



GRACE NOTES

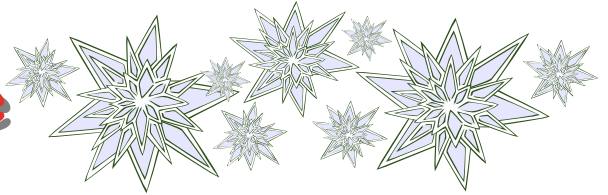
A Communications Ministry of Grace United Methodist Church

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Gather to Christ
Grow as Disciples
Go to Serve

December 2011

Christmas at Grace



✧ **SATURDAY, DECEMBER 10, 5:00PM** "A Thrill of Hope" Christmas musical, presented in worship by the New Life Singers, Grace Bell Ensemble, and Instrumentalists. Joel Raney's fresh adaptation of beloved Christmas carols and the Bethlehem narrative.

✧ **SUNDAY, DECEMBER 11, 8:15/9:30AM** "A Thrill of Hope" 11:00am worship this day will be led by the Grace Praise Team

✧ **SUNDAY, DECEMBER 18, 8:15/9:30/11:00AM** Music led by the Children's Music Ministry, Grace Chancel Choir, and Grace Praise Team, respectively

✧ **SUNDAY, DECEMBER 18, 4:00-5:30PM** "Gift of Love" Christmas Benefit Concert for the homeless. Featuring the Grace Chancel Choir, soloists and ensembles, Grace Junior Singers, and special musical guests Rebecca Davis (leading soprano with Opera San Jose), concert organist Philip Spencer, 28 members of the Chicago Civic Orchestra, and the music and media artistry of Fifth House Ensemble. Tickets are \$18 adults/\$13 seniors 65+/\$7.50 students; purchase tickets and reserve seats online at www.peopleofgrace.org or in the church office. 100% of proceeds benefit Hessed House in Aurora. Contact danwagner@peopleofgrace.org or 630-355-1748, ext. 232, for information about sponsors' benefits.



✧ **WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 21, 7:30PM** Longest Night Service in the Activity Center, led by Pastor Bob Atkins. Candles and anointing oils will be part of this special service of remembrance and quiet reflection.

✧ **SATURDAY, DECEMBER 24, CHRISTMAS EVE:**

12:00pm Holy Communion, Grace Bell Ensemble; Pastor Don Niswonger

3:00pm Children's Music Ministry, children/families; Pastor Bob Atkins

4:30pm Grace Praise Team, children/families; Pastor Bob Atkins

7:00pm Youth-led music and drama, assisted by Pastor Lisa Telomen and Youth Director Gaye Lynn Loufek

9:00pm Holy Communion, New Life Singers; Pastor Bob Atkins

11:00pm Candlelight service of "Lessons and Carols," music from the Grace Chancel Choir and Naperville Brass Ensemble; Pastor Bob Atkins

✧ **SUNDAY, DECEMBER 25, CHRISTMAS DAY:**

THERE IS NO 8:15AM SERVICE THIS DAY!

9:30am "Happy Birthday, Jesus!" family worship service, with decorating, carols, re-enacting of the Christmas story, prayers and thanks; led by Rev. Lisa Telomen, Margaret Harrison, and Lynn Leitzen

11:00am A traditional service of carols and lessons, with Nancy Staton and Pastor Bob Atkins

✧ **SATURDAY, DECEMBER 31, 5:00PM** Watch Night Service in the Activity Center; music led by Vickie Wagner

✧ **SUNDAY, JANUARY 1, NEW YEAR'S DAY:**

8:15am A traditional service with Holy Communion in the Sanctuary

9:30am An interactive Family Covenant Renewal service in the Activity Center. Families will consider the things they will do to preserve creation, care for community, grow as a family together, and honor God with their lives and actions. This service replaces regular Sunday School.

11:00am A traditional service with Holy Communion in the Sanctuary



Pastor's Journal



I want to say thank you for the wonderful recognition of ministry service on November 13. I sincerely enjoyed preparing for the dialogue sermon with President Phil Amerson from Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary. Many who attended said to President Amerson and me that they enjoyed our worship and message.

The reception, comments and gift book of memories were a blessing. Marlene and I felt affirmed and encouraged by the morning. We extend many thanks to the Staff-Parish Relations Committee and, especially, to Harriet McCabe for making the day possible.

Most importantly, a new scholarship at Garrett-Evangelical will assist and encourage divinity students in defraying some of the cost of their education. The future leaders of our Church, educated in our seminary, confront the increased cost of tuition. This scholarship will certainly help. The future Church, the seminary and student scholarship recipients will all be grateful for additional contributions made either directly to Garrett-Evangelical or through Grace Church.

On another note, I spent the past week at the annual American Academy of Religion and Society of Biblical Literature meeting in San Francisco. As a program unit chairperson for the Academy, I coordinated two of the more than 900 sessions. I especially profited from two half-day Pauline Epistles meetings and the discussion of a paper by Mark Goodacre of Duke University on Romans 16:7.

As we move toward the celebration of Christ's birth through the Advent season, let us prepare to be open to the message of the Christ Child – Emmanuel! God with us.

Grace and Peace,

Bob Atkins



Linking Up to Grace

By Pastor Lisa Telomen



What are you waiting for?
 WHAT are you waiting for?
 What ARE you waiting for?
 What are YOU waiting for?
 What are you WAITING for?
 What are you waiting FOR?
 English professors and other literate people will say this should be phrased "FOR WHAT are you waiting," but I am hoping that you are catching on that no matter how you phrase this question, it is where you put the emphasis that can change the meaning entirely!

This Advent, we are waiting...waiting for Christ to come, to be born into our hearts and lives and world again, waiting to put up decorations (well, some of us are!), to purchase a Christmas tree, to buy and receive presents, to send and receive Christmas cards, to bake cookies and other Christmas treats, to visit with family, to

serve others at various Christmas special projects, to attend and perform in Christmas concerts...

This season offers so many ways to express God's love, generosity, creativity, salvation, kingdom. The challenge is to not get so tired waiting for and doing all these things that we have no energy left to actually experience God's gifts! Perhaps the key lies in how we answer the question "What are you waiting for?". If what we truly want for Christmas (and any time of the year) is to see Jesus and feel his love entering our hearts and lives, then those pursuits which truly fill our hearts and others' with Jesus' love and presence should take first place. And our behavior should, likewise, become all about communicating and receiving Jesus' love, not just "getting

through" things, or checking them off the list. Those things for which seeing and experiencing Jesus is not the prime directive should take a back seat during the holidays. (Can we put housecleaning on this list?:-p)

Here are some things we might put first on our lists this season in order to introduce others to—and reacquaint ourselves with—the love of Christ: 1) Our annual Celebrate the Season event that each year gives Grace women the wonderful opportunity to introduce Christ's love and our church to friends outside Grace; 2) Giving opportunities at Grace through food donations to local pantries, gifts to the children and youth of Trinity UMC, Heifer Project gifts, Christmas cards for Bread for the World, Christmas ornaments for summer

youth missions, etc., etc.; 3) Concerts

from our New Life Singers, children's choirs, bell choirs and Chancel Choir on upcoming Sundays, and a Christmas concert to benefit Hesus House, featuring our own Grace musicians and phenomenal special guests.

So, what are you waiting for? Jump in and immerse yourself in Christ's love...find ways to share it with others! Truly, Christ's love is not just what we are waiting for; it is what the world is waiting for. And when we share this gift with others, we receive back a full measure, in abundance, running over. God's love in Christ is just that good. You can depend on it! Blessed to be on the journey with you,

Rev Lisa E. Telomen

December 2011

PORTRAITS OF FALL

Harvest Home Oct. 12



CROP Walk Oct. 16



Window Dedications Oct. 30-Nov. 6



UMW Quilt Dedication Oct. 30



Mistletoe Marketplace Nov. 5



All Saints Memorial Service Nov. 6



All Saints "Beams of Heaven" Nov. 6



Ministry Sunday Honoring Pastor Bob Nov. 13



"Light of Hope" Advent Celebration Nov. 27



"Celebrate the Season" Nov. 30



Fall Festival Oct. 30

Photos courtesy of Dick Trondsen, Ron Wills, and Barb Ceruti



Church Council Update

By John Bodine, Church Council Chair

As we approach the end of 2011, we find ourselves on the cusp of some new beginnings. It's evident that our members are personally more comfortable with the economy, but also specifically aware of the difficulties experienced by neighbors in our surrounding communities. Both October and November have been strong on receipts to the extent that Church Council authorized early payments for budgeted 2011 Missions, rather than waiting until the end of the year as we've had to do for the last several years. Thank you, Grace! Our Missions contributions will serve those who are among the jobless and dispossessed, even in our own community. They are often the first to feel economic hardship and the last to recover. Grace members who are able might also consider accelerating their giving to help people

through the holiday period. We will be presenting a set of Vital Church goals, developed from feedback provided by Grace members as part of the Vital Congregations initiative sponsored by the UMC Council of Bishops (see below). The objective is to prompt UM churches to adopt goals for developing disciples and providing services to those in need. Church Council has agreed on five-year goals for worship attendance, number of new members by profession of faith, number of small groups, number of members engaged in Missions, and amount given to Missions. Where are we heading with this? Here's what Church Council approved, based on member input, as a description of what Grace aspires to be:

"A congregation that actively welcomes and seeks out new Christian disciples and proactively engages people of all cultures, ages and interests, inclusive of youth,

adults, and the elderly by providing for them an enlightening Christian experience that is relevant in today's stress-filled society."

It will be up to us all to help figure out how we can move Grace along a path to this end—and we'll be doing it in concert with churches across all of the UMC.

Our Stewardship Campaign is moving along well, with only a small percentage of Estimate of Giving cards still out. If you have yet to submit yours, please help us out by submitting it to the church office as soon as possible. Based on returns so far, Church Council has approved a 2012 Budget of \$1,646,280, subject to review in January and adjustment, if needed, after updating Estimate of Giving data. This amount is a 6% increase over 2011. Thank you again, Grace, for your support and timely responsiveness!

Grace Trustees have summarized capital

projects that have been identified and refined through work with an architectural firm which conducted a facility assessment of our Grace buildings. As was expected, we've done very well over the last 30 years, squeezing value out of our heating and cooling systems, but they are no longer very efficient and they have passed the point of obsolescence. Finding repair parts is increasingly difficult. Areas of focus for maintenance and improvement beyond the HVAC system include roofing, parking lots, security, and safety concerns, such as a fire suppression system in the kitchen. Church Council and the Trustees will recommend forming a Study Committee to the NIC District Superintendent that will further detail the work that is needed so that competitive bids can be obtained. This is expected to tighten the preliminary scoping costs of the overall project list. We can anticipate a Church

Conference around April or May 2012, when all Grace members will have a voice in approving a capital campaign to begin these capital maintenance projects.

This will be my last Church Council Note as Chair of Church Council, as Tom and Christine Ryan have agreed to serve as co-chairs over the next term. My six years have been instructive and a source of gratification and growth for me, and I appreciate all of the energy and support for Grace that I have witnessed over the years. I pray we will continue to transform and evolve as suggested above to be a welcoming, multi-generational, multi-cultural, healthy, vibrant faith community.


Editor's Note: *We as a congregation—and I as Editor of this newsletter—have been amply blessed by John's exemplary leadership, enthusiasm, dedication, and Christian discipleship. Thank you, John, for a job very well done!*

close · intimate · healing · social · inspiring music · meaningful messages · tasty refreshments · everyone welcome!

evening **Saturday** worship

5pm in the Activity Center

Grace is embarking upon a visioning and strategy process for our congregation over the next four years. Your feedback is essential! Start by visiting our website at www.peopleofgrace.org and clicking the "Vital Congregations" icon (shown here) on the home page. There you will find more about this project and an open-answer questionnaire. You may also fill out a questionnaire by hand, found outside the church office; return to office, ATTN: Barb Ceruti.



All's well that ends the week well...
Experience Saturday Evening Worship!



**Toast (left)
and
Cinnamon**

Animal Attraction!

Here are Toast and Cinnamon, two very special members of the Browning family. Cinnamon is an 11-year-old Golden Retriever/Chow mix. She loves to go on walks, play tug, and cuddle on the couch with her family. She is the "fastest dog in town," says Mary, and can often be seen chasing bunnies under decks and squirrels up trees. "A more loyal companion could never be found." Toast is the family's three-year-old, 103-pound Yellow Lab mix. He is big and powerful, but mostly, he is lovable, offering endless kisses and following his family and anyone he meets anywhere. Toast loves to go to the dog park and play flash-light tag with his best friend, Zach (Mary's son). He even has been to church twice for the Blessing of the Animals!



Has "Animal Attraction" Run Its Course?

After the month of January, "Animal Attraction" will have run out of animals to feature. As a fervent lover of God's creatures great and small, I would be happy to see this column continue for as long as Grace Notes receives photos and stories to feature. If you would also like to see this column go on, please send your favorite animal photos and "bio's" to Barb Ceruti at gumcnotes@peopleofgrace.org, or drop a hard copy in the office to my attention (photos will be returned upon request).

OUR PEOPLE

Sympathy to the Friends and Family of...

Jean Bray, mother of Richard Bray
Dorothy Butler, mother of Eunice Lasky
Ben Calvert, husband of Pat Calvert
Bishop R. Sheldon Duecker, former Episcopal leader of the Northern Illinois Conference
Janette Flatt, mother of Jay Flatt
Jason Masters, son of Bill and Karen Masters
Marilyn Nelson, mother of Don Nelson
Carol Ory, friend of the Systo Family
Benno Ott, father of Joanne Louis
Maxie Todd, mother of Sherrie Holdeman
Frank Towey, brother of Sean Foley

Celebrations and Congratulations

Jill Myatt and Eric Jungnickel were married on November 26
Clifford and Eleanor Preston celebrated 63 years of marriage last month
Bob and Judi Poland celebrated 50 years of marriage on November 4
Charles and Marilyn Kayton (pictured) will celebrate 50 years of marriage on December 17
Kenneth Dorsch celebrates his 97th birthday on December 10; please send greetings to 310 Martin Ave., Apt. 124, Naperville, IL 60540



Irene Hoekstra celebrates her 90th birthday on December 10; please send greetings to 1029 Page Ct., Naperville, IL 60540
Otto Meglin celebrates his 90th birthday on December 16; please send greetings to 808 Havenshire Rd., Naperville, IL 60565
Karina Marie, daughter of David and Kirstie Adams and granddaughter of Richard and Glenna Adams, was born on October 11
Zachary Howard, son of Michael and Rachel Harrison and grandson of Margaret Harrison, was born on November 13
Nolan Patrick, son of Shannon and Brett Meurer and grandson of Karen and Brian Patterson, was born on November 15
Colin Gabriel, son of Jennifer and Dan Hay and grandson of Bob and Margaret Schmitt, was born on November 28
Kayleigh Deanna Grysh, daughter of Paul Grysh, Jr., and Melissa Leighann Hunt and granddaughter of Lorie and Paul Grysh, Sr., was born on November 29
Robert David, son of Rob and Angie Poland and grandson of Bob and Judi Poland, was born on December 1

Baptisms

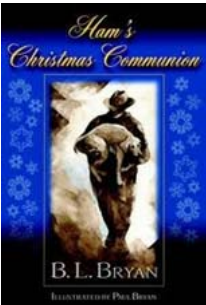
Margaret Ann, daughter of Alan and Barbie Wenk, was baptized on November 13
Cameron Alexander, son of Sean and Michelle Fraser, was baptized on November 27
Paige Whitney, daughter of Clint and Jessica Rhea, was baptized on November 27

Welcome, New Members

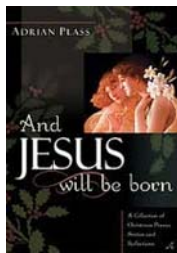
Bob and Suzanne Lippencott
Tom Vander Meulen
Meena Rathod
Vince and Colleen Rio
Virginia O. Vance
Susan and Corinne Wittig



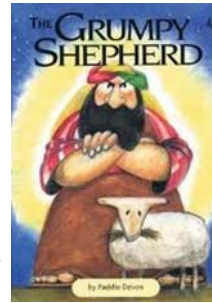
Merry Christmas! There are books for all ages in our Grace Library. Children can easily find their own Christmas stories by looking for the Christmas tree stickers on the book spines. *Saint Nicholas* was selected for the “Kids Camp In” event on December 2. Anne Tompert retells the life of Nicholas, Bishop of Myra, whose gen-



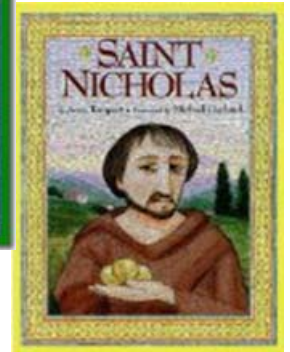
erosity and good deeds became legendary. Other favorites include Paddie Devon's *The Grumpy Shepherd* and Richard H. Schneider's *Why Christmas Trees Aren't Perfect*. Seasonal titles for adults include Adrian Plass's *And Jesus Will Be Born: A Collection of Christmas Poems, Stories and Reflections*, Pastor Bill Bryan's *Ham's Christmas*



of the Harvest Home Festival, including the turkey preparation team, carvers, Grace confirmands, set-up and clean-up crews, servers, ticket sellers, office staff, the “wonderful, talented Chorestes,” and all those who supported Samaritan Interfaith. Encourages Brenda, “If you missed this treasured event this year, we hope to see you next year!”



The handmaid and carpenter are, of course, Mary and Joseph, here depicted as a very young couple coping with the emotional and social consequences of a most unexpected pregnancy. Happy reading!
“Visit the Library to grow in the knowledge of your faith.”



Harvest Home 2011 Honors Grace Members, Supports Samaritan Interfaith

For over 100 years, the Grace Harvest Home Festival has gathered members of our church together for bountiful food, fellowship, musical entertainment, and recognition of our newest members as well as those who have been members of Grace for 50 years or more. Harvest Home also recognizes a single individual for his or her outstanding service to Grace and the community. This year, that person was Clifford Preston, whose professional abilities in the field of construction have been put to much use over the years, both at Grace and in our community. “Cliff has supported our church in all endeavors, especially in its building,” said Winnie Graver. Winnie noted that Cliff has also been very involved and instrumental in various groups and programs at Grace throughout the years. In the community, Cliff has been a major influence in the programs and projects of Naperville, particularly the development of the Riverwalk. He has also been an active, supportive figure in the realm of Naperville high school sports and various community youth programs. As for his spouse, Eleanor, says Winnie: “Behind Cliff is a very supportive wife!”

Entertainment for Harvest Home was provided by the all girls’ choral ensemble, the Naperville Central High School “Chorestes,” under the direction of Claire Leitzen and Rachel Doll. Missions proceeds from the evening benefited Samaritan Interfaith, totaling \$4,000 for the 40-year-old, non-profit counseling center that relies on donations to provide services to those who have little or no financial resources. Harvest Home coordinator Brenda Carpenter extends her thanks to all of the volunteers and supporters

of the Harvest Home Festival, including the turkey preparation team, carvers, Grace confirmands, set-up and clean-up crews, servers, ticket sellers, office staff, the “wonderful, talented Chorestes,” and all those who supported Samaritan Interfaith. Encourages Brenda, “If you missed this treasured event this year, we hope to see you next year!”



Pastor Don Niswonger congratulates Harvest Home 2011 service award recipient Clifford Preston October 12.

Members of Grace for 50+ Years

Bill Abe, Mary Abe, Ruby Allen, Jean Anderson, Robert Anderson, George Bentz, Cliff Bock, Russell Breitwieser, Bob Craig, Millie Craig, Kenneth Dorsch, James Dudley, Helen Enger, RuthAnn Epperson, Char Gregory, Rita Harvard, Barbara (Hagemann) Hiltz, Robert Hoffman, Shirley Hoffman, Albert Johnson, Martha Johnson, Ruth Ladd (member for over 90 years!), Bob Lehman, Miriam Lehman, Darlene Noerenberg, Carol Piper,

Robert Piper (75-year member), Faye Pletcher, Harold Pletcher, Marylou Pratte, Betty Rickleff, Myra Riskedal, Claire Ann Saunty, Robert Sebastian, Lillian Squires (75-year member), Lois Stanley, Jack Upton, Julian (Gus) Voss, Maxine Voss, Judith Wehrl, Norris Yonker, and Peg Yonker.

50+-year members who died within the past year: Phyllis Dubson, Miriam Fry, and Clarence Rickleff

Choristers Make a Joyful Noise

By Lynn Leitzen, Director of Children's Choir Ministries

"Make a Joyful Noise To the Lord!" was the theme of this year's annual Chicago-area Chapter of Choristers Guild Festival, hosted once again at Grace on November 19. Over 100 choristers from seven different local denominations were represented at the day-long event, including 15 members of Grace's Junior Singers. This year's event was very interactive and included hands-on experiences in many of the worship arts, including: vocal, liturgical dance, art, drumming, and handbells. The highlight for many in attendance was the drum circles led and directed by NCHS graduate Evan Ryan. Evan is a professional drummer who facilitated the use of all varieties of percussion in the worship of



God. The event culminated in an afternoon worship celebration in the sanctuary for parents, friends, and directors. The Children's Music Ministry and its families did a wonderful job hosting this event. I wish to thank all those who graciously served throughout the day, in-

cluding accompanists Vickie Wagner and Sherri Nagy, Children's Music Ministry Directors Sue Riedinger, Renee-Roscoe Morrison, and Angela Sterchi, and many choir parents who served as bakers, runners, ushers, t-shirt sellers and servers. Choristers Guild is a not-for-profit Christian organization that enables leaders, through the publishing of choral, handbell, and educational resources, to nurture the spiritual and musical growth of children and youth.



Eldredge Artistry Lives On In Grace Ornament

This Christmas season, the Grace Youth Ministry is selling ornaments embellished with a sketch of Grace Church rendered by Dick Eldredge, who passed away in 2005. "Dick was always drawing," said his wife, Mary Lou. "We'd go to church dinners and he'd start drawing on the paper table cloths. People would move down so he could keep going." An environmental engineer by trade, Dick provided the sketch of Grace several years ago for the cover of our smaller annual church directories. The drawing is still used for this purpose, and now it also appears on the ornaments Grace youth are selling to the benefit of their summer mission trips. "Dick would be honored to have the youth of our church selling these ornaments for their projects and missions," said Mary Lou. Youth Director Gaye Lynn Loufek and Christine Ryan, whose idea it was to create the ornaments, presented Mary Lou with the first of a limited number of ornaments.



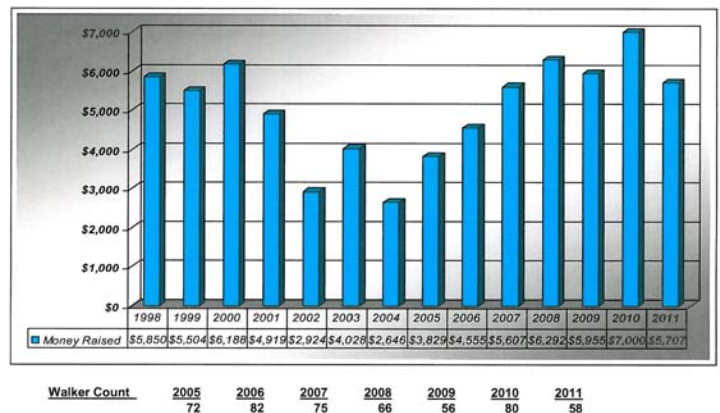
Youth Director Gaye Lynn Loufek (left) and Christine Ryan present Mary Lou Eldredge (center) with the first of a limited number of ornaments imprinted with a sketch of Grace Church by her late husband, Dick.



CROP Walk, Mistletoe Marketplace Raise Thousands In Support of Missions

- 58 walkers from Grace participated in the 29th Annual **CROP Walk** on October 16, raising a total of \$5,707 toward hunger efforts here in our area and around the world. Many thanks to our walkers, those who supported them, and to Grace Church for being the CROP host site for the second year in a row. Here is a look at our Grace CROP Walk history over the past several years:

GRACE CROP WALK HISTORY



- United Methodist Women's **Mistletoe Marketplace** on November 5 raised nearly \$11,000 for local, national and global UMW missions. Many thanks to all who helped make this event such a success. Your hard work and efforts really paid off! Quilt drawing winners for 2011 Mistletoe Marketplace were: Jean Vance ("Honey Bee" queen-sized quilt); Val Dudley and Ann Mitchell (table toppers); Joan Carter and Jeri Blood (wall hangings); and Jan Cosgrove (table runner).



Grace United Methodist Church
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Naperville, IL 60540-7424

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Local Missions Express Gratitude to Our Youth & Families

Dear Grace Youth Ministry:

Thank you for coordinating an outstanding service activity with the Grace UMC Youth Ministry. In the two weeks of food collection, your youth collected an impressive 950 pounds of food and \$355! The demand for our services has grown by 59% in the past year alone. Your support will truly make a difference to the families in Naperville and DuPage County who receive groceries and access to empowerment programs at no charge through our not-for-profit organization. Thank you so much for leading such an inspirational program for youth to channel their desire to help their neighbors and be part of their community. These young people are truly a blessing to all of us. We are grateful for your partnership in ending hunger and empowering lives.

—Jody Bender, Loaves & Fishes Community Relations Director

Dear Children of Grace:

Those of us at Hesed House are very grateful for your donation of 101 coats and snow pants. As you probably know, our needs are multiple. It is only with the support of one another that our dreams will ever become reality. We truly appreciate your generosity in helping us care for those who would otherwise go without.

—Ryan Dowd, Hesed House Executive Director

Dear Grace Church and Boy Scout Troop #555:

Thank you for joining or sponsoring me in Bridge Communities' "Sleep Out Saturday" on November 5. Bridge has more than 17,000 people now living self-sufficiently after completing its two-year Transitional Housing Program. Thanks to your support and participation, Bridge Communities will be able to continue its service to the ever-increasing number of families in need of help.

—Catherine Page, Grace Church Hunger Committee Chair

Just a Little End-of-the-Year Housekeeping...



\$ *If, for tax purposes, you would like any remaining monetary contributions to Grace to be included in the year 2011, they must be turned in to the office by December 30 or postmarked by December 31. Note: the office is closed Dec. 26, Dec. 31, and January 2.*

\$ *E-Giving makes catching up on your 2011 pledges E-asy! Just visit our website at www.peopleofgrace.org and click the E-Giving icon found on every page to get started. It's easy and completely secure. Check it out!*