

Grace United Church of Christ

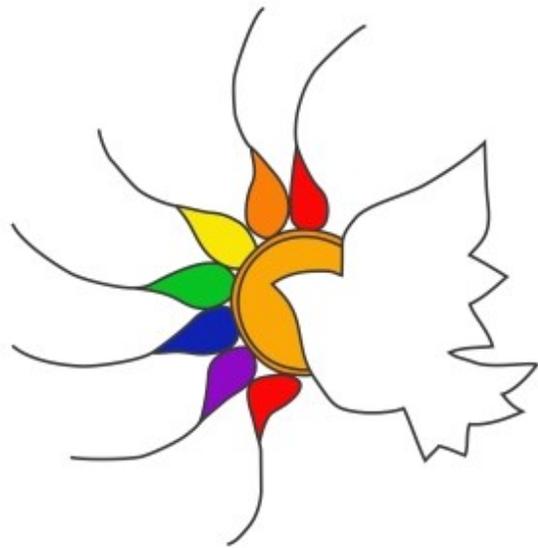
Shalom

April 2015

Rev. Katie Cort, Pastor

Lynn K. Miller, editor

Thank you to story contributors and proofreaders.



In the Sun There Is a Promise

Friends, sometimes it is hard to remain faithful. Sometimes it is hard to believe the promises of the future will come true. Sometimes it feels like nothing will ever change. But, brothers and sisters, I am here to tell you the sun is out, my windows are open, and the trees are beginning to bud. Spring is (finally) almost here!

Recently we baptized eight-month-old Anthony Walter Schwartz, grandson of our neighbor Ronald Schwartz, and the fourth generation of their family to be baptized at Grace. This beautiful moment was a reminder to us that Grace has had such a magnificent and meaningful history, and when we look at little Anthony, we know he will be carrying our name into the future. Anthony is the visible bud who reminds us the future is full of beauty, promise, and richness. His baptism is God's promise to us not only that our faith carries on, but also that the community of Grace continues to grow and touch the world around us.

During Anthony's baptism, at the family's request, we sang the hymn *In the Bulb There is a Flower*, which reminds us that even if we can only see a small part of the promise, we know underneath is the fullness of God's provision. This is much harder to do during the winter when it seems even that small piece is covered in several feet of snow. But, now as the sun has melted so much of that away, we can see visible signs that hope is here and nature's fulfilled promises are on their way!

I invite you to step outside on one of these upcoming beautiful days. Stand in a beam of sunlight, close your eyes and breathe in the spring air as you can. Feel and smell and taste the freshness coming into the world all around us. Let the Spirit swirl in the breezes around us that sweep away the fall leaves and tickle the new blades of grass. Hope is here! Spring is coming! Thanks be to God.

~ Pastor Katie

Holy Week Events

Maundy Thursday

Thursday, April 2 at 6pm in Fellowship Hall we share a Seder Meal together in reflection of Jesus' celebration of the Passover with his friends at the Last Supper. This is a fun and casual event for all ages, with good food and a prize hunt for children. (Maundy comes from the Latin word meaning "commandment".)

Good Friday

Friday, April 3 at 7pm in the sanctuary, we remember the crucifixion event in a somber Tenebrae Service (tenebrae from Latin, "shadows"). Listen to scripture and music retell the Good Friday story as candles are extinguished and the sanctuary grows dark.

~ Spiritual Life & Growth Committee

Making Change with Joyful Noise

Bring your loose change the first Sunday of each month for the Joyful Noise collection. Proceeds benefit a different organization every month:

April Joyful Noise donation will be going to Angel Tree Prison Ministry for children and their families. Angel Tree provides ministry to the children through its Christmas gift and ministry program. Angel Tree also provides a summer camping program and promotes family reconciliation through discipleship and mentoring.

May Joyful Noise donation will be for Back Bay Mission, a community ministry of the United Church of Christ serving the Mississippi Gulf Coast and the wider church community. By its faithful witness for social justice and compassionate service to people who are poor and marginalized, this program helps many people. Our gifts will help Back Bay strengthen neighborhoods, seek justice, and transform lives.

Pastor's Office Hours

Pastor Katie's office hours are Tuesday through Thursday from 10am-1pm, and by appointment Tuesday and Thursday nights as well as all day Fridays. She can be reached by phone or text message at (717) 224-6991, or by email at PastorKatieCort@gmail.com. Pastor Katie also has a Facebook page where messages can be left. If you have a concern about Pastor Katie, please contact a member of the Pastor/Parish Relations Team: Verna Labrador, Laura Carey, Nick Santaniello or Suzy Luber.



Easter Breakfast and Egg Hunt

Do you enjoy watching children participate in an Easter egg hunt? If so, please join the Congregational Life and Evangelism Committees as they host a breakfast and egg hunt on Easter Sunday, April 5, beginning at 8:45am.

Eggs will be strewn in the grass surrounding the church and children can win prizes.

Please sign your family up so we know how many will be in attendance. We look forward to seeing you!

~ Evangelism and Congo Life Committees

Centennial Capital Campaign Update

Total campaign contributions as of February 28 have totaled \$125,392. Thank you!

In March, we sent R.J. Brunner Co. an initial payment of \$10,900 from Capital Campaign funds on hand. (No previous deposits had been made.) The revised total amount owed is \$32,700, leaving a balance of two more payments of \$10,900 each as repairs progress. Work is scheduled to begin this summer. The organ will be out of service for six to eight weeks. Stay tuned ...

~ Centennial Capital Campaign Committee



*Grace upon Grace
for a second century*

Did You Know... The One Great Hour of Sharing offering March 15 raised \$370. If you have not yet contributed to this offering, please use an envelope in the narthex to help provide emergency relief for people around the world.

Questions? Concerns? Suggestions?

Talk with a Council member:

President: Amy Southall

Secretary: Ve Wolfe

Congregational Life Committee: Jessie Dombach

Endowment Committee: Karen Wentz

Evangelism and Outreach Committee: Nick Santaniello

Property Committee: Rob MacGregor

Spiritual Life and Growth Committee: Amy Fishburn

Stewardship–Mission Committee: Denise Pfeiffer

Member-at-Large: Suzy Luber

Pastor: Rev. Katie Cort

Sign Up for the Cape May Adult Retreat

Friday, May 1 — Monday, May 4

Lots of free time to walk the beach, eat good food, and fellowship with one another is what the Cape May retreat for adults is all about.

The group meets together Friday evening, Saturday for dinner and an evening program, and worship on Sunday morning

The retreat ends with worship Sunday morning but folks are free to stay until 10am Monday.

The cost is \$100 per person. Sign up sheet is in the narthex. Any questions, check with Jessie Dombach or Dottie Book.

Invitation to Pastor's Ordination

Pastor Katie's ordination is Sunday, April 26 at 2pm at Wyomissing United Church of Christ, 2 Vermont Road, Sinking Springs. Everybody is invited to attend.

Thank You's

Brent, AJ, and I would like to thank our Grace family for their cards, prayers, and comforting words during the loss of my father. Your thoughtfulness is appreciated.

~ Jeff Clouser

The Memorial Bells of Grace would like to thank the Endowment Committee for giving us the opportunity to participate in the Lancaster-Lebanon Handbell Festival on Saturday, March 14 at Palm Lutheran Church in Palmyra. The day's workshop/mini concert enabled the bell choir to learn additional techniques and musicality in presentation while performing five selections under the direction of award winning composer-conductor Michael Helman from Cape Coral, Florida.

I would like to extend a big thank you to the ringers in the handbell choir for giving of their time to participate in the Lancaster-Lebanon Handbell Festival in March. Their dedication to learning additional ringing techniques and making music is a blessing to the choir and to Grace UCC. I also want to thank Darlene Hein, Artistic Director of the Mennonite Children's Choir of Lancaster, for letting us borrow their hand chimes for use at the festival and in worship.

~ Jeffrey Clouser, Director
Memorial Bells of Grace and 4Grace Ringers



Parish and Community Health Resources

Ask Dr. Trudie: “From Farm to Plate, Make Food Safe”

April 7 is World Health Organization Day, so I thought I’d do my bit for WHO by highlighting their 2015 campaign on food safety. Years ago, most of the food we ate was grown locally, if not in our own gardens. Then, with the advent of refrigeration and rapid transportation, food could be sent from all over the U.S., and eventually the world.

With the rapid growth of the international food trade came the development of the *Codex Alimentarius*, a set of international food standards, guidelines and practice codes that help insure food safety and quality. Our own FDA monitors food-related illnesses, and our Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture is responsible for inspecting eggs, fruits, and vegetables, certifying employees in food safety, and licensing retail, wholesale, and home-based food establishments. These organizations keep an eye on additives, and residue levels of veterinary drugs and pesticides. They set standards to insure food processors use proper techniques to avoid contamination. Ultimately, it comes down to us to be educated consumers, whether buying groceries to prepare at home or purchasing meals in restaurants or from street vendors.

Most foodborne illnesses are due to eight well-known pathogens. Salmonella bacteria is a common cause of diarrhea and is especially severe in pregnant women, the elderly, young children, and those with compromised immune systems. You get it from raw or undercooked eggs, undercooked meat, unpasteurized milk, and contaminated raw fruits and vegetables. *C. perfringens* is a bacteria that actually lives in our intestines, but if you consume foods contaminated with large amounts of this bug, the result is

cramps and diarrhea. Known as the “buffet germ,” *C. perfringens* grows quickly in large portions like casseroles, stew, and gravies sitting on the dining room table at suboptimal temperatures.

Staph aureus lives on the skin and in the throats and nostrils of many healthy folks and don’t usually cause illness unless it gets on food products where it can multiply and produce toxins. It can cause nausea, cramps, diarrhea, or vomiting, and can be found in unpasteurized milk, salty foods like ham, or in foods that don’t require cooking, like sandwiches. Since staph food poisoning often comes from foods touched by hands, hand washing or wearing gloves is the best defense. A particularly nasty strain of *E.coli* can cause severe illness and can be found in raw or undercooked ground beef and unpasteurized dairy products, juices, or ciders.

If you love hot dogs and deli meats and are at high risk for food poisoning (old, young, pregnant, or with a weakened immune system), even a good refrigerator may not save you from *Listeria monocytogenes*. This crafty bacteria can grow on refrigerated foods, so be sure to keep your fridge clean, and cook food thoroughly.

When we talk about a “stomach flu” (not actually “the flu”, since that’s a respiratory illness), we’re usually referring to Norovirus, a common cause of food poisoning resulting in stomach cramping, nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea. Easily spread through contact, Norovirus is found in fresh produce, shellfish, ice, fruit, and ready to eat foods prepared by someone who’s infected. Hand washing and staying home from your job at the deli can help prevent its spread.

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Ask Dr. Trudie (continued from page 5)

And finally, a parasite, *Toxoplasmosa g.* is another pathogen especially dangerous for those high risk folks. It can cause swollen glands and muscle aches lasting for months, and may cause blurry or reduced vision and painful red eyes. Use a food thermometer to be sure meat is properly cooked and be sure to clean cutting boards and utensils. This parasite is found in cat feces, which is why obstetricians tell pregnant women not to clean the litter box. We hope you'll wash your hands after dumping the litter and before you make dinner.

As with the spread of other diseases, hand washing is critical in preventing food-borne illness. Wash your hands before and after handling food and keep your kitchen, cutting boards, utensils and refrigerator clean. Keep your fridge and freezer temperatures at the proper levels. Be aware of sell-by dates and refrigerate or freeze meats, fish, and poultry promptly. Wash your fruits and vegetables, and don't store cooked and raw foods together. At the risk of alienating the raw milk lovers out there, I recommend sticking with the pasteurized product. Use a thermometer to be sure your foods are properly cooked. BUT, be careful to avoid overcooking: pan frying and grilling over an open flame produce heterocyclic amines (HCAs) and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAH's) which, after exposure at high levels, have been found to cause cancer in animals. While it's not clear if it can cause cancer in humans, it's worth thinking about. (I'm not sure how many smoking monkeys it took to get us to realize that cigarettes cause lung cancer in humans.)

Also in the news lately are GMO's, or genetically modified organisms. Are they associated with increased chronic illnesses, food allergies or other health issues? This remains to be seen and I'm not ready to throw out an opinion----I just hope it doesn't turn into another smoking monkey.

(Dr. Trudie welcomes readers' comments and suggestions for future columns. She can be reached c/o graceucc@comcast.net.)

Stand with Pastor Frank:

Rev. Frank Schaefer to Speak at Millersville University



The President's Commission on Gender & Sexual Diversity presents a lecture, *An Evening with Reverend Frank Schaefer*, Tuesday, April 7 at 8pm in Myers Auditorium in McComsey Hall at Millersville University. The lecture is free and open to the public.

An Evening with Rachel Held Evans

Saturday, April 18, 2015 at 7pm

Highland Presbyterian Church, 500 East Roseville Road, Lancaster

Sponsored by the Parish Resource Center, a subscriber ticket (\$19) includes a free copy of Rachel Held Evans' new book, *Searching for Sunday*, and Grace is a subscriber church! For tickets call the Parish Resource Center at (717) 299-1113, or go to parishresourcecenter.org/events/an-evening-with-rachel-held-evans/.

Registration Open for National Open and Affirming Gathering

Three outstanding leaders in the United Church of Christ will speak at the Open and Affirming Coalition's National Open and Affirming Gathering June 24-25 in Cleveland -- right before General Synod. All three are members of the UCC Board of Directors. The Gathering's theme is "100% OPEN AND AFFIRMING." Registration is now open on-line at the Coalition's website, www.openandaffirming.org, or by calling (216) 736-3228.

Bishop Dwayne Royster, founding pastor of Living Water UCC in Philadelphia, will preach at opening worship Wednesday. A recognized civil rights leader in his community, Bishop Royster is a graduate of Geneva College's Center for Urban Theological Studies with a Bachelor of Science in urban ministry management. He earned his Master of Arts in religion at Lutheran Theological Seminary in Philadelphia with a specialization in the African American Church.



Bishop Royster

The Rev. Dr. Maritza Angulo de Gonzalez, pastor of Manantial de Gracia (Spring of Grace) UCC in West Hartford, Connecticut, will be the keynote speaker Thursday. Born in Puerto Rico, she was a preacher, teacher and missionary in several Central and South American countries. She earned her BA in theological studies from Logos Bible College, a BA in psychology from the College of New Rochelle, a Masters in social work from the University of Connecticut and a Doctorate in Education from Argosy University. She is president of the UCC Council for Hispanic Ministries, New England region.



Dr. Gonzalez

The Rev. Dr. Edward Davis, Conference Minister of the UCC's Southern Conference, will be the keynoter at the Coalition's General Synod ONA Banquet Friday night. He holds two degrees in business and an MBA in finance and economics from Roosevelt University in Chicago. He earned his Master of Divinity degree from Chicago Theological Seminary and a Doctorate in Ministry with a specialization in "collaborative leadership in the 21st century" at the United Theological Seminary in Dayton, Ohio, where he serves on the adjunct faculty. In 2014 Dr. Davis was honored by the Human Rights Council for his leadership in the UCC's lawsuit challenging the same-sex marriage ban in North Carolina.



Dr. Davis

This year's National ONA Gathering comes at a time when the movement for LGBT justice is at a crossroads. Shortly before or during the event, the Supreme Court may rule on whether same-sex marriage is a constitutional right in all states. Sensing that the end is near for their campaign against marriage equality, the Religious Right is turning to a new tactic: "Religious Freedom" laws that will allow private business owners to refuse service to LGBT customers and landlords to turn away LGBT tenants. Opponents of LGBT equality are also preparing to resist proposed bans on "reparative therapy"-- a practice, still legal in 48 states, based on the belief that homosexuality and non-conforming gender identity are mental illnesses that can be cured. The number of LGBT refugees seeking asylum in the United States continues to rise as a wave of persecution advances in Asia, Africa and Russia. LGBT seniors face abuse in nursing homes, and LGBT youth still live with the risk of bullying and suicide.

Spring Into Music

So here it is SPRING, and time to make good on your promises of winter: joining choir, performing in church, playing an instrument, and sharing your gifts and talents with a willing and eager community. Don't let another season pass without you! Soon it will be summer with all of those excuses! We'd love to hear your song! Let me know if you are interested!

After careful consideration, it has been decided choir rehearsals will remain on Tuesdays at 7pm in the church. Please keep that in mind when you decide to attend. Thank you.

~ Suzanne Delahunt, Director of Music

Support Hartman Center Golf Tournament

Attention golfers: come to the Hartman Center Golf Outing Saturday, May 9 at 1:30pm at Deer Valley Golf Course, Hummelstown. Your \$75 registration fee supports the center's outdoor ministries and camper scholarships, and includes greens fee, cart, prizes, and a delicious dinner. Sign up as a foursome or individually. Registration forms are in the narthex (due by May 6) or register online at www.hartmancenter.com. See Verna Labrador for more information.

