

Grace United Church of Christ

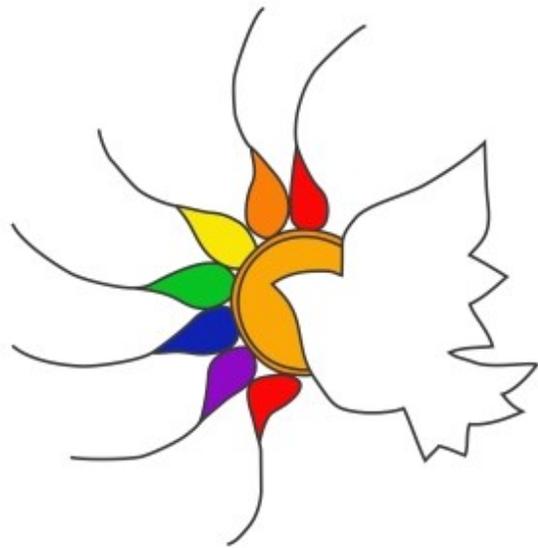
Shalom

March 2015

Rev. Katie Cort, Pastor

Lynn K. Miller, editor

Thank you to story contributors and proofreaders.



Let's Try That Again

Hello friends! As I write this, the latest of our snow storms is melting off of the sidewalks outside, and our committees are trying to figure out when to re-reschedule snow-cancelled meetings. No leader ever wants to be put in the position of deciding whether or not to cancel an event due to weather issues or any other reason. That person, or team of people, must weigh the dangers of travel with the benefits of attendance. Sometimes we don't cancel, and we freeze to the bone. Sometimes we cancel, and the bright sun shines.

This Lenten season has been particularly tricky with trying to ensure we are able to gather and worship as a community while also doing so safely and (physically) comfortably. No matter which option is chosen, this often means changes have to be made. Our Ash Wednesday service whittled down from a standard service to a small gathering of the chilly faithful. The service for the first Sunday in Lent was cancelled, leaving us unable to reflect together on what it might mean to enter into such a season together. And, yet it is these very changes that force us to stop in our tracks and reevaluate ourselves and everything around us. So, while we might think that Mother Nature is at war with God right now, it might just be they are working closer together than we realize. Because, during the season of Lent, we are called to stop and take a moment out of time to reassess.

The next time weather or transportation issues, or anything else unseen causes plans to be changed, let us try to challenge ourselves to see past the frustration and the annoyance of this challenge that has slipped into our perfectly-planned lives. Instead, let us see these as divine interruptions. What are we being called to look more closely at in this moment? What could we be reexamining during this gift of time? If we trust enough to loosen our grip on a well-ordered life, what gift might the chaos of God be able to bring us in these most unexpected ways?

~ Pastor Katie

*remember, redevelop, refine, rekindle, rebirth, reward, revive,
restart, reform, reunite, refresh, rebuild, recycle, redeem,
relieve, rebound, reflect, remind, reopen, redraw, renew,
reinvent, reclaim, recreate, reboot, relax*

re-Lent

This Lenten season join a small group as we share with one another the thoughts and questions that arise from reading *re-Lent*, a UCC Stillspeaking Writers' Group daily devotional.

We have free copies for everyone, and you are encouraged to join one of the following groups:

Sundays, 9am in the Fellowship Hall
Mondays, 7pm at Jim & Karen Wentz's home
Wednesdays, 6:30pm in the Fellowship Hall

~ Spiritual Life & Growth Committee

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 PastorKatie-Cort@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.

Looking Ahead to Holy Week

Maundy Thursday

Thursday, April 2, at 6pm in the 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

Time to Order Easter Flowers



Easter Sunday, April 5, the sanctuary will be adorned with a variety of spring flowers. There will be colorful tulips, daffodils, and tête-à-têtes. Orders will be due by Sunday, March 15, and payment is due when the order is placed. Descriptions, prices and order forms will be included in Sunday bulletins.

A Timely Reminder

Daylight Saving Time begins Sunday, March 8 — Remember to turn your clocks ahead.



Spring Work Day Needs Helping Hands

Mark your calendars for the Spring Work Day Saturday, April 18 from 8am to 12 (rain date is the following Saturday, April 25). All are welcome to help with tasks both indoors and out. A good turnout means less work for all. Coffee and doughnuts will be provided. Thank you from the Property Committee.

Centennial Capital Campaign Update

As the second year of our three-year capital campaign ended, we needed contributions totaling about \$120,450 to be on track to reach our campaign goal of \$180,859. Our total contributions as of January 31 were \$124,692! Thank you, Grace families and friends!



*Grace upon Grace
for a second century*

~ Centennial Capital Campaign Committee

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 (ex officio)

Congo Life Offers Lenten Luncheon Invitation



One of the wonderful things about the Lenten season at Grace is the weekly soup and bread lunches after the service. It's a great time for our cooks and bakers to share their talents as well as a time for fellowship. The members of the Congregational Life Committee invite everybody to stay after worship during Lent for lunch.

Be on the lookout for the date and time of the Grace Church trip to Avalanche Xpress in York County to go snow tubing. We will announce the date, time and price in the Sunday announcements. Never fear, if riding an inner tube down a snowy mountain isn't your cup of cocoa you can spend the time sitting by a cozy fire pit with a hot beverage and your friends.

Congo Life has more activities coming as we head into spring. Stay tuned to *Shalom*, the Sunday bulletins and Sunday announcements for details.

~ Congregational Life Committee

Sign Up for the Cape May Adult Retreat

Friday, May 1 — Monday, May 4

It's a little cold to walk the beach or journey to the lighthouse but we need to plan to do that! This year the dates are May 1-4 (beginning Friday afternoon/evening and ending on Sunday morning with worship.) It is possible to stay until 10am Monday.

There will be a sign-up sheet in the narthex (lobby). The cost is \$100.00. Shared rides and communal meals will be available.

Plan now to attend. For further details talk with Jessie Dombach or Dottie Book.

Memorial Bells of Grace to Perform in Regional Bell Festival

Everyone is invited to the Lancaster-Lebanon Bell Festival Saturday, March 14 at Palm Lutheran Church, 11 West Cherry St, Palmyra, in the multipurpose room. This day-long workshop/mini concert for 130 bell ringers will end with a concert from 2:45 – 3:15pm. Open to the public, the concert is free, but seating is limited.

The workshop is held bi-annually and draws beginning to advanced groups of bell ringers whose bells range from two to five octaves. The guest conductor this year is award winning composer-conductor Michael Helman from Cape Coral, Florida. Come and support the Memorial Bells of Grace.



Parish and Community Health Resources

Ask Dr. Trudie: *“And in the End...”*

I am a terrible procrastinator, and in some instances can be the poster child for “Do as I say, not as I do” when it comes to staying healthy. March is, among other things, Colonoscopy Awareness Month, and by now you’ve figured out I wasn’t exactly first in line when I turned 50. Of course, I badgered my husband to have the procedure done, and he grudgingly agreed since his grandmother had died of colon cancer. I, on the other hand, put off this simple, painless procedure because it’s probably the ONLY disease my family hasn’t had. I finally gave in because my health insurance company gave me a discount on having the colonoscopy. Yes, I can be bought. So of course, now I’m going to try to encourage those of you who’ve passed the half-century mark and haven’t had one to talk with your doctor about getting it done.

Colorectal cancer is not sexist, occurring pretty much equally in men and women. It does seem to be more prevalent in African Americans and somewhat less common in Latinos. There is a genetic predisposition, but diets heavy in red meat and low in fiber, smoking, and alcohol can put you at risk. The good news is colon cancer is one of the most preventable cancers thanks to screening colonoscopies. The American College of Gastroenterology recommends starting screenings at 50, or 45 if there is a family history. If the initial screening is normal, the procedure should be repeated every ten years. If you are in a high risk category, or if the doc finds polyps (protruding growths that may become cancerous), it’s an every five year event.

The procedure itself is painless; thanks to short-acting anesthetics, you’ll get some of the best sleep of your life. The tricky part is

the prep, although this is not nearly as unpleasant as it was years ago. Yes, you need to drink a good bit of Gatorade mixed with a laxative and will make several trips to the john, but I can testify it was less unpleasant than having an intestinal bug. Maybe you’ve heard about the little camera you can swallow and let it photograph your colon; it may sound appealing, in that you don’t need to bare your butt to an almost complete stranger (NOT the case in my experience). However, you still need to do the prep, and if the camera shows polyps, you’re still gonna need to have a ‘scope so the gastroenterologist can biopsy them.

Obviously, if precancerous polyps are removed, they can’t become cancer. On the other hand, if cancer is found early, life saving surgery can be performed. Surgery is the only cure for colon cancer, with chemotherapy being reserved for inoperable disease and metastasis. It doesn’t take a lot of common sense to realize early recognition is critical; while I tend to think I have a lot of common sense, clearly I did not when it came to the subject at hand.

So, eat a diet rich in fiber with lots of fruits and vegetables. Be judicious about red meat, watch your alcohol, and of course, DON’T SMOKE. (This is the one bad habit I never had, so I can stand on my soapbox with impunity here.) Talk with your doctor about your family health history so he or she will know when to start badgering you about a screening colonoscopy, and please, do as I say, not as I did, on this account.

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

Hartman Center Hosts Spring Open House

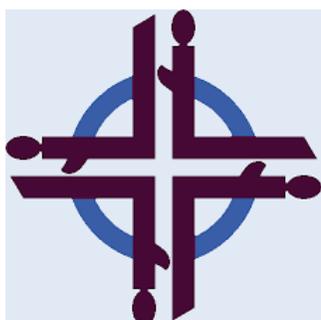
If you've never been to Hartman Center, plan to visit Saturday, May 16 for an All Camp Open House beginning at 11am.

Located in the mountains about 20 miles southeast of State College, Hartman Center is the camp, conference and retreat center of the Penn Central Conference of the United Church of Christ. The Open House includes tours of the camp and a complimentary lunch as well as some of the games and activities involved in Hartman Center camping.



Camps run from June through September (plus a Fall Youth Retreat November 20-21). Anyone signing up for camp before April 1 receives a \$50 early bird discount. Brochures listing the camp themes are located in the narthex. Camps include archery, fishing, guitar playing, soccer, writing and Grand Camps for grandparents and grandchildren. Online registration is available at hartmancenter.com. Check it out!

World Day of Prayer Celebrated Friday, March 6



World Day of Prayer is a worldwide movement of Christian women of many traditions who come together to observe a common day of prayer the first Friday of March each year, and who, in many countries, have a continuing relationship in prayer and service.

This year's country of focus is the Bahamas. Their WDP representatives write:

"Let's not forget the call for responsible stewardship of God's creation shared by all; whether it is those who step in the pink sand or swim in turquoise water of the archipelago, or those who enjoy whatever natural beauty has been gifted by God to your corner of the world."

Through World Day of Prayer, people around the world affirm their faith in Jesus Christ; share their hopes and fears, their joys and sorrows, their opportunities and needs.

Through World Day of Prayer, women especially are encouraged

- to become aware of the whole world and no longer live in isolation
- to be enriched by the faith experience of Christians of other countries and cultures
- to become aware of their talents and use them in the service of society

Through World Day of Prayer, we affirm that prayer and action are inseparable and both have immeasurable influence in the world.

~ From Worlddayofprayer.net/



One Great Hour of Sharing provides support for health, education, refugee, agricultural, and emergency relief initiatives in 138 countries by working with local, national and global partners. When disaster strikes, funds go to help immediately. It is administered by the United Church of Christ in Cleveland through its Wider Church Ministries, Global Sharing of Resources. The offering will be received Sunday, March 15. This year, why not make a donation to the OGHs offering and you won't need to determine where and how much you will give when a disaster strikes?

The Parish Resource Center presents:

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/.

Like millions of people under 40, Rachel Held Evans didn't want to go to church anymore. The hypocrisy, the politics, the gargantuan building budgets, the scandals — church culture seemed so far removed from Jesus. Yet, despite her cynicism and misgivings, something kept drawing her back to church. And so she set out on a journey to understand church and to find her place in it.

Centered around seven sacraments, Evans' quest takes readers through a liturgical year with stories about baptism, communion, confirmation, confession, marriage, vocation, and death that are funny, heartbreaking, and sharply honest.

A memoir about making do and taking risks, about the messiness of community and the power of grace, *Searching for Sunday* is about overcoming cynicism to find hope and, somewhere in between, church.



What Can You Give? Your Voice!



We are always seeking new choir members especially as we enter Lent and prepare for Holy Week and Easter. Although I have always loved winter and snow, this season has been difficult. Bearing that in mind, we are changing our choir rehearsal to Sundays, either before or after the service. Which time is decided upon will be announced beforehand. My thinking is it might be easier to attend rehearsal if you are already here. We can all appreciate the great contribution the choir makes to worship, but without voices, there is no choir! A special thank you to our stalwart and steady members! Also, I would like to invite all string players — violin, viola, cello, and bass — to join the choir in performing Mozart's *Ave Verum* for Easter. Interested, available? I would love to speak with you.

On a personal note, I am pleased to announce that I have won the role of Madame Dindon in *Les Cage aux Folles* to be presented this summer at the Ephrata Performing Arts Center. More to follow. I am assistant teacher in the Alternative Education classroom at Manheim Township High School. Although I was not quite convinced at first, I have come to appreciate this position as an answer to prayer! Thank you, Grace UCC community for your prayers. Finally, I am delighted to begin a new journey with Pastor Katie. Stay tuned for exciting updates as we begin the dance!

~ Suzanne Delahunt, Director of Music

Grace United Church of Christ

*Welcoming All
Sharing Love
Proclaiming God's Grace*

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