Serving those in need with a reminder of Christ gives me purpose and blesses me! Sometimes, it seems a pillowcase is a small gift. Can it really make a difference? My wish and prayer is that the gift plus the message inside will provide a reminder of joy and hope!

Working with Pillows-of-Love blesses me with friendships, serving together with Christians taking action, and most importantly: seeing how God answers prayers! So many times, we are blessed to see God fill a need that we have for resources, timing, or talents. His love endures in a mighty way!

There are many ways to be involved in this ministry, including hands-on creation of the beautiful pillowcases, or planning events and activities to support the ministry. Will you join us in serving?

Colette Cocco

***Read the Scripture of the Day***

***Matthew 22:34-40***

***Monday, October 25, 2010***

**Camp Program**

Matthew 18:5 “And whoever welcomes a little child like this in my name welcomes me.”

This summer I had the privilege to be a full-time counselor at Camp Eder Church Camp. This was my 13th year being involved in the camping program, but my first time being a counselor for an entire summer. My kids during the seven weeks ranged from the ages of 6 - 17 and we stayed in a covered wagon with no lights or electricity. It was a labor of love.

The second week, however, made everything worth it. I had an 8-year old who was asking questions about God and Jesus all week. I told her about my personal relationship with Jesus Christ. She very sincerely said, “I want to have that!” We started the sinner’s prayer and the wind kicked up into huge gusts a few words into the prayer. I looked to my co-counselor to make sure I wasn’t imagining things, but she looked just as startled as I was. The wind continued until the exact moment the camper said, “Amen” and everything went still. My co-counselor and I talked after and we determined that it was truly the Holy Spirit amongst us.

Serving at camp is hard and exhausting. But after my experience every time I got hot or tired, I remembered that I was being a shepherd for God’s sheep. God calls us to not only have faith and innocence of a child, but lead the children to God. So many times I felt inadequate for my job, but I was exactly where I was supposed to be. I was reminded that “God doesn’t call the equipped, he equips the called.” Don’t ever be afraid to follow God’s call into service. Trust me...He knows what He is doing.

Sarah Wagoner

***Read the Scripture of the Day***

***Deuteronomy 4:9-14***

***Tuesday, October 26, 2010***

**Ready-For-School Project**

Over ten years ago when volunteering at my children's elementary school, I learned of some families that were struggling to provide basic school supplies and backpacks for their children. I gathered some supplies to help and then I began to wonder if there were others in the surrounding community who were in need of assistance. After a few conversations with God and His continual "nudging" to act, I realized that I needed to step forward to help make a difference for these families. I presented my concept to Rev. John and he agreed it sounded like a wonderful idea. Also, because it was my concept I would have the opportunity to coordinate the project.

I am an organizer, so I quickly contacted the local elementary schools and organized a "system" to identify and provide the basic school supply needs for the young students. I felt overwhelmed at the response for 100 backpacks that first fall.

Now, fast forward ten years, we have provided over 3,200 backpacks filled with supplies for local students ranging from high risk Pre-Kindergarten kiddos through 12th Grade students. Grace Church is lovingly known as the Backpack Church in the Hummelstown and surrounding community.

I am thankful that I did not ignore God's "nudge to take action and do something" and I am truly blessed by the opportunity to have a small role in reminding several hundred students each fall that God loves them and wants to deliver blessings to all of them..even if the blessing is delivered in the form of a backpack filled with school supplies!

Tammy Houck

***Read the Scripture of the Day***

***Luke 6:37- 42***

**Wednesday, October 27, 2010**

**ALPHA**

Revelations 21:6b—7

“I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. To him who is thirsty I will give drink without cost from the spring of the water of life. He who overcomes will inherit all this, and I will be his God and he will be my son.”

I have always been a Christian but it wasn't until I attended an Alpha Course that all the experiences and education I have had all of my life came together into a wonderful whole that changed my life forever.

Jesus became real to me. He was no longer a picture on the wall or a story from the Bible he is my master, my Lord and my best friend and constant companion.

It isn't that Alpha told me things I had never heard before I began to hear with new ears and a new heart that wanted to learn more.

We have been teaching Alpha Courses here at Grace since 2001. In 2000, at the suggestion of Lillian Russell; Jim Love, Jim Williams and Pastor Bob Stokes went to an Alpha Conference and decided we should try it.

Alpha is not just for new members, although it is a good way to meet new people. It is for anyone who wishes to refresh their faith or go more deeply or even just to share questions with others.

If you want to be clear about who Jesus is for you or you want to share your faith, come to an Alpha Course. It might be the beginning of a new relationship with Him for you.

Sally Farrar

***Read the Scripture of the Day***

***Romans 14:1-4***

**Thursday, October 28, 2010**

**Widows and Friends Share Group**

At the death of a spouse many emotions become overwhelming and the spouse left behind must make new and sometimes frightening decisions that may drastically alter his/her future way of living. When the initial activities of the funeral are over, the loved one buried, friends and family have departed, the living spouse is alone with his/her grief.

In 2002, three women lost their husbands in close succession and a fourth widow moved into our area and sought refuge with Grace. We found that Grace could provide assistance, understanding, care and love thus the *Widows and Friends Share Group* came into being.

We meet every Monday afternoon from 1 - 3 pm. And so with the sharing of "how was your week", a book study, prayer session, activities that out to others in need and some fun time with "lunch out", etc. or board games, we have become a close bonded "family" with greater strength to deal with our grief and the problems that accompany it. We look forward to sharing our joys and concerns with each other.

Lillian Russell

***Read the Scripture of the Day***

***1 Timothy 5:3 - 8***

**Friday, October 29, 2010**

**Bethesda Mission**

GUMY (Grace United Methodist Youth) and TY (Transitional Youth) have been involved in many service projects throughout the years. One of these is making *Care Kits* for the residents at Bethesda Mission. Bethesda Mission provides a place to stay, warm food, and the message and love of Jesus.

GUMY packs hygiene items and socks into the *Care Kits*. We also make a card that has a Scripture verse and a personal message to include in each kit. Through these kits, we hope the men who receive them feel the love of our group and the love of Jesus. Being the hands and feet of Jesus is a way to not only serve others but build relationships with each other as we spend time together. It also reminds us how fortunate we are. There are many opportunities for us to reach out to those in need, and when we do so, we are blessed.

GUMY and TY would like to thank the congregation for all their support that enables us to do the many things we do.

Rebekah Forshey

***Read the Scripture of the Day***

***Psalm 146***

**Saturday, October 30, 2010**

## **Fall Gleaning**

In the Bible, gleaning refers to farmers leaving a part of the harvest (crops) in the fields for the poor. The poor were allowed to pick the crops left in the fields.

The gleaning done by GUMC is different than referred to in the Bible. A group from GUMC goes to an orchard to pick the apples left on the trees. One person from GUMC is on the *Quick Response Team* which goes on very short notice to pick perishable foods.

The food typically goes to Food Banks in Dauphin, Lebanon and Lancaster Counties. Sometimes a group may come, as far away as Maryland, and take some of the crop back to their area.

An orchard in Lebanon County, Sycamore Springs, graciously allows the apples to be gleaned from their orchard, usually in mid to late October.

Additional information on gleaning is available on the Mission Table in the Narthex or on the web at [www.endhunger.org](http://www.endhunger.org) . Consider joining us!

Kelly Peffley

***Read the Scripture of the Day***

***Leviticus 19:9-10***

***Sunday, October 31, 2010***

**Grace Christian Pre-School**

Grace Christian Pre-school has impacted me on many levels and I am extremely grateful for the role it has played in my life. But, before I profess to what GCPS means to me, I must explain how I know that this is where God needed and intended for me to be ...

Over the spring/summer of 2009, our family was preparing to a move out of Hershey and into the greater NYC area. When our house did not sell after being on the market for over 6 months, we decided to stay for a least one more school year. However, being that I thought we were going to be packing up our belongings and heading out of town, I did not perform many of the sign-up duties of a diligent mother. I did not enroll my kids in things like sports, after school activities and most importantly for my 3 -year old daughter, preschool. Scurrying to get involved on the playing field and through activities did not prove too hard, but finding a preschool program that still had an opening in late August was unheard of. Following a play date that my son had with a new friend, I was discussing this dilemma with his mom. She explained that her church was starting a preschool and had just mentioned during services that there were still openings. I think I called the church immediately and was connected to Heidi Hoover. The rest is history...we met Heidi, visited the school, immediately enrolled my daughter and have participated in the program ever since.

I know that this really was meant to be. I really believe that God helped to guide me to this program. I believe that my son was meant to have this particular play date so that I could learn of this program at such a crucial time. And I believe it not only was a critical decision for my daughter for pre-school, but for my entire family and our faith.

GCPS is phenomenal on many levels and has meant so much to me, my daughter and our entire family. First and foremost, Heidi is an amazing teacher. She helps our children learn not only their ABC's and 123's, but also models gracious, compassionate and loving behavior.

The GCPS staff bring the word of the Lord and stories of the Bible to life for everyone. Second, it is through the connection with other parents of the preschool class that I learned of the Graceful Mom's group. This group has given me comfort, support and friendship that I desperately needed throughout the past year. I have learned of other groups through this means, including the Easter Bible Study where I again met so many wonderful people and was able to continue my journey and learning of the story of Jesus and the Word of God. Third, because of my daughter's comfort level with the preschool, we started to attend church services on Sunday mornings and discovered how wonderful the minister, congregation and the children's ministries are in this church. We hope to continue this pursuit this fall and consider membership as well.

In summary, the GCPS ministry has brought education to every person in our family, friendships that will never be broken, and a reminder of our faith. I simply cannot say enough positive things. Our children and families are so lucky to be a part of it. Thank you Grace United Methodist Church!

Doreen Hand

***Read the Scripture of the Day***

***Luke 9:46-48***

***Monday, November 1, 2010***

**Women's Retreat**

As I sit at my desk and reflect on the Women's Retreat, my mind wanders back to previous weekends. I smile as I recall the smell of the fallen leaves and how they rustled as I shuffled through them on my afternoon walk down to the small lake. The colors of Fall were beautiful as the sun filtered through the trees. I remember first meetings that blossomed into friendships and women sharing stories that tugged at my heart.

Our Women's Retreat is so much more than just a day away from "real life". It is the gathering of women of various ages who are in different stages of life who share laughter and joy and sometimes shed a few tears. It is the love of our Lord bringing us together to study His Word and seek to grow in understanding before returning home. It is a gift and a blessing.

Marjy Woodburn

***Read the Scripture of the Day***

***Matthew 4:1 -11***

***Tuesday, November 2, 2010***

**30 - Hour Famine**

The 30-Hour Famine is an activity I always enjoy participating in. Even though many people ask why I would want to fast for 30 hours, I have so many stories to make each time worth it.

You see, in America, we don't know how truly fortunate we are. Did you know that 26,000 kids each day die from hunger? That's such a staggering number. Just think -- Lower Dauphin High School has about 1200 students in it. Hunger wipes out close to 21 LD High Schools every day! Even though I can't help all 26,000 kids, I can help one or two. And that makes all the time and hunger worth it.

Hunger has never been a problem for me. I have 3 meals a day and snacks available for almost 18 years of my life. But not everyone is so fortunate. The 30-Hour Famine is a time to step back from our lives and be thankful. God has gifted us all with so much and we get so blinded to this fact daily. It's time to get refocused on what really matters - God, friends, and others.

Today, think about the others who aren't as fortunate as you. It'll make anything you are going through seem easier to bear.

Luke Forshey

***Read the Scripture of the Day***

***Luke 9:10-17***

***Wednesday, November 3, 2010***

**United Methodist Church  
Children's Home**

In 1917, local Methodists turned a dream into a reality when they established a home for orphaned children.

By 1970, society had drastically changed. Nationwide the orphanage system of caring for children was being replaced by foster care and adoption.

Today the United Methodist Home for Children is “home” to local children who are victims of the social environment. The Home provides emergency shelter and residential care for hundreds of Central Pennsylvania children every year.

Pray for the Home, the children , and the care providers.

Rev. John

***Read the Scripture of the Day***

***Proverbs 22:1-6***

***Thursday, November 4, 2010***

**UMC Neighborhood Center**

Neighborhood Center is in its 99<sup>th</sup> year of service to the multi-ethnic uptown neighborhood of Harrisburg, as well as the total Harrisburg community; and have touched the lives of others significantly.

The Center is a place where you see Christian love in action daily through our commitment to respond to the expressed needs of individuals and the community. The Christian beliefs and principles provide the underpinning for all they do. The Center is a gift from God as both employees and volunteers commit to achieving the highest level of service through Jesus Christ.

Rev. John

***Read the Scripture of the Day***

***Matthew 5:1-11***

***Friday, November 5, 2010***

## **Scouting Programs**

Stewardship is many things to me. It goes well beyond one's personal financial commitment to the church, which is really needed for a church to provide or sponsor it's many ministries.

God asks that we make a financial commitment. We need to share our financial wealth with others. Stewardship is much more, it is giving of our personal strengths. Whether it be youth programs or community outreach to those less fortunate.

One of my personal strengths in my stewardship responsibility throughout my life has been the opportunity to work with youth. God has given me the ability to be able to connect with them. I first saw the light when my sons were growing up. I was a baseball coach and scout leader. Through these ministries I became aware that God wants us to reach out to all our youth not only our own children. I have had many spiritual experiences working with youth, which have made me grow closer to God and youth.

As we know Jesus says many times in the Bible that the youth are the most important in our preparation for heaven.

At the time that I volunteered to be a scout leader, I had been lost on the path of spirituality. Through my experiences of camping in the great outdoors, I became aware of the wonders of God's Creation. All the sounds and colors and activities, what a beautiful creation that God has given us. Through working with youth in scouting, I quickly became aware that I was to be part of God's plan to help direct youth to God through His wonderful creation.

The biblical reference that I was given - Exodus 33:7-11 - helps me support my youth stewardship commitment through scouting. I had left scouting for several years because I became disappointed in the people - not the program.

I returned to scouting as a volunteer 2 years ago and started my youth outdoor ministry by serving as a Scout Staffer at Hidden Valley Scout Reservation. This has again turned on the light for me to work with youth in the outdoors. The Bible reference seems to tell me that the great outdoors is a wonderful place for people to come together to become strong in their faith. I am in agreement with God and hope I am again part of His plan to direct youth on the path to God.

We here at Grace support Scouting Programs. We have recently agreed to sponsor a Boy Scout Venture Crew. This Fall, I am considering starting a Cub Scout Pack here at Grace.

Please search your soul and determine your stewardship strengths. Maybe you, like me, enjoy working with youth and have a lot of the great outdoors, Bring these talents together and you have the Boy Scouts of America. A program which teaches love of God and country through the fantastic nature that God has created. Please consider joining me in growing young men to be leaders and to follow God's Word.

Gary Wagner

***Read the Scripture of the Day***

***Exodus 33:7-11***

***Saturday, November 6, 2010***

**Love INC**

The King will reply, "I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me." Matthew 25:40

As Christians we are to be as committed to serve the "least" as we are to serve Christ Himself." Love In the Name of Christ (Love INC) is a network of churches that links volunteers to people in need. Love INC has over 135 affiliates in 30 states that are helping more than 1 million people in need each year. The mission is carried out through over 8,000 churches, 5,000 community-based organizations, and more than 200,000 volunteers.

The Greater Hershey affiliate, which Grace is an active supporter and participant in, opened its doors in May, 2007, and has been fulfilling many requests for help since its inception. Love INC empowers churches to give Christians manageable opportunities to demonstrate the love of Christ to people in need through the use of their gifts and talents. The result is transformed lives of both the giver and the receiver, invigorated churches as Christians live out their faith, and transformed communities as unity in the Body of Christ is seen through churches working together across denominational lines. Currently, there are 15 local churches involved in Love INC of Greater Hershey covering the zip codes: 17033, 17036, and the Dauphin county part of 17022.

Grace Church has been one of the core churches and supported Love INC through its unified budget since the beginning. Countless volunteer hours have been given through the ministry of many faithful individuals here at Grace.

Some of the opportunities for service include: transporting people to doctor appointments, visiting with patients or families at HMC, providing meals to families in need, reworking donated bicycles and distributing them to individuals needing transportation, distributing personal care items through the area food banks and providing various administrative needs at the Love INC office where client requests are coordinated with gifts and talents.

The newest opportunity for ministry is at The Parsonage which is operated in the same manner as a Ronald McDonald House as a short-term, free-of-charge facility, primarily for families with loved ones in the Heart and Vascular service at HMC. Volunteers continue to be needed at The Parsonage as “elves” assisting with light housekeeping, laundry and other “chores” usually once or twice a month. “House Managers” usually take a “day of the week” coordinating the “elves” and checking in the guests, who are referred by the Medical Center, and helping them to become oriented to the house. Ask Christ who the particular “least” is for you. The wonder of prayer is that He will show you. Perhaps the ministry of Love In the Name of Christ (Love INC) will be a doorway for your service to Him.

Love INC Board

***Read the Scripture of the Day***

***Matthew 5:1-11***

***Sunday, November 7, 2010***

**UMCOR**

In John 21:15—19, Jesus talks with Peter, asking him three times, if he loves Jesus, and three times Peter responds, “yes, I Love You.” Jesus also asks Peter to “feed his lambs”, three times and by the third time, Peter feels put out by this request. Why did Jesus ask him this three times? Perhaps Jesus knew that it was one thing for a person to say they loved him, while knowing the real test is the willingness to serve Jesus.

How willing are we to serve Jesus? Sometimes the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak. Many times when disasters occur, there is a part of me that wants to help those in need, but I feel helpless just where to start. Last spring when Haiti received a terrible blow from an earthquake, I again heard God’s call to help, but this time was different. There had been an article in both the paper and the evening news of a need for kits to be made and sent to the Haitians. I cut the article out of the paper and put it on our refrigerator, in an effort to get started. This took me a bit of time, though. The following Sunday, in church, one of the parishioners was mentioning these kits needed by UMCOR. That was the nudge I needed from God. I spoke with Harold McNaughton to find out how to get to UMCOR, and got started.

Monday afternoon, I got a box, covered it with red paper, placed a sign on it, along with an example of what one of the kits would contain. I figure I would come back, near the end of the week to see how the collection had gone. I was so thankfully surprised to see the box filled with many kits. This meant so much to me, but more is what this would do for those suffering in Haiti.

I was remiss through all of this, because I never thanked everyone for their help. THANK YOU SO MUCH! We collected approximately 500 kits. I could have never done that without all of your help. In this sense, you folks “helped to feed all the lambs of Jesus”. Remember, God’s call comes in a whisper, just listen for His call.

Becky Holey

***Read the Scripture of the Day***

***John 21:15-19***

***Monday, November 8, 2010***

**Mission Central**

When I retired I had a hope to spend more time serving my Lord. I have done this in many ways but this one is a keeper. I can spend as much or as little time as I want to. But I am always serving my Lord. Helping those in need. Just as Peter was sent, so are we. We are called to go unto all the world, to feed his sheep.

I serve at Mission Central because I have felt called to serve there. I feel as if God has led me there. It is like a job to me. A place where I can feel good about the work I am doing, as well as, feel needed. I think that this is my calling. I feel part of the big picture.

Mission Central was a dream of Bishop Neal L. Irons and is a tribute to him. It is our Conference Mission Warehouse. The warehouse was used to gather and supply 230 outreach ministries globally in 2009 valued at \$1,391, 537.

It is helping hands that serve people by fulfilling their needs. You can make a difference by praying for the ministry, volunteer your time, donate needed materials or make a monetary donation.

There are monthly work dates and other on-going opportunities available. Please stop by the Mission table in the Narthex for additional information.

Harold McNaughton

***Read the Scripture of the Day***

***Matthew 28:16-20***

***Tuesday, November 9, 2010***

**Grace Christian Child Care**

*“Train up a child in the way he should go.  
Even when he is old he will not depart from it.”*  
Proverbs 22:6

A school is opened, hoping to fulfill the needs of all the little children. We hire trained teachers, buy books, computers, supplies, healthy food and drinks, and a clean warm environment. We hope that we give them everything they need to become educated and prepared adults. But a Christian School gives them the greatest gift ; because God promised that if we write the lessons of the Lord on a child's heart, he will have those lessons forever. What greater preparation for life can we give our children?

Watching my children be educated by the staff of Grace Christian Child Care has given me great comfort. There is such peace in knowing that my children are receiving the gift of salvation...and that even after I am gone, my boys will have what they need to make good decisions and live a Christian life. We all tend to worry about “leaving” our children something...some kind of a legacy. I am personally comforted by the belief that - even if I cannot leave them worldly goods - I have given them the greatest of gifts - Blessed Assurance of their salvation.

Robyn Wagner

***Read the Scripture of the Day***

***Mark 10:13-16***

**Wednesday, November 10, 2010**

## **Hospitality**

*"Be hospitable to one another without complaining. Like good stewards of the manifold grace of God, serve one another with whatever gift each of you has received."* 1 Peter 4:9-10

One of the very special ministries of Grace Church is the visitation of members homebound as a result of an illness, surgery, accident, old age, etc.

A phone call is made and soon a delicious meal is prepared and taken to a home of a family or person in need. The visit to the homebound is more than just a meal dropped off. It is about care and concern for the well-being of that person and/or family. It is not uncommon for other care to occur, such as light cleaning, heavy lifting, or running an errand.

Currently, Grace Church members and staff deliver approximately three to four meals per week to homebound families. For some church members it is an ongoing weekly meal. For others, it is until the person is back on their feet.

Pray for those who are at home recovering from illness, surgery, or who are aged and needing personal care. Also, remember the kind-spirited members who visit these folks on a weekly basis.

Rev. John

***Read the Scripture of the Day***

***Romans 12:9-14***

***Thursday, November 11, 2010***

**Hummelstown Food Bank**

The Hummelstown Food Bank is like an underground gift from God. Located in the basement of Zion Lutheran Church in Hummelstown, most of the community is unaware of the silent workings of this much-needed ministry.

Manned solely by community volunteers, it runs like a well-oiled machine. Serving over 100 needy families in Hummelstown, it is my constant reminder of how truly blessed and fortunate I am. When people are in need, the people of this community and the good Lord, do provide. I am always amazed that when the shelves start to look bare, a local church, organization, or individual comes through with a substantial, saving donation. Or when one grocery store's weekly donations are slim, invariably, the other grocery store's donations are abundant! Surely this is the working of the Lord.

My reminder of the importance of this ministry is the elderly gentleman who had just received his Christmas box of goodies containing the ingredients to make a nice holiday meal. He looked at me with the biggest smile and thanked me for making this the "best Christmas ever!" How very simple to make a difference in another person's life!

Jen Swavely

***Read the Scripture of the Day***

***Exodus 16:1-8***

***Friday, November 12, 2010***

## **Puppet Ministry**

Puppet Ministry is such a unique and fun way to share the gospel. At Grace, we all like to joke that “Puppets can get away with saying things people can’t.” And though we think of children enjoying puppets, the truth is, we all do. We love their humor, their honesty, and the way they touch our hearts. Jesus said we need to welcome and become like little children, and those who are the least among us are the greatest. The puppets’ message may be very simple, but it can be powerful. Sometimes we get so caught up in our busy lives that we forget the simple truths are often the most important.

GPS (Grace Puppet Squad) is a new and growing ministry at Grace. The mission of GPS is to led people to Jesus and help them to know Him better. We’re excited about the opportunities God has in store for us as we minister to others.

Our first GPS outing was to Paxton Ministries, a home for adults with mental challenges. It was amazing to see the residents who were shy in talking to us interact and feel comfortable talking to the puppets. Through the puppets, we were able to ask them questions, learn about them, and start to build relationships. The puppets gave us a bridge to do that.

I have gotten to know and work with many great young people and have the joy of seeing them develop their gifts and talents to minister to others. Witnessing is easier and more natural for some people than others. Through the puppets, even those who are quiet can learn to witness and share their faith. Puppet ministry helps to build confidence and teaches us all how to be part of a team - to work together for a common goal. And when that goal is sharing the gospel, we are all blessed - those who receive the message, but also those who bring the message, because we are constantly reminded of His Word and how much her need Him in our lives.

Stacey Forshey

***Read the Scripture of the Day***

***Luke 9:46-48***

