



# GRACE NEWS & NOTES



March 1, 2020

## Keeping the Focus in a World of Distractions

By IGRC Bishop Frank Beard

(reprinted from *The Current*, February 2020)

Distracted.

The word that keeps consistently recurring and forcing its way to the forefront of my vocabulary at the start of this new year is the word “distracted.” To be distracted means that the main thing slips out of the place of primary importance, even if only momentarily, as one becomes preoccupied with something else seeking attention.

Everyone faces distraction in one form or another at some level when they are unable to pay full attention or to yield full focus and concentration to something. Distractions come in all shapes and sizes and typically happen when we do not expect or need them to occur. They are a part of life that each of us must deal with every single day, nearly every moment of the day.

We are bombarded by distractions. Some are quick and easily dealt with while others are long term and demanding. They can become so embedded in our lives that we mistakenly normalize the distractions and allow them to control our lives.



At this point, 2020, for me, is full of distractions. I've been distracted by personal health concerns, the death of friends and family members, the financial concerns of our Annual Conference and General Church, national and international events that are causing hurt and harm, weather related tragedies, increasing concerns about the future of the United Methodist Church, and the list goes on and on.

No one is exempt from distractions! Daily living is filled with challenges that force us to continually make choices that reflect our primary focus.

Jesus provided both a challenge and a goal for those seeking to emulate life according to the standards he prescribed for successful living. Jesus advised, **“Seek first the kingdom of God and God’s righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you.”** (Matthew 6:33)

Jesus carefully demonstrated for us how to navigate life and ministry without getting permanently side-tracked. His life was anchored by daily spiritual disciplines and he kept his mission at the forefront of his day-to-day schedule. Distractions were normal, but the distractions were not allowed to set the agenda of his life.

Jesus was able to “keep the main thing the main thing!” Perhaps we can learn from his example:

1. He was clear and certain about his calling and his purpose (Luke 4:18).
2. He had his mind focused on the right priorities (Philippians 2:5).
3. He was totally submitted to God’s will above his own personal desires and plans (Luke 22:42).

The IGRC is a terrific place to live and to engage in ministry. I am so blessed to be your Bishop. As one of your spiritual leaders I am determined, with the help of the Holy Spirit, to lift up Jesus and to allow him to have preeminence in my life and ministry. Let us encourage one another to attend to Christ’s agenda as we navigate the distractions of day-to-day living.

A good friend of mine often says, “You cannot stop the birds from flying over your head, but you don’t have to let them build a nest in your hair.” Let us focus on the primary task of lifting up the light of the world so that folks in darkness can have hope and know that help is still found in Jesus Christ.

God Bless,  
Bishop Beard

KEEP  
YOUR  
EYES  
FOCUSED ON  
JESUS

# YOUTH Activities

...for  
March

March 1, 8, 15, and 22

5:00-6:00 p.m.: Children's Ministry

6:00-6:30 p.m.: Snupper

6:30-7:30 p.m.: Student Ministry



March 5 and 19, 8:00  
a.m.: Senior High  
students are invited to  
come and have break-

fast with Dan Simonton at the Bonnie Café  
(church treat)

March 8 and 22, 7:30 p.m.: Senior High  
Ministry

March 28, 9:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.: Light Kids  
Conference (1st-5th grades) at Troy UMC  
in Troy, IL

## Upcoming Date to Mark on Your Calendar

April 4, 9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.: "Girls  
Conference—Becoming" for all teen girls  
(6th-12th grades) at Troy UMC in Troy, IL

\*If there is an event you are interested in  
helping with, please contact Daniel  
Simonton, Associate Minister of Family,  
Children & Youth Ministry.  
(Church office: 327-8407).



## Light Kids Conference

Troy UMC

Sat., March 28, 9:00 am—2:00 pm

This is a one day event for children in  
first-fifth grades of focused fun and Bible teaching.  
Kids will love the music, puppets, lunch, Bible Buzz  
and a recreation time with a 30-foot inflatable  
obstacle course.



## BIRTHDAYS

March 3	Jenny Kirsch
4	Morris Roetemeyer
5	Margaret Snyder
7	Terry Campbell
	Kourtney Hake
16	Bernice Chambers
17	John Luessenheide
20	Sarah Staley
28	Selina Reynolds

## ANNIVERSARIES

March 4	Pastor Bill & Rhonda Bunnage
	Len & Terry Campbell

*Congratulations everyone on your milestones! If your  
name was not included in our list, please  
inform the office so that we can update our records.*



## Girls Conference—Becoming

Troy UMC

Sat., April 4, 9:00 a.m.—3:00 p.m.

This is a conference for all teen girls (6th-12th  
grades), hosted at Troy UMC in Troy, IL. Rebekah  
Bled from Tulsa, OK will be the speaker for the  
event. Rebekah grew up in southern Illinois and is  
now married, has a young son and is serving in  
ministry in Tulsa. During the Girls Conference,  
students (and any female adults who wish to join  
them) will enjoy worship, seminars, experience  
stations, great refreshments and a delightful lunch.  
You can find all the registration information at  
[www.girlsconference.net](http://www.girlsconference.net).

## *From Me to You*

Here's a test for detecting negativity.

1. Are you an optimist or a pessimist?
2. Do some things at church (such as changing the way people do things) upset you?
3. When you are upset, do you complain?
4. Do you express your complaints to others?

If you answer yes to questions 2, 3, 4, then face it, you are a negative person.

I know it is hard to be positive and to put off negative stuff. Here's what the writer of Ephesians says: 4:1-3 (NCV) I am in prison because I belong to the Lord. Therefore I urge you who have been chosen by God to live up to the life to which God called you. 2 Always be humble, gentle, and patient, accepting each other in love. 3 You are joined together with peace through the Spirit, so make every effort to continue together in this way.

Have you noticed that just listening to a church can reveal how a church is doing spiritually? Are people positive or negative? Constant grumbling, complaining, arguing, gossip and slander are negative stuff that points to a church that is struggling spiritually.

The Apostle Paul made it very clear that these are things that are not to be a part of a believer's life, hence the church's life. In Philippians 2:14 he says: Do all things without murmuring or arguing. (NRSV)

If this resembles you, then as we enter into this season of Lent, use this 40 days as an opportunity to give up being a negative person. At the same time use these 40 days to take up being a positive person. The Good Lord knows we always need more positive people in the church, and the world as far as that goes.

In the coming days there will be numerous opportunities for United Methodists all around

the region to go and listen to some of our elected General Conference delegation share about the upcoming General Conference May 5-15 in Minneapolis, MN. I do not know what information will be shared. Again, anything talked about before May 5th will just be speculation and opinions of those sharing. When the delegation comes together and votes on what will be before them, then we will have something to actually discuss in our church gatherings.

The purpose of the Church (large C) is to glorify God. The purpose is not to pick and choose sides. The Church is to glorify God both internally-for the church and externally-for the community. What kind of image do we have—God honoring image or are we giving God a bad image through how we represent God to our community? We need to think about this because it really is important.

My concern is that as a an established church we already have a reputation in our community. Is it good? Or is it bad? Does our image glorify God, or is there a need for damage control?

The only way to really know is to ask. So ask people what kind of image we have in this community.

*Keep Being Faithful!*  
*Pastor Bill*



*A cheerful heart is good medicine,  
but a crushed spirit dries up the  
bones. —Proverbs 17:22*



## Noisy Offering from October-December 2019

A letter was received from **Heifer International** this week, thanking Grace UMC for our recent gift of **\$649.54**. This money was collected during the Sunday morning worship service's Noisy Offering (loose change and bills). The letter thanks Grace UMC for "providing them with the life-changing gift of animals and training they need to lift themselves out of hunger and poverty forever. " As you can see, change adds up!

## Volunteers Needed!

More volunteers are needed to help drive the church van once a month. You do not need to take a written test to drive the church van, but you will have to drive the van at the Secretary of State's office here in Nashville and they will give you an endorsement on the back of your driver's license. One of the current van drivers would be happy to accompany you, if you need some time to get familiar with driving the van. A current list of drivers is posted on the bulletin board outside the sanctuary. For more information, please call Terry Campbell at 618-246-6956.



## *A thank you letter from East Side Heart & Home Family Center...*

Dear Grace Methodist Congregation,

This thank you is long overdue. Seems like (as I age) time escapes me and I just don't get things done with much punctuality any more.

All of this to say, I am thanking you (in the name of everyone at East Side Heart & Home) for your very gracious quarterly donations. I know I have said it many times, but your checks help us keep our many programs going.

I am enclosing some photographs of the Dec. Senior gathering where they proudly display the snow globes they constructed. Your 2019 last quarter donation paid for the items needed for their construction. You can see on their faces how proud they are of their craftiness.

Please know how much the money you so kindly donate means to our agency.

God bless all of you and your obvious love for God's poor who we serve.

With deep appreciation,

Sr. Carol, S. Mary Ann & all at ESH&H Family Center.



## Greeters:

March	1	Bud & Nancy Meade
March	8	Margaret King
March	15	Helen Dude
March	22	The Szopinski Family
March	29	Senior High Youth





## Trustees Complete Remodeling Project

The recently remodeled women's bathroom upstairs is now finished! (This was formerly the men's bathroom.) Thanks go to all the members of the Trustees that contributed their time and talent to this project!

A project for the near future will be the former women's bathroom, which will be remodeled into a family bathroom, which will be handicapped accessible.



Mark your calendars now for the next **Electronic Recycling Event**, sponsored by the Washington County Health Department.



### Nashville Community Center

455 South Washington Street  
Nashville, IL

**Sat., March 7, 2020**  
**8:00 a.m. to noon**

**What to bring:** Computers, tube TVs, computer monitors, flat screen TVs, desktop printers, FAX machines, scanners, DVD, VHS, VCR players, video game consoles, keyboards, computer mice, cable boxes.

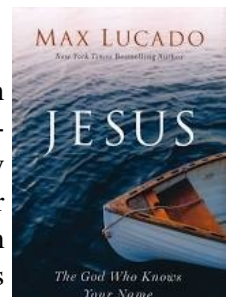
Microwave ovens accepted.

**Do not bring:** Other home or office electrical items or appliances.

## Small Group Studies Starting Up

Small group studies are beginning again and because this is ongoing, there will be others added in the future. Sign up sheets are on the credenza in the back of the sanctuary.

**Thursdays, beginning February 27, 11:30 am-1:00 pm, a 6-week study.**



Combine physical exercise (half an hour) with spiritual exercise, a one-hour small group study, facilitated by Linda Summers. Helen Dude, former NCHS P.E. teacher will guide us in some stretching exercises, as well as walking, before we meet as a small group to discuss a new book by Max Lucado called Jesus: The God Who Knows Your Name. If you are unable to come for the exercise, feel free to bring your lunch and join us for the Bible study. "If we want to know what matters to God, all we need to do is look in the Bible to see what matters to Jesus. If we want to know what God is doing in our world, we need only ponder the words of Jesus."



## Bit O' Luck Trivia Night

Washington County  
Vocational Workshop

**Saturday., March 14, 2020**

**Doors 5:30 pm; Starts 6:30 pm**

Register your 4-8 person team by calling  
Kristy Cameron 618-521-0750.

Cost is \$100/team (age 21+)

*All proceeds benefit Love, Lucas.*

*Love, Lucas is a 501(C)3 non-profit organization that provides compassionate financial, emotional and spiritual care for families experiencing infant and pregnancy loss.*

## Why Should We Care About Camp in 2020?

“Recent studies show that young people are less religious than ever, twice as many identify as atheists than previous generations, and over 50% believe attending church is not important.” (Barna)

**In 2019, 95% of campers had significant faith experiences at camp.** Give your child the gift of camp experiences they will carry with them the rest of their lives.

We have three camping ministries in the Illinois Great Rivers Conference (IGRC)—East Bay in Hudson, IL, Little Grassy in Makanda, IL and Beulah in Eldorado, IL.

For the purposes of this newsletter, only the camps at Little Grassy will be listed, but information for all the camps can be found online at [igrcamps.com](http://igrcamps.com)

### Elementary Camps

Camp 456—Grades 4-6-June 14-19, explore the lake, trails, and the archery range. Dive deeper into your faith and spend a night in the hammocks and experience creation in new ways.

Camp 456 + Horseback Riding—Grades 4-6, June 14-19, see the above description of Camp 456 with the added bonus of horseback riding.

S'Mores and More Day Camp—Grades K-5, June 15-19, campers are dropped off at 7:30 a.m. and picked up between 5-5:30 p.m. each day. There will be an optional sleepover at Little Grassy to get your feet wet before trying a longer overnight camp.

Discovery—Grades 1-4, June 28-July 1, discover your faith, adventure and friendships during this action-packed shorter week that is perfect for younger campers.

Night Owls—Grades 4-6, June 28-July 1, night games, a night hike and a surprise night activity await you at this shorter, adventure-filled camp. Stay up late, sleep in, and experience all camp has to offer—in the dark!

### Jr/Sr High Camps

Fueled—Grades 6-9, June 10-13, spend time at the lake, hiking, archery and the rest of your favorite camp activities while serving others!

Impact (CIT)—Grades 10-12, June 14-19, ever have dreams of being a counselor? This camp equips you with the tools needed to experience the best summer job while gaining hands on counseling experience. After this week, you will be welcomed back to help with camps the rest of the summer.

AIR—Grades 7-13, June 21-26, loads of experiences packed into one week! Rock climbing, working on a service project, playing games, crafts, taking naps, and all your favorite camp activities.

AIR + Horse Camp—Grades 7-13, June 21-26, you will be part of the AIR camp and go to Giant City Stables in the afternoons.

Uplifted—Grades 6-8, July 5-10, exploration, archery, swimming, climbing, canoeing and spending time together. Grow closer to God during campfire worship and make memories during this adventure filled week.

Amplified—Grades 9-12, July 5-8, enjoy the best of camp during a shorter week, dig deep into Bible study, enjoy worship around a campfire, canoe, cook over a fire, and connect with your friends.

### February Report

Date	Attendance	Offering
02-02	99	\$6,574.92
02-09	115	\$2,588.88
02-10	Online (Vanco)	\$ 399.25
02-16	90	\$1,055.05
02-19	Online (Vanco)	\$ 388.55
02-21	Online (Vanco)	\$ 299.32
02-23	84	\$1,537.55
02-24	Online (Vanco)	\$ 300.00

# March 2020



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2 Missions-7:00 pm (date changed from March 9th)	3	4 Choir-7:00 pm	5 Sr. High breakfast with Dan-8:00 am  Small group study 11:30 am-1:00 pm	6	7
8	9	10 Happy Days Board-6:00 pm	11 "Sharing Grace"-5:30 pm Choir-7:00 pm	12 Small group study 11:30 am-1:00 pm	13	14
15	16	17 Education-6:45 pm	18 Evangelism-6:30 pm Choir-7:00 pm	19 Sr. High breakfast with Dan-8:00 am  Small group study 11:30 am-1:00 pm	20	21
22	23 Trustees-6:30 pm	24	25 "Sharing Grace"-5:30 pm Choir-7:00 pm	26 Small group study not meeting this week	27	28 Light Kids Conference at Troy UMC (Grades 1-5) - 9:00 am-2:00 pm
29	30	31				

**NOTES:** All Sundays: Prayer Group in Chapel-8:30 am; Sunday Morning Small Groups-9:00 am; Worship-10:15 am. Youth Groups meet Sundays, except where noted: Children's Ministry (K-4th Grades)-5:00-6:00 pm; Snupper-6:00-6:30 pm; Student Ministry (5th-8th Grades)-6:30-7:30 pm. Sr. High Ministry meets the 2nd and 4th Sundays of each month at 7:30 pm.



**Grace United Methodist Church**  
**250 North Mill Street**  
**Nashville, IL 62263**

**ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED**

**We're on the Web**  
**Nashvillegrace.net**

**Dated Material Do Not Delay**