

# Grace Messenger

APRIL 2021



## PASTOR'S REFLECTION

It's no secret that my favorite hymn is "It Is Well with My Soul." If you don't know the story behind that hymn, you seriously need to Google it. If you do, it may well become your favorite hymn as well.

People are always sending me links to versions of that hymn that are especially beautiful. I listen to them all and bookmark most of them. It never gets old. Recently I received one such link. The artist was new to me: Wintley Phipps. This man has a richly-toned baritone voice. Wow! Hearing him sing is well-worth another Google.

Before he sang, though, he offered this word from the Lord: *"It is in the quiet crucible of your personal, private suffering that your noblest dreams are born and God's greatest gifts are given in compensation for what you've been through."* And then he sang those wonderful words "It is well, it is well with my soul."

The good news of Easter is that no matter what you have experienced this past year, no matter what battles await you in the coming days, Jesus has risen! The tomb is empty. And it can be well with your soul. Thanks be to God! -Pastor Thomas Brodbeck

## Celebrate Easter at Grace

After being forced by the pandemic to host its Holy Week Services online in 2020, the Grace congregation is ready and excited to be live-and-in-person in 2021.



Our Holy Week celebration begins on Palm Sunday with the traditional waving of the palms as the service begins.

We will also worship on Maundy Thursday (at noon and 7 p.m.) and on Good Friday (at noon and 7 p.m.)



Easter Sunday morning is certain to be a time of great rejoicing as we celebrate the empty tomb and the truth that Jesus has conquered the grave.

We will continue to live-stream the 10:45 a.m. services each Sunday, and will do the same for the 7 p.m. services on Maundy Thursday and Good Friday for those unable to attend in person.

## MESSAGE FROM GRACE COUNCIL PRESIDENT

Hello Grace Members and Grace Friends,

This month I would like to share a council update with you concerning where we are with a search for an Associate Pastor. Some congregational members have rightfully asked questions regarding this topic. As many of you know, Pastor Brodbeck has assumed increased responsibility for preaching, teaching and ministry involvement over the past several months. The Council and Pastor Brodbeck are cognizant of this fact and are working toward solutions. What we did not want to do is rush to fill the Associate Pastor position without thorough study and prayer in planning toward what Grace needs regarding staffing for the future. One component in our thought process was the lack of qualified candidates for Associate Pastor during our last call process. Through contacts with the NALC, the situation does not seem to be improving.

One exciting area we have been working on is the possibility of an Intern. You may remember Dan Mershon, who served in an internship position at Grace several years ago. He is now serving as Senior Pastor at Salem Lutheran Church in West Alexandria. Although the availability of an intern is not possible during the first six months of 2021, we recently received notification that Grace has a high probability of being selected by the NALC Internship Committee to host an Intern beginning in the summer months. Besides the immediate benefits an Intern would bring to Grace, it could also lead to an opportunity at the end of the internship for the Church to make a Call for the Associate Pastor's position. I am reminded, as we move forward with any decisions on staffing, that we must remain patient and listen to what God is telling us. Ephesians 4:2 tells us to *"Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love."*

If you were at the March 21 Congregational Meeting or watched it online, some of this information was shared and the opportunity to ask questions was given. If you have questions regarding this topic or any other questions you wish to share with Council, feel free to contact myself or any Council member.

Blessings, Mark Klopfenstein, Council President

### ENDOWMENT ANNOUNCES 2021 GRANTS

The Grace Endowment Team is pleased to announce it will award up to \$13,180 grants to qualifying ministries this spring. These funds are generated by the Grace Endowment Fund and represent a percentage of the earnings from calendar year 2020.

Award requests will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

- It honors and glorifies God.
- It cannot be included in the current year's ministry plan (budget).
- It will strive to diversify the distribution across ministry areas.
- It will reflect God's love beyond the Grace congregation.
- It will encourage the growth and health of the Grace Endowment Fund.

If you have a ministry idea that meets these criteria, you are invited to apply for a grant. Application forms are available in the Grace office. These must be submitted by April 30.

The Grace Endowment Fund was established in 1999 as a way of extending the ministry of the church. The principal is never touched, so the fund continues to grow as more and more people contribute to it. As you are planning your estate or considering how to invest your resources in a way that impacts the Kingdom of God for future generations, please consider a gift to the Endowment Fund. Contact the Grace office for more information.

### NEW ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL SERIES

The Adult Sunday School class will launch a new 12-week series on April 18, featuring the teaching ministry of well-known Christian author and teacher Francis Chan. The class will focus on the book of James. The class will be titled "Lessons for Living in the Book of James."

During this class you will see how true faith produces fruit. A faith without action and without life change is ultimately a dead faith. The book of James speaks to the realities of a living faith in Jesus—the kind of roll-up-your-sleeves and get-your-hands-dirty discipleship that is borne out of an authentic relationship with the risen Lord. James writes to believers who know suffering, who've faced trials and who ultimately desire a deep relationship with God.

Francis Chan unpacks the dense truth contained in the book of James in front of the iconic backdrop of San Francisco, the city where he lives and ministers. Through 12 sessions, Francis works through James verse-by-verse, challenging followers of Christ to move beyond a private, intellectual knowledge of God and His Word, to a vibrant faith that impacts every square inch of life. Sam Poston will serve as the lead facilitator for this class, which will run through July 4.

### APRIL OUTREACH CORNER

On Sunday, April 11, Nikki Stefanow, of Family & Youth Initiatives (FYI), will provide our next Outreach Break during the Sunday School hour. She will speak to our congregation about this Family-focused ministry in Clark County. Come and hear more about the ministry and how you can get involved.

## SUNDAY MORNING HIGHLIGHTS IN APRIL

The wonder and majesty of God will continue to be on display even beyond the April 4<sup>th</sup> Easter celebration.

We will celebrate the Sacrament of Holy Baptism at the 10:45 service on April 11 as new attendee Dawn Skomrock professes her faith. You will want to meet Dawn and extend a warm Christian welcome to her as she takes this important step in her faith journey.

The following week, April 18, we will be receiving new members into the Grace congregation. Despite the limitations of the pandemic, God has continued to bring new people to the congregation. If you would like to be received as a member of the church that day, please contact Pastor Brodbeck. He will schedule a time to meet with you and introduce you to the ministries and beliefs of this congregation.

### DEB O'NEAL AND NEW MEMBER RECOGNITION MINISTRY TEAM



Deb O'Neal has been the coordinator for our New Member Recognition Ministry Team for about six years. This team assembles gift bags for our new members. The gift bags contain Certificates of Membership, offering envelopes, sermon notebook, Bible Study notepad, highlighters, church directory, church pens, information about Stephen Ministry, a Grace bookmark, a bookmark from our Prayer support team, and more.

This team also provides a mentor for new members. The mentors work to assure that our new Grace members become a part of our Grace church family by assisting them to get involved in the life and the ministry of our church.

Deb loves to tell a story about one of our new families, the Franz family, which is a family of 9 who had been worshipping at Grace, but were required to move to New Jersey because the mother is in the military. They worshipped with us via our services on YouTube which Grace had started in the spring of 2020. Our New Member Recognition team has sent, and continues to send to the Franz children, Sunday School "goodies" each week to make sure they continue to feel connected to our Grace family.

Deb has been blessed with the gift of service to others and uses that gift well. We thank you, Deb, and your team members, for doing such a wonderful job!

### GRACE AND JSO COMMUNITY GARDENS

What a difference between March and February. Once weather changed, the snow melted, and here we are ready to plant once again. Jerry and I have met and our garden plan is under way. Our seed was ordered many weeks ago and most of it is on hand. Last year, as you know, was an exceptionally good year, producing over 10,000 pounds of produce (5 tons).

Our garden table was equally outstanding which experienced many positive changes. Three things made it outstanding. First, we changed the location to an "under the canopy" approach off the community room door (how fitting). This allowed easier access from the kitchen, but more importantly, it made the second change more possible. Second, we "opened up" the harvest table to the general public. They could easily see this unique produce market under the big red canopies when they came down Grace's driveway. It was a no brainer to do this, since we had excess produce coupled with reduced congregational attendance due to COVID. It also was a great bonus to Grace since donations were even better than ever. Many of those non-Grace members who came were familiar with farmer's market prices and gave generously. Third, was the quality and quantity of the produce. God's creation did not suffer from COVID so we were blessed beyond expectations. But as experienced gardeners know, one has to prepare wisely and then not get ones hopes up too high. In 2020 we were truly blessed!



Grace has also helped the Jefferson Street Oasis Community Garden both financially and with some great volunteers. The two gardens are very different as these volunteers will tell you. It is an allotment style garden with some 75 adults working about 60 plots. It is education-based, teaching food preparation, preservation and nutrition. It sits on 4.8 acres solely owned by JSO and has a herb, pollinator, children's garden, and pastured heritage breed chickens. It now has a poly-house (green house) that produces fresh greens even in the winter. As of this writing, we have already harvested three times. Thus far it has yielded spinach, arugula, mizuna, tatsoi, pac choi, and lettuce. Plans are in the works for expansion, including a summer kitchen for group canning. If you have not seen this garden, please contact me for a tour. God is working in many places. Praise be to God! Terry Fredrich

## "Sing and make music from your heart to the Lord."

Eph 5:19b (NIV)

Isn't it wonderful to see many more musicians in the choir loft? What a blessing it is to hear all the beautiful music from the dedicated members of our Sanctuary Choir, Grace Notes Handbells and Handchime Choirs. It is a blessing to be able to welcome back members as they return and those who are new to our choirs. You are a blessing. Thanks be to God!

The choirs are returning to more traditionally sized groupings from what has been quite a challenging year, to say the least. We are grateful for the singers, handbell and handchime players who were able and comfortable in returning during this time to make music together in smaller sized choirs after our church doors were reopened. Learning to play bells or chimes and especially, to sing while being socially distanced and wearing masks, has been a challenge. It was a blessing to be able to come and make music together, even with those constraints. What a blessing it was to hear music from groups of any size, singing and playing in harmonies and praising God together in song. Thank you!

"O come, let us sing for joy to the Lord; let us shout aloud to the Rock of our salvation." Ps 95:1 (NIV). Our choir and handbell members are happy to be back together, praising God together in song, and leading worship with their music, even in these 'new' ways. It is a blessing to be in-person enjoying the fellowship of the choir family. Singing or playing handbells or handchimes together in a choir has a unique way of bringing your heart, soul, mind, and strength together to focus completely on God. To quote Martin Luther, "Music is one of the fairest and most glorious gifts of God." "As long as we live there is never enough singing." The music of our choirs is a blessing in our worship services. Thank you to all who sing and play in our Grace Choirs. Thank you for sharing your God-given gifts with us at Grace. We are blessed with your gift of music and the message in your songs.

"Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts." Col 3:16 (NIV)

- Barbara Blackburn

### PIE NIGHT

Pie night was a success! Sunday, March 14 was "Pie Night." There were at least 22 different pies and 35 participants enjoying fellowship with one another.



### SERVICE QUILTERS GUILD SEEKING DONATIONS OF MATERIAL

The Service Quilters Guild sews 78-100 quilts each year for Lutheran World Relief and North American Lutheran Church Disaster Relief.

The guild is asking the congregation for donations of material and clean used sheets. There is a drop off box located inside the front doors of Grace for materials.

Thank you!

## JOY GUILD

Members of Joy Guild were so "joyful" to be together at Grace for our March meeting and service project. We discussed how the joy from our Lord is our strength and had many examples from 2020 to share. After our study, members and guests filled plastic eggs with candy and Bible verses. These were packed in boxes along with many packages of favorite cookies. The boxes will be traveling to Jordan to be shared with the Ohio Air Guard who are there for 6 months. After the boxes were filled, we circled the boxes and prayed for safety and God's presence with the activated troop and their family members. May God bless our troops everywhere.



## HEARTFELT THANKS

To all my new friends at the Grace Card Ministry,  
Thank you so much for all the beautiful cards and sentiments and for keeping me in your thoughts and prayers through this crazy time! It's always so nice to know that people are rooting for you when you are going through big life changes. I am doing very well after the kidney transplant and already feeling a whole lot better. My recovery is going about as well as it could, and I think I'll be back to normal in a few weeks! Hopefully, I'll be able to meet some of you in the future. If you ever drop by the library, maybe I'll be working and can say hello! In the meantime, I hope you all are doing well and staying healthy and happy!

Love, Amanda Gaudette

P.S. There are STILL cards coming in!! Thank you all!!!

Dear Members of Grace and the Card Ministry,  
How blessed my husband, Ollie, and I were/are to have received your wonderful cards of comfort during a very difficult time in our lives! How blessed we are to be remembered in your prayers. So deeply grateful to you and both Pastors, for your tremendous outpouring of sympathy and LOVE. Thank you for adding "sunshine" to the dark clouds.

Jesus loves you and we do too!

Gail and Ollie Eldridge and Family

Many thanks for all of the cards, kind words, and prayers from all of you. I am thankful for loving people like you. It is very much appreciated!

Thank you for your kindness,

Connie Price



As Rapunzel shines her light through **MUSIC**, those with the spiritual gifts of Evangelism and Apostleship can share their gifts of singing or playing instruments to **shine their lights** for all to see and hear the love of Jesus!



What a beautiful way music allows for us to call attention to Christ and the Word of God and to call the righteous to praise God! You will be able to seek out others with these spiritual gifts and encourage them to serve with their voices and musical talents. Musicians can encourage other congregations with the Gospel, also!!

These spiritual gifts combined with a love of music could be a wonderful way for YOU to share your time & talents in Music Ministries! **Let Your Light Shine!**

## Lay Ministry Fun Corner

Our ministry "nod" this month is to our Kitchen Ministry. The Spiritual Gifts related to this ministry are Servanthood and Helping. Servanthood: Meeting needs, not wants. Genuineness, Intentionality. Helping: An enhanced sense of compassion and willingness to tangibly support others.

Bible trivia:

1. Paul was shipwrecked on what island?
2. Which Gospel is written by a doctor?
3. What did Joshua command to stay still?
4. What did God create on the sixth day?
5. Which book is the Gospel of the second chance?
6. In which town did Jesus meet the woman at Jacob's well?
7. How many books did Paul write?
8. King Herrod promised what to his daughter on his birthday?
9. How many years did Sarah live?
10. Who is David's chief counselor?
11. Which city mentioned in Revelation is also an American city?

Who was King Solomon's mother?

ANSWERS TO MARCH WORD SCRAMBLE

eyirnittg	integrity	eeuarnncd	endurance
ssneeigorvf	forgiveness	eiaditcond	dedication
acger	grace	osreimh	heroism
etntshrg	strength	timuhiyl	humility
iyidtnq	dignity		

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Springfield, OH 45504  
1801 St. Paris Pike

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