

# AMAZING GRACE

FEBRUARY 2024





# Sacred Rhythms for Lent and Beyond

The focus at Grace UMC this Lenten Season will be Spiritual Transformation. Traditionally the Season of Lent has been at time in the life of the Church, and more specifically in the life of individual followers of Jesus, to intentionally draw closer to God. It could be said that Lent is our time to prepare ourselves to celebrate the resurrection on Easter Sunday, and then to live our lives for the rest of the year drawing closer and closer to God through Christ.

The six Sundays of Lent at Grace UMC will include messages, liturgy and music aimed at helping us learn spiritual practices that can help us know and experience God more in our individual lives. Throughout the season I'll often refer to a book called Sacred Rhythms by Ruth Haley Barton. The individual practices we'll focus on come from this book. I want to encourage you to consider purchasing the book for yourself as a way to dive even deeper into the spiritual practices within. The book can be purchased on Amazon.

The sermons and practices for the Sundays of Lent will be:

- 2.18.24 | LONGING FOR MORE: An Invitation to Spiritual Transformation
- 2.25.24 | SOLITUDE: Creating Space for God
- 3.3.24 | SCRIPTURE: Encountering God Through Lectio Divina
- 3.10.24 | PRAYER: Deepening Our Intimacy with God
- 3.17.24 | SELF-EXAMINATION: Bringing My Whole Self Before God
- 3.24.24 | SABBATH: Establishing Rhythms of Work and Rest

In addition to the opportunities for spiritual transformation on Sunday mornings during Lent, you are also invited to participate in "From the Inside Out," a spiritual formation workshop that will be led by our own Joe Venema on Tuesday evenings from 6-7:30PM beginning February 13. The materials for the workshop will be provided and all are invited and welcome to participate. Please call the office (574-288-4789) to let us know if you are planning to engage in this workshop.

I am praying for spiritual transformation for all of us during this Lenten Season. I am praying we will all find ways to draw closer to God through these practices. I am praying these 40 days will prepare us for a real celebration on Easter Sunday. And I am praying we all continue to seek spiritual transformation and nearness to God all year long.

Peace,  
Pastor Jim



FROM THE  
*inside* OUT

GRACE UMC IS PLEASED TO OFFER

## “FROM THE INSIDE OUT”

A WORKSHOP ON CHRISTIAN SPIRITUAL FORMATION BEGINNING TUESDAY FEBRUARY 13, 2024. THE WORKSHOP WILL MEET FOR SIX CONSECUTIVE WEEKS ON TUESDAYS FROM 6PM TO 7:30PM.

## “FROM THE INSIDE OUT” A WORKSHOP ON CHRISTIAN SPIRITUAL FORMATION

If you are an ordinary Christian who is looking for “something more” in your spiritual life, this workshop may be for you. Jesus tells us that He came so we might have life, abundant life, here and now, a life filled with faith, hope, love, joy, and peace.

He says that this abundant life, here and now, can only be ours if we abide in Him. Abiding in Him means developing a close, personal, and ongoing relationship with Him. Our personal relationship with Him is His primary method of transforming our life into the abundant life he promises.

“Jesus-centered spiritual formation is the process of being transformed into the image of Christ, through a relationship of intimacy with God, by the power of the Spirit, in order to live a beautiful life of faith, hope, love, joy and peace, a life that will be a blessing to oneself and to others and will glorify God now, and for all eternity.” James Brian Smith

“From the Inside Out” is an introductory course about how to intentionally form a closer friendship with Christ. It was developed by Renovare, a Christian organization, whose mission is to help people become more like Jesus. (cf. [renovare.com](http://renovare.com)). Joe Venema has offered to facilitate the sessions at Grace. Joe, a member at Grace, is a retired psychologist with graduate degrees in theology and psychology. He has been a teacher and retreat leader for many years at churches in Southern California where he lived before coming to South Bend.

“From the Inside Out” will be offered on six consecutive Tuesday evenings from 6PM to 7:30PM beginning February 13, 2024. All course materials will be provided free of charge. While this will be a group class, there is no expectation or requirement that you will share personal information with others in the class. Any sharing will be voluntary.

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You must pre-register for the class.

Please call the church office at 574-288-4789 or email [communications@gracemethodist.org](mailto:communications@gracemethodist.org). If you would like further information, please feel free to contact Joe Venema at 574-344-0978.

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# ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICE

February 14 @ 7PM

## The Wesley Covenant Renewal Service

In 1775, John Wesley introduced a covenant service as an important part of spiritual life in the Methodist Societies. This renewal service was a time for the Methodists to gather annually in a time of self-examination, reflection, and dedication, wholly giving up themselves and renewing covenant with God. Repentance through confession and commitment was a key focus of the service, demanding humility from those willing to submit themselves to the dynamic words stated within the liturgy.

On Sunday, February 11, we will participate in this covenant renewal service at Grace UMC as a way of entering into the Lenten Season committed to drawing nearer to God. We hope you will join us for this meaningful service at 9AM and 10:30AM in our sanctuary.



# Families - Mark your calendars!



## An Update from our Finance Committee

We have seen several changes in our church over the past year. Some of the changes are obvious to our members, such as the arrival of Pastor Jim Clark and his family. What you do not see are the things that go on behind the scenes, the everyday tasks of running the church in a responsible and efficient manner.

The Finance Committee, along with the other leadership teams and ministry leaders spent time last fall putting together a budget for the 2024 church year. As we looked back on 2023, we did our best to be realistic about the needs of the church and its mission within our community. Like a lot of households now, our expenses outweigh our income. In response to that discovery we have been working diligently to reduce our

expenses. You will see a few more changes as we do this. An email from Pastor Jim a few weeks ago detailed one major change, the combining of three program areas into one staff position. Other smaller changes have been made that will not be noticeable except when it comes to paying the bills. Our leadership teams and staff are brainstorming ways they can be most responsible and effective as we continue to be the church in our community.

Once the budget is finalized, copies will be available in the office for anyone who would like to see it. You only need to stop in and ask for a copy. Another change that you will see will be in the Newsletter. Each month, starting in February, there will be a short note on the finances of

the church for the previous month. Without going into too much detail, we will share the income and expenses of the church for that month and year-to-date. The Finance Committee is committed to being transparent so everyone can know what our financial picture looks like.

Grace UMC is a vital part of the South Bend and Mishawaka communities. We are doing good ministry and finding ways to love our neighbors as we love ourselves. We are only able to do that because of the generosity of people like you. Thank you for being generous! And Thank you for being the Church!

Serving with you,  
Your Grace UMC  
Finance Committee

## Thank You For Supporting the Angel Tree Prison Ministry

Thank you, Grace Church, for supporting the Angel Tree Prison Ministry by calling families, purchasing gifts, donating money to purchase gifts, sorting the gifts, and delivering the gifts to these local children and families. We served 23 families and 56 children. A big Thank You to the Angel Tree committee and volunteers; Sharon Butiste, Tom & Meg Csenar, Linda & Jim Clauson, Scott Dunham, Holly Easterbrook, Sandy Fackson, Cheri Kucela, Joyce Kuehl, Mike Kummeth, Bob & Karen Messersmith, Denise Pitts, Jennifer Robinett and Tom & Kara Strang. We could not have done this without all of your support and willingness to share Christ's love with others. Thank You so much for supporting this wonderful ministry!

~Teresa Jodway, Angel Tree Coordinator

### Grace Cares Meeting

February 27 @ 7PM in the Conference Room  
Everyone interested in taking care of others in our congregation are invited to join us!

### UMW Graceful Friends Meeting

February 27 @ 6:30PM in the Parlor  
Join us as we make Spring / Easter cards for our friends who have a hard time gettin out.



#### SUNDAYS

9AM & 10:30AM In-Person & Virtual Worship Service  
9AM LIVE on Facebook; 10:30AM LIVE on YouTube  
10AM Coffee Fellowship Hour  
10:30AM PreK - Adult Sunday School  
11:45AM Youth Group

#### MONDAYS

1PM Pilgrimage Healing (by appt.)  
7PM A.A.

#### TUESDAYS

5:30PM Positive Outlook Basketball Group

#### WEDNESDAYS

6PM Sky Dig Soldiers 2026 Basketball Group

#### THURSDAYS

8AM Bible Study  
7PM Choir Rehearsal

#### FRIDAYS

7:30PM A.A.

#### FEBRUARY 4

11:30AM "Souper" Bowl Chili Cook-Off

#### FEBRUARY 7

6:30PM Board of Trustees Meeting

#### FEBRUARY 10

10AM-12PM Paper Pantry

#### FEBRUARY 13

6PM "From the Inside Out" Workshop Begins

#### FEBRUARY 14

7PM Ash Wednesday Worship Service

#### FEBRUARY 16

6PM-8PM Parents' Night Out

#### FEBRUARY 27

6:30PM Graceful Friends UMW Circle

#### MARCH 2

8AM Men's Breakfast

SENIOR PASTOR:  
Rev. Jim Clark  
[James.Clark@inumc.org](mailto:James.Clark@inumc.org)

DIRECTOR & LEAD TEACHER OF  
RAGGEDY ANN PRESCHOOL:  
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MEDIA OPERATOR:  
Evie Ringer

CUSTODIANS:  
Robert Russell  
Angel Soto

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#### GRACE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

ADDRESS | 3012 South Twyckenham Drive South Bend, IN 46614

PHONE | 574-288-4789 WEBSITE | [gracemethodist.org](http://gracemethodist.org)

FACEBOOK | [sbgraceumc](https://www.facebook.com/sbgraceumc) YOUTUBE | [SBGraceUMC](https://www.youtube.com/SBGraceUMC)

SUNDAY MORNING WORSHIP SERVICES | 9AM & 10:30AM (Livestream & In-Person)

#### ALTAR FLOWER DEDICATION CALENDAR

If you would like to celebrate or memorialize a loved one or event by dedicating flowers for the altar, please sign up at [signupgenius.com/go/70a084eadae2aa4f94-altar](https://signupgenius.com/go/70a084eadae2aa4f94-altar). Please sign up by 10AM on the Tuesday before desired date.

#### THE MORE WE KNOW, THE BETTER WE CAN CARE!

If you or anyone in your life needs care, love, prayer and support, please contact Melodie at 574-288-4789 or email the Grace Cares confidential email address at [gracecares@gracemethodist.org](mailto:gracecares@gracemethodist.org). Grace Cares about you!



#### MAKING A CONTRIBUTION TO GRACE UMC

If you would like to contribute, please scan the QR Code or text 574-444-3044 and follow the prompts. Please remember Grace United Methodist Church when doing your estate planning.

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