

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 9TH!

WHEN HELPING HURTS

How to Alleviate Poverty Without Hurting
the Poor... And Yourself




Christmas Eve CANDLELIGHT SERVICE

DECEMBER 24 · 6:00 P.M.

For more information and events happening at GracePoint visit or follow us at:
www.gracepointpc.org

 GracePoint Plant City, GP Outsiders, & GracePoint Jr.

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Church Office hours: Mon. – Thu. 8am-3pm

December 23, 2018

Hope



“And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will
come again and will take you to myself, that
where I am you may be also.”

John 14:3

SUNDAY WORSHIP

But by the grace of God I am what I am.

WELCOME/ANNOUNCEMENTS & PRAYER

GREETING ONE ANOTHER – LUKE 24:36

FIRST ADVENT CANDLE LIGHTING - THE ARNOLD FAMILY

CALL TO WORSHIP – PSALM 45:1-2

SONGS OF PRAISE TO OUR SHEPHERD

*“Away in a Manger”

*“O Holy Night”

*“O Come All Ye Faithful”

*“My One Comfort”

CONGREGATIONAL PRAYER

LORD’S PRAYER

CHILDREN’S LESSON – LUKE 1:26-29

HEAR GOD’S WORD

Old Testament Reading: Isaiah 9:1-7

New Testament Reading: Luke 1:26-38

SERMON – LUKE 1:26-29- PASTOR ROBERT OLSZEWSKI

OFFERTORY

“Mary Did You Know” – Elizabeth Watson and Hailee Brightwell

*We offer ourselves to God, dedicating all to his service.
Visitors, please feel no obligation to give to this ministry.*

*BENEDICTION

Elders will be available for prayer following the Service

**Stand as Comfort Allows*

ADVENT WREATH LIGHTING

Our Advent Readers and Lighters for the Fourth Advent are Mr. & Mrs. Walt Arnold, Mr. & Mrs. Jeff Arnold, and Jared Arnold.

SLEEP WARRIORS

Join us on Friday, January 11 from 6 – 7 am for the kick-off of our study in Matthew. Sleep Warriors is a group of multid denominational men gathering together weekly to pray, study, and hold each other accountable.

PRAYER FOCUS

We would like to invite everyone to join Pastor Robert on January 2 at 5:30 pm – 6:30 pm for a time of prayer. We would like to pray for the upcoming year in the life of the church, for our church members and friends, and for God’s leading as we move forward in and for His glory!

NOTICE OF CALL

Congregational Meeting Sunday, January 6
6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

The purpose of the meeting is to come together for a time of fellowship, worship, and a review of the upcoming year. Please join us for this covered dish dinner and vision casting.

F.L.O.W. – JANUARY 13TH

Explore with us during the Sunday School hour beginning January 13 - February 24! Join us for the seven-part series, FOR THE LIFE OF THE WORLD! Christians are always being told to be “in the world but not of it.” But what does that really mean? FOR THE LIFE OF THE WORLD explores oikonomia: God’s surprisingly beautiful plan for his creation, the world, and us.



THE 4TH ADVENT

The **fourth candle** represents **Hope** and is called the “Angel’s Candle.” The angels announced that Jesus came to bring peace--He came to bring people close to God and to each other again.

PRAY OF GRATITUDE FOR THE BIRTH OF JESUS

Father God, we thank You and praise You today for the miracle of Your Son's birth. Thank You for bringing great JOY to the whole world! Thank You for giving us the assurance that because You came to us in the form of a human, we who believe in Jesus can know with absolute certainty that we'll spend eternity with You. We thank You, Lord, for the many reasons we have been given a merry Christmas. And we rejoice for each blessing. New life. New love. A home. A job. New opportunities. Second chances. And more. We know, Lord, that You bring the sun and the moon and set the stars in motion. You tell the ocean where to stop and the snow when to start. And we thank You for the mighty gift of Your creation. Thank You, Father, for spiritual leaders and faith-filled friends who keep encouraging us when we are close to giving up. And although we have many reasons to rejoice today, Lord, we also know December 25th can be not-so-merry for a whole host of reasons. We pray for those who are experiencing loss during Advent: relational, financial, spiritual and physical. We pray for those who are coping with loving a prodigal and our friends and family members whose hearts are far from You. We pray for those dealing with unemployment and addictions and chronic sickness... and unending pain and frustrations of all kinds. Thank You, Lord, that You are The Wonderful Counselor and Prince of Peace, even in the midst of our not-so-merry circumstances. Finally, Lord, we ask You to grant us peace. Peace in our homes, peace in our churches, and peace in our hearts, when the world all around us spins out-of-control. Help us to stay focused on You, this Advent season and always. Thank You for loving the whole world enough to send the greatest gift, Your Son, so that we might truly have a very merry Christmas. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

~Steph Raquel, from “**A Christmas Prayer for the Merry... and Not-So-Merry**,” **Prov. 31 Ministries**

ANOTHER ADVENT TRADITION

In China, Christians light their homes with decorative paper lanterns. Some also decorate a “Tree of Light” with paper chains or flowers.

P2P (PASTOR TO PEOPLE) - CHRISTMAS GIFTS

As we approach the celebration of Jesus Christ’s birth take some time to reflect on the following poem by C.S. Lewis. C.S. Lewis was an extraordinary writer (think Chronicles of Narnia, Mere Christianity) who did not personally know Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior until much later in life. The following poem reflects his understanding of the glorious birth of Jesus.



The Nativity
by C.S. Lewis

“Among the oxen (like an ox I’m slow)
I see a glory in the stable grow
Which, with the ox’s dullness might at length
Give me an ox’s strength.
Among the asses (stubborn I as they)
I see my Savior where I looked for hay;
So may my beast like folly learn at least
The patience of a beast.
Among the sheep (I like a sheep have strayed)
I watch the manger where my Lord is laid;
Oh that my baaing nature would win thence
Some woolly innocence!”

Merry Christmas,
Pastor Robert

THIS WEEK

Sunday, December 23 – 4th Advent

- 8:45 a.m. Prayer Group in Chapel
- 9:30 a.m. Worship Service
- 10:45 a.m. Sip 'n Chat
- 11:10 a.m. Sunday School for all ages

Monday, December 24

- 6:00 p.m. Candlelight Service

Tuesday, December 25

Office closed



Wednesday, December 26

Office closed

Thursday, December 27

Office closed

Friday, December 28

Office closed

Saturday, December 29

Sunday, December 30

- 8:45 a.m. Prayer Group in Chapel
- 9:30 a.m. Worship Service
- 10:45 a.m. Sip 'n Chat
- 11:10 a.m. Sunday School for all ages

GRACEPOINT PRAYER LIST

If you have a prayer request or would like to be added to our email prayer chain, please email:
kbergman@gracepointpc.org.

...Olszewski Family - A huge thank you and praise to God and our church family for getting us moved into our new home. Continue to pray for transitions around a busy time of year and for God's working in us to bless our new neighborhood.

...Clint and Cindy Cline – for their son Austin, for continued healing regarding the ruptured abdominal aortic aneurysm that nearly took his life. Please continue to lift up his family also.

...Andrea Simmons - That God would provide a place for the Simmons family to live. They are struggling to find a new place to park.

...Joel Switch - Friend Jeff's brain cancer has returned. Pray that the cancer will once again go into remission, for healing and comfort. God's hands on him.

...Vicky Kennedy - Please continue to pray for the leveling out of her blood pressure.

...Church Leadership – for wisdom and knowledge, for God's guidance, for seeking His will in the life of the church as we move into 2019. For their continued willingness to lead and direct.

THE WEEK THAT WAS — FINANCE

Weekly Income Budget	\$	9,616
Offering	12/16	\$ 12,228

SERVING LOCALLY AND GLOBALLY



January 6, Ed and Nan McCallum will give a brief update in the service and prayer. During the Sunday School all classes will meet in the Sanctuary to hear a full report on God's work in EPC World Outreach for Theological Education.

Ed McCallum has served the Evangelical Presbyterian Church for 19 years as the Assistant Stated Clerk. In his new role as ITEN's Associate for Site and Program Development, Ed will serve on the executive leadership team helping to cast vision while supporting the development, management and implementation of site goals. Nan McCallum currently serves as the Child Safety Officer for EPC World Outreach. She has been a regular coordinator for Perspectives on the World Christian Movement classes and has taught English as a second language. A lifelong educator, Nan has taught in public schools and serves ITEN with her husband.

ELDER OF THE DAY

Robert Watson

DEACON OF THE DAY

Lesley Bateman

ACOLYTES

Peyton McNab

Tavyst Harnage

TODAY'S WORSHIP

VOLUNTEERS

Special Needs Class

9:30 a.m.

Donna Howard

11:00 a.m.

Sandy Burnett

Sip n' Chat Cleanup

Phillips LifeGroup

SERVING LOCALLY

Here are several ways to serve at GracePoint! Contact the Church office to serve.

- Support the Deacon's Fund
- Join us for prayer on Tuesday mornings at 6 a.m. or on Sunday mornings at 8:45 a.m.
- Usher & Greeter
- Christmas Caroling to Shut-ins
- Connect with the Dorcas Circle to make scarves for the homeless and much more.
- Lydia Guild, who make dresses for the Guatemala Mission Trip.
- Join Sleep Warriors
- 5th/6th Graders can serve as Acolytes