

GRACE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH, LASALLE, IL 61301

APRIL 2024 NEWSLETTER

PASTOR:

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Mon – Fri 9 am – 1 pm

Worship Times:

Sunday 9: 00 AM

Wednesday 5: 30 PM

Jesus came and stood among them and said, "**Peace be with you.**" After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. Jesus said to them again, "**Peace be with you.** As the Father has sent me, so I send you." When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "**Receive the Holy Spirit. John 20: 19b-22**

Dear Friends:

Greetings to you all in the name of the Risen Christ!

Hope you all are having a blessed season of Lent and Easter – celebrating the love, passion, sacrifice and finally the victory over death of our LORD Jesus Christ. I pray and wish that the power of Christ's resurrection will guide and lead us in our spiritual journey. We had wonderful services during the lent season, it was great to see our children and all of us wave palm branches commemorating the triumphal entry of Jesus into the city of Jerusalem. Our Maundy Thursday service is a solemn opportunity to remember the "New Covenant" Jesus ushered and also to partake in the Holy Eucharist. On Good Friday we will be meditating on the last words of Jesus on the Cross. And we come together as the living body of Christ on Easter Sunday celebrating the resurrection of Christ from the dead – Alleluia! Thanks to Chris and the Choir for meaningful and uplifting singing during this blessed season. Thanks to all those who helped, especially Leslee and Kathy, for setting up the sanctuary for various services, for decorations etc. And also a big thanks to them for their commitment all through the year in changing Church Altar Paraments.

After Jesus rose from the dead, and in spite of the testimonies of Mary and others, the disciples were still in shock and fear. Fearful that even they would face the same fate as their master. So they hid themselves up in a room, not knowing what to do or where to go. It was during that vulnerable condition the risen Christ appeared to the disciples. Friends, over the years, at some point in our lives, both as individuals and churches, we may have had similar experiences of being frightened and hopeless as these disciples, there would have been times when we hid behind bolted doors escaping from life's challenges and situations. But make no mistake, the risen Christ comes and says, "**Peace be with you.**"



When in doubt – Christ shows us in mysterious ways, his wounded hands and feet and makes his presence felt with his assurance of peace and grace. Then as the scripture above tells us, he breathes on them, giving them the Holy Spirit. God still comes to us, The Holy Spirit of God is still with us – empowering us and filling us. God calls each of us today to be channels of God’s peace and love in this world. Even as we are filled with the power of the Holy Spirit, we are called to minister to those who are still hiding in fear because of the circumstances of their lives, to bring the peace and good news.

On a personal note – this year Satya and I are preparing for a transition in our family. We will soon become empty nesters. Both our girls will be moving out to colleges. In May 2024, Nima will be joining the med school in Virginia to be a Physician Assistant and Christina will graduate for LP high school and is getting ready for college in Fall. Several of you encouraged us that it will be okay! Archie will be with us. I request you all to uphold our family in your prayers.

So also pray for our church. Last year we had few transitions and challenges. The leadership stepped up and things are slowly coming into place. There is peace and joy to see so many of you working together for the well-being of our congregation. Thanks to each one of you, especially Nancy Otto for her ministry to our church. Also thank you for all your generous contributions, with which we are able to continue various ministries here at Grace.

May God guide and lead us. Have a blessed month of April.
Blessed Easter to you all!
God Bless!

Your,

Pastor Solomon



Lectionary Readings for the Month of April 2024

April 7, 2024 - Second Sunday of Easter Communion Sunday

Acts 4:32-35

Psalm 133

1 John 1:1-2:2

John 20:19-31

April 14, 2024 - Third Sunday of Easter

Acts 3:12-19

Psalm 4 1

John 3:1-7

Luke 24:36b-48

April 21, 2024 - Fourth Sunday of Easter

Acts 4:5-12

Psalm 23

1 John 3:16-24

John 10:11-18

April 28, 2024 - Fifth Sunday of Easter

Acts 8:26-40

Psalm 22:25-31

1 John 4:7-21

John 15:1-8



SOLAR ECLIPSE IS ON APRIL 8TH 2024

SUMMIT REPORT by Abby Cervantes, SLA Director

We are half-way in the second semester! Here are a couple things that Summit has been doing in the month of February.

Scholastic Book Fair: This was done during Grandparents' Breakfast

We also celebrated Valentine's Day in our classrooms. This included special treats, crafts and gifts for our parents.

Dental Health Week: Retired Dr. Tom Harris visited our students and taught them about the importance of dental hygiene.

Summit is wrapped up the month of February with Dr. Seuss week. This week is full of special days that are celebrated in honor of books written by Dr. Seuss. This includes special dress up days and activities. Summit will also celebrate the 100th Day of school on Friday, March 1st. We will celebrate this special day by taking on the challenge to collect 100 hats!

As we make our way to the final 3 months of the 2023-2024 school year, here the things that we have planned for March: Registration for the 2024-2025 school year will open mid-March. This is a very busy month for Summit. Registration opens for our current families' mid-March and it will be open to the public at the end of March. Summer Camp registration will be open mid-March also. Summer camp is limited to first come-first serve.

Summit will be having a Culver's fundraiser on March, 19th from 5pm-8pm. This will help raise funds for this year's preschool prom. Our teachers are volunteering their time to help make this fundraiser a success. Spring Break will start on March 29 - April 5. School will resume on April 8th. We look forward to the last 3 months of the year and we cannot wait to continue making memories for our kiddos and our teachers!

The Way to the Cross - By Elizabeth Schuetz

Jesus showed us the way to the Cross.

Throughout his life it would always lead to the cross for there was no other place he could go if he would save us from ourselves.

We too are on a journey that leads to the cross. It began the day we were born. Our journey is filled with life's challenges - some good, some difficult to bear. And yet our journey to the cross is different from the one Jesus took. While our journey also leads to the cross, it's a different cross we seek. It's not the cross of crucifixion, but is the cross of grace, forgiveness, and salvation.

Jesus waits for us there and watches as we take our journey to find him waiting there.

For when we come to the journey's end, he'll open his arms to welcome us in and take upon himself our cross to bear for he'll not let us suffer because he loves us so very much and the price of that cross - that cross we seek has already been paid.

The way to the cross is our journey to take and take it we must if we want to find peace and love within ourselves - within our heart and soul.

The way to the cross is not always easy, but the reward is worth the task. So, pick up the journey and make the path straight and you will follow and find your way to the Cross where Jesus will be waiting at journey's end!

Annual Conference 2024 Updates

Sunday, June 16 - Tuesday, June 18

Renaissance Schaumburg Convention Center

Volunteers Needed We need ushers, plenary pages, legislative section leaders, greeters, secretarial pool members, and more to help annual conference session run smoothly and efficiently. Volunteer for the entire conference, one day, or even part of a day. No previous experience is necessary.

Contact **Bri Wadlington, Events Administrator**, if you have questions. Interested? Complete this **volunteer form**.

Things to note:

- **Registration:** Voting members and guests should plan on registering on the Annual Conference website. Registration will open here on **April 3**. Registration includes Clergy Session or Laity Session, Pre-conference briefings and some meal options. The cost before April 29 is \$115. The cost rises to \$130 until May 29. There will be no on-site registration.
- **Hotel rooms:** The Renaissance Schaumburg Convention Center Hotel is holding a block of rooms for conference attendees at a special rate. The reservation deadline is **May 25**. Any remaining rooms will be released on May 26. Cost: \$185 plus 11% tax per night. Call (888) 236-2427 (mention Northern Illinois Conference UMC) or reserve **online**.

Other action items:

- Submit **legislation or historical documents**. Request a video or media **presentation**. Sign up for a **display table**. Join the **mass choir** at Ordination & Commissioning.
 - Apply for a **childcare grant** to defray costs of childcare arrangements.
 - **Submit names** of passed lay members for the Memorial Service.

Rural Church Grant Deadlines Approaching

Are you a rural church that has a great ministry idea but you need some money to get it off the ground? Then, consider applying for a PACK Grant (Planned Act of Christian Kindness) or Keagy Grant. **Deadline: March 31**.

- **PACK Grants** are from \$100-\$500 for strategically reaching out and blessing the lives of your community neighbors. Examples of PACK grants include supporting teachers with school supplies for their classrooms, providing snacks and water at a local parade or treating first responders to pizza as a thank you.
- **Keagy Grants** are from \$500-\$3000. They are also typically community-facing ministries and can be used as seed money to start a new ministry or strengthen an existing ministry. Examples include a summer reading program for kids, a senior ministry with meals and entertainment and start-up funds for a teen ministry. If you have any questions, contact **Rev. Libby Rutherford**.

Other grants available

- The Migrant Needs grant, funded by the 2023 Bishop's Appeal, is offering funds for churches in ministry with migrants in your community. Priority will be given to proposals that directly assist individuals or families and include cost-sharing or additional sources of support, whether in-kind, volunteer hours, or financial contributions.

HAVE A BLESSED MONTH OF APRIL
2024



Recipient Name
Street Address
City, ST ZIP Code