

# Grace Messenger

March 2020



## THE JOURNEY

FEB. 26 – APRIL 12

### THE JOURNEY

The theme for our 2020 Lenten services is "The Journey." The theme is inspired by Luke 9:51: "*As the time approached for him to be taken up to heaven, Jesus resolutely set out for Jerusalem.*" As Luke records it, this was the moment, Jesus began the final phase of His ministry – a phase that would lead Him to the cross on Good Friday and to the empty tomb on Easter Sunday.

This is also the journey each follower of Jesus is called to make. Each of us is called to move to the foot of the cross, carrying our own crosses with us. It is there we find forgiveness and wholeness. From there we walk on to the garden tomb where we find that Jesus has conquered sin, death and the devil and made it possible for us to spend eternity in heaven.

Along the way, our journey also takes us to a number of other places. Some of these places help us address our deepest concerns; other places clarify for us the truths that we believe.

Pastor Brodbeck and Pastor McGee will serve as our tour guides for this journey. Each of their sermons will move us forward to the cross and tomb.

Our journey begins with worship on February 26 with our Ash Wednesday service (noon and 7 p.m.). At this service we face the reality that we are sinners in need of redemption, an act symbolism in the imposition of ashes.

The journey continues in our Sunday morning worship services, and in our Thursday evening services, which begin on March 5 at 7 p.m. These latter services provide a simpler and more contemplative tone than our weekend services do and will, once again, include the receiving of the Sacrament of Holy Communion around the altar railing.

Other special stops on the journey include Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and, of course, Easter Sunday. Sunday services will be held at our normal 8 and 10:45 worship times, with the weekday services held at noon and 7 p.m.

Will you please join us for the journey?

## PLUGGED IN

I have great excitement and joy in sharing a new ministry starting at Grace for young adults called Plugged In! Plugged In is for all young adults. (We'll let you define 'young adult' not us!) The mission of Plugged In is: "connecting people to a life-saving relationship with God and a life-giving relationship with others."

Upon coming to Grace, I've been praying that the Lord open my eyes to see how and where I might be used best. I believe one of those areas is young adult ministry. There are many things that I could do, many things on which I could spend my time. But I desire to leverage my time in ministry with intentional direction in fulfilling the call to which I have received in Christ. Though the "no's" may be a good thing, they are not a 'God thing'. After all, Jesus commands us to: "Simply let your 'yes' be 'yes,' and your 'no,' 'no'; anything beyond this comes from the evil one" (Mt. 5:37). If Jesus gives us a command, it's wise of us to obey.

The purpose of this ministry is to help you connect to a life-saving and transformational relationship with God. We want to help you go deeper in your relationship with Jesus and to be empowered, trained, and equipped for discipleship. It's out of a relationship with Jesus that all other relationships properly function and find their meaning and purpose.

In addition to helping you connect to a life-saving relationship with God, we want to help you connect with a life-giving relationship with others. We are not made to do life alone. We are made to do life with other people. According to Health Resources and Services Administration, loneliness and social isolation can be as damaging to health as smoking fifteen cigarettes a day. Living in isolation is deadly. Living alone and disconnected can be lethal. Though social media with its various platforms of social connectivity is at its high, meaningful one-on-one relationships with other people is at its low.

To learn more about Plugged In, I invite you to come to our first gathering on Sunday, April 26, 2020 at 4 pm. We'll meet at the church in the cafe. We'll cast vision about this ministry together, hear from you about potential ideas you have, and then we'll all go out to dinner.

I'm excited about what the Lord is doing. Invite your friends, get excited, and let's watch and see what God will do!

Your pastor, fellow servant, and friend,

Pastor Brian S. McGee



# Plugged In

CONNECTING PEOPLE TO A  
**LIFE SAVING**  
RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD  
AND A  
**LIFE GIVING**  
RELATIONSHIP WITH OTHERS.

**WHO: ALL YOUNG ADULTS**  
**WHAT: PLUGGED IN KICK-OFF**  
**WHEN: SUNDAY, APRIL 26 @ 4PM**  
**WHERE: THE CAFÉ (YOUTH WING) AT GRACE**

## FIRST COMMUNION CLASS

Beginning Wednesday, March 18, Pastor Brodbeck will lead all interested Grace fifth graders and their parents in a "First Communion Instruction" class. The invitation to participate is also extended to any other Grace youth members who are older than fifth grade but were not able to attend with the rest of their class.

This class will run for three consecutive Wednesday evenings from 5:45 – 8 p.m. The course will meet in YW 103 for the first two sessions and in the sanctuary for the third and final session. These sessions will teach the meaning and importance of the Sacrament of Holy Communion, and prepare the young people for receiving their first communion at the Maundy Thursday service on April 9 at 7 p.m.

A reception, honoring these young people, will be held immediately following that worship service in the Grace Fellowship Hall. Any questions may be directed to Pastor Brodbeck ([tom.brodbeck@grace-nalc.org](mailto:tom.brodbeck@grace-nalc.org)) or Matt Rugh, Director of Youth and Children's Ministry ([matt.rugh@grace.org](mailto:matt.rugh@grace.org)).

## PASTOR'S REFLECTION

Karen and I have had the opportunity to worship with a couple of other congregations, as we have enjoyed a few days of vacation. Ever on the watch for new ideas and best practices that we could incorporate into our ministry efforts at Grace, I have once again been reminded of the importance of a warm welcome.

Every church believes itself to be friendly. Can you imagine a congregation posting "You Won't Be Welcomed Here" signs on their websites? Of course not! But it is easy to slip into bad habits that communicate that very thing. With the large number of special services coming up between now and Easter, let's remind ourselves of ways to continue our well-deserve reputation of being a friendly church.

**Meet someone new each Sunday.** Our congregation is large enough that you likely don't know everyone who regularly attends, let alone, the guests we have each week. Come to worship every Sunday with the goal of meeting someone you don't know. They may or may not have worshipped with us before, but if you can't call them by name, you don't know them as well as you should. The people in unfriendly churches spend all their time talking with people they already know.

**If they are new, make sure they meet at least two other people.** Help them build a network of relationships. Studies show that visitors need to know the names of at least seven people within seven weeks. For example, if they have children, another younger family is a logical choice. And, of course, help them find their way around the building. There's nothing worse than getting lost in a new place.

**Invite them to sit with you.** Better yet, sit wherever they would like to sit (even if that is down in the front!!). Sitting with them allows you to answer their questions about the service. Two common questions are: What's an LBW? What do I do if I go up for communion?

**Save your personal agenda items for another time.** Sometimes we come to church with a "to do" list that occupies all the time we have in the building. We end up rushing to the next thing on the list, or trying to catch someone before they leave, and rush right past people who would enjoy a conversation. In so doing, we appear busy and uninterested rather than warm and welcoming.

I suppose this short article could go on long enough to fill this entire newsletter, but I will stop here. I want to reinforce that our congregation already works hard in this area. We have wonderful teams to guide us in this process, but, creating a warm and welcoming environment is a total church effort. Our guests in these next weeks and months may be seeking a new church home or, more importantly, a personal relationship with Jesus. Let's make sure we do everything in our power to ensure their finding both is possible here at Grace.

-Pastor Tom Brodbeck

## DISCIPLESHIP DAY

Sunday, March 29 has been designated as Discipleship Day at Grace. We will be highlighting our discipleship ministries and encouraging each member of our Grace family to consider participating in a Life-to-Life small group. Doing so will help you grow in your faith, as together, you read the Bible and build a caring network of other Christians friends.

Our Culture Crew will guide us in through the morning. This team works with the pastors to help us keep the Great Commission's call to "make disciples" at the center of all we do. Learn how you can become involved!





# Church News

## **CONGREGATIONAL MEETING**

The annual spring congregational meeting will be held on Sunday, March 29 at 9:15 a.m. There will be no adult Sunday School that morning. Every member is strongly encouraged to attend, along with those who have not yet joined the church. This is a wonderful opportunity to hear about our church and its ministry.

The key agenda items for the day include the election of the 2020 Nominating Committee and the approval of the annual report. The full annual report will be posted on the Grace website. Printed copies will be made available to those who submit a request for one to the Grace office prior to the meeting date.

At that meeting, you will also hear updates on our current debt elimination efforts and learn more about the church's discipleship focus. Pastor Brodbeck will also be sharing the first draft of the congregational vision for this next decade.

It will be a full agenda indeed, all adding up to a meeting you will not want to miss.

## **2020 Nominating Committee**

Our congregation will be electing the 2020 Nominating Committee during our congregational meeting on March 29, 2020. The Congregation Council is currently accepting nominations for this very important committee. The Nominating Committee is charged with preparing the ballot for the election of four members to the Congregation Council and at least one member to the Endowment Committee for terms that begin in 2021. The exact number for the Endowment Committee depends on how many terms expire at the end of this year.

The Grace Constitution requires that all members of the Nominating Committee be members of this congregation. Those who serve effectively also have a clear understanding of the church and its mission and who have a working knowledge of the Grace congregation. They must also have a general understanding of the responsibilities of both the council and endowment committee. The term of office will be one year (March through the following March). The four people elected by the congregation to serve will be joined by two currently serving council members who have been appointed to that team by the council.

If you are interested in serving or wish to nominate someone, please notify Craig Witker (Council President) or one of the pastors.

## **LAY MINISTRY**

We have a good news/bad news situation in our ministries. We have wonderful people that are willing to serve on more than one ministry (good news). Sometimes those ministries overlap and they cannot fulfill both obligations (bad news).

I have been asked, more than once, how can this happen in the scheduling of the ministries? It is because we have a Ministry Team Coordinator for each of the ministries and they cannot set their schedules to omit overlaps. It has been our policy and request that if you are scheduled to serve on more than one ministry in the same service, that you select one ministry and contact a team member to cover you on the other ministry.

It is possible to serve on more than one ministry for "some" but not all. Example: If you are a Safety Steward and something else on the same day, please find a sub for the other ministry, because we have so few Safety Stewards. If you are a Communion Assistant and a Greeter, you can do both since they do not conflict. If you are a Lector and singing in the Choir, you can do both since they do not conflict. You get the picture?

This message of dual duties is not intended to discourage you from serving on multiple teams. We are very grateful for your service. It is intended as a reminder to review your schedule and ask a brother or sister on your team to help you assure our ministries are covered.

Please direct any questions or concerns to Janet Rice.

# **GRACE GARDEN MINISTRY**

## **CONNECTING OUR FOOD WITH OUR FAITH**

By now I'm sure all of you are anxiously waiting the warmer days that will soon come. Even though we have had a relatively mild winter, I have heard many of you wishing it was spring already.

Rest assured, the Grace Garden coordinators, Jerry Angst and I, have been planning the garden for several months now. We have scanned over the many seed catalogs we typically receive as soon as early December and January. Presently, we have a pretty good idea "what" we need to plant and "where" each crop will go. But we value your input. If there is something in particular you are interested in; **we need to know**.

Our season typically kicks off with our annual Garden Ministry meeting. This year's meeting will be held on Monday, March 16<sup>th</sup>, at 6:00 PM in the Fellowship Hall. Last year we took the approach of presenting how we plan, prepare, plant, tend, harvest, and present the garden produce. We described all the vegetable groups and classifications and how each is treated differently. We included discussions about bees and culinary herbs. We affectionately called all this Vegetable Gardening 101.

This year, Vegetable Gardening 102, will include some comments from me about the marvels of the Creation; followed by how I feel the connection between our Food and Faith has changed since pre-industrial times. A history of where many of our vegetables originated will also give an interesting perspective. Jerry will go over the "new" varieties of vegetables we are proposing in each classification. Don't forget to ask him about the black popcorn that originated in Germany and was handed down from his grandparents. An encore discussion about bees and our herb garden often draws the most questions.

We always welcome anyone in our congregation to join us, with no obligations to volunteer in our ministry. We simply want to share our love of gardening and the simple way it can serve the Lord.

In closing, I would like to mention that I will discuss some outreach issues. This will include the food access issue with the closing of the Kroger store on South Limestone Street. This was the last full-service grocery store within the south neighborhood, which comprises 37% of our Springfield residents.

Please consider coming to our information-packed meeting. On behalf of the Garden Ministry Team, I would like to thank all of you for supporting this important part of what I call the Grace experience.

Coordinator: Terry Fredrich

### **Garden Ministry 2019 Update**

Following is a 3-year history of our harvest and harvest table receipts as well as our financial distributions for 2019.

<b><u>Year</u></b>	<b><u>Lbs. Harvested</u></b>	<b><u>Harvest Table Receipts</u></b>	<b><u>Receipts + Donations</u></b>
2017	9,500	\$5,785.95	\$7,052.45
2018	9,350	\$5,605.72	\$6,358.26
2019	5,338	\$5,494.70	\$6,367.02

It was no surprise that our total lbs. were down in 2019 due to only 2/3 of the garden being planted and the crazy "too wet/too dry" weather. It seems like we went from a monsoon to a bake oven. We were very pleased with the table contributions this year despite not having as much quantity or variety of produce.

Most importantly, we helped many in need, either directly with fresh produce or financial help to those whose mission it is to help others. In 2019 our \$6,367.02 in proceeds went to the following organizations:

Springfield Soup Kitchen	\$2,183.51
Jefferson Street Oasis	\$2,183.51
Open Hands Free Store	\$1,000.00
Restored Life Ministries	\$1,000.00

Both the Open Hands Free Store and Restored Life Ministries have received funds for the first time from our ministry. If you have any questions regarding any of these ministries please ask me.

Thanks to each and every one of you that helped to make our mission possible.

In Gods Service,

Terry Fredrich

## **Lay Ministry Spotlight:**

### **GRACE USHERS**

"Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers." Galatians 6:10

"My name is John Maxwell. Why do I serve on this ushering team I am asked? Simply put, I love being an usher. I began over 40 years ago at Central United Methodist Church when I was asked to help as an usher one Sunday. I found I enjoyed it so much I never stopped. The reason I love it? Look at the words "you shepherd." Now look at it again – you SHEPaRd. The word "usher" is contained in that phrase. If you look at all the duties listed for an usher and those not listed but are understood by those who usher, you see the joy ushers have in serving. We not only hand out bulletins, collect the offering, assist in communion process, and other written duties, but we also look amongst the congregation before, during, and after services to see if any are in need. Then, if within our abilities, we provide for that need. We often do not wait to be told what service is needed, but instead, look for a way to serve. We also take great joy in giving a cheerful greeting to those who attend. Like shepherds, much of our job is to attend to and look after a flock during services. What more reason could I have to say, "I enjoyed it so much I never stopped"? Do you want that same joy? Join us. Training is easy and if you are afraid you may make a mistake – nah no worries; just be you and shepherd - you will do just fine."

Thank you, John (Lead Usher, 10:45 services). The ministry of ushering is a vital part of Grace. Ushers represent the church in a very visible way, help set the tone in preparation for the worship service and assist with the smooth operation within the service. Grace ushers are the ambassadors of the church. As "ministers of hospitality," they warmly welcome our guests and congregational members as they arrive for our services. Team members serve at Sunday, special, and midweek services. Our ushers are not only doorkeepers in the house of God providing the many areas of assistance as outlined by John Maxwell. They are also involved with "after worship." They walk the aisles of the sanctuary picking up any trash, straightening/replacing hymnals, picking up the attendance records, sorting the attendance records, separating the sheets with any visitor information from those with congregational members' names, and placing the attendance records on the secretary's desk in the church office.

The 8:00 and 10:45 a.m., and special service usher teams are always looking for new members. If you are interested in joining this integral part of the Grace Worship experience, please see Usher Team Leaders Steeg Hertz, 8:00 a.m. or John Maxwell, 10:45 a.m.—Carol Carpenter, Ministry Coordinator

## **OUTREACH CORNER - MARCH 2020**

This month we will be collecting paper products for "Celebrate Recovery House." Please bring your paper towels, toilet paper and tissue donations and place them in the box in the Narthex. Celebrate Recovery House helps those struggling with addiction, sharing God's love and promise as they support them to start a new life.

Mark your calendars for our next Breakfast Break on Sunday April 5<sup>th</sup>. Jeff Pinkleton, Executive Director of The Gathering of the Miami Valley, will introduce us to his men's ministry that morning.

Are you interested in participating in a mission trip - local or abroad? Watch for more to come about opportunities to spread the Good News and a Sunday school hour to hear more and express your interests.

## **Expressions of Gratitude**

### **Heartfelt Thanks**

I just want to say thank you for all the cards and well wishes I have received since my move. The move was emotionally harder than I thought it would be, but so far I have managed to make the adjustment easier than I thought it would be. My family, of course has been a great help. The cards I received have been a real blessing. Now I know firsthand the importance of the card ministry. I will continue with that even from here, as long as I get Deb's emails. Again, thanks to all who remembered me and wished me well, and for the holiday cards. I can't tell you, how much they mean. I think of my Grace "family" fondly.

With best wishes for a Blessed New Year.

Susan Truchses

### **Praise and Thanksgiving**

As of Dec. 31, 2019 I have retired from the lawn and snow service. I want to thank my church family for over 20 years of serving you. It has been my honor to do so, but my age has told me it's time, with this writing I am 74 years old. Thanks and praises. Your brother in Christ,

Chuck Weller

# March Events

Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church 1801 St. Paris Pike. Springfield, OH 45504

937.399.6257 [www.grace-nalc.org](http://www.grace-nalc.org)

## Sunday, March 1

8:00 am Worship  
9:15 am Sunday School for all ages  
10:45 am Contemporary Worship  
2:30 pm New Members class

## Monday, March 2

## Tuesday, March 3

8:00 am Men's Bible Study  
11:30 am —1:30pm Staff meeting/  
office closed

## Wednesday, March 4

9:30 am Embroiderer's Guild  
5:30 pm Grace Notes rehearsal  
6:00 pm Culture Crew  
6:30 pm GriefShare  
6:45 pm 8-12 grade youth group  
7:00 pm Sanctuary Choir rehearsal

## Thursday, March 5

11:00 am Adult Bible Study  
1:00 pm Service Quilter's Guild  
6:00 pm Lenten Soup Supper  
7:00 pm Worship

## Friday, March 6

## Saturday, March 7

8:00 am Men's Bible Study

## Sunday, March 8

8:00 am Worship  
9:15 am Sunday School for all ages  
10:00 am *Worship at  
Springfield Manor*  
10:15 am Fellowship  
10:45 am Worship

## Monday, March 9

## Tuesday, March 10

8:00 am Men's Bible Study  
9:30 am Faith Guild  
11:30 am —1:30pm Staff meeting/  
office closed  
2:00 pm Joy Guild  
6:00 pm Executive committee  
7:00 pm Agape Guild

## Wednesday, March 11

9:30 am Hope Guild  
1:30 pm Charity Guild  
5:30 pm Grace Notes rehearsal  
6:30 pm GriefShare  
6:45 pm 8-12 grade youth group  
7:00 pm Sanctuary Choir rehearsal

## Thursday, March 12

11:00 am Adult Bible Study  
1:00 pm Service Quilter's Guild  
6:00 pm Lenten Soup Supper  
7:00 pm Worship

## Friday, March 13

## Saturday, March 14

8:00 am Men's Bible Study

## Sunday, March 15

8:00 am Worship  
9:15 am Sunday School for all ages  
10:15 am Fellowship  
10:45 am Worship/Receiving New Members  
12:15 pm Handchime rehearsal

## Monday, March 16

1:00 pm Stephen Ministry  
6:30 pm Garden Ministry meeting

## Tuesday, March 17

8:00 am Men's Bible Study  
11:30 am —1:30pm Staff meeting/  
office closed  
7:00 pm Grace Council

## Wednesday, March 18

5:30 pm Grace Notes rehearsal  
6:30 pm GriefShare  
6:45 pm 8-12 grade youth group  
7:00 pm Sanctuary Choir rehearsal

## Thursday, March 19

11:00 am Adult Bible Study  
6:00 pm Prayer Support Team  
6:00 pm Lenten Soup Supper  
7:00 pm Worship

## Friday, March 20

## Saturday, March 21

8:00 am Men's Bible Study

## Sunday, March 22

8:00 am Worship  
9:15 am Sunday School for all ages  
10:15 am Fellowship  
10:45 am Worship  
12:15 pm Handchime rehearsal

## Monday, March 23

## Tuesday, March 24

8:00 am Men's Bible Study  
11:30 am —1:30pm Staff meeting/  
office closed  
6:30 pm MAC meeting

## Wednesday, March 25

5:30 pm Grace Notes rehearsal  
6:30 pm GriefShare  
6:45 pm 8-12 grade youth group  
7:00 pm Sanctuary Choir rehearsal

## Thursday, March 26

11:00 am Adult Bible Study  
6:00 pm Lenten Soup Supper  
7:00 pm Worship

## Friday, March 27

## Saturday, March 28

8:00 am Men's Bible Study

## Sunday, March 29

8:00 am Worship  
9:15 am Sunday School for children  
9:15 am Congregational meeting  
10:45 am Worship  
4:00 pm Spring Ring at Maiden Lane  
Church

## Monday, March 30

## Tuesday, March 31

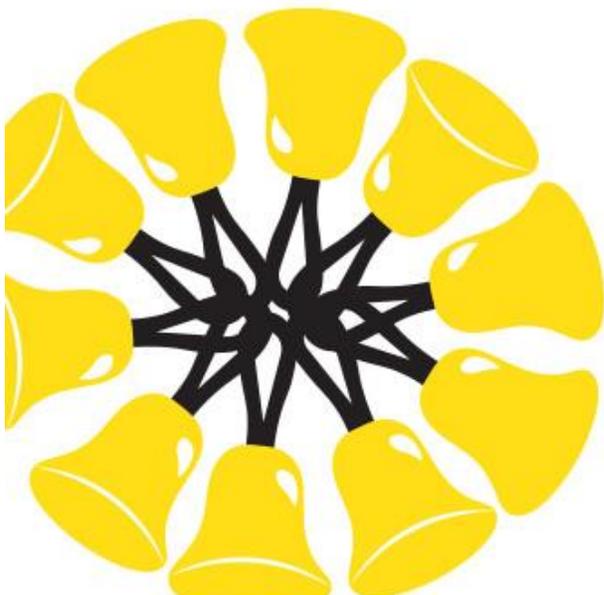
8:00 am Men's Bible Study  
11:30 am —1:30pm Staff meeting/  
office closed

## 2019 Grace Annual Report

The 2019 Grace Annual Report can be found on our Grace website Member page. Use the password MartinLuther to discover the Annual report and other church resources. Printed copies are available upon request.

March 29 4 p.m.

# SPRING



# RING

## A Handbell Concert

### Maiden Lane Church

CURRENT RESIDENT OR

[www.grace-nalc.org](http://www.grace-nalc.org) 937.399.6257

Springfield, OH 45504

1801 St. Paris Pike

Evangelical Lutheran Church



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