

“No matter who you are or where you’re from, you are welcome here”

MESSENGER

Office Hours: Monday - Thursday 9:00a-3:00p
Closed Fridays, Holidays and Fort Zumwalt No School Days

Sunday Worship: Traditional Service-8:45 am
Contemporary Service-11:15 am

Community Outreach Programs:

Girl Scout Daisy Troop 2811

N.A.M.I. (National Alliance for the Mentally Ill) Meetings are held on the 3rd Tuesday of the month

Grace Preschool: 2 years-Pre-K (Please call 636-240-5856 for details!)

GRACE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

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O’FALLON, Missouri 63376

Phone: 636-240-7621

Website: www.wearegraceucc.com

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OUR MISSION IS TO KNOW CHRIST AND MAKE HIS LOVE KNOWN TO ALL



Facebook.com/graceuccofallon



O’Fallon@WeAreGraceUCC

A WORD FROM YOUR PASTOR

~ A NEW THING ~

“Do not remember the former things or consider the things of old.
I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth.
Do you not perceive it?”
(Isaiah 43:18, 19a)

Dear Grace Family and Friends,

Greetings and peace in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, The One True Light of us all! I am writing this ‘old-fashioned’ Messenger article for 2020 almost two weeks before it arrives. My inner clock feels a bit confused. 😊 What that means is I am trying to convey certain feelings on paper before you or I have even prepared for them in real life – but it always happens. For example, Thanksgiving is written before Halloween. So even today, as I write — having pushed the newsletter deadline to its allowable limit, and still days before Christmas — I’ve got to think and talk about a world I haven’t seen yet: the New Year, 2020. As we look back over the past 365 days we’ve been given, I think we would all have to agree – life seems to be moving fast – but something new is upon us this year. “Do you not perceive it?”

But there is a problem with welcoming a new year sometimes if can feel like nothing is new. By now the Christmas decorations look raggedy and taking them down is a tiring. And here in Missouri is like much of the Midwest, winter is hardly out of the gate, winter’s iciest, coldest two or three months are still ahead of us. (I confess that’s one of the reasons I love Easter so much.) Yet, 2020 is approaching fast and something new is upon us. “Do you not perceive it?”

Some things will stay the same as we feel time passing but what new thing might God be doing in our personal lives? What new thing might God be doing in our Grace Family life? Sometimes the new thing might feel like a train rumbling by us but what if we stop to listen to the rhythm? What gifts does God want to bestow upon us as we move into 2020? ‘Will we perceive it?’

In every season of life, there is always a new thing that God is doing – if we will open our hearts and spirits to perceive it unfolding. Whatever time it is in your life, whatever your age or occupation, the voice still calls out to you and I to “Follow me.” Or, as the God of Isaiah declares, “I am about to do a new thing... Do you not perceive it?”

Maybe this will help. On Epiphany Sunday, 5 January we are asking everyone to bring a sandwich you like and an unopened can of veggies to add to our soup base. We will eat together right after 11:15a Worship. Then we will take down our Christmas decorations. On Sunday, 12 January at 12:30p we will have our yearly congregational calendaring meeting. This is when we like to brainstorm and plan what we want to do as a congregation. So if God has placed something on your heart that you’d like to share with us – this is a wonderful time to do! Then on Sunday, 19 January at 10a we have our yearly congregational meeting. This is when we vote on our budget and other things that we decided to do. That’s one of the best things about being a congregationally based denomination – EVERY member has a voice! Again, what new thing will God be calling us to? In all these things we gather as a congregation to discuss the “new things” that we sense the Holy Spirit is doing in our midst and the directions we might be led. Until then, I’d encourage you to ask yourself these two questions: What new thing am I being called to? What new thing is our church being called to? And please know, it is my joy and privilege to be making new discoveries with you!

As Always, in Christ’s ministry with you and sent with Love,
Pastor Polly

A WORD FROM YOUR STUDENT PASTOR

Since I've been here at Grace, it's hard to count up all the many things I have learned about ministry, congregational life, and about you all! I have genuinely appreciated the opportunity to get to know you better, whether it's in a conversation after service, a post-surgery visit, or playing "Family Feud" at the Christmas party!

I'd like to take an opportunity to share with you some of my reflections on what I am learning. One of the biggest things I'm soaking up is how awesome it is to be in intergenerational community. I'm not sure why, but when I first came to Grace, I wondered whether my age would be a barrier. I figured that the youth would feel comfortable with me, but that it might be harder for folks who are older than me. I think a lot of millennials wonder whether our age will get in the way, since generational divides seem to mark such dramatic differences in our outlook on life. But this has not been my experience! In fact, I have found it joyful and fulfilling to connect across all ages. I am learning that we have a shared hunger and need for this kind of intergenerational community, and that church is one of the only places we can do that.

The other big thing I am learning is about my own perfectionism. Yes, I admit it! I am a closet perfectionist. I worry about whether what I said or wrote or did was good enough, whether it sounded crazy or made me look dumb. And what I'm learning is that my perfectionism gets in the way of just being present and doing my best work. Having the opportunity to preach regularly and to receive your feedback has helped me to see that I can relax and trust the process. Instead of worrying about whether what I have to say will be any good, if I can let go of perfectionism, I will actually be able to tune more into what the Spirit is saying. Then, I can spend my energy focusing on making the message more clear and coherent. Your feedback has been SO HELPFUL for me to see how I can improve, and I sincerely thank you for taking the time to share comments and fill out those feedback forms for me! In November, I completed my first full year as a preacher and I am excited to be in a place that is challenging me to grow in this area.

If you would like to talk further about any of the things I've mentioned here, please feel free to reach out to me at agirresch@eden.edu. As always, I welcome the conversation! And please know how very grateful I am for each and every one of you and all that you are teaching me.

In Christ's Love,
Pastor Annie Girresch

ATTENDANCE AND FUNDRAISING

JANUARY: 236

JULY: 305

FEBRUARY: 246

AUGUST: 306

MARCH: 349

SEPTEMBER: 461

(not including Wednesday Lenten Services)

APRIL: 406

OCTOBER: 344

MAY: 300

NOVEMBER: 322

JUNE: 450

DECEMBER: 283 as of 12/15

Scrip Announcements!

In November \$12 was donated to Evangelism and \$12 was donated to the Capital Campaign. A profit of \$91.40 was made in November. Recently in the middle of worship another microphone died. There was a quick discussion of how we need 2 microphones and I said loudly “Gift Cards!” The reason was that through the gift card fundraiser, we have enough money to cover the cost of buying 2 microphones. That’s the beauty of the gift card fundraiser...it’s a different way of spending the money you normally spend while at the same time the church gets a little money to store away for unexpected expenses like needing new microphones. Thanks to all who purchase! Shop with scrip - www.shopwithscrip.com

Amazon Smiles 😊

You can designate Grace as your charity to receive a percentage of the amount you purchase at Amazon. Copy this link into the browser <https://smile.amazon.com/ch/43-098919>

Maddie and Kenzie Moore Volunteered at Culver’s recently to help raise funds for our youth summer mission trips!

Culver’s Fundraising Nights

Thanks for all who attended the December Fundraiser at Culver’s. Thanks to you the Youth made \$352! Next Culver’s fundraiser will be on Tuesday, February 4th.

Ink Jet Cartridge Recycling helps Camp MoVal Scholarship fund!

Any inkjet cartridge with a print head can be recycled, regardless of brand or type. Bring in your empty OEM inkjet cartridges (placed in the original box that you would have thrown away to keep it safe from spills and damages, or a Ziploc bag) to church (Note: Epson cartridges cannot be recycled – they don’t have a print head.). We get paid up to \$4 per cartridge. For any questions, please contact Cindy Rose.

Grace’s Backpack Program

Please consider donating individual serving sized boxes of cereal, individual cups of fruit, individual cups of vegetables, goober peanut butter & jelly in plastic jars, and basically anything that would fit in a backpack without breaking or getting smashed. If you prefer we did the shopping for you, we will happily take your money donation to do just that. Thank you so much for supporting these children. In this country no child should ever go to bed hungry!

FOOD PANTRY ITEMS

Needed for January: Chicken Helper, Dry Potatoes, Toilet Paper, Syrup. THANK YOU!

NOTE: Rev. Susan Shumway is a notary and is offering free notary services to church

Grace Opportunities

Every Child's Hope

The ECH Christmas Store is expanding! Introducing, hope Chest. Gifts will now be available all year long for our young peoples' giving needs-Mother's Day, Father's Day, Birthdays, Graduations...and Christmas too! Please see the flyer on the community board just outside the sanctuary for more information or contact Sarah Dewesse, Volunteer & Community Relations manager, 314-427-3755 x299 or sdewesse@echmail.org. Mark items "Store/Sarah" or "Hope Chest/Sarah." (Pick up is also available).

Re-Group

Re-Group is a fellowship time for adults ages 18 (post high school) and older. All adults are welcomed to join us at any or all of the events. We meet informally at least once a month. Often we go out to eat a meal and fellowship together. Other times we meet at various activities. What this means is you can have a fun time getting together with our Grace Family. If you have any questions or would like to host an event please contact Ana Kniesel. The next Re-Group meeting is on January 25 at 3rd Wheel Brewing, 4008 N Service Rd., St. Peters, 63376 at 7:30p. The nights entertainment will be our very own Shaughn and Gina Uebinger! Please RSVP by using the signup sheet or by contacting Ana Kniesel by 23 January. Hope to see you all there!

National Alliance on Mental Illness

For more information, 314-962-4670 or www.namistl.org/programs-2/nami-family-to-family/

Every Child's Hope Ladies Aid

Gift cards for youth across all programs (Target, Wal-Mart, grocery stores, Amazon. For Winter: baby items for pregnant/parenting youth Steppingstone – Diapers, wipes, formula, bottles, blankets, onesies. For more information please call 314-427-3755.

TIME AND TALENTS

Volunteering, offering a donation of time or a talent that may assist in an event OR using your place of business as a resource are just some ways to give without having to use your personal funds. Many companies have a charitable program in the form of either matching funds for donations or volunteer hours. Please check with your personnel department or check out http://nnedv.org/downloads/Other/Matching_gifts_companies.pdf for a complete list.

Adult Sunday School

You may sign up on the Ministries Opportunities board or just show up. We meet in the church office at 10a.

Cleaning Up O'Fallon

Save these dates in 2020 for your next chance to help clean up O'Fallon: March 14, May 9, June 13, July 11, September 12, November 14. Thank you!

If you are feeling called to a new ministry, please look at the "Ministry Opportunities" board right outside the office. There are Lay Reading, Usher, Greeters, Acolyte, Fellowship Hosting, and many other opportunities for you. Each of these ministries are important in Christ's Church and we have many others if you're feeling called to Bible Study, Youth Ministry, Care Giving Ministry, and so many others.

MISSION OF THE MONTH

The Pastoral Discretionary Fund

In my 25 years of ordained ministry I can tell you that in every place of ministry there are needs which arise for members. Grace has always taken very seriously the apostle Paul's direction in Galatians 6:2 in which we are to "bear one another's burdens." The PDF is one way that we help to bear another's burden. Trust me when I tell you that our folks do not want to ask for help. They only ask when they have no alternative – this is when the PDF comes into the picture. The PDF was founded long before I arrived at Grace. This is an important ministry because we have been able to help many families in 2019 and I am sure we will have requests in 2020. Do you want to know something? One family we helped was able to pay back the PDF and even gave a donation as their way of paying it forward!

Please prayerfully consider how you may be able to donate to the PDF because it is a wonderful way of helping to bear one another's burden in Christ's name. All through the month of January we will collect for this worthy cause. You will find a special envelope in your bulletin to benefit the PDF. Thank you for prayerfully considering how much you can share – your donations are helping folks right here at Grace. Oh yes, please pray for your Grace Family too, that's another important way of helping! In Hope and Love, Pastor Polly

MUSIC MINISTRY

Thursday evening rehearsals: Choir meeting from 6p-7p and Risen from 7p-8p. Please watch your emails and the Weekly Update for changes. Choir will not meet every Thursday.

*Grace Choir wants YOU! If you are interested in joining the Choir, please contact our business office at graceuccoffice@gmail.com or talk to Jon Garrett after Sunday Worship Services. *

*Bass guitar player wanted. Auditioning sessions may be scheduled by contacting Jon Garrett at graceuccoffice@gmail.com or in person after Sunday Worship Services. *

From Kelly Deptula and a Stewardship Opportunity

My name is Kelly Deptula and my family has been a member of Grace for almost 6 years. After listening to the powerful stewardship messages, I would like to increase my tithes to Grace and would like to do this through my company Ibuumerang. We have a free travel portal called a buumerang that gives a better savings than say Expedia or Travelocity for example. When you go to Igobuum.com and enter code 497052, you will activate a wholesale portal that is yours for life and totally free! When you activate the code, the BUUM Foundation will provide a meal to a child. When you make a book a rental, flight, cruise etc, I will be able to tithe back the fee back to Grace. Thank you! Kelly Deptula

From Sandy Silger and her \$5

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Finance team for their incredibly creative use of the 'Parable of the Talents' to strengthen the church funds. Knowing, as a former council member, we rarely had an abundance of assets, I was surprised the day Bob Penn handed out envelopes of \$5 to anyone willing to take, use and return the profits. I immediately jumped at the challenge with no idea of what to do. I have been collecting Cardinal T-shirts leftover from our rummage sales and thought "this is it" I can use them to make a quilt. I'm not a seamstress by any stretch of the imagination, so this would be a challenge to myself as well. And it was a bit of a test but I prayed my way through it and the personal growth was well worth it. It turned out fine and our own Pastor Polly won it! ~Sandy Silger

Kid Stuff

Conference Middle School Event at Camp MoVal. We played habitat in the woods. There were 53 people in attendance for this weekend retreat themed “Let Your Light Shine.”

Christmas Program

The Children’s Christmas program, *The Friendly Beasts*, is happening Dec. 22 at second service. Jesus is the reason for that season and we would love to see your child in Sunday School at ten o’clock that month for rehearsals.

Safe Church Child Protection Policy

Grace has a document, updated and approved by the Church Council, which details the procedures in place to keep everyone safe. Just a reminder that during the ten o’clock hour on Sundays, only trained volunteers, students, and their parents should be in the youth area on the east side of the lower level.

SCUMY

On January 18th Grace will join with our Youth Ministry partners in having a retreat for our High Schooler’s based on Our Whole Lives. The retreat will be for youth in grades 9-12 and the focus will be on covenant, language, body image and feelings. Youth are encouraged to bring a lunch. In order to participate, parents will need to take part in a meeting on Sunday, January 5th at 10am or on Sunday, January 12th at 1pm.

All youth in grades 6-12 are invited to a Lock-In the night of January 18th starting at 7pm. Please bring a snack and drink to share. It will be over at 8am Sunday morning...aka...just in time for worship!!!

Fun in the nursery with Mollie

NURSERY

There is a trained teen at second service each Sunday to care for the children in the nursery. All the Nursery Attendant workers were confirmed at Grace and each has been qualified in the Safe Church Boundary Training. The Nursery Staff includes Lexi Hagl, Mollie Garrett, Alexandria Fuehrer, and Melissa Megathlin. Look for their picture and biographies hanging on the Nursery door each Sunday. In accordance with Grace UCC’s Safe Child Church Policy, we are requiring that **ONLY ADULTS** pick up children from the Nursery. Children/Parents are assigned a number that is used in the pick-up procedure.

Annual Year End Reports

This is a reminder for ministry team and committee leaders to start preparing your annual year end reports. These reports are due NO LATER than January 6. Thank you!

Save the Date

18 January – 10a & stay all night Our Whole Lives Retreat & Lock-in
15-17 February – CYE (Grades 9-12)
22-23 February – 30 Hour Famine by Friedens-Peace Julie Meyer
26 February – Ash Wednesday

BIRTHDAY'S AND COUNCIL CORNER

JANUARY BIRTHDAY'S

04 Krysten Gray
06 Beth Johnsen
07 Dan Fahnestock
12 Ariel Shelton
12 Chris Tiemann
14 Maylo Nation

17 Stephanie DuBray
17 Ana Kniesel
19 Julia Rose
23 Deryck Whiteley
24 Rachel Sutton
28 Dan Howard

Council Corner

November 19th was our council meeting and 7 members were present. Pastor Polly devotional was from Psalms 19 and she asked that we reflect the image of Jesus in all we do as a council.

Treasurer's report was good news. Seems we are finally receiving more money in than paying money out. The \$5 stewardship campaign has been very successful, and they are getting much more back than the \$5 outlay. Rummage sale raised over \$2100. Maintenance continues to be of concern. Windows in the parsonage upper level are in bad shape, our rock road to the back of the church is in need of more rock, we still need to put doors on the kitchen area in the lower level, just to name a few of the additional needs of the church. We went over the budget and it will be finalized in the December meeting, but for the most part, council is in agreement with the finance team.

Roger Miyasaka is organizing all our old records and has spent mountains of time working on this.

We discussed a new program of the UCC called WISE, but at this point in time, we are not going to pursue this project. WISE stands for Welcoming, Inclusive, Supportive and Engaging, but since we just finished the ONA program, we feel we need to wait a while.

Pastor Polly thinks our church needs to look at our constitution and bylaws and thinks that there needs to be a lot of changes and updates. We agreed with her and will form a team to look into this in 2020. She also thinks we need to develop a "vision" statement. This, too, will be developed in 2020.

Ministry teams gave their reports. Christmas is foremost on everyone's thoughts and plans now, and the Celebration of Lights is up for display at For Zumwalt Park. We encourage all members of the congregation to drive through the park and see our display.

Our next meeting will be December 18th at 7pm.

Cheryl Howard

PROJECTED CALENDAR FOR JANUARY

January – Mission of Month Pastor’s Discretionary Fund

- 1: OFFICE CLOSED, No Preschool-3Jan
- 2: Crafty Corner 9a, Youth Ministry Team Meeting 10:30a, POP 4:15p, Choir Practice 6p, Risen Practice 7p
- 3:
- 4: Men’s Group 8a

Sunday 5: Unhanging of the Green’s, Birthday Sunday

- 6: Grace Life 7p, Annual Reports due to office
- 7: Community of Practice 11a-2p
- 8: Staffing 10:30a, POP 4:15p
- 9: Crafty Corner 9a, Choir Practice 6p, Risen Practice 7p
- 10:
- 11:

Sunday 12: Annual Reports due, Calendar Meeting 12:30 (Bring Lunch), Property Meeting 10a

- 13: Worship Design 7p
- 14: SCUM 12:30p
- 15: Staffing 10:30a, POP 4:15p
- 16: Crafty Corner 9a, Choir Practice 6p, Risen Practice 7p
- 17: Preschool Half Day of Classes for Teacher In-Service
- 18: Youth Retreat & Lock-in -1/19 at 8a

Sunday 19: Youth Retreat & Lock-in ends at 8a, Messenger Deadline, Congregational Meeting 10:15a

- 20: OFFICE CLOSED (FZ No School Day), MLK Jr. Day, MID Meeting Sara Andler 6p
- 21: Preschool Testing, NAMI 7p, Council 7p
- 22: Preschool Testing, Staffing 10:30a, POP 4:15p
- 23: Preschool Testing, Crafty Corner 9a, Choir Practice 6p, Risen Practice 7p
- 24: Preschool Testing, Community of Practice 9a-12p
- 25: Re-Group @ 3rd Wheel Brewing 7:30p

Sunday 26: Daisy Girl Scout Meeting 4-5:30p

- 27:
- 28:
- 29: Staffing 10:30a, POP 4:15p
- 30: Crafty Corner 9a, Choir Practice 6p, Risen Practice 7p
- 31:

THANK YOU



Thank you Lawrence & Moore Family for sharing your gifts and talents with the congregation at a recent worship service

Thank you St. Charles Combined Choir for gracing us with your beautiful voices at the "Grateful" Concert in December



Thank you to everyone that volunteered to work gate nights for Grace at the Festival of Lights



Thank you for the beautiful poinsettias at the front of the church that were graciously purchased by members of this church in honor or memory of their loved ones:

Pastor Polly & Randy McWilliams in Honor of Jon, Missy, Angie, Carol, & our Grace Faithful Family.

Bonnie Leist in Honor of Robert & Katherin Melay and in Memory of Tommie Leist.

Roger Miyasaka in Honor of Mary Ann Sutton and in Memory of Lois Miyasaka.

Laura Roberts in Memory of My Mother.

Betty Warren in Memory of Dave Warren.

Edwin & Connie Smith in Honor of Betty Warren and in Memory of Our Parents.

Bob Penn in Honor of Karen Penn.

Judy Harris in Honor of Troy & Elda Hart.

Sheila Dunn in Memory of Tom Dunn & Ken Stuckwisch.

Nick & Melissa Lawrence & Girls in Honor of Our Grandparents.

Sarah & Alicia Miles in Memory of Jillian Goehl.

Cheryl Howard in Memory of Mom & Dad.

Prayer List

Valerie Baker, Pastor Beebe, Cathy Blake, Family of Robin Boiles, Jean Bowman's journey to heaven, Lizz Brooks mom, Liz Clemensen, Norm Clements, Lexie Delfino, Dena's new baby boy, John Dylan, Sheila Engelmeyer, Geiger Family, Krysten Gray, Family & Friends of Dennis H., Ian Ives, Jackson's Family, Oliver Jackson, Dave Lammert, Steve McKensie, Randy McWilliams & Polly, Angela Mense, Ali Meyer & Shane Hanes, Helen Meyer, Mike, Don Mueth, The family of Nikki, Sheila Nirk, Rich, Sharon Riess, Gregg & Janice Saling, The Scherbring Family, Rev. Gary Schulte, Scott, Norm Summers, Teson Family, Willie Vogle, Sherry Webster, Nicole Whiteley, Kelsy Wong, Those homeless, Our Military Men, Women & Families, Kids who are bullied, Government Leaders & all Americans, Those who have no prayers offered for them.

In Care

Betty Bauer, Liz Birchen, Jan Sutton, Bernice Watson