

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

MESSENGER

DUE TO COVID - 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



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A WORD FROM YOUR PASTOR and CHURCH COUNCIL

**“Dear friends, let’s love each other, because love is from God,
and everyone who loves is born from God and knows God.”**

1 John 4:7 (CEB)

Reopening Grace is based in our love of God, one another, and our world. We have been physically distant from one another since Sunday, 15 March. We have met virtually but who would have ever dreamed we would be living through a pandemic?!?! Nonetheless, here we are and we have managed. There are many discussions occurring in various places about re-opening churches and what that means. Until there is a vaccine, we must focus on protecting people and not spreading the disease. We are a people that believes that science is a gift from God. Thinking of that please remember, many people are asymptomatic and not aware that they may be spreading the disease. Previously your Grace Council wanted to wait for a 14-day plateau or decline in positive COVID-19 cases for our area. Since it has been six months it has been decided that we want to determine a path forward so we can manage our reopening in the best way possible.

When we reopen Grace we will have to manage differently than we have ever done before. That being said, we have developed a “Covid-19 Work-in-Progress Plan.” That is why we will begin outside on Sunday, 4 October and gently ease ourselves back into our building. Still, we must be intentional to be successful and we all want to be successful, don’t we? Following this paragraph are some guidelines your Grace Council and I are implementing so we can be successful!

Grace’s Covid-19 Work-in-Progress Prevention Plan What can Grace UCC do to stop the spread of Covid-19?

1. We will have one Blended Worship Service at 10a – Masks are required all through worship. (Hand sanitizer and masks can be provided – if needed.)
2. All Worship services, Bible studies, Sunday School, and other events are offered online. At this time, all Worship services are limited to 50 people to allow for physical distancing of at least 6 feet. We won’t take reservations. Should we have more than 50 we will allow only adult members to sit in one part of the balcony.
3. A sign will be placed in our lobby reminding people not to enter if they have any signs of sickness.
4. Weddings, funerals, and baptisms are limited to 50 people to allow for physical distancing of at least 6 feet.
5. Ushers will need to record attendance at 10a Worship. This could be done via photos to enable contact tracing in event of Covid-19 spread and for voting at congregational meetings. We are discussing if the Ushers will have enough time to record attendance on a sheet – due to the possibility of a slight problem should many folks arrive at the same time – that’s why we are considering photos.
6. All Bibles, hymnals, pencils, attendance sheets, and children’s coloring supplies are removed to limit surface contacts. (NOTE: The simplified Worship outline will still be emailed to you weekly and it will be on the projection screen but if you want it in your hand, please print it out to bring with you. Families should bring their children’s coloring supplies or paper to be used during worship.)
7. The offering is collected at the door, online, or through the mail.

8. Holy Communion, families will need to bring their own bread and juice but we will have prepackaged kits that can be handed out by a gloved, masked usher.
9. Custodian will wipe down all surfaces in the sanctuary and restrooms following each worship service before a sanitizing bomb is set off. This requires the building being empty for several hours.
10. All Band and Choir practices are on hold at this time as recommended by the CDC.
11. All food service in the fellowship area has been cancelled.
12. Pastoral care continues to be offered through prayer chains, phone calls, and yard visits.

Finally, please know that once we are successful in establishing the proper protocol, for our church, we can reinstate our nursery care during Worship, children's and youth ministry including Sunday School and youth group. ALL children, youth, and adults are required to wear masks (except for infants and toddlers).

Re-opening churches means considering much more than Sunday worship. That's why we are creating this "Work-in-Progress Prevention Plan." It is a work in progress because we have never experienced anything like this before. That is why your Church Council is trying to anticipate and plan ahead while providing the entire congregation with an understanding as various decisions being made. Remember – it is about caring for the health and well-being of everyone, particularly those who are older or with compromised immune systems.

"Dear friends, let's love each other, because love is from God, and everyone who loves is born from God and knows God." 1 John 4:7 (CEB) It is completely out of our love for God and all of you that we are anticipating learning some new ways of being Christ's Church. These new ways might need further adapting into the future. Can you prayerfully think about some of the joys you have discovered by being forced to do things in different ways? Can you think of some things you feel may help your Church Council to help us be successful? If so, please know we would love to receive your suggestions in writing. You see, in this way it is easier to remember to ask any clarifying questions. We celebrate that God is still speaking to each one of us!

Praise God for our ministry together and as always sent with Love,
Pastor Polly and Grace Church Council

Scrip Announcements!

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. smile.amazon.com

BACKPACK FOOD ITEMS

Needed for October: Fruit Cups, Cans of Soup, and Peanut Butter & Jelly in plastic jars. You may drop off donations during the 10:00am Sunday worship services or call/text Pastor Polly to make other arrangements. Thank you!

HOPE FOOD PANTRY ITEMS

Needed for October: Canned Potatoes, Saltine Crackers, Chili, Canned Peas. 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!

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

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). Fall Luncheon is scheduled for Wednesday October 21 at 11:00 am in the ECH Dining Hall. Please contact ECH directly in case of cancelations or rescheduling given the Covid guidelines at 314-427-3755.

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 November 14. 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.

ADULT BIBLE STUDY

9/27 - Part 2 Chapter 5: Lightness and Darkness as Experienced in the Genealogy and Liturgy of the Church. October we will focus on learning more about "The cash value of whiteness or whiteness as a tax-exempt status" in Part 3 of the curriculum. Below are the links to John Brown's speech

<https://vimeo.com/1275249>

<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/aia/part4/4h2943t.html>

<http://www.american-historama.org/1850-1860-secession-era/john-browns-body.htm> This is a link that speaks about the song we know as Battle Hymn of the Republic, how it was written to celebrate John Brown and some of the early lyrics.

The book that Dr. Dorhauer referenced is "Lies my teacher told me" by James W. Loewen. It is available in the St. Charles Library. I have a copy if anyone wants to borrow it.

James Loewen has written another book "Lies across America - what our historic sites get wrong"

~Cindy Rose

BIRTHDAYS AND OTHER ANNOUNCEMENTS

OCTOBER BIRTHDAYS

04 Jacob Schnarre
04 Gina Uebinger
05 Brooke Teson
09 Michelle Molitor
11 Dylan Deptula
14 Carla Boster
14 Mark Miller
15 Cory Smith
16 Belinda Miller

17 Greg Johnsen
17 Sam Kendall
18 Ashely Patterson
23 Robert Penn
24 Noah Yates
27 Melissa Lawrence
27 Kim Megathlin
27 Allyson Rose
28 Allison Summers

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 you can 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!

CLOTHING DONATION BINS

Please place clothing donations only in the bins. Please do not place donations of any kind outside of the bins. Also note that Grace receives a percentage of the total weight collected as donation for hosting the bins on our property. Thank you.

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.

Shared by Mary Ann Sutton

These messages came from the book Church Signs by Donald Seitz. They will get you thinking!

The best vitamin for a Christian is B1.

Looking for a lifeguard? Ours walks on water!

God always uses someone to do something. R U the someone?

In Care

Betty Bauer, Dan & Sam Birchen, Liz Birchen

In August, our Sunday School Team worked hard to beautify the center circle!



THANK YOU!

