

Grace Notes

A QUICK LOOK AT THE MONTH AHEAD



A JOYOUS AND CARING CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

Vermilion Grace United Methodist Church

CHARGE CONFERENCE 2026

PASTOR'S LETTER

Greetings Grace!

I'm going to keep it real short this month because on the next few pages, you will get to read my report to the charge conference in just a few weeks time. All I will say is how incredibly blessed I am to be in ministry and community with you and I am excited to see where God leads us next year! Hopefully you will see this report and feel that nudge to plan to plant your roots a little deeper here in this joyous and caring Christian community!

Grace and Peace - Pastor Preston

Pastor's Report 2026

Greetings in the name of our risen savior, Jesus Christ,

The past year has been one of incredible blessings for us here at Grace! As my wife and I welcomed our little Leanette into our family, we have been so deeply blessed by your love and support as you have surrounded her with your prayers and support! We were also blessed to be led during my paternity leave by Rev. Dr. Roger Skelley-Watts. It was a beautiful Lenten season and Easter Service and I am truly grateful for Rev. Roger and Rev. Joan for their leadership and how they have truly blessed us all here at Grace UMC.

Looking back, I am truly amazed for the incredible goals we have set and, by the grace of God, achieved together this past year. 2026 saw Vermilion's first ever Pride event hosted right here at Grace UMC. Our diversity committee worked tremendously hard to create a fun and safe environment for LGBTQ members of our community. We had over 500 people attend our event featuring speakers from our community and our DS Rev. Kelly Brown! We also received incredible feedback from participants and vendors alike. What captured my attention the most was the messages people wrote with sidewalk chalk. All of which were reminders that we are God's children and our call is to love our neighbor as ourselves. When I reflect on our mission of creating a joyous and caring christian community, I think back to this event often. That we got a taste of what that joyous and caring kingdom of God can look like where all of God's children can safely be who they were made to be! Our Diversity committee was also recognized by the East Ohio Annual Conference for this event and for the Multicultural Ministries grant we received to make Pride 2026 the success it was!

Pastor's Report 2026 cont.

2026 was also a year in which our Wonderfully Made Worship Community took fantastic and inclusive steps forward. We welcomed Hayden Elder (probably better known as Andy Thunderstix) as our worship leader for the service and expanded our outings to include more and more people not just associating with Grace, but from the larger Vermilion Community. Our 2nd Annual Fall Festival was a tremendous success providing a fun night out to 80 individuals with disabilities and their caregivers! It also inspired us to break off our successful karaoke portion into its own standalone event. This is yet another example of Grace is becoming a safe and inclusive place where our neighbors can be themselves and enjoy each other's company as they are. We have also begun preliminary planning with the office of Discipleship to develop resources so churches across the united methodist connection can take steps to be in community with individuals with disabilities.

Our Community Garden was also a tremendous success! While we only utilized 11 of the 12 initial plots, we were blessed to have our Community Garden become part of a graduation project for a member of our wider community completing her nursing program. Admittedly, her observations were wonderful but not surprising. She found that the community garden created a space for community to develop between the folks who tended a plot. She also found that when she interacted with you, she found you to be incredibly warm, kind, welcoming and willing to listen to those around you. That once again, the community garden is but another example of Grace living out its mission to be both joyous and caring, not just to those who have taken membership vows, but to all who have been wonderfully made by God.

Pastor's Report 2026 cont.

Lastly, we are beginning a period of discernment here at Grace. By now, you will have received your invitation to participate in the Congregational Assessment Tool (CAT) and give your input on the ministry and mission of Grace UMC. It is paramount that we hear everyone's voice as we seek to discern where God is calling us next as a church. That each and every person who considers Grace to be their spiritual home can be heard and play a role in how we will approach life together for the next 3-5 years. Because it is only together that we can make Grace a truly joyous and caring community as we work to establish God's kingdom here on earth. My prayer is that you will take the time to fill out this assessment and then participate in the talkback presentations that will happen in a few months time after the results are processed.

To conclude my report, there is a phrase that our communications director, Dr. Jim Chapple has coined and really caught on in the past year. Grace is the place. I think 2026 was a year that, through the power of the Holy Spirit and by the grace of our God. We took huge concrete steps into making that saying a reality. When we celebrated the opening of the Splash Pad at the Vermilion Pool. It was largely funded through the generosity of members of Grace who direct their philanthropy through the church. I was blessed to be present and offer a consecrating prayer for the splash pad. At the end of the event, we were presented with a proclamation from the city of Vermilion thanking Grace for your compassionate work to improve the lives of all who live and come to Vermilion over the years. It was then remarked to me that not nearly enough people know just how much the church, you, have done for the city of Vermilion. The truth is that more and more each day are finding out about what is going on here and that Grace is the place to encounter the fullness of God as the fullest version of yourself. So Praise be to God for all the things God has done in and through Grace United Methodist Church. A truly joyous and caring Christian community indeed!

Respectfully Submitted,

Pastor Preston Watkins

HELP SHAPE THE FUTURE OF GRACE UMC PARTICIPATE IN THE CONGREGATIONAL ASSESSMENT TOOL (CAT)

Grace United Methodist Church is entering an exciting season of prayer, reflection, and planning for the future. As part of this journey, we invite every member and regular attendee to participate in the **Congregational Assessment Tool (CAT)**.

The CAT is a confidential survey that provides valuable insight into our congregation's strengths, priorities, hopes, and opportunities for growth. It helps us better understand where God is calling us as a church and provides our leadership with reliable information to guide future ministry, mission, and decision-making.

Why is your participation important?

Every voice matters. Whether you have been part of Grace for decades or have joined us more recently, your experiences and perspectives are essential. The more people who participate, the clearer and more accurate the picture we receive of our congregation.

The results will help us:

- Celebrate the strengths and gifts of Vermilion Grace United Methodist Church.
- Identify opportunities to grow in our ministries and outreach.
- Better understand the hopes and priorities of our congregation.
- Strengthen our mission to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.
- Develop a shared vision for the future that reflects the voices of our church family.

The survey is completely confidential. Individual responses are never shared with church leadership. We will receive only a summary of the collective results, allowing everyone to answer honestly and openly.

We encourage every adult who considers Grace United Methodist Church their church home to complete the survey. Your participation is one of the most meaningful ways you can contribute to the future of our congregation. We also ask that you please complete your CAT by October 25th.

The CAT is now live, you can type in this link below or scan the QR code to take it online. Please let the church know if you require a paper copy!

Your voice matters. Your participation matters. Together, we can help shape the future of Vermilion Grace United Methodist Church.

Grace UMC CAT Links

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/graceumcoh>



Scan this Code to pull up the CAT

COMING UP IN WORSHIP:



Gratitude is more than just another emotion, attitude, or something to be saved for certain times of year, like Thanksgiving or a finance campaign. Rather, gratitude is a foundation, a starting point in the journey of being made a disciple. Giving thanks fortifies us for the life of a follower of Jesus Christ, for the glories and the struggles. We aren't promised an easy road in this life of faith, but we are promised presence. We are not alone, and for that we always give thanks.

You are invited to join us Sunday mornings @ 10:15am here at Grace UMC or online via FaceBook, YouTube or vermiliongrace.com

Vermilion Grace

BIBLE STUDY

Join us as we continue our Bible
Study week study through:

THE BOOK OF GENESIS

October 10th - Jacob in
Canaan (Gen. 32-36)

October 17th - Joseph's
Journey to Egypt (Gen.
37-41)

October 31st - Joseph and
His Brothers (Gen. 42-45)

November 7th - Jacob and
his Family Reunited
(Genesis 46-50)

**There is a participant guide
available on Cokesbury but all you
need is a bible!**

Participant guide:
<https://www.cokesbury.com/Genesis-to-Revelation-Genesis-Participant-Book>

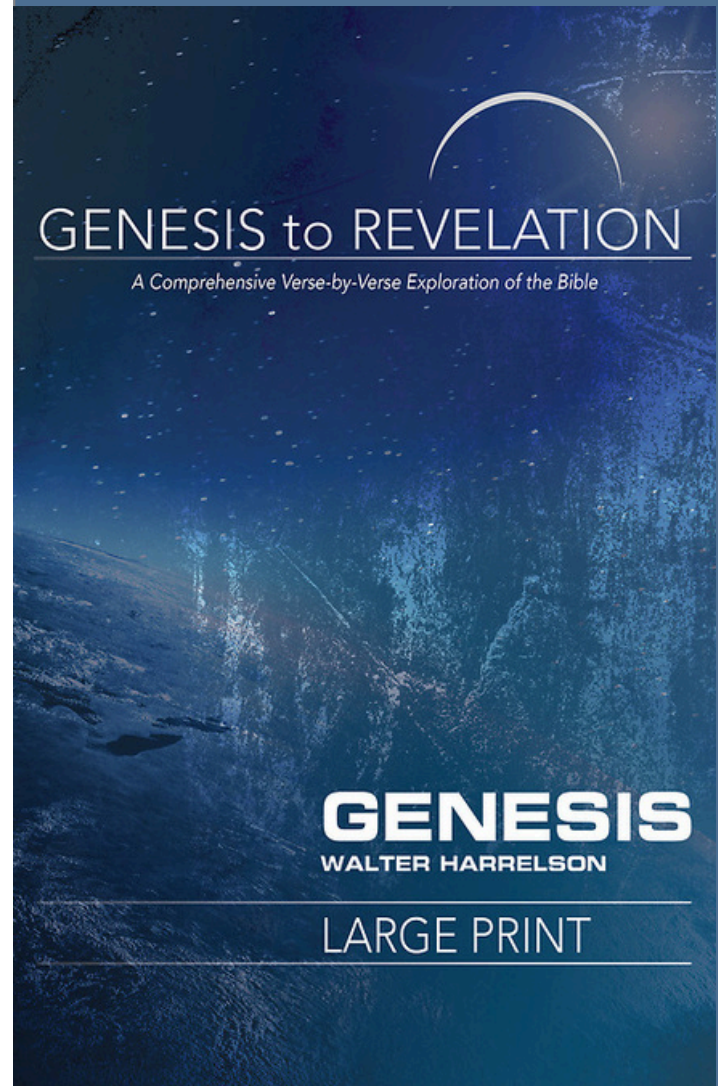
Coffee and donuts provided.



Contact Us
440-967-5206



More Information
www.vermiliongrace.com



SATURDAYS @

**10
AM**

**CRONOWALT
ROOM**

13406 W LAKE ROAD,
VERMILION OH 44089

**VERMILION GRACE UMC'S
WONDERFULLY MADE INVITES
YOU TO A
LANTERN
MAKING EVENT**

13406 W Lake Rd, Vermilion

Tues, October 13

6:00-7:30PM

Decorate Chinese lanterns with us, and then
join us at Vermilion's Lantern Parade on
Saturday, 11/7 @ 4:30PM at Main St Beach.
Contact Nicole at 440-829-2828 with questions,
or to RSVP

**WONDERFULLY MADE
MINISTRY
at Vermilion Grace UMC**

13406 W Lake Road, Vermilion

October 27, 2026

5:30-7:00pm

**Join us for a short worship service followed by
dinner and fellowship. All ages are invited
to participate.**

**WEAR A COSTUME THIS MONTH
FOR HALLOWEEN!**

**Text or call Nicole at 440-829-2828 with questions
or to RSVP. Caregivers are welcome to meet together,
stay with your family, or leave and pick up at 7:00pm.**