

Grace United Methodist Church
1718 Avalon Avenue
Joliet, Illinois 60435-5799



“Christ is Risen! He is Risen Indeed!”

“Why do you look for the living among the dead? He isn’t here, but he has been raised. Remember what he told you while he was still in Galilee, that the Son of Man must be handed over to sinners, crucified, and on the third day rise again.” (Luke 24:5-8)

We greet each other on Easter morning with the ancient affirmation of faith. “He is not here. He is Risen! He is Risen indeed!”

I am just wondering about the intense atmosphere prior to the appearance of Jesus in the safe house after he was raised from the dead. “They were startled and frightened, thinking they saw a ghost.” It was a common belief that the soul lingers for a while after death. Jesus offered peace and revealed his wounds. The risen Christ before them.

How did the disciples mark the passing of time? Did they extinguish the candles to a bare minimum so as not to attract attention? I read that in ancient times, a candle is used and nails were inserted at intervals so that when the wax is melted at that interval, the nail would fall down on the metal candle holder. It makes a sound on the metal candle holder and served as an “alarm clock.” In Jesus’ day, the community was looking for redemption and expect a new freedom. The resurrection will come at the end of time and that God was finally stepping in to make things new. There was a tone of urgency from the account of Luke. “He is not here. He has been raised!” God now inhabits our time and space. There is victory. There is joy in the Resurrection. The season of waiting is over. God’s plan revealed in His glorious appearance. We live in this revealed time.

Join us for our Holy Week and Easter services

- April 2 Palm Sunday with Holy Communion 8:00 and 10:30 a.m.
- April 6 Maundy Thursday with Holy Communion 7:00 p.m.
- April 7 Good Friday Prayer and Hymns 12:00-1:00 p.m. (Every 15 Minutes)
- April 8 Saturday Easter Egg Hunt 10:00-11:30 a.m.
- April 9 Sunrise Service at 8:00 a.m., followed by Easter Pancake Breakfast at 8:30 a.m., Easter Sunday with Holy Communion 10:30 a.m.



Happy Easter and Blessings to all of you,

Pastor Romir R. Esguerra

We invite you to join us for our Holy Week events:

- April 2 - Palm Sunday with Choir/Children singing and waving palm branches in the Processional at 10:30 a.m.**
- April 6 - Maundy Thursday service with Communion at 7:00 p.m.**
- April 7 - Good Friday Service from 12 noon to 1:00 p.m. (every 15 minutes)**
- April 8 - Easter Egg Hunt at 10:00—11:30 a.m. Bring your basket.**
- April 9 - Easter Sunday Service at 8:00 a.m. & 10:30 a.m.
Pancake Breakfast 8:30 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. in Grace Place**





PALM SUNDAY - April 2

Communion Sunday—The Choir and Children's Choir will be singing together. Children will wave palm branches in the processional at 10:30 am worship.



SUNDAY SCHOOL NEWS— April 16 -

Food Pantry Mission Activity - Grocery Bags will be distributed by the Sunday School Children and Youth to encourage the donation of non-perishable items for local food pantries.



April 23 - Labyrinth Sunday -

The **Sunday School classes** will engage in a Labyrinth Prayer activity during Sunday School. The congregation will be encouraged to participate as an extension to the 10:30 a.m. Worship Service.

MAUNDY THURSDAY - April 6

We will have a 7pm Worship service with Communion.

GOOD FRIDAY - Good Friday Prayer and Hymns in the sanctuary 12:00-1:00 p.m. (Every 15 Minutes)

HOLY SATURDAY - April 8

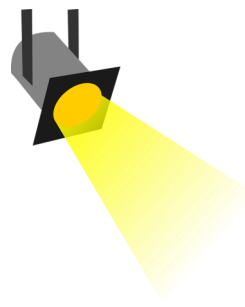
Easter Egg Hunt

EASTER SUNDAY — April 9

Sunrise Service at 8:00 a.m.
Easter Pancake Breakfast at 8:30 a.m.
Easter Sunday with Holy Communion at 10:30 a.m.



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
30 Youth Sunday						1
2 Palm Sunday 8am Worship 9 am Sun School 10:30 Worship	3	4 6:30p SPRC	5 6:15o Bells 7:30o Choir	6 7 a Men's Breakfast 7p Maundy Thursday Worship	7 12-1p Prayers in the Sanctuary	8 10am Easter Egg Hunt
9 Easter Sunday 8am Worship 8:30 Breakfast 10:30 Worship	10	11 6:30p Trustees	12 6:15p Bells 7:30p Choir	13 7 a Men's Breakfast	14 12pm Worship committee	15
16 8am Worship 9 am Sun School 10:30 Worship 'Lent is Love Food Food Collection'	17 5p Daybreak 	18 6:00a DayBreak 6:30 Daycare	19 11:30am Pantry 6:15p Bells 7:30p Choir	20 7 a Men's Breakfast	21 May Grace Notes Deadline	22 UWF Spring Auction & Potluck 10:00 a.m.
23 8am Worship 9 am Sun School 10:30 Worship Labyrinth Sunday	24	25 6:30p Finance 7pm 	26 6:15p Bells 7:30p Choir	27 7 a Men's Breakfast 	28	29 9-12p Church Spring Clean Up



MISSION SPOTLIGHT



UMCOR

We have a celebration to share. In 2022 our very generous church family donated \$6,321.00 to UMCOR. Already in 2023, we have donated \$1,500.00 in special appeals.

We are recognized in the Prairie Central District.

2022 were:

- ASP: \$9863
- Ridgewood Pantry: \$2649
- Daybreak: \$1583
- Lakota Indian Trip: \$3144
- UMCOR: \$6,321
- CROP Hunger Walk: \$620
- All Others: \$2149
- TOTAL: \$26,432

2023 are:

- ASP: \$3603
- Ridgewood Pantry: \$83
- Daybreak: \$396
- Lakota Indian Trip: \$36
- UMCOR: \$1500
- All Others: \$141
- TOTAL: \$5,759

FEEDING THE HUNGRY

Nineteen members of the Grace church family participated in a special food packing session for FEED MY STARVING CHILDREN held at Lincolnway West High School on Saturday March 18th.

During the 2-hour session we packaged enough meals to feed 90 children for an entire year and we had a good time doing it.

Thanks to all who participated.

April – (Local Benevolences) ASP

Funds collected will be used to help fund the ASP mission trip in June. This year our team will be leaving on Saturday, June 10th— returning Saturday, June 17th. The ASP Team will be commissioned at 9:30am worship service on Sunday, June 4th.

We have had a Potato Bar and Stock Sales to support our youth missionaries.

Thank you for all your support!

OUR CHURCH'S FINANCIAL HEALTH

February				
2023 Income & Expense Summary				
Comparison to expected cash flow for budget approved 12/120/22				
	February		Year to Date	
	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual
INCOME	\$19,808	\$20,079	\$48,116	\$49,924
EXPENSES				
Apportionment	\$2,317	\$2,317	\$4,634	\$4,634
Salaries & Benefits	\$14,887	\$14,912	\$29,774	\$29,473
Administration	\$1,221	\$926	\$2,442	\$3,109
Programming	\$993	\$415	\$1,866	\$1,511
Church Buildings	\$6,234	\$10,173	\$17,043	\$17,230
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$25,592	\$28,743	\$55,759	\$55,957
SURPLUS OR (DEFICIT):	-\$5,784	-\$8,664	-\$7,643	-\$6,033

- Notes: 1) Through February, income is about \$2K higher than expected.
 2) Through February, expenses are tracking very close to budget.

SENDING PRAYERS ~

Let us keep in our prayers our brothers and sisters in Mississippi after the devastating tornado. We pray for them as they begin to rebuild their lives and their homes.



Let us we pray for mothers, fathers, families, coworkers, teachers, and children who grieve as a result of the school shooting in Nashville. We pray for their healing and our own.

Thank you for the prayers, calls, texts and in-person visits while I was in the hospital and during my long stay at Alden Rehab Center. I'm grateful for my church family. Jolene Johnson

Thanks for the gifts of time and talent shared by those who give leadership to Grace Church. Joe and Maida McCormick

Thank you for all the cards and prayers sent our way. Ron & Peggy Tucker

On behalf of the Sunday School Children and Youth, we want to express thanks for everyone who assisted and participated in our Pretzel Sunday / Friendship Sunday Activity and for those of you who contributed to the Appalachian Service Project Stock Sale to raise funding for the Youth Mission Trip in June 2023.

Troop 15 wanted to take a minute to say farewell and extend our thanks to Grace for chartering us since 2017. This was a wonderful community to be apart of and we thank you all for the wonderful support over the years.



News Splash for Grace Notes from Cathy Boswell: Be on the look-out for **Cathy Boswell**, daughter of Hank and Clarice who will be inducted in the **"Women's Basketball Hall of Fame"** on April 29th 2023 in Knoxville, Tenn.

Cathy is a Gold Medal Olympian as well as National and International honors for sports and humanitarian work with children. She was unanimous voted by the Hall of Fame committee for her services to others over the years.

Thank You!



Congratulations!

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY

- Thomas & Sandy Cowgill April 5, 1975
- Bradley & Heather Linko April 7, 2001
- Tom & Kimberly Kinman April 26, 2008
- Rev. Romir & Vren Esguerra April 27, 1985
- Justin & Samantha Farrar April 27, 2007
- David & Valerie Jelinek April 27, 1985
- Fred & Linda Jursinic April 27, 1975
- Mark & Karen Storcz April 27, 1984

HAPPY BIRTHDAY APRIL

- 4/03 ~ Joan Landers, Brian Parro
- 4/08 ~ Amber Kolodziej
- 4/10 ~ Donald Lutz
- 4/11 ~ Gary Hecht
- 4/12 ~ Sheryl Caudle
- 4/13 ~ Matthew Meinhart
- 4/15 ~ Matthew Sabella
- 4/16 ~ Spencer Farrar
- 4/20 ~ Andrea Schoenrock
- 4/22 ~ Madison Fraser
- 4/24 ~ Gail Shaw
- 4-25—Jared Esguerra
- 4/25 ~ Melissa Meinhart
- 4/27 ~ Paul Schroeder
- 4/28 ~ Rebecca Linko, Hannah Linko



Spring CLEAN UP

Spring is just around the corner which means that a spring clean-up of the church and grounds will take place on Saturday, April 29 at 9 am til noon.

Join in the fun to spruce up our church for summer. Grab your rakes, pruners, buckets and rags or use church tools. All help is greatly appreciated. Mark your calendar now!

Spring has Sprung!
 May we all have a new fresh journey with Jesus. Spring into your faith and let's support each other. We all need a pick me up and fresh start from time to time.



MARCH ATTENDANCE	WORSHIP 8AM 10:30AM	CHILDREN'S SUNDAY SCHOOL	ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL
Feb 22	Ash	Wednesday	32
March 5	15/72	19	7
March 12	4/58	21	13
March 19	10/82	16	11
March 26	9/82	21	20