

342 Macedonia Church Road, Sparta, NC 28675

Is it Just Me? Or do you think Thanksgiving is being crowded out? We jump from Halloween to Christmas so easily. Why?

Despite what many tell us these days, our country was formed on Christian values and principles. In November 1621, after the Pilgrims' first corn harvest proved successful, Governor William Bradford organized a celebratory feast. This event lasted for 3 days. It was a time of feasting and giving thanks to God for His many blessings. The following year, there was a long drought which was threatening that year's harvest. During that drought the Pilgrims turned to God in prayer and fasting. They marked the end of that drought with a celebration to God.

During the American Revolution, the Continental Congress designated one or more days of thanksgiving a year, and in 1789 George Washington issued the first Thanksgiving proclamation by the national government of the United States; in it, he called upon Americans to express their gratitude for the happy conclusion to the country's war of independence and the successful ratification of the U.S. Constitution. His successors John Adams and James Madison also designated days of thanks during their presidencies. There are many recorded accounts of Americans taking time to give thanks to God for His blessings, kindness and guidance.

With the football games and parades and turkey dinners and all that we have included in our Thanksgiving Day, we are crowding out the real reason to celebrate the day. We need to fall on our knees and let God know how important He is in our every day lives. How gracious He is even in rough times. He is always there. He wants to lead us and care for us. What a grateful people we should be! **Thank You God for your great mercies to us.**



Agricultural Ministry
Do you grow vegetables?
Do you raise livestock?
Can you prune an apple tree?

Sharing the love of Christ by "spending ourselves on behalf of the hungry" as we walk alongside others, teaching and encouraging them to produce food.*

Isaiah 58:10



Contact:
Amy Huysman
336-572-1818
huysman4@gmail.com

We are exploring the vision of beginning an Agricultural Ministry at Grace Community Church. God has blessed many Grace members and fellow worshippers with a passion for producing their own food. These passions through experience have become knowledge (perhaps even expertise) that is a valuable resource and tool for serving not only our own personal needs, but also the needs of our community.

Christian Agricultural Ministry might be defined as serving God by meeting people's needs in the name of Christ through agriculture. As Christians, when Christ in us looks upon the needs of others and moves with compassion, then we, His hands and feet, respond in service. The purpose of this type of ministry at Grace Community Church is to share the love of Christ through generously giving of our time, knowledge, resources, and selves as we walk alongside others, teaching and encouraging them to produce their own food.

Anyone interested in learning more about this new ministry opportunity can contact Amy Huysman. In particular, we are seeking experienced farmers, gardeners, and food producers who are called to share their time and knowledge of producing food with others.

All areas of food production are welcome. Some examples include:

- | | | |
|-------------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|
| poultry for eggs | poultry for meat | garden vegetables |
| herbs, culinary and medicinal | goats - meat and dairy | cattle - beef and dairy |
| fruit trees | grapevines | beekeeping |
| pasture management | composting | food preservation |
| mushrooms | seed saving | |

As this Ag Ministry develops, I hope all of the participants will have an opportunity to share their journey of how the Lord led them to where they are today:

Testimony of coming to know Jesus.
How they have come to know the things they know
Where Jesus and agriculture intersect in their lives
How their faith is played out in their agricultural practices

We are excited to see where God leads us in this new area of ministry.

Sharing Thoughts

Our Elders share their thoughts

I wanted to share with the Church Body that the deacons & elders met together for a mini retreat on Oct 20-21, at Mark Parker's home. We had a night of fellowship on Thursday with a meal, prayer, scripture reading, and discussion. The elders spent the night and continued Friday until lunch.

The topic on Friday was looking at how the leaders of the early church heard from God as to how to begin the Church and grow and develop the Church. We covered the complete book of Acts on this topic.

They of course heard directly from God, they heard through their time with Christ, they heard through the Holy Spirit, and at times through angels. The early Church was able to learn through prayer and fasting, and through devotion to the word.

As we wrapped up our discussion, there were several points the elders saw.

1. That as the sailors in Acts 27:17 passed ropes under the ship itself to hold it together, so should the elders undergird the Church.
2. That as Paul stood up in Acts 27:22 and told the sailors to keep their courage, so should we keep our courage.
3. In Acts 27:35 Paul gave thanks to God even in difficult conditions, what a great lesson for us
4. Throughout this text of the storm, Paul kept the right attitude, always trusting God, Acts 27:23-25.
5. Finally, in Acts 28:30-31, it tells us Paul preached the Kingdom of God and taught about the Lord Jesus Christ.

May we as Grace Community Church always be witnesses to others about Jesus. Daryl Simpson

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS



Butch & Cheryl Godwin



Bob & Lane Dunyak



Rick & Tammy Canada



Dale & Donna Cox

Rain, Rain go away. Come again another day. . . BUT NO ! It was rainy and windy and yucky. Outside anyway.

Thanks to so many of you who helped with the fall festival. Much fun was had by all. So many smiles and so much laughter. The kids got their fill of sweet treats and hot dogs and loved playing the games. What makes an event a success? I don't rightly know the answer. But when so many pull together and genuinely give it their all with huge smiles on their faces. . . That seems like success to me. *Thanks, Janice*

Thanksgiving Fall Festival



ANNOUNCEMENTS

Church Membership Our elders will be meeting Dec. 5th. Anyone interested in membership, please, contact one of our elders about attending that meeting.

Women's Bible Study is forming. If you would like to be part of that, contact Mandy Stampler or sign up on the sheet on the sound board wall at the back of the church

Children's Christmas Program is Dec. 18. If your child would like to participate in that, please contact Mandy Stampler

Christmas Eve Music (Dec, 24) will feature a Choir with joyous Christmas songs. If you can help with that program, please contact Jodi or Rick Jones

Mercy's Well
Dec. 18
6 pm
A love offering will be taken during the Concert
invite your friends



Mid-November is a special time for our library, why? The library gets decked out for Christmas! Many of us enjoy reading books or watching movies with a Christmas theme in the weeks leading up to that very special day. Your library is happy to help get you ready for the beauty and wonder of Christmas, how? By having all Christmas themed books and movies on display. To get you started Darlene has written a review of a wonderful Christmas book below – a book well worth reading.

Besides great books in our church library there are also great CD's and DVD's. So check it out before service starts or afterwards.

Belinda Hiemstra

The Heirloom by Colleen Reece, & Julie Reece-DeMarco

The Heirloom is a book about giving away a treasure that means a lot to you. The setting is a small community in western North Carolina during the Great Depression of 1929.

This is a story of how one Bible ended up in different places and was read by people who needed to hear God's Word, and then they sent a note to the pastor of how it helped them when they needed it. Darlene Jones



As Operation Christmas Child draws to a close for this year, we are pleased to announce:

Final count is 1,656.

Thank you, everyone, who helped us meet and exceed our goal.

We pray God's Hand guards over these boxes as they travel to spread the Good News of God's salvation.



In 1921, an unknown World War 1 American soldier was buried in Arlington National Cemetery. This site, on a hillside overlooking the Potomac River became the focal point of reverence for America's veterans. Similar ceremonies occurred earlier in England and France. These memorial gestures all took place on November 11th, giving universal recognition to the celebrated ending of World War 1. Fighting stopped at 11 a.m., on November 11, 1918, (the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month.) That day became known as "Armistice Day."

Armistice Day officially received its name in America in 1926 through a congressional resolution. World War I was known as "the War to end all Wars." How hopeful the world was. But only a few years later war broke out in Europe.

In 1954 President Eisenhower signed a bill proclaiming November 11th as Veteran's Day, in order to pay tribute and honor to all those who served in the Wars. Thus Armistice Day became Veteran's Day.

Are you thankful to be living in America and enjoying her freedom?
Thank a veteran!

Congratulations
to our Newly Wedded Couple

Ken Griffith & Anna Strickland

Nov 20th, 2022

Be devoted to one another in love. Honor one another above yourselves. Romans 12:10 (NIV)

POWER OF PRAYER

Every Wednesday afternoon, 4:30 - 6 pm the church doors are open to anyone who wants to spend time in prayer. Come and go as your schedule allows.

Monthly prayer request sheets are available on the table in front of the sound booth. Take a sheet home & support those in need of prayer.

ELDERS		DEACONS	
Joel Stampler	336-813-2929	Kathy Abernathy	336-200-1357
Daryl Simpson	336-359-8327	Tammy Mason	540-845-5474
Steve Mason	540-424-8007	Winkie Clifton	336-363-9189
Tim Stalker	336-770-6657	Randy Clifton	336-657-2036
Mark Parker	704-641-1615	Darryl Evans	336-467-4486
		Grady Morris	704-239-6659
		Dale Jones	727-244-0095

Contributors: Belinda Hiemstra • Deb Wolfe • Janice Alexander