



Mark speaks at Micro homes groundbreaking ceremony.



Congregational Life sponsored the Holocaust Remembrance Sunday.



Witness & Ministry supports mission activities at Grace.



Marlene Hall and Charie Reid fill boxes for "Food for Thought Project."



Worship & Education purchased new banners to decorate the sanctuary and emphasize liturgical seasons.



Thanks to volunteer liturgists like Elise Teagle who assist with the weekly Sunday services.



Grace continues to support the cooperative Preschool.



Jumi Kim organized the Grace Concert series for the benefit of the congregation and community.



Discipleship supports the Sunday coffee hour, an important ministry of the church.



A focus of the Business Team in 2023 was major repairs to all the buildings, as well as enhancements to landscaping.

2023 ANNUAL REPORT GRACE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH WALNUT CREEK, CALIFORNIA

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Clerk of Session

Active Membership as of 1/1/2023	136
Deaths as of December 31, 2023.....	5
Other Losses as of December 31, 2023.....	2
Gains as of December 31, 2023	4
Active Members as of December 31, 2023.....	133
Affiliate Members as of December 31, 2023.....	3
<i>(Timothy Hamilton, Elise Teagle, Mary Munsell)</i>	
Membership as of December 31, 2023	136

We remember and celebrate the resurrection of members of Grace who died in 2023

Jeanne Lauritzen, Rita Dorst, Phyllis Carman, Glenn Watkins, Marjorie Bradley

We were very pleased to welcome new members

Betsy Werner, Mark Werner, Katherine Hoffer, Jordan Enright-Schulz



Submitted by Geri Rentz, Clerk of Session

Financial Secretary

Pledge Results 2023

	Number	Amount
Pledges	0	\$ 232,349
Pledges Received	70	\$ 251,266
Non-Pledgers Giving Like They Pledged	10	\$ 14,466
Total Pledged	80	\$ 265,732

Pledge Comparison 2023 to 2024

	Number	2023 Amount	Number	2024 Amount	Net Change
Persons who pledged the same amount:	31	\$ 80,520	31	\$ 80,520	\$ -
Persons who increased their pledge:	18	\$ 86,219	18	\$ 97,673	\$ 11,455
Persons who pledged 2024 but not 2023	5	\$ -	5	\$ 13,970	\$ 13,970
Persons who decreased their pledge:	6	\$ 23,440	6	\$ 19,900	\$ (3,540)
Persons who pledged 2023 but not 2024	14	\$ 38,170	14	\$ -	\$ (38,170)
Persons with a 2023 pledge who passed or moved:	2	\$ 4,000	2	\$ -	\$ (4,000)
Totals:	71	\$ 232,349	60	\$ 212,063	\$ (20,285)

Scenarios for Persons who pledged 2023 but not 2024:

If 100% of pledges are received	74	\$ 250,233
If 50% of pledges are received	67	\$ 231,148
If 25% pledges are received	64	\$ 221,606

Submitted by Faye Hutchings
Financial Secretary



Submitted by Faye Hutchings

Treasurer's Report

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL RESULTS FOR 2023

Activities Results

Grace Church budgeted \$413,039 for its General Fund in 2023, an increase of \$3,084 over the preceding year, due mainly to establishment of a Capital Reserve Fund budget. Expenses came in at \$405,254, or \$7,936 under budget due mainly to Personnel savings from Office Manager reduced hours and Music Guest services ramping up slower than expected offset by increased worship, utility and fellowship costs.

	<u>Church program expenses</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Personnel	\$ 232,479	57%
Local Program	\$ 128,075	32%
General Mission	\$ 44,700	11%
Total	<u>\$ 405,254</u>	<u>100%</u>

Grace Church budgeted \$367,520 for income in 2023, a decrease of \$230 over the preceding year, mainly due to reduction of investment income (reflecting the end of 5 years of Investment Funds withdrawals to support the Associate Pastor position) offset by increases in facilities and plate income. Income came in at \$394,943 or \$27,423 over budget due to stronger than expected pledge and facilities income.

<u>Church program receipts</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Pledges for 2023	\$ 265,732 67%
Plate	\$ 18,822 5
Other income	<u>\$ 110,389 28%</u>
Total	<u>\$ 394,943 100%</u>

As a result of expenses being higher than income, the bank balance decreased by \$10,310 at year end which was an improvement over the budgeted decrease of \$45,519.

Bank balance on 1/1/23	\$ 55,124
Church program receipts	\$ 394,943
Church program expenses	<u>\$ (405,254)</u>
Bank balance on 12/31/23	\$ 44,813

Dedicated (Special) Accounts Results

In addition, Grace Church handled \$221,378 in receipts and \$218,816 in expenses for special accounts and activities during the year. The receipts included Legacy gifts from Marjorie Bradley, EBIC investment income, Guntz fund annual gift, facilities campaign donations, and preschool payroll reimbursement. The expenses included extensive dry rot repairs to the sanctuary/office building, new sanctuary courtyard doors, Fireside annex roof replacement, landscape improvements, EBIC investments, and preschool payroll. At the end of year 2022, church bank accounts held \$330,351 for these designated purposes, apart from the church activities program.

Endowment, Bequests and Investment (EBIC) Results

The year 2023 saw an increase in the value of the church's investment holdings as a result of the end of year market performance. After allowing for EBIC investments of \$18,000, and income withdrawals, the increase was roughly 9.3% in asset value. At the end of 2023, the Investment Fund included the True Wealth Advisory Group fund, \$1,048,081, and the Presbyterian Foundation, \$536,824, a total of \$1,584,904.

As recommended by EBIC, \$36,000 was received from the True Wealth Advisory Group, and \$10,946 from New Covenant Funds of the Presbyterian Foundation, for various church purposes.

Debt

There is no outstanding indebtedness.

Submitted by Linda Neyer



Music Director's Report—Jumi Kim

GOAL

Our goal is to inspire members and friends to deepen their faith in Jesus Christ through worship. We also seek to encourage them to contribute their time, talent, and treasure as well as extend invitations to others to participate in our community of faith.

CHANCEL CHOIR

Our pianist, *Joe Lim* joined us in May and has been providing wonderful music to our services. He's a multi-talented musician playing piano and trombone, and he also sings and conducts; a great asset to Grace. We welcomed our alto section leader, *Kathryn Schumacher* who has been a strong anchor in our choir. We hired a tenor section leader, *Pepe Luis Hernandez* and several other substitutes to help the balance of our choir.

With the above additions, our chancel choir improved in sound quality and level of repertoire. The response from the congregation to our collective efforts was strong and positive. Engagement, participation, and overall feedback indicate the congregation is pleased with our ever-improving choir. We're very grateful to our dedicated choir members: *Frances Whipple, Nora Wu, Sara Allen, Meg Keeley, Ann McCullough, Rosalyn Cannelora, Susan Blair, Jordan Enright-Schulz, Lynne Baginski, Bill Keeley, Fredarica Delamain, Sun Bai Kim, and Mark Werner.*

VOLUNTEER & GUEST MUSICIANS FOR WORSHIP

We were fortunate to be supported by the musical talents of select congregants for our worship services. We appreciate all our volunteer soloists; *Kathryn Hoffer (violin), Meg Keeley (accordion), Sun Bai Kim (tenor), Paoyin Fan (piano), and Gail Peterson (organ).* We also brought in guest musicians for worship services including pianists, violinists, a cellist, flutists, trumpeters, singers, an Irish band, and a string trio. This enhanced the worship experience for both choir members and congregants.

CONCERT SERIES

Our concert series consisted of eight concerts in 2023; *Keyboard Extravaganza! (two pianos & four hands), Celeste Stella Trio (piano trio), Stabat Mater (piano trio with vocal duet), and Hymn Festival (choir with 3 organists)* in the spring, plus *Ensemble Ari (piano trio with a soprano), Opera Gala (soprano and bass-baritone), Celeste Stella Trio,* and our *Christmas Concert* in the fall.

Our concert series was highly praised for providing high quality performances to the community, resulting in attracting a number of newcomers to Grace. Two of the concerts involved Grace chancel choir and audience sing-alongs: *Hymn Festival* in April and *Christmas Concert* in December. These were particularly appreciated by the audience.

THANKS TO

I deeply appreciate Grace Chancel Choir, volunteer musicians, and guest musicians who brought beautiful music to our services and concerts this year. Thank you also to *Rev. Mark Burnham, Judy Williams, Linda Neyer, Faye Hutchings, Sara Allen, and Sharon Lyons* for their full support and love for the music program at Grace.



Respectfully submitted, Jumi Kim, Music Director

Mission & Vision

MISSION STATEMENT (2007)

*Guided by the Holy Spirit, with open minds and hearts,
we celebrate and share the love of Jesus Christ,
and are instruments of God's grace, justice, and peace.*

WELCOME STATEMENT (2011)

*We welcome and celebrate all who worship with us—
the young and the old, the rich and the poor,
the gay and the straight, the strong and the weak,
the meek and the brave—
and though we are different one from another,
we are united in loving and praising God
and in loving each other.*

VISION STATEMENT (2007)

TOGETHER WE:

- Deepen our faith in Jesus Christ through worship, study, fellowship, and mission.
- Exemplify and offer the good news of Jesus to our neighbors.
- Offer hospitality, nurture, and empowerment.
- Provide a comprehensive ministry with/by seniors, which respects and addresses the various stages and issues of growing older in Christ.
- Welcome younger adults, teenagers, and children in a ministry that enlivens their Christian Discipleship.
- Are in close collaboration with other faith and secular organizations to address social needs within our local community and throughout the world.
- Pursue excellence in all that we do as we glorify God through faithful stewardship seen in sharing our time, talents, and treasures.

CORE VALUES (2008)

1. Growing and Sharing the Faith
2. Outreach to the Community and Beyond
3. Developing an Extended Family

OUR ASPIRATION (2008)

Grace Church makes a significant positive impact on the lives of its members and friends, and on the life of its community.

Grace Church is a thriving congregation, showing a growing membership, increasing community recognition, and financial stability.

Goals & Strategies

The overall goal of our ministry, established by our Session, is “to effectively share the love of Jesus Christ and invite others into deepening discipleship and active participation in the life of our community of faith.” Each Department, and the Board of Deacons, has specific goals and strategies to fulfill this overall goal.

Goals

INSPIRES members and friends to deepen their faith in Jesus Christ through worship and study.
Worship & Education
(Passionate Worship/Intentional Faith Development)

ENCOURAGES members and friends to contribute time, talent, and treasure, as well as to articulate the love of God and extend invitations to others to participate in our community of faith.
Discipleship *(Extravagant Generosity/Radical Hospitality)*

SEEKS, welcomes, and integrates visitors and members, and enhances their lives through a variety of group experiences.
Discipleship *(Radical Hospitality)*

RESPONDS to social justice issues locally, nationally and globally with compassion and support.
Witness & Ministry
(Risk-taking Mission & Service)

MANAGES its finances and property with integrity to attract and benefit members, friends, donors, and community partners.
Business *(Extravagant Generosity)*

MINISTERS to those who are in need, to the sick, to the friendless and to any who may be in distress.
Deacons
(Deliberate Congregational Care)

COMMUNICATES with the congregation and the community to encourage dialogue and enhancement of our ministry. Session
(5 Practices of Fruitful Congregations)

Strategies

- Create a vision** of ministry and mission which is intentionally interpreted to the members and friends of Grace Church.
- Enhance worship** experiences and opportunities to attract, inspire, and further the spiritual growth of people.
- Offer and advertise** a variety of adult education opportunities which will nourish our membership and be attractive to non-members.
- Upgrade the facilities** to improve our profile and safety; and develop a Capital Improvement Plan.
- Implement a marketing plan** to attract visitors and maintain membership.
- Provide small groups** and larger celebrations to communicate and advance our values and ministry.
- Practice faithful stewardship** with property and finances and provide innovative stewardship appeals with an integrated calendar to support our annual budget, mission support, and facility upgrades.
- Interpret national and global mission** and work with local organizations to invite greater active participation of our members and friends.
- Enhance recognition of members** to acknowledge faithful volunteerism and invite other contributions.

Discipleship/Congregational Life

GOAL

To encourage members and friends to contribute time, talent and treasure - and to articulate God's love in our community of faith, to seek, welcome and integrate visitors and members by enhancing their church lives through a variety of group experiences.

STREATEGIES AND RESULTS

- Sunday Fellowship continues to be a highlight of Discipleship's mission. Thank you, Sharon Lyons, for volunteering to do the schedule for the weekly Fellowship providers, and setting up the beverages and room each week. We are especially grateful to the volunteers who faithfully brought refreshments and cleaned up.
- During this past year, our music director, Jumi Kim, continued with the Grace Concert Series. These fantastic concerts, featuring various professional musicians and singers, are the church's main community outreach effort. Thank you to the Grace Chancel Choir, who provide refreshment for the receptions that follow each concert.
- Each quarter, meetings were held for those interested in more information or joining Grace Church. Weekly attendance is tracked each Sunday and given to office volunteers who follow up with visitors. Thanks to Faye Hutchings and Linda Neyer for their efforts in taking attendance and communicating with the office.
- October 8: Grace celebrated Pastor Mark Burnham during the Presbytery's Pastor Appreciation Month. Discipleship organized and sponsored a post-service luncheon in the Fireside Room, small gift, and basket of personal thank you cards, written by members of the congregation. These were presented to Mark during worship. We served about 75 members of the congregation.
- October 28: The annual Harvest Lunch was organized by Discipleship. The Fireside Room was decorated with a Fall/Harvest theme. Special Chinese food luncheon was ordered from the Peony Garden restaurant along with various desserts and special Bible verse fortune cookies. About 65 members of the congregation were served.
- In early December, members of the Discipleship Team decorated the Fireside Room for Christmas season events, which included an honorary luncheon in recognition of the Annual Presbyterian Lifetime Membership Award - Mary Munsell, The Deacons' Annual Christmas Party, Christmas Concert Reception, Christmas Day Brunch and a New Years Eve Wedding Reception.
- For Veterans' Day Observance Grace veterans' photographs were put on display in the Narthex.
- The annual Christmas Day brunch was organized by Susan Blair and Sharon Lyons. Attendees brought food and shared potluck style. This annual brunch supports individuals seeking fellowship on a holiday during which they might otherwise be alone. About 20 people attended.
- The Book Club and Earth Care team met for part of the year and are now disbanded.

THANKS TO

2023 was again a busy year. Yet, there were several activities, such as the Memorial Day program, Earth Care team and Book Club, we eliminated because of lack of volunteers. What we did get done would not have been possible without the support of many. The office staff, especially Judy Williams, office volunteers, Jan Zimmerman, the Discipleship Team, and all the heroic volunteers quietly working in the background just stepping up where needed. Thank you all!

ELDERS RESPONSIBLE

Rosalyn Cannelora (Chari), Pat Devine Cummings, Sara Allen



Submitted by Rosalynn Cannelora

Business

GOAL

Manage the finances and maintain the property of Grace Presbyterian Church through 2023.

PROPERTY

2023 was a year to catch up on important projects that maintain Grace Presbyterian's campus beauty and appeal. Thanks to the generosity of our members, we completed the following during 2023:

- Removal of the trellis and wisteria vine at the front of the church office/Sanctuary building.
- Dry rot repairs and updated design of the courtyard and street side arbors.
- Dry rot repairs to the street side outdoor wall of the Narthex.
- Installation of a new drainage system in front of Narthex to ensure water was flowing away from the building.
- Removal of Liquid Amber tree and replacement with a Japanese Maple in front of the Narthex on the street side.
- Removal of two Liquid Amber trees in the first island of the parking lot.
- Replacement of courtyard double doors.
- Installation of a new redwood border and replacement the lawn of playground area with pea gravel, while also refurbishing the visitor bench.
- Weed abatement at back of property for future fires safety.
- Working with East Bay Municipal District to replace lawns with carpet mulch.
- Installation of upgraded thermostat and control boards in the office.

FIRESIDE ROOM

- Annex roof replacement

OAK ROOM

- Crawl space insulation repair and chemically treated crawl space for termites.
- Router installation for improved WiFi.
- Repaired water damage to Grand Piano

MEMORIAL GARDEN

- Applied new mulch to the Garden.
- In the spirit of maintaining the beauty of Grace Presbyterian, we also contracted with a new landscape maintenance company, Sweetwater Landscape.

OTHER PROJECTS COMPLETED

- Facility rate schedule benchmarked and updated.
- Met twice with Presbytery attorney, Michael Glass, to review agreements and "Approve in Form Substantially Similar" to documents received on December 13.
- Facilities Campaign raised \$15,500.
- Stewardship Campaign with theme of *Celebrate Abundance*.

THANKS TO other team members: Sara Allen,
Bill Keeley, Dave Fellner, Linda Neyer, Geri Rentz

ELDERS RESPONSIBLE Reta Wilcox, Earnie Cunningham,
Gary Parkhurst



Submitted by Reta Wilcox

Witness & Ministry

GOAL

Provide information regarding social justice issues and opportunities to respond.

STRATEGIES

The Witness and Ministry Team sought to support social justice and offer opportunities for congregational members to individually contribute. These included distribution of budgeted mission funds and leading special offerings.

ACTIVITIES

- Eliciting congregation participation in determining organizations to receive funding.
- Oversight of mission budget and reporting on funds collected and distributed.
- Articles for newsletter and Sunday bulletin and presentation of Minutes for Mission regarding annual collections for One Great Hour of Sharing, Peace Offering, Christmas Joy and the Giving Tree.
- Newsletter articles describing the organizations our congregation supports through budgeted funds.
- Inviting representatives of organizations to present to the congregation and to educate and to encourage volunteer participation.
- Attending meetings of organizations that are supported by Grace.
- Support of Micro Home Village initiative.
- Financial and volunteer support of the *Food for Thought* project.
- Involvement with the Interfaith Council of Contra Costa County and the Interfaith Council of Rossmoor and reporting on initiatives of these organizations.

RESULTS

- Total Budgeted for 2023 previous to changes: \$8,775.00
- This year, we added three additional community programs. Food for Thought, Monument Crisis Center, and Loaves and Fishes after meeting with members of the congregation who wished to be part of the decision making on our allocations. In order to do this, we reduced funding to several other organizations which were determined to not need the amount of funding previously allocated.
- EBIC Mission Funds has a balance of \$14,067 as of 1/31/23. For the last two years it was decided not to make any disbursements, thinking it might be needed for the Micro Homes project. The only exception was a donation of \$771 to the Sydney Paige Foundation for backpacks in July 2022. As of Nov. 30, 2023, there was a balance of \$17,776.
- We utilized funds designated for the December Food for Thought campaign through the allotted % of funds for local organizations from the Peace Offering and funds from EBIC to purchase tuna for the Food for Thought Drive in December 2023. Costs for tuna increased significantly and the total cost was \$2,038.80.
- Additional contributions made through special collections have included:
 - Food Bank of CCC & Solano Counties - \$900
 - Backpack Campaign (Sydney Paige via Hope Solutions) = \$1,201
 - Hawaii Fire Relief - \$3,360
 - OGHS - \$3,926
 - PDA - Earthquake - \$3,875

- Total collected from the Peace Offering: \$2,441
- Total collected from the Christmas Joy Offering: \$3,230 as of 12/31/23.
- Total collected from the Giving Tree: \$540 pending resolution of gift card as of 12/31/23.

WITNESS & MINISTRY LOCAL MISSION (AC#580)		
Contra Costa Interfaith Coalition		500
Hope Solutions (Contra Costa Interfaith Housing)		2,000
Interfaith Council of Contra Costa County		2,000
Interfaith Council of Rossmoor		75
Westminster Woods (Camperships)		150
San Francisco Safehouse (Hope Center)		1,000
Habitat for Humanity (East Bay)		500
Loaves and Fishes		430
Monument Crisis Center		440
Food for Thought		430
TOTAL		7,525.00
SPECIAL MISSIONS DESIGNATED (AC#585)		
University of Redlands (SF Theological Seminary Scholarship Fund)		200.00
Pastoral Salary Supplement Fund (SF Presbytery)		400.00
Pilgrims of Ibillin		650.00
TOTAL SPECIAL MISSION DESIGNATED		1,250.00

THANKS TO:

We are grateful for the generous giving from the members of the Grace congregation.

ELDERS RESPONSIBLE

Meg Keeley, Gail Peterson and Liz Bradner



Submitted by Meg Keeley

Worship & Education

GOAL

To inspire members and friends of the congregation at Grace Church to deepen their faith in Jesus Christ through worship and study of the word of God.

WORSHIP

- In-person worship was held all year, with Zoom for part of the year. Mid-year, Zoom was eliminated and Church at Home is now offered by livestream through Grace's YouTube Channel.
- Worship was celebrated Sundays at 10:00 am with Communion the first Sunday of each month.
- Ash Wednesday and Maundy Thursday (with Communion) services were held in the Sanctuary. Christmas Eve was celebrated with a service and 10:00 am and Candlelight service at 4:00 pm, including special music.
- New paraments (banners, hangings/markers, Communion table covers) were purchased to draw attention to the chancel area (front and center of the sanctuary) and emphasize the liturgical season.
- Jumi Kim, Music Director, facilitated monthly Sunday afternoon concerts, open to the public and to which members are encouraged to invite family and friends. The goal is for donations to make concerts self-sustaining.
- Currently we are unable to implement a bell choir.

EDUCATION

- Adult Education/Bible Study is offered on Wednesdays by Zoom. Short educational videos were offered on "Education Sundays" to encourage discussion on Matthew 25 to better understand the three areas emphasized: racism, systemic poverty, and congregational vitality.
- Bible Study, led by Pastor Mark, continues to be our primary educational effort and is available in person and via Zoom. Participation includes 8-12 persons. In-person meetings were restored in November.
- Pastor Mark and Bill Patten offered two sessions of the Grief Support Group.

THANKS TO

- All volunteer greeters, ushers, and liturgists.
- Fran Whipple, for recruiting liturgists.
- Susan Blair and others, for providing liturgical art.
- Roz Cannelora, Judy Williams for running the flower ministry which provides the arrangements for the sanctuary.
- Jan Zimmerman for recruiting ushers, greeters, and Communion servers.
- Sound System Operators: Sara Allen, Carolyn Choy, Don Lyons, Lynn Lyons and Wendy Watkins.

ELDERS RESPONSIBLE

Marlene Hall, Lynn Lyons and Jan Zimmerman

Submitted by Marlene Hall



Board of Deacons

GOAL

To minister to those in need, to the sick, to the friendless and to any who may be in distress. Deacons shall be responsible for other duties as may be assigned to them by Session.

STRATEGIES

- Continue caring ministry to support and encourage the congregation.
- Fulfill other responsibilities; oversee Deacons funds and mission-giving.
- Emphasis placed on the Deacons' Parish Contact Program

RESULTS

- The Parish Contact Program continued with each deacon making regular phone calls and writing notes to the congregation. New members and faithful non-members were added to the member calling lists. Each deacon had a list of 12-13 households for whom they were responsible. The program was very rewarding according to overwhelming positive responses from recipients of the calls and notes.
- Communion elements were prepared. Training for Home Communion was held, though not implemented.
- Memorial receptions were supported by the Deacons with their work at receptions.
- Memorial Coordinators were Mary Munsell and Barbara Rainis.
- Note cards were sent to shut-ins, those hospitalized, or in need.
- The needs of the Food Bank were kept before the congregation, as well as monthly \$100 (total \$1,200) in food cards to Contra Costa Interfaith Coalition for the Fourth Week Food Program.
- Local Mission funds were disbursed to Contra Costa and Solano Counties Food Bank, CCIC food cards, Meals on Wheels, Loaves and Fishes
- Non-perishable food was collected in the Food Barrel Ministry.

THANKS TO

The Deacons who have fulfilled their three year terms: Kathy Anderson, Sally Day, Mary Munsell.

DEACONS RESPONSIBLE

- Sally Day, Moderator; Barbara Rainis, Co-Moderator; Jean Savage, Secretary
- Communion Preparation: Kathy Anderson, Connie Bills, Mary Munsell, Barbara Rainis, Jean Savage, Sally Day
- Food Barrel Ministry: Mary Munsell
- Nominating Committee Representative: Sally Day



Submitted by Sally Day

Grace Cooperative Preschool

Grace Cooperative Preschool greeted children the first week of January after Winter Break. We had three new students join us in January 2023, including the son of a Grace alumnus! We enjoyed a gentle start thinking about winter, then moved into our theme of Space.

February began with a Saturday School for the non-co-opting parents to experience a typical school day. We combined the latter part of the day with an enrollment Open House. It was nice to have our school parents there to promote the school. February continued with Lunar New Year (culminating in a parade), Mardi Gras (which included a parade) and Valentine's Day. A highlight was the children walking to the giant mailbox in the courtyard of Grace church to mail a valentine home to their families.



March and April brought Spring activities to preschool with exploring what comes out of eggs, planting seeds and preparing for our Earth Day fundraiser. The children practiced songs during our weekly Music Time with Ms. Lavenia. They were excited to sing in church and the parents were excited to be there, though it was brief as they needed to begin work shifts at the Earth Day event. This year the focus of our fundraising was a new play structure for the play yard especially suited to younger children. It would replace the metal climber which was donated to a local family. We met our fundraising goal and enjoyed a nice day with our school, church and larger community.

We were slated to attend Family Camp at Westminster Woods in Occidental, CA near the end of our school year. Sadly, we had to postpone the trip due to my getting Covid. Thankfully teachers Sarah Lee-Jaine and Meg Fiset were able to capably handle end of the year activities at preschool.

Although we do not run a summer program, families meet at various local parks weekly to maintain connections and welcome new families and prospective students.

The "Grasshopper" play structure was installed over Labor Day weekend, just in time for children to return to school. We started the school year with a very lean enrollment of 16 students. Of those, one child attended five days/week, five attended four days/week, three children attended three days/week and seven attended two days/week. We also enjoyed a September Family Camp weekend and invited the families who had moved on to elementary school but were not able to attend in May.

In October we enjoyed fall activities and events including a Halloween Parade and family Pumpkin Carving Day.



At Thanksgiving time we typically discuss the idea of thankfulness. This year children were able to name and share the many things for which they are grateful: family, friends, preschool, pets, trucks, flowers, dinosaurs... to name a few. We celebrated a Family Feast potluck at one very long table set up on the patio of the play yard. It was wonderful to share that time together.

December turns our classroom into "Santa's workshop" as children prepare gifts for families and learn about different ways people celebrate the season. The year culminated with a special visit from Santa and his helper, thanks to Bill and Meg Keeley for fulfilling this role.

We continue to feel very grateful for the support and community of Grace Presbyterian Church. Special thanks for long-time volunteer Music Teacher and church member, Lavenia Black.



Women of Grace

GOAL

To nurture our faith through prayer and Bible study, offer fellowship, education, and to be leaders assuring that women have opportunities to grow and mature in their faith.

STRATEGIES

The PW welcomes all women to join the circle. Recruitment is done by personal invitation. All church women are invited. Church membership is not required to join the Circle. At their monthly meetings, they seek to educate and engage participants through Bible Study and create a nurturing and inclusive atmosphere by encouraging fellowship among members.



HANNAH CIRCLE

Hannah meets on the second Tuesdays at 10 am in the Library. A Zoom link is provided for the members who cannot attend in person. In 2023 Bible study has become a prominent focus of the meetings with Geri Rentz leading studies and Charie Reid substituting as needed. Faye Hutchings handles communication and admin tasks for the group. Jan Zimmerman was in charge of organizing simple refreshments.

NEEDLERS

The knitting and crocheting craft group is carrying on with mostly just one knitter, dedicated Marsha Stark. She continues to make scarves for our troops, and in 2023 Grace Needlers mailed 160 scarves to Operation Gratitude and 60 to One Warm Coat. Marsha Stark is the liaison for Operation Gratitude.

RESULTS

Hannah Circle provides fellowship and Bible Study to approximately 17 women of the church, although not all are able to regularly attend. The Circle hopes to expand their membership in 2024.

A successful Luncheon to honor Annual Honorary Life Membership Award recipient, Mary Munsell, was hosted by Hannah Circle on Sunday, Dec. 8. Faye Hutchings purchased the food for the luncheon and others stepped in to help with the serving and cleanup after the event. The Fellowship Time lunch was enjoyed by about 75 who attended church that day, as well as members of Mary Munsell's family.

In 2023 Circle leaders realized they had accumulated \$9,000 in their account. It was decided by the group that \$3,000 would be distributed to local charities. Through a poll of members, it was decided that \$1,000 would be donated to each of these organizations:

- 1st choice: Today's Youth Matter, Oakland
- 2nd choice: Center for Elders Independence (PACE program), Concord
- 3rd choice: Trinity Center, Walnut Creek

THANKS TO

The Coordinating Team: Geri Rentz, Jan Zimmerman and Faye Hutchings. Charie Reid for substitute teaching and to volunteers who pitched in to set-up and clean-up which make the December luncheon a success. Thanks to Marsha Stark for continuing the work of the Needlers.



Submitted by Geri Rentz

Legacy Society

Grace Presbyterian Church expresses grateful thanks to past, present and future donors of major gifts, bequests and endowments. Their thoughtful contemplation of our church's future needs, and their generous commitment to extend their faith, influence and support beyond their lifetimes is sincerely appreciated.

PAST DONORS

June Allen	Emil Danielson	Mabel Milhan
Earl & Judy Bardin	Warren Eukel	Virginia Millson
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This list includes those who have notified the church of their future intentions.

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