



# Growing with Grace

March 2018

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*Welcoming All • Sharing Love • Proclaiming God's Grace*

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## *March 4th!*

“In the last days it will be,’ God declares, ‘that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams.” - Acts 2:17

The news is full of angry voices right now. Angry politicians, angry institutions, angry families and friends. And, on the other side there are voices trying to quiet everyone down ... especially those of youth. The voices of high school kids are getting louder and louder, and right now they are refusing to quiet down, even when politicians and institutions raise voices against them. When children are very young, we teach them to speak, but as they grow up, it becomes “children should be seen and not heard.” We stop encouraging their voices, and we stop listening to them. Not only have we discounted younger people, but we have forgotten our Bible.

In the very earliest days of the church, we were told that “in the last days” youth will become our prophets. The voices of the youth are calling us to follow them and perhaps it’s time that we listened. I am not suggesting that we are heading towards the ends of times, but what if those “last days” were the last days of mindless killing, the last days of lack of mental health care, the last days of amassing items of destruction?

The Bible doesn’t have clear-cut answers, nor do any of today’s loud voices. But, perhaps we are being called to listen in new ways to new voices and new ideas. Perhaps there are prophecies and visions and dreams if we are willing to look. God tells us “Behold, I am doing a new thing,” so we are called to watch all around us for new things and to see what they have to tell us.

So, I ask us to listen. No perfect answer will come from just one voice, but new

answers can only begin with new voices. After all the prophet Isaiah also told us: “the wolf will live with the lamb ...and a little child will lead them.” Listen. And, be led. And, let us see the new thing that is being done.

Amen,  
Pastor Katie

## Partners in Faith

### Church Attendance?

In a recent edition in the Faith and Values section of the LNP, there was an article entitled: "How declining churchgoing harms society." Along with describing the negative effects of declining church attendance, the article talked about the benefits of going to church regularly.

Benefits of attending church are well documented. Studies show that going to church regularly adds two to three years to your life as well as promoting healthier lifestyles. In addition to the health benefits, church attendance increases social ties and strengthens existing ones, "being in community," people take care of each other.

When it comes to children, studies showed that "Youth involved in religious organizations take tougher courses, get higher grades and test scores and are less likely to drop out of high school." They also "have better relationships with their parents and other adults, have more friendships with high-performing peers, are more involved in sports and other extracurricular activities." "A child whose parents attend church regularly is 40 to 50 percent more likely to go to college."

Religion also has an enormous impact on American businesses. The "value of services provided by religious organizations totals \$1.2 trillion."

Sadly, those who are most vulnerable as a group, meaning they don't generate the same level of societal relationships, are the majority deciding not to attend church. If we are to try to improve our society, we need to reach out to this group of people.

James 2:8-9 reads: *You do well if you really fulfill the royal law according to the scripture, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." But if you show partiality, you commit sin and are convicted by the law as transgressors.*

**And here lies the 'Good News.' Grace UCC is here for everyone. We welcome and accept persons unconditionally!**

Yours in Christ,

Karen K. Wentz  
Assembly President

## **Music Ministry Update**

Lent is an interesting and confusing time in the church calendar. I never grew up observing it and only found out about it once I started working at a UCC church. I learned that Lent has something to do with the Passion and the 40 days leading up to it, which offers an opportunity for introspection and feeling pious. Of course, Lent has a much deeper theological significance. Its most devout observers adhere to a strict fast and contemplate mortality through the story of the cross. While I don't belong to that category, I find that sacred choral music from past centuries provokes and disturbs me more than usual, and I hope to share some of it with you.

During Lent, I will be playing two movements from the Catholic Mass: the Kyrie and the Benedictus. These movements will be taken from early sung masses (late Medieval and early Renaissance eras) and transcribed for the organ. The text of the Kyrie is simple: "Lord have mercy (Kyrie eleison). Christ have mercy (Christe eleison). Lord have mercy (Kyrie eleison)." Some of the most exquisite language in the Bible is inspired by lamentation and penance; this locution is echoed by the saints who wrote their own prayers, chants, and mantras, which were stitched together in the fabric of the mass. However, and without question, worship must begin with a cry for mercy and an acknowledgment of our base nature needing constant forgiveness. While celebratory and triumphal in its Old Testament spirit, the Benedictus also portends Palm Sunday: Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord. (Benedictus qui venit in nomine Domini). Hosanna in the highest. (Osanna in excelsis).

During the month of March, the choir and praise band will be singing a number of times as well. Among important dates are March 4, when the choir and praise band will sing "Shout to the Lord" by Darlene Zschech; Palm Sunday (March 25) when, again, the combined forces will sing "I Am Not Alone" by Kari Jobe; and, on Maundy Thursday (March 29), "Let My Prayer Be Set Forth Before Thee" by Ukrainian composer Dmitri Bortniansky (1751-1821). As a bonus, the choir will be using the Church Slavonic text in its original form.

On behalf of the music ministry, we eagerly look forward to worshipping with you throughout the rest of these 40 days of Lent.

*Sam Tarasenko, Director of Music*

## ***Bring a Friend!***

Grace, Grub, and Gab will meet March 21 at 6:30pm at Tellus 360. Join us for a bite to eat and a tasty beverage and a bit of open, thought-provoking conversation about faith, life, and everything in between. Bring a friend - hope to see you there! If you'd like to attend and don't want to drive at night, contact Amy Fishburn.

# March 2018 Worship Participants

*Please remember it is your responsibility to find a substitute or swap dates with another participant as needed, and then notify the church office of any changes. A complete list of worship volunteers -- to help you know who else has volunteered for each role -- is posted in the lobby and also available from the church office.*

## March 4, 2018

Greeters — Jim and Karen Wentz  
 Ushers —  
 \*Verna Labrador, Nick Santaniello, Jeff Wolfe  
 Lector — Fay Kasapidis  
 Liturgist — Holly Keller  
 Communion Set-up/Clean-up —  
 Christen Chew, Denise Pfeiffer  
 Prayer Candle Lighter — Herb McCollom  
 Fellowship Hosts —  
 Sara Ulrich  
 Counters — TBD  
 Bulletin Volunteer 3/2—Karen Wentz

## March 25, 2018

Greeters — John Markley, Cathy Hainley  
 Ushers —  
 \*Kay Charles, Christen Chew, Sara Ulrich  
 Lector — Jeff Hackenberger  
 Prayer Candle Lighter — Holly Keller  
 Fellowship Host — Jeff & Jessie Dombach  
  
 Bulletin volunteer 3/23 — Jessie Dombach  
 Newsletter Volunteer — Herb McCollum

## March 11, 2018

Greeters (10am) —  
 Herb McCollom, Christen Chew  
 Ushers — \*Jessie Dombach, Holly Keller, John  
 Markley  
 Lector — Amy Fishburn  
 Prayer Candle Lighter — Suzy Luber  
 Fellowship Hosts —  
 Nick and Lori Santaniello  
  
 Bulletin Volunteer 3/9 — Verna Labrador

## April 1, 2018

Greeters — Jessie Dombach, Verna Labrador  
 Ushers —  
 \*Jim & Karen Wentz, Kellie Wilson  
 Lector — Jennifer Swank  
 Liturgist — Rick Chamberlin  
 Communion Set-up/Clean-up —  
 Tom & Marilyn Miller  
 Prayer Candle Lighter — Herb McCollom  
 Fellowship Host — Heather Eshbach & Amy  
 Southall  
 Counters — TBD  
 Bulletin Volunteer — Karen Wents

## March 18, 2018

Greeters (10am) —  
 Holly Keller, Sara Ulrich  
 Ushers —  
 \*Beth Bowers, Cathy Hainley, Suzy Luber  
 Lector — Herb McCollum  
 Prayer Candle Lighter — Jeff Dombach  
 Fellowship Hosts — Tom & Marilyn Miller  
  
 Bulletin Volunteer 3/16 — Ve Wolfe



\* Denotes head usher

# March 2018

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	
					1 6:30pm Choir	2 1pm AARP Chorus	3 9am-4pm Mountain Dulcimer Players of Lancaster Dave Haas work- shops
4 9am 1st Corinthians study 10:30am Worship Communion Joyful Noise	5 6:45pm Memorial Bells of Grace	6	7	8 6:30pm Choir 7:30pm Grace Wor- ship Band rehearsal	9 1pm AARP Chorus 7:30pm ROSE	10 8am Breakfast at 1st Reformed 8am-12:30pm Safe Church cluster	
11 9am 1st Corinthians study 10:30am Worship Little Shepherds	12 6:45pm Memorial Bells of Grace	13	14	15 6:30pm Choir	16 1pm AARP Chorus	17 10am-12:30pm Mountain Dulcimer Players of Lancaster	
18 9am 1st Corinthians study 10:30am Worship Little Shepherds	19 6:45pm Memorial Bells of Grace	20	21 7pm Mountain Dulcimer Players of Lancaster	22 6:30pm Choir 7:30pm Grace Wor- ship Band rehearsal	23 1pm AARP Chorus	24	
25 <b>Palm Sunday</b> 9am 1st Corinthians study 10:30am Worship Little Shepherds	26 6:45pm Memorial Bells of Grace	27 7pm Embrace meet- ing	28 6:30pm Assembly	29 <b>Maundy Thursday</b> 7pm Service	30 <b>Good Friday</b> 7pm Service	31	

## Thank You!

- \* Our December offering to One Great Hour of Sharing totaled \$576! Almost 60 percent of the UCC's offering supports international development initiatives, including annual support for missionaries. Currently there are 4 OGHS supported missionaries and 2 Global Mission Interns working in disaster relief, health care, education, sustainable agricultural development, and refugee support. The offering also funds disaster preparedness and response, and disaster related volunteer initiatives in the U.S.
- \* Grace's January Joyful Noise offering to the Lancaster YWCA winter shelter totaled \$116.91.
- \* March Joyful Noise offering will go to:



The organization was created with the hope of building a bridge to unite special waiting children and families who wish to adopt a child but are burdened by the substantial cost associated with adopting a child internationally. Although they assist with advocating for special children, **Brittany's Hope is not an adoption agency**. They raise funds and work with adoption agencies to lower the cost of adopting special needs children. *One hundred percent of all donations received are used to place financial grants or to benefit one of their humanitarian efforts.*

## Opportunities:

- ✎ Do you have a few free hours during the week? Do you like to help others? How about volunteering at Conestoga View Nursing & Rehab? They are looking for individuals to help with various aspects. They include: Bus Trip companion, Activity Assistant, and Friendly Visitor. See the flyer on our bulletin board in the hallway.
- ✎ This winter Grace is again working together with local faith communities volunteering with the Lancaster County Council of Churches and the YWCA at their emergency cold weather shelter for women & children. The shelter can accommodate 46, providing a warm, safe, and dry place to stay overnight during the winter season. Talk to Verna, Pat, Karen, Jim, Jeff D, Jessie, Amy Fishburn or Pastor Katie to hear about their experience volunteering last year. To go this website to volunteer: [www.timetosignup.com/shirleymusser](http://www.timetosignup.com/shirleymusser)

# *One Great Hour of Sharing*

The annual One Great Hour of Sharing offering will be collected on Sunday, March 11.

One Great Hour of Sharing, as part of Our Churches Wider Mission, is the special mission offering of the United Church of Christ that carries God's message of love and hope to people in crisis. The UCC works with international partners to provide sources of clean water, food, education and health care, small business micro-credit, advocacy and resettlement for refugees and displaced persons, and emergency relief and rehabilitation. OGHS also supports domestic and international ministries for disaster preparedness and response.



## **Notes of Gratitude:**

Joyful Noise recipient Humane Society International: "Thank you for your gift of \$24.87. Your support makes it possible for us to strike at the root of problems affecting animals and thus prevent animal suffering both now and in the future"

Joyful Noise recipient YWCA Winter Shelter: "Thank you for your recent gift of \$116.91. Due to your generosity, we will continue to meet our mission...eliminating racism, empowering women and promoting peace, justice, freedom, and dignity for all."

Special offering recipient, UCC's One Great Hour of Sharing: "Thank you for your offering of \$116.91 and for being inspired by God's grace, for partnering with us in loving our neighbors and uniting with us to build a just world for all."

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**Address Service Requested**



*Dates To Remember:*

Thursday, March 8:	CHOIR 6:30pm WORSHIP BAND 7:30pm
Saturday, March 10:	Serving Breakfast @ 1st Reformed In Lancaster
Thursday, March 15:	CHOIR 6:30pm
Sunday, March 25:	PALM SUNDAY WORSHIP 10:30am
Friday, March 30	GOOD FRIDAY Service 7pm
Sundays, before Worship:	Bible Study 9am