

Grand AveNews

January 2023

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"Timeless Promises for a New Year"

Join us for this exciting new worship series.

January 8 - God's Promise of New Life

January 15 - God's Promise of Faithfulness

January 22 - God's Promise of Ministry

January 29 - God's Promise of Blessing

February 5 - God's Promise of Guidance

February 12 - God's Promise of Freedom

"New Year, new you" — this is the message we get from pop culture, year after year. We vow to make changes to our diet, exercise habits, or lifestyle, but in spite of those resolutions, most things stay the same. This may be cause for disappointment, but there is some consistency we can celebrate. God's promises to us do not change with the calendar or the latest fitness trend. Rather than focusing our energy and attention on making (and in all likelihood breaking) promises to ourselves, let's spend the first part of the new year appreciating God's unbreakable promises.

Join me starting on Sunday, January 8, for this 6-part sermon series, *"Timeless Promises for a New Year."* There will also be opportunities for deeper study, prayer, and fellowship as we form small groups, start new Bible studies, and offer new opportunities for mission and ministry. I hope you'll make spiritual growth part of your New Year's resolution by simply accepting God's promises for you.

Blessings to you this New Year. I look forward to celebrating with you in worship this Sunday and throughout 2023.

Dear Friends,

From the first Sunday of Advent when we gathered for the Hanging of the Greens through last Sunday's celebration of the Epiphany, I have been so blessed to be a part of Grand Avenue UMC!

Thank you to all who helped to decorate our sanctuary, who donated poinsettias, who read scriptures and led children's times. Thank you to those who served as greeters and ushers and to those who helped with Holy Communion. Thank you especially to Kathie and Lowella and to all who enriched our worship with the gift of music. The spirit with which you serve our congregation and the community around us is inspiring.

I also want to thank you for the generosity you have shared with our staff, my family, and me this Christmas season. The gracious gift that you shared with each of us has truly been a blessing, and we are grateful. Once again, Karla and I are planning for future travels to spend time with Andrew in Florida. We will use your generous gift for our travel and for creating new memories with him there.

David Fleming



Building Faith,
Bringing Hope,
Reaching Out in
love

Grand Avenue
United Methodist Church
Hot Springs, AR
501-623-5626

Help Wanted at Outreach Thrift Store

Our United Methodist Outreach program is in need of more volunteers. We have several openings and hope that you will prayerfully consider helping out.

1. Volunteering at the Thrift Store on either a regular shift or as a backup. Our store hours are Tuesday through Friday 9:00 to 4:00; Monday and Saturday 10:00 to 2:00. We have morning and afternoon shifts available.

We regularly receive donated items to sell. Volunteers price clothing and household items and place them out on the floor on racks or shelves. Some volunteers work the Cashier desk. Others organize the clothing racks, help clean the store or help display seasonal décor. Our volunteers also fill food boxes from our food pantry for clients who bring in vouchers from the Department of Human Services.

If you are interested in volunteering, please contact our scheduler Becky Meadows at 501-282-9898, and she will arrange for you to receive training and add you to the schedule.

2. Each week, volunteers take inventory of our food pantry, make up our shopping order and travel over to Project Hope Food Bank and purchase needed items. We are in need of additional volunteers to assist with this weekly shopping. It is necessary to have an SUV or pick-up truck to load the food.

If you are interested in volunteering to shop for our food pantry once or twice a month, please contact Jana Sims at 501-627-8696 and she will give you more information and training.

3. In order for us to purchase food from Project Hope Food Bank, we must keep detailed records of our food distribution and complete quarterly reports. All the records are kept on the store computer in an Excel format. If you are knowledgeable in Excel and would like to assist with the recordkeeping, please contact Carol Dickinson at 501-545-5824.

Endowment Fund

It's the time of year when we make our New Year's resolutions. A resolution is a promise to ourselves and most of us never keep them over the first few months of the year. Why can't we keep our resolutions? Different psychologists say that it takes many tries to form a good habit and many times to break a bad habit. Let's try to form a good habit by giving a little along on a regular basis to our Endowment Fund. The amount does not have to be large. Slow and steady wins the race. We know that from *The Turtle and the Hare*. No two people are the same. Some may develop a habit in a few weeks. Others may need several months or several starts at it. However we do, let's strive to form a good habit of remembering our Church Endowment Fund.

Dickey Cooley

Sign up now for Sanctuary Flowers in 2023

A new flower calendar for 2023 is now in the church office. If you would like to place flowers in honor or memory of a loved one, or in celebration of a special occasion, contact Chris in the office (501-623-5626) to add your name to your choice of date. The cost of the flowers is \$39.29 (same as last year).



Year End Statements

Thank you for your generosity throughout 2022. You helped us meet all of our mission and ministry needs for the year. Year-end statements will be mailed once our books have been closed. If you need a record of giving before then, please call Chris in the church office at 501-623-5626.

“Rule of Life” Study to Begin January 19



What if? Have you made your New Year's resolutions? We so want to start the new year fresh with new habits and lifestyle only to fall flat within a month... or maybe even within the week! Why not start the new year differently. Instead of resolutions, let's seek a Rule of Life, i.e. habits and routines, that insure we stay close to God and others. Join us on Thursdays at noon beginning January 19 as we learn from scripture, spiritual communities, and ancient prayer practices that could change our life and therefore even change our community and the world. Yes, just a simple Rule of Life can do that. The curriculum will be provided along with the tools necessary to start you on a life changing practice. An optional deeper dive

curriculum will be available (at cost) for those seeking more introspective work. We will meet for four weeks and take a two week break followed by four weeks in March.

I hope you will join us. To sign up for the study, contact the church office at 501-623-5626.

Teresa Holt

New Study Opportunities

The Open Door Class is beginning a new study of “Help is Here” by Max Lucado – Now more than ever, we're all weary from the loads we carry and the challenges we face. We have questions we cannot answer and problems we cannot solve. We'd hoped that life would be an invigorating adventure or an inspiring journey. We never expected to grow so tired so quickly. But Max Lucado teaches us that we can find fresh strength and purpose in the power of the Holy Spirit. In this study you will:

- Learn who the Spirit is and how the Spirit can help
- Become joyful, enthusiastic, and empowered as you draw closer to God
- Confidently take on any difficulty with the power of the Spirit
- Discover your unique gifts and purpose to further God's kingdom

Join us Sunday mornings at 9:45 in Fellowship Hall. For more information, call Carol Dickinson at 501-545-5824.

The Upper Room Class is continuing their study of “Romans” – Exploring how people have interpreted “Paul's Letter to the Romans” down through the ages is a good lens to view the history of Christianity itself. The Upper Room Class is resuming their 8-week journey through Paul's letter, reading two chapters each week. Class discussion is enriched by video presentations featuring world-class scholars and storytellers. Join us Sunday mornings at 9:45 behind the sanctuary. For more information, call Morris Coston at 501-525-7456.

The “Striving for Victory” Class is beginning a new study of “Power and Belonging.” Occasionally, something happens in a person's life that is so big that it changes his or her identity. Maybe it is getting married and changing from a single person to a spouse, or becoming a parent. Sometimes a major job change can cause a shift in identity. While each shift is usually an exciting time, it's also a time of self-discovery and adjustment, learning about new commitments and challenges.

This is also true of becoming a Christian. The lessons in this unit examine the changes people experience when they are welcomed into God's holy community of the church. Becoming a Christian isn't completed in a day. Rather, it is a process of growing into the manner and likeness of Jesus Christ. It asks us to realign our priorities, understand living in a community governed by grace, and challenge ourselves to become true disciples. For more information, call Martha Blancke at 501-538-7327.

Adult and Teen Challenge of Arkansas



For over 60 years, Adult & Teen Challenge has operated a holistic model of drug and alcohol recovery concerned with the body, mind, and spirit of those who come to this addiction recovery center. Normally, the program is a 12 month recovery through classes, individual study, personal mentoring, work ethic training, and involvement in the Christian Community. The lodge where these men stay has been totally remodeled and feels more like a home rather than an institution. They have a newly refreshed thrift store and woodworking shop at 1679 N. Highway 7. Stop in and see the terrific items!

Our church has supported Adult & Teen Challenge of Arkansas for several years. There is a basket in Fellowship Hall for donations of items on their "approved list". For several years, the Upper Room Sunday School class has generously shopped for men in the program who do not have support outside of the program from family or friends. The gifts this year were very welcomed and appreciated. The staff determines which resident needs items and they are wrapped for Christmas by the staff

We are working with the new Director, Stephen DeLorenzo, and his staff. If you have questions, the GAUMC lead for this mission is Sheila McLarty. Approved items for donation (NOT wrapped) are:

- | | |
|---|---|
| Winter work gloves | Winter caps |
| Jeans / kakis (32 is an average size) | Ties |
| Shoes (athletic or dress or work boots) | Sweat suits (pants and tops in all sizes) |
| Winter coat | Bible or Concordance |
| Socks | Stamps |
| Christian T-shirt (size large is most common) | Christian jewelry |
| Toiletries and hygiene items | Address books |
| Watches | <u>NO money to the students, please</u> |

Christmas Bicycles for Kids

Through the generous giving from you the congregation of Grand Avenue we were able to purchase EIGHTEEN bicycles for the Salvation Army. Take a minute and just try to imagine the faces of eighteen children on Christmas morning as they get what they wished for...a new bike!

Thank you to everyone who donated money and to those who helped shop and get them delivered on time. We are blessed at Grand Avenue to have such wonderful, giving folks!

(Pictured on right: Carla Haynie and Carol Scrivner deliver bicycles to the Salvation Army for distribution to children.)



During the month of January, Outreach is collecting Spaghetti and/or sauce.

Food for Seniors

Grand Avenue is known for its feeding ministries: Table of Grace, Backpacks for Kids, the United Methodist Outreach Store, our Blessing Box, and Food for Seniors. Our Food for Seniors program is a joint effort with the Area Agency on Aging (AAA). Periodically Doug Baber and Larry Hatfield purchase items from Project Hope that are used to supply the AAA pantry/closet. Our mission is to keep the pantry full with purchases that are funded by your donations. AAA's home health care nurses visit their clients monthly and are able to supply the seniors with needed food and toiletries from the pantry. In 2023 Robert Gronwaldt will be the director in charge of our Food for Seniors program. If you would like to volunteer to help, contact Robert at 281-840-2640.



My heart is full of gratitude at the start of this New Year and that gratitude is for the wonderful Christmas season we have shared together at Grand Avenue. So many of you have contributed in many ways to honor Christ during this time and I hope each person has been encouraged to keep serving the Lord through 2023.

Thank you all, my church family, for your generosity and love to us on the church staff at Christmastime. I am amazed and humbled at your generous gift to us. Thank you so much!

I look forward to the year ahead with confidence in God's provision, unwavering love, and purpose for us. It is a joy to serve the Lord and his people.

Love to you all,
Kathie



I'm home at last after 2 months in various medical institutions. I had good care but am so happy to be home.

Now I want to thank the Church members for their calls, gifts and cards. I have a box of beautiful Get Well cards and sympathy cards that are precious to me.

Now I am looking forward to being in Church services on December 4th.

Dorothy Blundell



Dear Grand Avenue Members and Guests,

Thank you for your generous gifts to our staff this Christmas. Blessings to each of you in the coming year.

Jonnie Nix

Outgoing Chair, Staff Parish Relations Committee



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We're Here to Serve You

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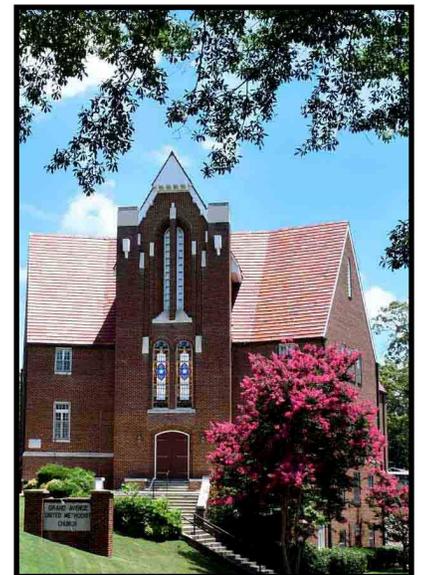
RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

How do I become a member of Grand Avenue UMC?

You can become a member of Grand Avenue UMC no matter what your previous church involvement has been.

- You can transfer your membership from any church of which you are currently a member (the church will make the arrangements).
- You can make a profession of faith if you have never been a member of a church before.
- If you have never been baptized you would join by Profession of Faith and Baptism.

Our pastor and staff will be happy to answer any questions you may have about Grand Avenue, questions you may have about our ministries and programs, or questions you may have about the Christian faith. Please call the church office, 501-623-5626 or send us email at grand.avenue@sbcglobal.net



We want to be your church!