

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

# MESSENGER

**WORSHIP SERVICES AND OFFICE HOURS ARE  
SUSPENDED THROUGH APRIL 5, 2020. YOU MAY STILL  
CALL OR EMAIL THE OFFICE DURING THIS TIME. WE  
WILL EMAIL NEWS AND UPDATES AS NECESSARY.**

**Thank you and God Bless!**

**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**

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



**[Facebook.com/graceuccofallon](https://www.facebook.com/graceuccofallon)**



**[O’Fallon@WeAreGraceUCC](https://twitter.com/OFallonWeAreGraceUCC)**

## A WORD FROM YOUR PASTOR

I want to tell each of you, Grace Faithful, how often I thank God for you. I tell all our ministry teams this too because I truly praise God for the ability to do ministry with you. Now just a little refresher. The Apostle Paul regularly thanked God for the churches to which he wrote letters. It didn't matter if he founded the churches or if someone else did, you can see it demonstrated in 1 Thessalonians 1:2-3 and Romans 1:8 respectively. His letter to the Colossians falls into the second category, even though the founder, Epaphras, was a member of Paul's church-planting team (Colossians 1:7). Paul had influenced the Colossians significantly, though indirectly, through Epaphras.

Colossians 1:3-4 Paul writes, "In our prayers for you we always thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, for we have heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and the love that you have for all the saints." Hopefully, Paul's example can inspire us to grow in gratitude to God and to share this gratitude with others. It is easy to tell someone "Thank You" but when I hear that someone thanks God for me, I feel valued and encouraged. Plus, my relationship with that person is deepened and strengthened.

How do you feel when you read the last statement? Saying "Thank You" to someone is really a good thing. BUT telling someone "I thank God for you" reframes it in a deeper way. I truly thank God for each of you that has been able to help our Student Pastor Annie Girresch with her senior project by regularly attending the Wednesday evening Lenten Worship meetings. On Palm Sunday at 8:45a we HOPE to have our Easter Cantata at 11:15a and to begin our Holy Week together. Then we hope to participate in the Maundy Thursday Worship at 7p because Pastor Annie will also be leading this. On Good Friday we hope to worship again at 7p, leaving in silence to contemplate Holy Saturday. IF we are able to worship on Easter Sunday, 12 April, we will have only one worship at 10a. In this way, our sanctuary can be sanitized. We just don't know what the near future holds when we are asked not to gather in order to get this COVID-19 in control. IF we can worship, we have 'sanitized' Holy Communion so as not to pass along any germs to one another. Unfortunately, we will not have brunch or the Egg Hunt.

Finally, I do truly thank God for each one of you that worship and fellowship with our Beloved Grace Family. Grace is such a special place to belong and I am so thankful we get to be in Christ's ministry together!

As Always, Sent with Christ Jesus' Love,

Pastor Polly

## A WORD FROM YOUR STUDENT PASTOR

### **Practicing Presence in Times of Panic**

“Don’t be anxious about anything; rather, bring up all of your requests to God in your prayers and petitions, along with giving thanks. Then the peace of God that exceeds all understanding will keep your hearts and minds safe in Christ Jesus.” ~ Philippians 4:6-7

Over the last month, we have seen a new “normal” as things have shifted rapidly with the spread of COVID-19.

In times like these, it can be easy to get swept away in news cycles and anxiety. As good as social distancing is for our public health situation, being stuck at home can cause isolation and depression. Of course, our concerns and fears are very real as we worry about ourselves, our loved ones and our communities. But we have a choice about how we show up in this time! We can react to fear and panic by taking that fear and panic in ourselves; or we can respond to the situation at hand with grounding, prayer, and wisdom.

What are the invisible blessings hidden in this situation? How might God be able to use this situation for our collective good? What possibilities exist in this time that don’t exist when things are carrying on as usual?

I don’t believe that God wants us to suffer or that God makes us suffer to teach us a lesson. But I do believe that God can take our suffering and turn it into medicine if we are willing to surrender and be in alignment with the Spirit.

I was inspired by a video that I saw of people in Italy. They were quarantined, but they stood outside on their balconies singing and playing tambourines and accordions. They took their quarantine and turned it into an opportunity to make music with their neighbors!

Our individual responses to crisis have a ripple effect. As writer adrienne maree brown says, “what we pay attention to grows.” We can align our thoughts and prayers with possibility and hope in this time. We can choose to see a quarantine as an opportunity to practice Sabbath - resting, praying, discerning God’s voice and connecting with others who live with us or via phone. We can choose to see shortages as opportunities to get to know our neighbors and share what we have, ask for what we need. We can choose to see the possibility of how much generosity and sharing really is possible when we all come together. What if this kind of generosity and shared compassion was possible all year, every year?!

What are you and your beloveds doing to grow presence and prayerfulness and possibility at this time? Please, share with me your thoughts at [agirresch@eden.edu](mailto:agirresch@eden.edu). I want to hear from you!

In Divine Love,  
Annie

## **ATTENDANCE AND FUNDRAISING**

<b>JANUARY 2020:</b> 352	<b>JULY:</b> 305
<b>FEBRUARY:</b> 329 as of 2/16	<b>AUGUST:</b> 306
<b>MARCH:</b> 247 (including Wednesday Lenten Services)	<b>SEPTEMBER:</b> 461
<b>APRIL:</b> 406	<b>OCTOBER:</b> 344
<b>MAY:</b> 300	<b>NOVEMBER:</b> 322
<b>JUNE:</b> 450	<b>DECEMBER:</b> 527

### **Scrip Announcements!**

In February \$10 was donated to Evangelism and \$10 was donated to the Capital Campaign. A profit of \$61.71 was made in February. Please know that if you are looking for cards, Susan can make arrangements to get them to you while the office is closed and worship is online and at home. Shop with scrip - [www.shopwithscrip.com](http://www.shopwithscrip.com)

### **Grace Marketplace**

Grace Marketplace will **NOT** occur on Saturday, April 4th. We are currently looking at May as a possible time for rescheduling. Please watch for updates. Thank you.

### **Evangelism**

Right now we are collecting 1-inch wide ribbons around and 18 inches long for our Pride St. Charles display. Please contact Rev. Susan Shumway for any questions or suggestions.

### **Amazon Smiles 😊**

You can designate Grace as your charity to receive a percentage of the amount you purchase at Amazon. Between 1 Oct and 31 Dec of 2019, Grace was issued a donation of \$53.48. [org.amazon.com](http://org.amazon.com)

### **Culver's Fundraising Nights**

Our next Culver's fundraiser will be on Tuesday, April 14. If you are unable to attend, please take a flyer and share with others to invite them as the youth will receive 10% of ALL sales from 5pm-9pm

### **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**

This month, please consider donating Ravioli, Spaghetti O's, Soup, Canned Veggies, 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 April: Cereal, Sweet Muffin Mix, Jelly, Tuna Helper. **THANK YOU!**

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

## **Grace Opportunities**

### **Every Child's Hope**

ECH Trivia Night Fundraiser on Saturday 18 April at the Moolah Shrine Center at 7p. Gifts will now be available all year long through Hope Chest for our young peoples' giving needs-Mother's Day, Father's Day, Birthdays, Graduations...and Christmas too! Please contact Sarah Deweese, Volunteer & Community Relations manager, 314-427-3755 x299 or [sdeweese@echmail.org](mailto:sdeweese@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 drop into any event, anytime you can join us. We 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 is on April 24 at 6pm. We will be meeting at O'Charley's 2204 Highway K, O'Fallon, MO 63368. Please RSVP by using the signup sheet or by contacting Ana Kniesel at [safemamahealthyfamily@gmail.com](mailto:safemamahealthyfamily@gmail.com) by April 19. 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/](http://www.namistl.org/programs-2/nami-family-to-family/)

### **Every Child's Hope Ladies Aid**

April: Easter candy and plastic eggs and art supplies for all programs. 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](http://nnedv.org/downloads/Other/Matching_gifts_companies.pdf) for a complete list.

### **Cleaning Up O'Fallon**

Our next street clean up is on Saturday May 9th. We meet at 10 am at church. We clean up a one mile stretch of Mexico. With about an hour of your time you can help tidy up O'Fallon, get some exercise and get to hang out with your fellow "Green Champions" here at Grace. Sign up if you plan to help on the board on the activity wall. That way you can be reached if necessary.

We will reschedule if it is pouring rain, icy or if there is substantial snow on the ground.

Additional clean up days this year are June 13, July 1, Sept 12 and Nov. 14.

## **MISSION OF THE MONTH**

### **Seminarian Debt Reduction (SDF)**

Sara Andler is Grace's Member-in-Discernment (MID). She has been going to Phillips Theological Seminary in Tulsa Oklahoma for about a year and a half. She began at Lexington but transferred into Phillips for cost savings. She is required to be there several weekends per year. Beginning next year Sara will be taking one-week long intensive class per year. The approximate cost for the week is \$700 and it takes her six hours to drive there one-way. Since Sara has been a MID, we have been meeting regularly with her. However, we have not, as a congregation helped her financially. That being said, we have been asked by the committee on ministry to offer Sara some financial help. The Mission of the Month is to help Sara, personally, with her SDF.

A bit more information to help you understand Sara. She works a full-time job, goes to school, quarter-time, pulpit supplies a couple of times a month, is on the Grace Evangelism Team, and generally catches any cold going around (Lord, please NOT the COVID-19...). Sara works very hard because she feels called by God to be in ministry. Please give generously, if you are able, and definitely pray for her. Also please know Sara will be so grateful to God for any financial help we can provide. As one of our Grace Family members, we can and should feel so grateful Sara has answered God's call to serve! Thank you, Pastor Polly McWilliams

### **MUSIC MINISTRY**

Everyone is welcome to join choir. Risen is by audition only, and we are currently in need of a bass player for our regular 11:15 services. Please continue to watch your emails for updates regarding practices and performances while we navigate through the suspension of church access, closings and cancellations. Thank you.

#### **Choir rehearsals:**

Friday, April 10, 6 - 6:45 PM

#### **Choir services:**

Sunday, April 5, 8:45 AM

Friday, April 10, 7 PM

Sunday, April 12

#### **Risen rehearsals:**

Please watch for updates regarding when regular 10:15a Sunday Rehearsals will begin again.

### **Job or Ministry**

Some people have a job in the church. Others involve themselves in ministry. What's the difference? If you do it just because no one else will...it's a job! If you do it to serve God...it's a ministry! If you quit because someone criticized you...it's a job! If you kept on serving in spite of criticism...it's a ministry! If you'll do it only so long as it doesn't interfere with other things...it's a job! If you're committed to staying with it even when it means letting other things go...it's a ministry! If you quit because no one ever praised you or thanked you...it's a job! If you stay even though no one notices your efforts...it's a ministry! If you do it because someone else said it needs to be done...it's a job! If you do it because you sensed God saying it needs to be done...it's a ministry! It's hard to get excited about a job. It's almost impossible not to get excited about a ministry! An average church is filled people doing jobs! A great and growing church is filled with people involved in ministry! ~shared by Roger Miyasaka

## **Kid's and Youth Stuff**

### **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**

April 7– Culver's Fundraiser 5-9p

April 18 – Our Faith & Sexuality Retreat for Grades 9-12 from 10a-6p and Lock-in at Faith UCC  
in Wentzville for Grades 6-12

April 24-25 – Conference Annual Gathering in Jefferson City

### **NURSERY**

There is a trained teen at second service each Sunday to care for the children in the nursery. 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.

### **Babysitting**

Mariah Mattox would like to offer babysitting for \$10/day during the suspension of church services and activities. Please email the church office and your requests will be forwarded to Miss Mariah. Thank you.

### **The H.O.P.E. Food Pantry**

Is in need of two volunteers to help bag loaves of bread on the third Tuesday of the month, anytime after 11 AM for 1 to 1-1/2 hours. If you can commit to every month, please contact Kathy Dunlap.

### **Spring Rummage & Bake Sale 2020!**

The Spring Rummage & Bake Sale has been cancelled at this time. A reschedule date is yet to be determined. Please do not drop off donations until new dates have been scheduled. Thank you.

Peace & Blessings, Kevin Boiles, Dana Buchanan, Sam Fahnestock and Cindy Rose

## BIRTHDAYS AND OTHER ANNOUNCEMENTS

### APRIL BIRTHDAYS

01 Sam Fahnestock  
01 Debbie Teson  
02 Lynne Gittemeier  
03 Neil Boiles  
03 Judy Harris  
04 Cheryl Howard  
12 Eric Boiles

12 Tom Deptula  
16 Oliver Jackson  
21 Sophia Schnarre  
22 Cathie Sanzoterra  
22 Kelly Stahlman  
27 Ethan Kniesel

### **New Member Class Rescheduled**

At Grace United Church of Christ “Our mission is to know Christ and make His love known to all.” And our denomination motto is: “Whoever you are, and wherever you are in life's journey, you are welcome here!” We completely embrace that motto. This Grace family welcomes everyone with open arms and a kind heart as we strive to guide, join, help and faithfully encourage each other on life’s journey. If you are interested in joining with like-minded open and accepting people please plan to join us for the next New Member’s Class on Sunday, 19 April at 10a. We will talk about our denomination, our church, and our responsibilities as those who follow Jesus. The first new members of 2020 will join at on 26 April at 8:45a or 11:15a. Looking forward to meeting with you!

### **Tithes and Giving During The Mandatory Suspension**

The finance department would like to extend a gracious thank you to those of you still mailing in your tithes. As we attempt to socially isolate in an effort to comply with the recommendations provided by officials and experts, we also wish to stay connected to our church family and continue to grow in Christ together. In order for our church to provide outreach, to pay the monthly bills, to remain active, to communicate with our congregation and beyond, we must still have funds to do so. Your tithes and generous giving is what helps to make all of this happen. While we are unable to be at Grace in person, we have the opportunity to be there in spirit. You may still mail your checks to Grace United Church of Christ, 8326 Mexico Road, O'Fallon, MO 63376 OR I've listed options below that will allow you to make electronic payments from the comfort of your own home. Please direct questions to Fred Bruner at [fdbruner000@centurytel.net](mailto:fdbruner000@centurytel.net) or call him at 636-379-1690. Thank you and God bless!

[GivePlus\\_Online\\_Flyer.pdf](#)

[Vanco\\_GivePlus\\_Online\\_FAQs.pdf](#)

[Vanco\\_GivePlus\\_Online\\_How\\_it\\_Works.pdf](#)

[GivePlus\\_Mobile\\_FAQs\\_for\\_Donors.pdf](#)

[GivePlus\\_Mobile\\_How\\_It\\_Works.pdf](#)

[GivePlus\\_Mobile\\_Overview.pdf](#)



## PROJECTED CALENDAR FOR APRIL

### **APRIL – Mission of the Month Member In Discernment Sara Andler**

- 1: NO SCHEDULED EVENTS
- 2: NO SCHEDULED EVENTS
- 3: NO SCHEDULED EVENTS
- 4: NO SCHEDULED EVENTS

### **SUNDAY 5:** Palm Sunday, Birthday Sunday

- 6: Preschool No Classes through 4/10, Grace Life 7p
- 7: St. Charles Polling
- 8: Staffing 10:30a, POP 4:15p
- 9: Crafty Corner 9a, Maundy Thursday with the Lord's Supper, Student Pastor Annie Preaching
- 10: Good Friday, Good Friday Worship 7p
- 11: All Church Workday 9a-12p, Worship Design 10a

### **SUNDAY 12:** Easter Worship 10a

- 13: Easter Monday-OFFICE CLOSED
- 14: SCUM 12:30p, Culver's Fundraiser Night 5-9p
- 15: Staffing 10:30a, (Polly at Eden), POP 4:15p
- 16: Crafty Corner 9a
- 17:
- 18:

### **SUNDAY 19:** Messenger Deadline, Mission Outreach 10a, New Member Class 10a, Risen Practice 10:15a, IFD Meeting 12:45p

- 20: MID Meeting Sara Andler 6p
- 21: Council 7p, NAMI 7p
- 22: Earth Day, Staffing 10:30a, POP 4:15a
- 23: Crafty Corner 9a
- 24: CAG
- 25: CAG

### **SUNDAY 26:** Music Minister and Administrative Professional's Appreciation Sunday, and New Members Join at 8:45a & 11:15a, Risen Practice 10:15a Daisy Girl Scout Meeting 4-5:30p

- 27:
- 28:
- 29: Staffing 10:30a, POP 4:15p

**THANK YOU**

**Thank you for joining us on the Wednesday Lenten Worship Services we were able to have**

**Thank for your special memorial donations in memory of Norman Clements:  
Don, Karen and Keith Gaertner**

**Thank You! Youth Famine 2020  
Imagine Enough for All: Enough Food, Enough Respect, Enough Justice,  
And Enough Love**

**On February 22nd & 23rd eleven youth did imagine a world where there is enough for all, and then did something to make it a reality. By fasting for 24 hours, they raised \$1,607.00 for World Vision's 30 Hour Famine. These funds will feed nearly 38 children for a month, and provide hope to families struggling to survive. In 2019, students raised over \$1.7 million to help World Vision empower farmers, provide clean water and food for malnourished kids. 2020 famine events are just getting underway, but already more than \$150,000 has been given.**

**THANK YOU to everyone who donated, participated and helped throughout the lock-in. Over the past 25 years, hunger has decreased by 20 percent. It's retreating to the hardest places and we need to keep fighting. With youth who are willing to give up Taco Bell and pizza for a day, there is hope.**

**Prayer List**

Jim Bausch, Family Of Pastor Beebe, Harold & Pat Boldt Family, Carla, The Clements Family, Angelina DeGrasso, Deptula Family, Ellen Driekemper, Sheila Engelmeyer, Time Ferguson, Krysten Gray, Natalie Green, Nicole & Nick Green, Sandra Hollenbeck, Baby Oliver Jackson, Martha Johnson, Stacey Johnson, Diane Kearns, Family of Liz Kendrick, Christian Lemmons & Family, Family of Patty Marsh, MaryAnn K., Mariah Mattox, Randy McWilliams, Helen Meyer, Sheila Nirk, Anne Ortworth, Matt Purcell & Family, Robin, Mary Louise Salvi, Scott, John Scotto, Imogene Silger, Harmeeta Singh, Norm Summers, Victoria Teague, Ashton & Alex Uebinger, Willie Vogel, Dennis White, Nicole Whiteley & Family, Kelsy Wong, Laura Wunder, Illness, Everyone effected by COVID, Those homeless, Our Military Men, Women & Families, Kids who are bullied, Government Leaders, Those who have no prayers offered for them.

**In Care**

Betty Bauer, Liz Birchen, Jan Sutton, Bernice Watson

**Grace United Church of Christ Welcoming Covenant**

**Grace United Church of Christ strives to be an Open and Affirming Christian community that welcomes and affirms all people in all ways. It is a place where love binds us together in the tapestry of life. We affirm our Still-Speaking God ministering to and with all of**

**God's children, including all ethnicities, sexual orientations, gender identities, and differing abilities.**