

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

MESSENGER

THE CHURCH BUILDING IS CURRENTLY CLOSED. YOU MAY STILL CALL OR EMAIL THE OFFICE DURING THIS TIME.

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



Facebook.com/graceuccofallon



O’Fallon@WeAreGraceUCC

A WORD FROM YOUR PASTOR

Greetings and peace Grace Faithful. Please know you are missed! Virtual Worship is a good way to be together, but I do hope you're praying for cure for both the COVID-19 and the systematic racism for our siblings of color. We have begun a new worship series with the focus on "contemplative prayer." What does this really mean and can it be a useful idea for people of all ages?

To me, it means we take time to intentionally quiet ourselves and sit with God. Some would like to mislead us that this is some kind of new age idea. It is not. Contemplative prayer is an ancient practice that we can find support for in scripture. For example, Philippians 4:6 says "Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God." What we have been doing is looking to God by quieting our minds and hearts. What I have found is that turning off all electronics helps. It also helps to sit quietly in my garden. When I ask God to give me a better understanding about what is going on right now in our country and world it becomes clearer on how to stay present in the moment. This alleviates the overwhelming thoughts which helps me to deal with my stress. Contemplative prayer, by design, focuses on having a deeper relationship with God. I'm beginning to take notice of so much beauty. And do you know why? God loves us and wants the best for us.

Perhaps you and your young people would like to help create a collective photography project. Take notice of God's activity as you go about your daily life. It may be in nature, it may be something that goes on with your family, whatever it is, if you feel led to share, it would be appreciated. It would be nice to inspire one another.

Perhaps in your prayer time you're led to write some poetry. Might this be something God inspires you to share as a gift in worship? Perhaps we can share on Grace's Facebook page or on our church website – only with your permission, of course. Maybe what you write will inspire someone else.

All that being said, in this time of pandemic and equal civil rights, there is heightened anxiety and way too much stress. Many folks are feeling isolated so we have begun a few new things to help. That is why we have started a Wednesday night Zoom Fellowship Time at 7p. The turnout has been good. There is no real agenda. We would love for you to join us – please use this link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85390458348>

Another thing you need to know is that the 16 backpack students we normally feed on the weekends have been getting their food. This is how our mission has been working. Your mission team is packing the food for four weekends and it's being delivered once a month. We have some families that have been donating so we can feed them all summer. The economic impact for these underemployed families has been real. If you would like to help we are in real need of things like Sweet Sue Chicken & Dumplings, Chef Boyardee canned pasta with meat like SpaghettiOs with meat balls, canned tuna or chicken, canned fruit, peanut butter, jelly, pop tarts, granola bars, and for the summer we can take an entire box or bag of cereal. We've been thinking about powdered milk and canned milk their parents can make and it doesn't need refrigerated. Your pastor has been working with the school social worker to get the food to the kiddos.

HOPE Food Pantry needs our support too. As a reminder HOPE stands for "Helping Other People Eat." We've been able to give them donations of food and money. As a gentle reminder, they too are in need of protein rich food, fruits, peanut butter, personal care items, and even baby diapers are helpful. Again, this is a tough economic time for families in need.

HOPE is also in need of volunteers. If there is any way you can help that would be wonderful. They are located at 206 East Elm Street in O'Fallon.

We are not exactly sure when we will be able to safely congregate together again. But ... WE ARE THE CHURCH! To be absolutely clear, we have stopped worshipping in our building to protect the health of our people. We are still praying and serving in Christ's ministry with compassionate love!

As Always, Thanking God for our Mutual Ministry and Sent with Love, Pastor Polly

Scrip Announcements!

In February \$10 was donated to Evangelism and \$10 was donated to the Capital Campaign. \$20 was spent on Mission Possible. A profit of \$61.71 was made in February.

In March \$7.50 was donated to Evangelism and \$7.50 was donated to the Capitol Campaign. A profit of \$52.42 was made in March.

In April \$5 was donated to Evangelism and \$5 was donated to the Capitol Campaign. A profit of \$34.12 was made in April.

In May \$5 was donated to Evangelism and \$5 was donated to the Capitol Campaign. \$160 was used to pay for the Evangelism cups that are given to visitors. There was no profit made in May. Shop with scrip - www.shopwithscrip.com

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

Evangelism

Currently we have members gathering for a Visioning process for Grace UCC O'Fallon. Members include Laura Roberts, Sam Fahenstock, Mariah Mattox, Allison Summers, Sarah Miles, Kevin Boiles, Dan Fahenstock, Pastor Polly, and Susan Shumway. Lots of time churches can get caught up in doing for the current time and taking care of members. The visioning process will help Grace determine what is the long term vision of the church and where we would like to be in 5 - 20 years from now. In the most recent meeting comments were made by multiple people that the process was causing them to think. Watch this space for more info as we go through this process.

Amazon Smiles 😊

You can designate Grace as your charity to receive a percentage of the amount you purchase at Amazon. Between 1 Jan and 31 Mar of 2020, Grace was issued a donation of \$36.75. smile.amazon.com

HOPE FOOD PANTRY ITEMS

Needed for July: Protein Rich Foods, Dry Potatoes, Stove Top Dressing, Canned Mixed Vegetables, Snack Crackers. Please deliver all donations directly to the pantry while the church building is closed. There is someone at the pantry on Monday and Tuesday from 9 till noon to receive food at 206 East Elm Street, O'Fallon, MO. THANK YOU!

Grace Opportunities

Every Child's Hope

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 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).

National Alliance on Mental Illness

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

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://nmedv.org/downloads/Other/Matching_gifts_companies.pdf for a complete list.

Cleaning Up O'Fallon

Our next street clean up is on Saturday July 11. 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. Please contact Cindy Rose at cindyro60@msn.com if you plan to attend so you may be reached if necessary.

We will reschedule if it is pouring rain.

Additional clean up days this year are Sept 12 and Nov. 14.

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.

Safe Church Child Protection Training

At this writing we are currently not having worship or Sunday School physically present in our church building. However, we are positively planning and looking to the future when we will be inside the building, Read on for the description of Grace's procedures to keep children safe.

There is a detailed document that explains Grace's policy on keeping children safe. One part of this important work is a training/refresher session. Our church volunteers who work with elementary aged children, middle school, confirmands, and teens are required to participate in training every three years.

This year the hour-long training on mandatory reporting will be online through Zoom and is provided by the Child Advocacy Center in Wentzville. (The preschool staff took this training in May.) Since we have adopted this new source for training, we would like for all volunteers to participate this year. (The teens in the nursery are required to participate annually.) Volunteers please mark your calendars for August 3 at 7 pm for this important Zoom training that keeps everyone safe. Contact Mary Ann Sutton if you plan to participate.

RALLY DAY 2020
THE THEME OF RALLY DAY IS PEACE

Grace has traditionally held a kick off to the new school year with an all church celebration. This year our “gathering” will look somewhat different. The Worship Design and Intentional Faith Development Ministry Teams are planning safe activities we hope to implement outdoors at Grace on Rally Day, Sunday September 13 starting at ten o’clock. Mark your calendar for this church family picnic and stayed tuned to learn more about the fun and fellowship!

SCUMY

Unfortunately, due to COVID 19 there will be no youth mission trip this summer. Hopefully there will be a vaccine by next year so we can take a mission trip next summer.

ADULT BIBLE STUDY

We have decided to make a detour in our summer plans and spend some time studying White Privilege. There is a lot of training material on this subject on the UCC Website. I have been reviewing this material and have decided that the best entry into this is the Webinar series that is available. As we work through the video series, we can decide if we want to individually or as a group, dive further into this material.

My plan is that we will watch them together and then discuss.

Below is a link to the videos in case you can't join us

<https://vimeopro.com/progressrenew/white-privilege-lets-talk/video/172039574>

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84950281649?pwd=UHZmdnd2RXpzNU9NdG5ramorQ2pNUT09>

Meeting ID: 849 5028 1649

Password: 861218

Find your local number: <https://us02web.zoom.us/u/kxHeEcvXg>

~Cindy Rose

BIRTHDAYS AND OTHER ANNOUNCEMENTS
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JULY BIRTHDAYS

07 Pamela Mosher

09 Charles Heenan

10 Pat Vogel

11 Cindy Rose

17 Carson Latimer

17 Christian Lemmons

19 Matthew Jackson

22 Rich Mattox

23 Vivienne Lund

26 Randy McWilliams

28 Amanda Lang

29 Ryan Patterson

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. 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 are 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 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](#)

CLOTHING DONATION BINS

We are excited to announce that we have new clothing donation bins! As you may or may not have known, our previous bins were being broken into and the donation items were being taken. The bins no longer had functioning locks after an occurrence. They have been replaced with metal boxes that detour this from happening again. Please know that your donations are now more secure and going to those that need it most. Also note that Grace receives a percentage of the total weight collected as donation for hosting the bins on our property.

MISSION OF THE MONTH

Christmas In July (Second Mile Giving)

Do you know what Second-Mile Giving is all about? Grace supports many worthy missions throughout the church year. Second Mile Giving offering helps to reach our budgeted goals by reducing short falls that occur during the summer months when normal bills exceed income. The funds to this special mission go straight to Grace and – AND only to Grace. Second Mile Giving helps to ensure that Grace continues to be a viable church in years to come. As a member of our Beloved Grace – that is something we all want. Please prayerfully consider what you can do to help and label your offering “Christmas in July” or “Second Mile Giving.” Thank you!

~In Christ, Fred Brunner

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.

Grace's Poetry Corner

"Sun"

By Cathy Blake

The sun means
Many things.
It means light--
To see;
It means warmth--
To feel;
It means happiness--
To be.
It is God's joy
Expressed.

"Worries of a Sailor"

By Alexandria F.

An ocean of fear can swallow you whole
And it'll still be smooth sailing
So don't fall down the trench
Keep on smiling
Because even in violence
Our king is winning

I don't know about you but I often feel like an empty field of nothing
And suddenly
A tornado of everything is crashing down my door
And yet I am calm in the storm
Because our lord offered us something more

More than a house, or a field, or an entire ocean of gold because why bother with the worries of
the sea
The wind will always blow
The rain will always pour

In Care

Betty Bauer, Dan & Sam Birchen, Liz Birchen, Bernice Watson