A special General Conference of the UM Church, February 23-26

General Conference is the highest legislative body of the United Methodist Church, with voting membership coming from an equal number of clergy and lay delegates elected by each Annual Conference. Typically, General Conference convenes every four years, but in February 2019 a special General Conference, called by the Bishops of our denomination, will be held in St. Louis, MO, to receive and act upon a report from the Commission on a Way Forward. The Commission was authorized at the General Conference of 2016 to examine paragraphs in our Book of Discipline concerning human sexuality and to explore options to strengthen the unity of the church. Arising from the Commission’s work are three options, or plans, for the future organization of the United Methodist Church. The three plans are briefly summarized below. At the February General Conference, delegates will receive, discuss, and hopefully act upon the report as our global church discerns its future.

The pastoral leadership of Grace Church invites you to pray for this General Conference, for the delegation representing the Baltimore-Washington Conference, and all attending delegates. We pray that God’s Spirit moves through this gathering to inspire and shape our church for God’s future work.

The General Conference will be live-streamed and anyone may tune in to the proceedings. After its conclusion, the Baltimore-Washington Conference will hold a live-streamed prayer and informational session on Saturday, March 2. Grace will provide more details about that opportunity as it draws near.

Finally, a member of Grace, George Kahl, will be attending the special General Conference as a volunteer and witness to the proceedings. We thank George for his dedication to the ministries of the United Methodist Church, and pray God’s blessing upon him in this journey.

[see plan summaries on next page]

February Worship and Preaching
February 3: Rev. Amy McCullough preaching
February 10: Rev. Amy McCullough preaching
February 17: Pastor Dane Wood preaching
February 24: Gospel Music Sunday

Staff-Parish Relations shares 2019 staffing update

This year’s stewardship emphasis, A Grace-Filled Past, A God-Shaped Future, included areas for future ministry growth at Grace, along with proposals for new or adjusted staff positions. The Staff Parish Relations Committee is pleased to share with the congregation the following additions and adjustments within Grace’s staff. These changes are slated to begin in February pending approval by the Finance Committee and the Church Council.

The Director of Children and Youth Ministries will be expanded from 25 hours per week to 30 hours per week, enabling us to continue growing our ministries to children, youth, and their families.

A new position of Communications Coordinator has been created, to provide dedicated attention and expertise to Grace’s electronic avenues for sharing news and ministry opportunities. This is a part-time position of 10 hours each week.

Lastly, the Day Custodian’s responsibilities will include the overall maintenance of the facility as well as supervision of the custodial staff.

The committee thanks the congregation for its support to the ministries of Grace, and also extends its deep appreciation to the members of the church staff for their hard work and dedication.
OVERVIEW OF PROPOSALS FOR GENERAL CONFERENCE:

1. One Church Plan - Summary:
   This plan, preferred by a majority of the Council of Bishops, would remove restrictive language from the Book of Discipline that prohibits same-gender weddings in UMC properties and ordination of “self-avowed, practicing homosexuals.” It would add language to protect churches and pastors who choose not to allow same-gender marriages.

2. Connectional Conference Plan (Ccs) - Summary:
   This plan would replace the current jurisdictional conferences with three connectional conferences based on affinity: Progressive, Traditional and Unity. All 3 would use a general Book of Discipline (Articles of Religion, General Rules, Confessions of Faith) with the ability to adapt other portions to their context for ministry.

3. Traditionalist Plan - Summary:
   This plan, developed more fully toward the end of the Commission on a Way Forward process, broadens the definition of “self-avowed, practicing homosexual”; puts penalties in place for disobedience to the Discipline; and requires bishops, pastors and annual conferences to certify adherence to the Discipline.

Those interested in reading the proposals in detail may find the information on the Conference website: www.bwcumc.org under Commission on a Way Forward

Update on Strategic Planning Project
Grace officially launched the strategic planning project that was announced in the previous Grace Notes issue by welcoming Ravi Waldon of Waldon Studio Architects to our morning worship services on a recent January Sunday. The objective of the study is to examine long-term improvements to the building in a phased, coordinated manner. The study process includes gathering information from the ministry areas and groups that use Grace’s facility, follow-up conversations with committees, ministry teams, and other congregational representatives, and opportunities for the congregation to be involved in the conversation. We anticipate the master planning process will carry through the winter and early spring, concluding by late May or early June.

The process is being guided by a Planning Committee, formed at the direction of the Trustees. These committee members are: Scott Stevens, chair, Thomas Gaeng, George Kahl, Doug Schmidt, Claire Greenhouse, Curtis Adams, Barbara Starkey, Jody Wiseman, Rev. Amy McCullough. Please feel free to reach out to these committee members and look for further updates by the committee and specific ways you can have your voice heard. We are excited about the dreaming and visioning of the process and look forward to sharing the ideas and results with the congregation.

HYMN FESTIVAL: A Peaceable Kingdom
Sunday, February 17th at 3:00 p.m.

The Chancel Choir of Grace Church will be joined by the choir from Christ Lutheran Church in downtown Baltimore and its organist and director, Daniel Aune, as they present a hymn festival filled with familiar hymns and anthems addressing the issue of migrants, refugees and displaced persons. This powerful service of word and song will include a narrative written by hymn text writer Mary Louise Bringle.

No admission fee; a free will offering will be taken.

Thank you... to all who made gifts in honor or memory of loved ones through the Christmas Memorials directed to the music ministry! Your donations allowed us to hear beautiful music from a string quartet and flute at our 9:00 p.m. Christmas Eve service. Your continued support and patronage toward the music ministry is greatly appreciated by the music staff and all its volunteers!
Happy Birthday!

Birthday greetings to those of the Grace family celebrating in February

1. Grayson Gilbert, Patricia Volker
2. Emily Bruce, Brendan Millon, Marian Yanega
3. Sarah Starkey
4. Morgan Scott
5. Bonnie Caster, Kelly Jackson, Lura Warren
6. Kelly Painter
7. Jennifer Gillis-White, Constance Mech
8. John Strahan
9. Alicia Metz
10. Laura Getschel
11. Carter Benson-Williams, Cole Benson-Williams, Elliott DeFilippis, Nicholas DeMetrick, Elinor Old, Steven Paylor
12. Allen Kessell
13. Eric Benfer, Jesse Siegel
14. Esi Yarney
15. John Honeycutt, Kendi Irwin, Barbara Jackson
16. Bob Smith, Paige Stevens
17. Karl Schillinger
18. Molly Farrugia, Bob Volker
19. Curtis Adams, Alec Rowley, Robert Schaefer
20. Jody Wiseman

Special Gifts

In Memory of Raymond and Iona Shephard by Mr. and Mrs. Stephen F. Jencks

To Grace Sunday School in memory of Ruth Ann Beachler by Grace Preschool

To our Mission-Outreach program in honor of Jim Fitzgerald for generously donating his time and talent to provide a cooking-making class to the Madsen family for the Grace Gala & Auction

In Honor of Hojoon Lee on his Birthday by His parents

GRACE BOOK CLUB

February 11th is the date of the next meeting of the Grace Book Club. The book for this month is The President is Missing by Bill Clinton and James Patterson. Join the discussion at 7:00 p.m. in the Parlor.

Within the Family at Grace

BAPTISM

Vera Cate Guaraldo
daughter of Andrew and Kristen Guaraldo
December 16, 2018

BIRTH

Wells Carroll Hudkins
son of Meredith Hauf Hudkins and Michael Hudkins
grandson of Sally Hauf
October 28, 2018

Christina sends “thanks”

It seems like a cliché to say that “I don’t have the words” to say thank you to you, my Grace Church family, for the abundantly generous gift you have given me, but although my stunned silence may speak volumes, it doesn’t translate well to the written page. “Thank you” doesn’t seem like enough, but please know that I am overwhelmed and extremely grateful.

Thank you also for your continued prayers for me. I miss working for and with you and am grateful to still be in touch with several of you. I pray God’s blessings on each of you and will thank our God “every time I remember you.” (Philippians 1:3)

Again, from my grateful heart, merci beaucoup.

In Christ,
Christina Rushing

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Christina joined several of the church staff and volunteers at dinner at the Peppermill before Christmas. Following the meal, she was given a generous check representing the donations from her many friends and former colleagues here at Grace.
VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL
June 24-28 9:00-12:00 pm
Children age 3 and older
[extended day 12:00-4:00 pm available for an additional cost]

One small step for your kids ... one giant leap for God's Kingdom! Blast off with the first VBS to land on Mars!
Cokesbury's To Mars and Beyond will help kids discover the wonders of God's universe. They'll become Voyagers on a
journey through space, exploring where God's power can take them. Beginning in your Assembly-area - an outpost on
Mars - they'll lift off to distant planets on special missions to collect power sources. Along the way, they'll learn how
God walked with heroes of the Bible, and that God is always with them, too. Add to the adventure with this out-of-
the-world fun, learning, and timeless Bible stories that inspire kids to give glory to God, who is able to do far beyond all
that we could ask or imagine.

Wildlife Adventures will return as part of the VBS program again this year! Each day a different animal shares in
the Bible experience. Kids have an opportunity to be up close and personal with some of God’s amazing creatures!

Go to http://graceunitedmethodist.org/kids-grace/vbs/to register! Contact Trisha Wetzelberger with any
questions: 410-433-6650, ext. 111 or trisha@graceunitedmethodist.org

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HERSHEY PARK TICKETS
BEST PRICE AVAILABLE Group Ticket Sales will be available through Grace until March 25, 2019
This new and innovative way to save money on tickets for the summer 2019 season replaces the promotion
that has been in place for many years. Please plan ahead!

For Summer 2019 Season
$29.95 (Visiting May 3-July 31) or $32.95 (Visiting May 3-September 29)
(all ages 3 and up)

The Gate Price (the price of a ticket at the gate without any discount coupons, group sales, etc.)
will be $66.95 plus tax (all ages 3 years and up). There will be no other discounts this year for children
ages 3-8 years, Seniors ages 55-70, or Senior Plus. Everyone over the age of 3 years will pay the same rate!

Pre-Purchase Hershey Park Tickets for the Summer 2019 Season:

Name: __________________________________________________________________________
Address: ________________________________________________________________________
Phone Number: ___________________________________________________________________
E-Mail: _________________________________________________________________________

Number of tickets @ $29.95 Visiting May 3-July 31 ________________ Total: $ ________________
Number of tickets @ $32.95 Visiting May 3-September 29 ________________ Total: $ ________________

Make checks payable to Grace United Methodist Church

The Youth will be going to Hershey Park this Summer. Please plan ahead. If you have any questions,
please contact Trisha Wetzelberger at trisha@graceunitedmethodist.org or call 410-433-6650, ext. 111
AIDS BENEFIT

“ANYTHING GOES!”

Sunday, March 3 at 1:00 p.m.

Mark your calendars now to attend this popular event that highlights the talents of Grace members and friends and supports Grace’s AIDS ministries. This year’s show theme and title is ANYTHING GOES!

A free will offering will be taken at the show, so no tickets are required.

We are asking for patrons and sponsors to support this worthy cause. And most importantly, we need talented individuals to share their gifts on stage in the Variety Show!

All talents are welcome to perform: singing, dancing, poetic reading, dramatic reading, miming, juggling, etc. Whatever your special talent, this will be your opportunity to share it with others.

We also need volunteers to help with logistics during the show, including tech people. So please contact Chris Schroeder at chris@graceunitedmethodist.org or 410-433-6650, ext 106 to talk about ways you might participate.

We hope you will join us for this fun afternoon of talent, while raising money for a good cause!!

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 24

10:00 a.m.

“Lift every voice and sing. . .”

Join us at the 10:00 a.m. worship service on Sunday, February 24 to share in our annual Gospel Service, led and directed by our bass soloist, Robert Cantrell. This popular service will feature Black Gospel Music of African-American heritage. Robert invites anyone who would like to sing with the choir that morning to come to rehearsals in the Choir Room on the lower level at 9:30 a.m. on the Sunday mornings of February - 2/3, 2/10, 2/17 and 2/24.
We celebrate those who have pledged in support of our 2019 operating budget

Thank you to all members and friends of Grace Church who have made a financial pledge to Grace’s ministries in 2019. Your dedication and commitment to helping Grace accomplish God’s work this year is a blessing. Listed below are those who have pledged, excluding the names of those persons who wish to remain anonymous.

Kitty Allen
Janet Ander
Carolyn Benfer
Jane Benson
Nancy Blackstone
Francette Boling
Barbara Bond
Pat Boughter
David Brock
Catherine Buffington
Linda & Dennis Cameron
John Casey & Marie Yeh
Ed & Bonnie Caster
Bud & Susan Clark
Nancy Cornbrooks
Mimi Corry
Kathleen Cosgrove
Ann Dahl
Joseph Dandy
Jack & Maureen Danz
Betty Dempster
Bruce Eicher
Burt & Linda English
Debbie English
Todd English
Angus & Lydia Everton
Norma Faby
Edward & Michelle Fields
Frank Fiske
Jim Fitzgerald
John Ford
Richard Frank
Doris Franklin
Thomas & Kimberly Franklin
Ed & Anna Mae Frederick
John & Judy Gillan
Marcia Gleckler
Amanda Graham & Thomas Gaeng
Heather Grandsire
Lisa Greenhouse
Walter & Claire Greenhouse
Larry & Anne Griffith
David Haile
Dick Hall
James Heckman
Carl Hickey
Casey Humbyrd
Wendy Iglehart
Kelly Jackson
George Kahl
John & Francie Keenan
Brian & Sandy Kick
Cath LaCosta
Diane Lesman
Michael & Amy Madsen
Amy & Chris McCullough
Mike & Kristen McGuire
Bob & Sharon McIntire
Ellie Megraw
Kathie Metz
Thomas Moore
Irene Moses
Helen Mosher
Stephen & Kathryn Mullan
Chris & Nila Murray
Priscilla Newton
Patrick Onley
Steve & Kelly Painter
Henry & Mirlene Perry
June Peterson
Carol Polk
Ryan & Michelle Riddle
Thom & Sue Rinker
Bob & Elaine Schaefer
Doug & Allegra Schmidt
Wayne & Shannon Schmidt
Chris Schroeder
Alan & Nancy Seitz
Lynne & Norman Sharpe
Dorothy Shindle
Richard Shindle
Milt & Linda Siglin
Edward Skinner
Jack & Jean Smith
Katie Spearman
Tanya Spedalere
Chuck & Barbara Starkey
Lee & Wilma Starkey
Gordon & Joanie Stetz
Scott & Suzanne Stevens
Gil Strieks
Walt & Marguerite Stucki
Andrew Trofatter
Rex & Kristin Turner
Pat Volker
Susan Wallace
Nancy Webb
Tom & Lois Wellener
Jeaneen Wingate
Dane & Megan Wood
Marilyn Workman
5 Unnamed pledges

Don’t Forget Your Pledge

It is not too late to make a 2019 pledge. The Finance Committee encourages every Grace member to return a financial commitment, as a spiritual discipline and a fulfillment of our membership vows. We are excited about the ministry plans before Grace and hope you share our excitement. Pledge cards are available from the church office.
Men’s Breakfast
Tuesday, February 12 at 7:00 a.m.
All gentlemen of the church and community are welcome to join us for a time of fellowship and food – every second Tuesday at Panera Bread, 6307 York Road. Come for breakfast or just for coffee, but come!

ADVANCE NOTICE
Save the date for
VACATION THEATRE SCHOOL
August 19-23
More details will be available soon!

Snowed in on Sunday? Remember to send in your offering!