

# GOOD NEWS AT GRACE

Grace United Church • October 20, 2023

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'GraceUnitedTavistock'



'Grace United Tavistock'



www.graceunitedtavistock.com

## For Anniversary Sunday at Grace United Church, Some Early History

Here's a question for you. Of the various congregations that came together 54 years ago to form Grace United Church, in which one did the very earliest members of our church first gather to worship? Was it at Lingelbach? At South Easthope? At Harmony? A significant number of our current membership can trace their faith roots to a small congregation that once existed near Cassel. Here is the story of that East Zorra Evangelical Church taken from chapter one "The Early Years of East Zorra Township" in a booklet entitled *Cassel Mennonite Church 1935-1985* written by Vernon Zehr and Leona Bender.

"The north-east third of East Zorra Township was first settled by German-speaking immigrants from Germany, Switzerland, and eastern France (Alsace and Lorraine). These German-speaking people staked out their land claims along the dirt roads and were soon hard at work

clearing the land with broadaxe and fire. These people became a

cohesive community forged together by a common language and common cultural and racial background. They shared each other's toils and tears, shared the Protestant work ethic, encouraged each other and with dogged determination created one of the most attractive farming communities in Ontario.

"With so much in common, it is surprising that their faith in and worship of the same universal God did not further enhance their togetherness. In fact, the strong religious convictions and denominational loyalties got in the way of complete harmony. Even though these people had so much in common, on Sunday morning they went to churches of three different denominations. Three church buildings in a two mile radius (Lutheran, Amish and Evangelical) stood as evidence of their differences.

"The Evangelicals (or German Methodists as they were called) were the first to erect a place of worship. They built a frame structure in 1858 at the corner of the 17<sup>th</sup> Concession and the Maplewood sideroad on land donated by the Valentine Grenzsbach family. As devout Evangelicals, they stressed personal faith, the need for conversion and repentance, and were very zealous in promoting their faith and calling people into active church work. By the turn of the century, seven ministers had come from this small congregation to serve the broader denomination: two from the Grenzsbach family, two from the Haist family, two from the Staebler family, and one by the name of Amacher. Other names from this congregation in the early years were Ankenmann, Lingelbach, Lemox, Hess, Luizler, Kreh, Otto, Pletsch, Spahr, Schlemmer, Reibling, Nicklas, Wagester, and Weil. "The spot where this church building stood was rather wet and unsuitable for a cemetery. A few people were buried there. The markers are now piled in a corner of the lot. ➡



Centennial Evangelical Church, Cassel

Another cemetery was soon established two miles south at the corner of the 17<sup>th</sup> and the Cassel sideroad (on land donated by the Haist family). In 1901, the original frame building was sold to the Lingelbach brothers for \$113 and a new beautiful brick building was erected next to the cemetery. Someone in the church records stated that "it was nice enough to be a city church." The writer records that "Zorra was famous for its good farms and good preachers." The church records were written in excellent German script until 1904.

"In 1923, only twenty-two years after its construction, the church was closed. A total of ten different ministers had served the church in those years. Only five families remained as members. Some had moved to urban centres, some had gone to college and seminaries and did not return to the farms their parents had homesteaded."

The members of the East Zorra Evangelical congregation who remained transferred their membership to Zion Evangelical Church in Tavistock. The church remained vacant until 1935 when approximately 30 families from the over-crowded East Zorra Amish Mennonite community rented the vacant building. In September of that year they purchased it for \$800 with the Evangelicals reserving the right to use the building for an annual decoration day service and for their cemetery for funerals. Submitted by Paul Bartlett

### **Upcoming Services and Dates**

**Oct. 22nd:** 10:30 am Anniversary Worship Service led by Rev. Marg Smith. Sunday School. Service will be recorded for online worship. All are invited for light snack, refreshments and social time in Zion Hall following worship.

11:35 pm Christmas Musical Rehearsal

12:00 - 2:00 pm Art Day for Youth

**Oct. 25th:** 10:00 - 11:30 am Sit n' Knit Stay n' Crochet

**Oct. 26th:** 7:00 pm Choir Practice

**Oct. 29th:** 10:30 am Reformation Sunday Worship guest speaker Andrew Middleton. Sunday School. Service will be recorded for online worship. All are invited for light snack, refreshments and social time in Zion Hall following worship.

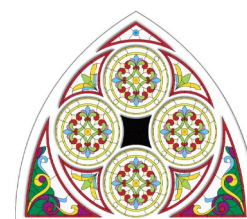
1:30 - 3:30 pm Movie Afternoon

**Nov. 1st:** 7:00 pm Worship Committee

**Nov 2nd:** 10:30 am Pastoral Care and Outreach Committee

7:00 pm Choir Practice

**Nov. 5th:** 10:30 am Remembrance Sunday Service led by Rev. Marg Smith with Tavistock Legion Madre Mary Boland. Guest speaker Tade Ankenmann



**All dates and events can be found on our website calendar as well.**

**➡ Link to the calendar: [GraceUC Calendar](#)**

**Services will be recorded and can be found on our You Tube Channel usually later Sunday.**

**▶ Link to [Grace United Tavistock You Tube](#)**

#### Contact us

Rev Marg Smith cell 289 926 0707 margsmith@rogers.com

Carol Young cell 519-301-1356 tavigraceyouth@gmail.com

Office 519 655 2151 graceunitedtavistock@gmail.com

E-transfer donation email gracetavistockdonation@rogers.com

Office Hours (please call ahead for an appointment)

Rev. Marg Smith, Thursdays 9:30 - 3:30 pm

Katherine Brenneman, Thursdays 9:30 - 2:00 pm

## Do you have a prayer request?

*"In all things let your requests be known to God in prayer."* (Philippians 4:6)

Grace has a group of wonderful and dedicated people that form a prayer chain. If you, or anyone you know is in need of prayer, please reach out to the chair of Grace PCO, Bev Neeb 519 655-2695, or Rev Marg Smith 289 926 0707 and we will begin praying for you.

- ✝ pray for Brenda Mohr as she copes with health issues.
- ✝ pray for Keith Weitzel as he deals with health issues.
- ✝ pray for Marg Pletsch as she deals with health issues.
- ✝ pray for Ron Rudy as he deals with health issues.
- ✝ pray for Ken Brenneman as he deals with health issues.
- ✝ pray for Shelley Walker as she deals with health issues.
- ✝ pray for Larry Odette, father of Ken Odette, who is dealing with health issues.



**Sunday, October 22, 2023 12 - 2 pm**  
GRACE UC, TAVISTOCK, 116 WOODSTOCK ST. S

**FOR KIDS GRADES 1-8**

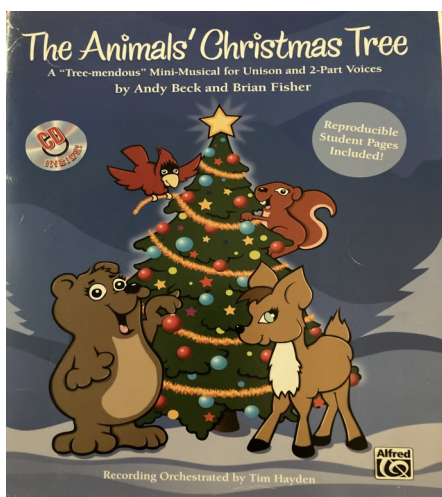
**Art Day**  
come and be creative!

**\$5 PER PERSON**  
(BUT DON'T LET COST BE A BARRIER--WE CAN HELP)

START WITH A PIZZA LUNCH AND THEN WE'LL MAKE A DRUM!

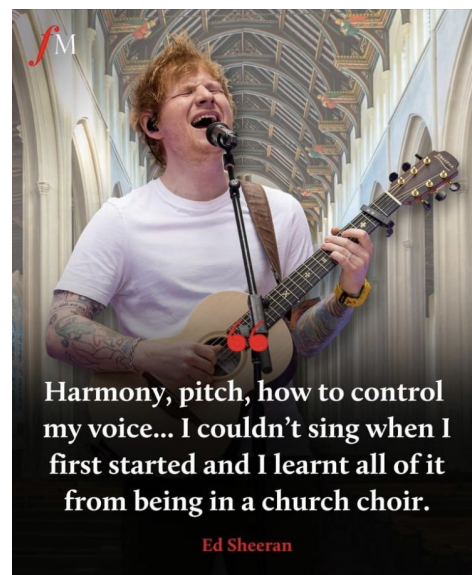
PLEASE LET US KNOW YOU ARE COMING BY  
FRIDAY, OCTOBER 20, 2023  
TAVIGRACEYOUTH@GMAIL.COM

## CHRISTMAS MUSICAL AT GRACE



We will have our second practice for the Christmas musical following the service on Sunday. Practices will continue each Sunday until the musical.

If you like to sing, please join us! Everyone welcome!!

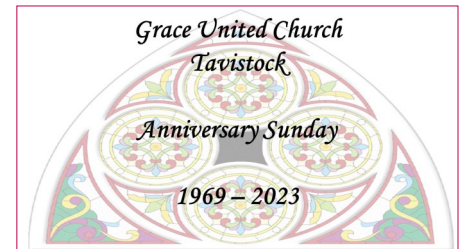




## Grace United Church Anniversary Sunday is being celebrated Sunday, October 22nd.

This year we recognize 54 years together as our Grace Community of Faith. It has been a tradition at Grace to invite you to support our Anniversary Offering. We do rely on these gifts in our budget, this year we have budgeted Anniversary receipts of \$8,500. We ask you to prayerfully consider how you can support Grace with this special donation over and above your regular giving. Donating Anniversary Offering is easy:

- Offering Envelopes in the pews. Please leave envelopes on the offering plates placed at the entrance to the sanctuary— we are not passing the plate during worship.
- Mail to Grace UC at PO Box 189, Tavistock ON N0B 2R0
- Etransfer to [gracetavistockdonation@rogers.com](mailto:gracetavistockdonation@rogers.com) Password is *Grace1980*



PLEASE mark **Anniversary Offering** on envelopes or etransfer

THANK YOU to all our generous donors for your support of the ministries of Grace United Church.

**"GIVE THANKS IN ALL CIRCUMSTANCES" BECAUSE GIVING THANKS IS THE FIRST STEP TO BEING GENEROUS,  
AND GENEROSITY IS A MARK OF FOLLOWING JESUS.**

### STOP THE SPREAD OF GERMS THAT MAKE OTHERS SICK

As we enter the fall season, we know there are an abundance of viruses, including COVID-19, requiring us to use caution. One positive outcome from the pandemic has been our understanding of how these viruses spread. Remember the universal precautions that can help us keep each other protected:

- Stay at home if you feel unwell
- Wash your hands frequently
- Wear a mask if it makes you feel more comfortable, or if you have been unwell in the past 5-10 days
- Each of us needs to take responsibility for how best to protect oneself, and consider that others may be vulnerable.
- The [Huron Perth Public Health Unit](#) is a great resource providing current information on risks and protective measures.

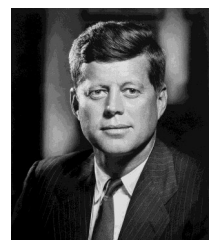
**Staying  
Healthy**



**One day, I would  
like to turn on  
the news and hear,  
there is  
Peace on Earth.**



**Congregational Meeting November 12th.** On Sunday, November 12th there will be a congregational meeting following worship for the purpose of electing new board, session, trustees, and WOW Rep (one vacancy). **Inspiration and paraphrasing from JFK: "Ask not what your church can do for you but what you can do for your church".**



## Northern Love: A new project supported by Sit-n-Knit, Stay-n-Crochet



Northern Love run by Callie Haverkamp ships donated second-hand items to people in need in northern communities, often Nunavut and 10 other locations as well. All items are free to those in need. The cost to the recipients is the cost of shipping (\$28 - \$38), although some packages are sent free of charge to those who cannot afford to pay.

We continue to collect items for this project and ask they be brought to the church by October 29th.

Items needed: clothing from infant sizes to adult (no rips or stains please), Bras are very popular, scrubs, Kitchen items, blankets, kid's toys (please nothing huge – they have to fit into a shipping box), kid's books, footwear (no sandals), yarn, fabric, sewing items, craft supplies, fur (coats, hats, mitts, etc. – even if these items have rips or are not in good condition, individuals in the north will repurpose them), baby items (bottles, diapers, etc.), hygiene products, make-up, tooth paste, tooth brushes, soap, etc.

When cleaning out your closets and cupboards this fall, please keep this project in mind. Together we can make a difference to folks in need within our own country. Thank you!

Submitted by Mary Boland – mcboland53@gmail.com

## Sunday School Co—Ordinator

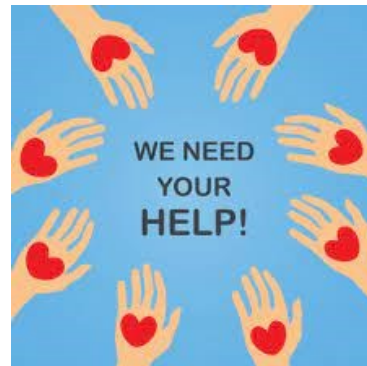
Jen Reibling has decided to retire as our Sunday

School Co-Ordinator.

Thank you Jen for your many years as Sunday School Co-ordinator. We are currently looking for someone to take on this role. Please speak to Jen for more information.



Lawn Signs for sale. \$30.00. Fundraiser for the Poppy Fund for RCL Tavistock Branch #518. Call Mary at 519-655-2992 or Brian Boland at 519-359-9236. Thanks.



**SUNDAY, OCTOBER 29 1:00-3:30 pm**

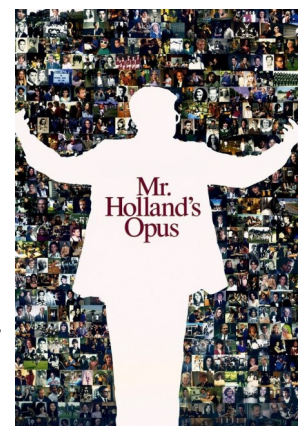
**Knox Parlour**

**Grace Movie Afternoon "MR HOLLAND'S OPUS" (RATED PG) 1996**

Glenn Holland (Richard Dreyfus) is a musician and composer who takes a teaching job to pay the rent while, in his 'spare time', he can strive to achieve his true goal - compose one memorable piece of music to leave his mark on the world. Mr. Holland discovers 'Life is what happens to you while you're busy making other plans'. **Open to everyone!**

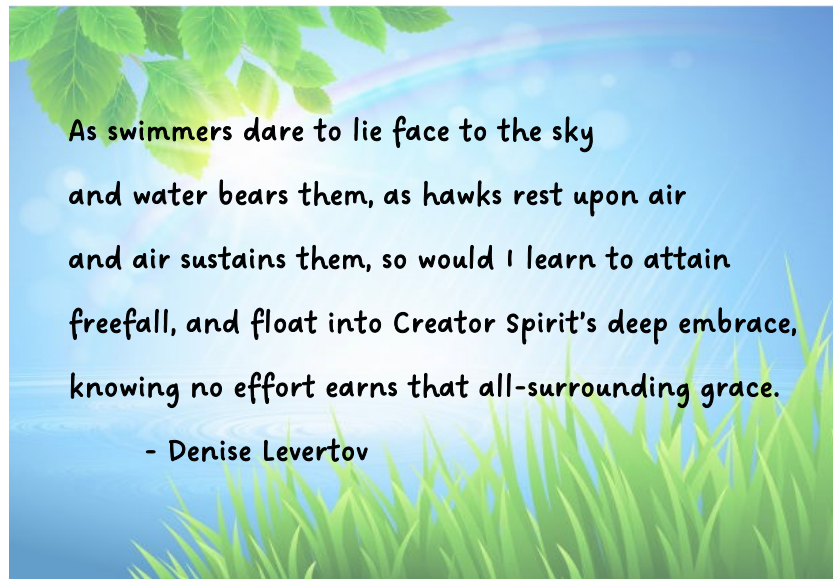
*\*A pizza lunch will be offered at 12:15 pm for those who wish to stay for the movie after worship. Please let Carol know if you are planning on staying for lunch!*

*Snacks to be served during the movie!*





## Blessing of the Animals October 15th



### Fall Fair Booth Items for Sale

There are three cases of pop, two containers of ice cream bars and some plastic cutlery and small paper plates that will be for sale after church on Sunday.

### Back for a Second Year Camp Bimini Christmas Mini Sessions

Intuition Photography By Leanne



**Nov 4th & 5th**

20 min sessions  
Up to 10 Digital Images  
\$120.00 (cash or  
e-transfer made at  
appointment).  
Hot Chocolate &  
Freshly made Cookies  
to enjoy!!!

50% of the proceeds are being donated back  
into the Camp Bimini Community.  
[intuitionphotographybyleannechristmasminis.as.me](http://intuitionphotographybyleannechristmasminis.as.me)

### **Camp Bimini Online Auction Oct 25 - Nov 1**

**Register to Bid and  
see items as they  
are added**

<https://shackletons.hibid.com/catalog/489033/camp-bimini-online-auction>



\*Grand Bend  
Weekend Cottage  
Rental



\*Luggage  
\*Waterfall Live  
Edge Table

\*Rheo Thompson  
Chocolates



\*Tattoo Gift  
Certificate

\*45 minute Flight

\*Prints, Birdhouses  
and more



### More Interesting Facts about the East Zorra Evangelical Congregation at Cassel

The Evangelical church was a Protestant denomination that was founded in 1800 by the German-speaking Jacob Albright of Lancaster, Pennsylvania. He was very much influenced by John Wesley and the English Methodist Church. Albright was a passionate and powerful speaker and in his sermons stressed holiness, social activism, and evangelism. His ideas were outlined in his Book of Discipline which was based on a German translation of the English Methodist Book of Discipline. His word spread rapidly through the German communities, often through revival meetings and preachers on horseback, and by 1892 there were over 2000 Evangelical congregations in North America, including those in East Zorra, Lingelbach, South Easthope and Tavistock. In 1946, the Evangelical Association joined with the United Brethren in Christ to form the Evangelical United Brethren (EUB) and in 1968 the EUB joined with the United Church of Canada (which also had Methodist roots).



Old Evangelical Cemetery Looking South

The Evangelical congregation in East Zorra began meeting around 1858. In June 1861, Valentine Grenzebach donated 1 acre of his land at Lot 30 on the 17<sup>th</sup> line to the trustees of the Evangelical Church (listed as Jacob Wagner and Jacob Staebler). On the deed it was stated that the land was for a church site, a meeting house, and a burial site. A frame church was built on the lot.

Three children of Johannes and Anna Grenzebach in Germany emigrated to Canada in 1848: Johannes (John), Anna Marie (Mary) and Valentin (Valentine) Grenzebach. John had originally purchased the 200 acre property at lot 30 Concession 17 in 1848 but he decided to give it up to become an Evangelical preacher and he sold the farm to his brother Valentine in 1855. Valentine stayed on the farm and would have two wives and raise ten children. Donna Rudy is the great-granddaughter of Valentine's son William and she has done a very thorough history of the Grenzebach family tree. Keith Wiffen her cousin is another Grenzebach descendent.

Valentine's sister Mary married William Morlock and they lived next door. William was listed as "class leader" when thirty Evangelicals gathered in Tavistock in 1865 to form a congregation there. That would become Zion Evangelical Church. Mary and William's granddaughter married Rev. William Zimmerman, the grandfather of Tom Zimmerman.

The Grenzebach farm would eventually become the family home of the Weicker family, William and Olive (nee Pletsch) and their children Jim, Judy (Zehr) and Joanne (Bean). When Jim moved off the farm because of illness, the Beans acquired ownership of the property. Joanne's son Trent currently lives on the farm.

This spot where the first church building stood was wet and proved rather unsuitable for a cemetery and so both church and cemetery moved one sideroad south to lot 26. The "Old EUB" cemetery is still present, however, and adjoins the property now owned by John and Celia (Shantz) Reiger. Celia has done extensive research on the cemetery. There are 20 grave markers in the cemetery, five on the west side that are of children and 15 on the east side that are adults. The earliest grave is dated 1862, the latest is dated 1875. In 1940, the grave markers/slabs were laid flat and the cemetery was enclosed by a fence. Apparently the cemetery became quite overgrown with grass and weeds and, after much prodding from Jack Wettlaufer, the Township of East Zorra-Tavistock agreed to take care of the cemetery. Trent Bean is the current caretaker.

In 1900, a beautiful new brick church was built by the Evangelical congregation at the corner of the 17<sup>th</sup> Concession and the Maplewood sideroad to replace the old frame structure. Some of the members of the Evangelical Building Committee at that time were Jacob S. Otto, George Staebler, Henry Schlemmer, Henry Nicklas, and Noah Pletsch. The foundation stone of the new church was laid on 2 August 1900 with the result that the name given to the church was Centennial Evangelical Church.



In the new church, there were four beautiful stained-glass windows installed in memory of the departed heads of the Haist, Pletsch, Schlemmer, and Grenzebach families. After the Mennonites purchased the church in 1935, the stained-glass windows were replaced by frosted glass. "I'm not sure why we got rid of them" wrote one early Mennonite member, "I guess we thought they were too worldly. The square bell turret or tower did not fit our concept of a simple peace meeting church either." The trustees of the Evangelical church whose names were on the bill of sale when it was sold to Cassel Mennonite Church were Aaron Pletsch, Adam Lingelbach, and Allen Otto. One of the requests by the trustees was that they be allowed to use the church once a year for a graves decoration ceremony. The response by the Mennonites on 31 October 1935 was the following: "In regard to Provision I of your offer (building being available for the memorial and grave decoration services of the Evangelical Church), we beg to say that so far as the building is concerned for memorial and graves decoration services, it is at your service on the condition that no musical instruments be used in the church building at such services because our convictions forbid us any but vocal music in divine worship in church."

A program for the grave decoration service in 2002 lists the cemetery board as Lester Weil, Joan (Otto) MacDermid, Mary Lou (Weil) Ross, Henry Ruby, Robert Ferguson, and Sandra Lock. Mary Lou Ross continues as the treasurer of the "New EUB Cemetery". She says the cemetery is a community cemetery, open to everyone. There are people all faiths buried there, including both Evangelicals and Mennonites.



Grave marker Geo Ankenmann  
b. 19 Oct 1839 d. 16 July 1862

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