



GRACENOTES - January 2018
Rev. Steven M. Taylor, Lead Pastor
Panama United Methodist Church

From Pastor Steve's Desk...

Welcome to GraceNotes! We're so glad you picked up this copy of the Panama United Methodist Church newsletter! Everything you need to know about what is going on at Panama United Methodist Church and our community is in here...enjoy!

Looking Back - Looking Ahead

Back in January 2014, my GraceNotes newsletter article focused on an exciting and challenging season we, as a church, were entering at that time. The Growth and Vision Team was meeting to prayerfully discern what God was calling us to do to grow for, and respond to, our community. That was FOUR years ago. Since that time, a new team formed what we called the Vision 20/20 Team. The main purpose of the Vision 20/20 Team was to engage in an engineering study that would determine the future possibilities of our building and our ministries. Over the last two years, we've done just that. Then, in 2017, we engaged in a comprehensive and successful scriptural funding campaign that has us positioned well for the future. In 2018, in just a couple months, work will begin to transform part of our facility to better allow us to be a church in, for, and with our community and region. As we look back, we have nothing but gratitude in our hearts. As we look forward, our trust in what God can and will do positions us to work with God in all things.

Here's what I wrote in 2014, "When the early church was growing, there were some pains and lessons that had to be learned. That's no different today. It just takes on a different medium and culture. Here's what Paul wrote to Timothy, one of the younger church leaders that was raising up the church to bear fruit and grow that kingdom:

...Pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, steadfastness, gentleness. Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called and about which you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses. I charge you in the presence of God, who gives life to all things, and of Christ Jesus, who in his testimony before Pontius Pilate made the good confession, to keep the commandment unstained and free from reproach until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, which he will display at the proper time - he who is the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords, who alone has immortality, who dwells in unapproachable light, whom no one has ever seen or can see. To him be honor and eternal dominion. Amen."

(Continued on next page)

Panama United Methodist Church Mission Statement

**We seek to love the Lord God by introducing people to
His Son Jesus Christ and helping these relationships to grow.**

From Pastor Steve's Desk...(Continued)

Looking back on this scripture and my article from 2014 fills my heart with thanks. It's still very true for us today. The Panama UMC congregation continues to be strong and grow spiritually and numerically. More importantly, though, we have expanded our desire to love our community and neighbors, to see and respond to the needs of this region, this county, and the world through missions, ministry, and discipleship. We have been busy pursuing righteousness, godliness, faith, love, steadfastness, and gentleness. We are fighting the good fight of faith and giving glory and honor to God. Looking back, we can easily see God at work, in us and through us. Wow! It's fun!

Looking ahead, it's a little harder to see what God will do. Faith and trust in Jesus will guide our path. The Holy Spirit will not leave us or forsake us if we're faithful, obedient, and true. It's going to be a mess year, for sure, with construction equipment, disruption, inconvenience, sacrifice, patience tested, and resources used. I, for one, am looking forward to leading us in it and through it. Now is the time to ramp up our discussions about the vision God has placed before us. Let's dream about how we can utilize our current and new facility for Jesus. Satan will try to defeat us (and has already tried in many ways) but our God is stronger and is the victor. Nothing can ultimately stop what God has begun. Looking ahead, let's work as a team, let's love each other, let's help and pray for our community and neighbors, and let's give God ALL the glory and praise! Ready? Set? GOD!

In His Grip
Pastor Steve



UPCOMING EVENTS

January 8 - Grace Visitation Team Organizational Meeting;
6pm; Library

January 16 - Ladies of Light Spa Night; 6:30pm
Please join us for facials, manicures, prayer, fellowship and more!

January 26 and 27 - Confirmation Class Retreat

Blood Pressures and Sugars will be offered the first Sunday of every month
in Pastor's office. Please use the office door across from the coat rack.

SUNDAY MORNING TEAM for JANUARY

Ushers

George and Trudy Anderson
Pat and Kristy Catanese

Nursery Helpers

January 7

Birth-2: Kim Bajdo and Betsy Eggleston

January 14

Birth-2: Jason and Jolene Ayres

January 21

Birth-2: Barb Tordella and Madie Pearson

January 28

Birth-2: Candy Scarem and Azzaria Hardin

Thank you for volunteering to take care of
our little ones during the worship service.

We appreciate you!

If something comes up and you cannot serve,
please trade with someone or find a replacement.

You may call Debbie in the Church office
(M-TH) by calling 782-4031.

THANK YOU!!



***Be sure to keep updated on PUMC
meetings and events by checking the
online calendar and Pastor Steve's week-
ly Churchmail.***

***The PUMC website is
www.panamaum.org***

***Did you know we are also on
Facebook? Check us out at
www.facebook.com/panamaum***

***You certainly wouldn't want to
miss the "happenings"
by being uninformed!***

**Looking for a way to share God's love?
Feeling hospitable?**

Join the Sunday Morning Hospitality Team!

We can use your help to greet people as
they come in our doors and share a cup of
coffee with them.

If you would like to bake, purchase treats,
make coffee, etc., please see Julia,
Pam or Debbie. This does not tie you into an
every week commitment.

We are also always looking for door greeters
during the 9am hour. You can sign up on the
Welcome Table or call the church office.

YOU can be the happy, welcoming face
newcomers encounter when they
first enter God's house in Panama.



In need of meals?

**W.A.M. has had another opportunity to
provide meals.**

**Again, if you have a need for meals,
please let Kathy Foulk know.**



CENTERPOINT

CAMPAIGN CORNER

Currently, the total amount committed to the CenterPoint Campaign, as of the end of 2017, is \$874,081.66 with total donations being made of \$290,617.77. A total of \$25,088.17 was received during the month of December 2017.

We are grateful for the faithfulness of the congregation to the campaign.

HOUSEKEEPING NOTE:

When using your weekly offering envelopes for making CenterPoint donations, please label the bottom line as CenterPoint, if you are making a donation. Labeling them as “Building Fund” could be interpreted as being for the Trustees’ Fund, which is used for upkeep of the existing “Building”. Also, if you utilize a separate plain envelope (pink or white) for CenterPoint donations, please make sure that your name is on it so we can assure that proper credit is given to you. If the donation is in cash rather than a check, we have no way of knowing to whom it belongs. Thank you!



ADULT WOMEN'S CLASS Marge Vollmer

Our ladies' class strives to yield to God's lead. We lift each other up and push each other outside of our comfort zones, all while growing together in the name of Jesus.

We will finish Joyce Meyer's "Battlefield of the Mind" in mid January and start "Keep It Shut" by Karen Khman. Karen's study guides us through what to say, how to say it, and when to say nothing at all.

We meet downstairs, so grab a cup of coffee, take a deep breath and come and enjoy God's love during our hour of fellowship. If you would like more information, please feel free to contact Marge at 716-397-1385.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Classes are in full swing and there is room for you! Classes are available for every age and our teachers are prepared and excited to share the enduring truths of God's Word.

Pre-K to Grade 2: Candy Scarem

Grades 3-6: Becky Cable

Grades 7-12: Adam and Tory Irgang

Adults: George Anderson, Horizontal Jesus by Dr. Tony Evans

Adults: Jon Cable, Answers Bible Curriculum

Adults: Denny and Cindy Furlow, Complicated Topics and Passages; searching the scriptures for God to reveal the answers

Adults: Stacy Taylor, meeting Wednesdays-3:30pm

Adult Women: Marge Vollmer, Battlefield of the Mind by Joyce Meyer

Come early, grab a cup of coffee and join us!

MISSION TEAM MINISTRIES
Ted and Sharon Passarelli

VILLAGE OF HOPE, HAITI

One of the ministries that we have supported prayerfully and financially is the Village of Hope in Haiti. Many of our church members have spent time in missions in Haiti at the Village of Hope over the past several years.

Over 700 students at the Village of Hope School begin each day by calling upon the name of the Wonderful Counselor in worship. As they study and grow, they gain courage and strength from our Might God. The students, their families and the community are blessed with healing by the Everlasting Father through our Health Center and medical teams. The community, which has known much suffering and tragedy, experiences the blessings of the Prince of Peace.

In 2017, we sent \$750 in support of our brothers and sisters in Haiti. That gift is helping to save the lives of the children who Jesus came to save. Due to the generosity of a group of donors, matching gifts were offered for every gift made by December 31. What an opportunity to help ensure that the work of Village of Hope will continue to touch people around the world as the encounter Christ's story in 2018.

The Missions Team would like to thank you for supporting our local "business", the PUMC post office, which was open for the month of December. By having your Christmas greetings delivered for "in church" pick-up, missions of the PUMC, locally and around the world, will continue to receive our support.



CONNECTIONS

**We are always in need of snacks
and we thank you in advance for
your generosity!**

WHITE GIFT FUND

Are you aware of a community need?

We have a White Gift Fund with available ministry dollars.

If you know of anyone with a need, please talk to Pastor Steve.

STRONGER.....TOGETHER.....in PRAYER

PRIMARY GOALS OF THE PANAMA UMC

-1-

Helping people to turn away from a life of self-rule and becoming fully-devoted followers of Jesus Christ.

-2-

Equipping devoted Christ-followers to be effective at sharing their faith so they can lead others into a life-giving relationship with God.



God's Groceries Food Pantry (at the 4 corners of Panama)

Monday Morning: 9-10am
Monday Evening: 6-7pm

Thursday Evening: 5-7pm

Questions? See Tina Swineford

January Birthdays and *Anniversaries*

- 1 Carl Anderson, Dean/Rebecca Sprague
- 3 Caroline Apthorpe, Erin Miller, Reese McGaffick,
Pam Sali, Shawn/Amy Hummel
- 4 Cliff Reardon
- 5 Kimberly Barton, Betty Johnson
- 6 Jeff Ireland
- 7 David Rowe, Andrew Apthorpe
- 8 Claire Apthorpe, Mathis Baehr
- 9 Aubriana Dominey, Dennis Furlow, Jan Wheeler
- 10 Jacob Caldwell, Patrick Caldwell, Ashley Senske
- 13 Amanda Pekelnicky,
- 15 Sarah Umberger
- 16 Bob Gleason, Sharon Reese
- 17 Bronson Edwards, Callaway Anderson
- 18 Jonathan Komarek, Taylor Shreve
- 19 Don Garfield
- 22 Marcey Larson, Thomas Cartwright
- 24 Ian Ellsworth (Peck)
- 25 Kevin Beckerink, Linda Wood
- 26 Shawn Reardon
- 27 Alexandria Davis
- 29 Mert/Janet Osborne

A look ahead to February...

- 1 Joel Keefer
- 2 Kevin Rowe, Marissa Eckman,
- 3 Eric Scolton, Anna VandeVelde
- 4 Willson Baer, Meghan Price, Howie Wheeler
- 5 Jeff Enlow, Bill Schneider
- 6 Carl Davis III, Brenda Ireland, Braden Topolski
- 8 Alexandra Baer, Gail Dallas
- 9

W.A.M. **(Women. And. Missions)** Kathy Foulk

Just a reminder that W.A.M. will not meet again until April.

We are still collecting soup labels and box tops, postage stamps and change.

If you know of anyone who has been in the hospital or may need some help with meals, please let Kathy know and we will arrange for some meals to be taken in.

PUMC Discipleship Group Information

CHAT

George and Trudy Anderson
First Thursday of every month
gaanderson@windstream.net; 782-3252

RADICAL

Carl and Susie Davis
1st and 3rd Saturday of each month
appleoaktreefarm@yahoo.com or suesue5@windstream.net; 782-4611

Ladies of Light

Cindy Furlow
1st and 3rd Tuesday of each month; 7pm
cfurlow@chautauquamachinecom; 782-2775

Band of Brothers

Craig Vollmer
1st and 3rd Tuesday of each month; 7pm
craig.vollmer@gmail.com; 763-0879

Kyle and Brynne Hinsdale

One Saturday per month
kbhinsdale@windstream.net; 355-4382

We Care

Thea Kester
Every other Thursday at noon at the Rowdy Rooster
rtkester@windstream.net; 782-4620

Women and Missions (WAM)

Kathy Foulk
2nd Monday monthly at the Panama Diner (April - December)
ofoulks2@windstream.net; 782-4467 or 499-6437

For more information concerning PUMC Discipleship Groups, contact the church office at 782-4031 or at debbie.johnson@panamaum.org.
You may also contact Jon and Becky Cable, our Discipleship Group Leaders at 543-5050 or at jonbec95@gmail.com.

**Discipleship is a lifestyle filled with relationships;
a life of pouring yourself out for others.**

CHURCH STAFF

Reverend Steven M. Taylor, Lead Pastor
steven.taylor@panamaum.org

Debbie Johnson, Ministry Coordinator/Admin. Asst.
debbie.johnson@panamaum.org

Candy Scarem, Student Ministry Director
candy.scarem@panamaum.org

Julie Nagel, Music Director/Accompanist

Krista Odell, Accompanist

Jody Marsh, Parish Nurse

Peter Komarek, Custodian

Sandy Crossley, Connections

Joan Monroy, Connections

Tara Hosier, Connections

Dr. Mark and Diane Abbott, Spain

Blog: www.markabbott007.com

Rev. Paul D. Caseman, Alaska

Pastor Steve's Office Hours
9:00am - Noon: M, T and W

Church Phone (716) 782-4031

Church Fax # (716) 782-2326

Church E-mail – contact@panamaum.org

Church website - www.panamaum.org

www.facebook.com/panamaum

Please check the calendar inside for
weekly meetings and activities
for the month of January.

Cornerstone District Office

Christ First UMC

663 Lakeview Ave.

Jamestown, NY 14701

(716) 665-2423

Panama United Methodist Church
22 East Main St., PO Box 218
Panama, NY 14767

Church Phone (716) 782-4031

Church Fax # (716) 782-2326

Church E-mail – contact@panamaum.org

Church website - www.panamaum.org

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