



GRACE NOTES

Volume 12 Issue 4

April 2024

The flowers appear on the earth, the time of singing has come, and the voice of the turtledove is heard in our land. (Song of Songs 2:12)

Spring came early this year. The flowers emerged from its dark cocoon and greeted the world again. It grows and it dies and something else will occupy that small space. It is Easter season and gives hope another chance.

I love the reference to the “flowers appearing on the earth and the time of singing has come.” I read about the “Rose of Sharon” as a symbol of Jesus Christ. The “Rose” thrives in harsh conditions, yet beautiful and fragrant. This is how we live.

Paul wrote , “For we are the aroma of Christ to God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing, to one a fragrance from death to death, to the other a fragrance from life to life. (2 Corinthians 2:15-17)

There is no mention of Jesus’ favorite flower. He mentioned about the lilies of the field and how God protects them. If so, then we are in the palm of His hands.

It dawned on me that the “Rose of Sharon” falls under the genus Hibiscus. You can find it Tropical countries with different names. I have ignored these flowers because they were abundant when I was growing up. The flower is not something a person gives away because it is so common. I have to rethink that in light of Christ and the Easter hope that he offers.

Jesus is calling us to a new relationship. We can learn about Christ in church and our expressions of faith. We find Christ best of all in the heart. “Any one who is in Christ is a new creation, the old has passed away; behold the new has come.” (2 Cor 5:17)

Next time I see a Hibiscus plant or Rose of Sharon, I will treat it differently. God has shown us what is good. The time of praising God will bless the people around us with the gift of peace, justice, mercy and grace. The world is renewed through Christ alone.

Pastor Romir R. Esguerra

God's Work Our Hands

Blood Pressure Screening

The first Sunday of the month at 10 am in the Library, our dedicated nurses here at Grace UMC will be taking Blood Pressure Screenings. Stop in and chat while they check on your good health.



GRATITUDE CORNER

We are grateful for all who shared their gifts to make this year's Lent and Easter



Thanks to singers and musicians who share their talents for our Lenten and Easter worship services.

A huge THANK YOU to all for all the help in the office for Lenten and Easter office work.

Debbie Goepper and Geri Hoffman for helping with the Easter mailing. Linda and Steve Meister for help with bulletins. Peggy Weems, Kevin McOlgan, Sharon Fisher for all their help with music and bulletins. Barb Fisher and Matt Runnels with the sanctuary. We really appreciate your help.

Adrienne Hartman and Pastor Romir



FLOWERS OF SPRING

Doesn't that have a nice ring to it? The United Women in Faith will hold their spring auction on Saturday, April 13 at 10AM in Grace Place. Plan to come and bring an item or two for the auction.

This fundraiser helps support our missional outreach projects.

The auction is lots of fun! We will have a salad bar-type potluck after the auction.

Questions: Call Maida McCormack 815.254.4714

I'd like to say thank you for the prayers, phone calls, cards and well-wishes. Much appreciated!

Sharon Fisher

AA Meeting here at Grace UMC – There will no longer be weekday morning meetings at Grace UMC. As of April 1st they will only have Sunday morning meetings at 9:00 AM.

APRIL

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3 6:15o Bells 7:30p Choir	4 7 a Men's Breakfast	5	6 9-12p Church Spring Clean Up Restaurant Club 6pm Biaggie's
7 COMMUNION 8:30am Prayer 9 am Religious Ed 10 am Blood Pres- sure Screening 10:30 am Worship	8 SOLAR ECLIPSE 	9 6:30p SPRC	10 6:15o Bells 7:30p Choir	11 7 a Men's Breakfast	12	13 UWF Spring Auction & Potluck 10:00 a.m.
14 Labyrinth 8:30am Prayer 9 am Religious Ed 10:30 am Worship	15 5p Daybreak	16 6:00a DayBreak	17 11:30am Pantry 6:15p Bells 7:30p Choir	18 7 a Men's Breakfast	19	20
21 8:30am Prayer 9 am Religious Ed 10:30 am Worship	22	23 6:30p Finance Via ZOOM 7:15 p	24 6:15p Bells 7:30p Choir	25 7 a Men's Breakfast May Grace Notes Deadline	26	27
28 8:30am Prayer 9 am Religious Ed 10:30 am Worship 11:40am Worship mtg	29	30				

PALM SUNDAY

Our Palm Sunday worship was wonderful. Thank you Barb Fisher for the beautiful palm decorations in the sanctuary. Thank you music team for all the beautiful music on Palm Sunday.



OUR CHURCH'S FINANCIAL HEALTH

February

2024 Income & Expense Summary

Comparison to expected cash flow for budget approved 12/10/23

	February		Year to Date	
	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual
INCOME	\$21,709	\$18,031	\$50,917	\$38,236
EXPENSES				
Apportionment	\$2,525	\$2,166	\$5,050	\$4,274
Salaries & Benefits	\$14,129	\$14,094	\$33,043	\$32,572
Administration	\$1,129	\$1,414	\$2,258	\$4,300
Programming	\$791	\$557	\$1,583	\$204
Church Buildings	<u>\$6,350</u>	<u>\$10,260</u>	<u>\$17,962</u>	<u>\$17,301</u>
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$24,924	\$28,491	\$59,896	\$58,651
SURPLUS OR (DEFICIT):	-\$3,215	-\$10,460	-\$8,979	-\$20,415

Notes: 1) Income in 2024 much less than expected. Little pre-payment of pledges.
 2) Expenses in 2024 just about as expected.

ASP Stock sales was in the month of March. Thanks to our generous congregation, our ASP 2024 Team will proudly represent Grace UMC this June.



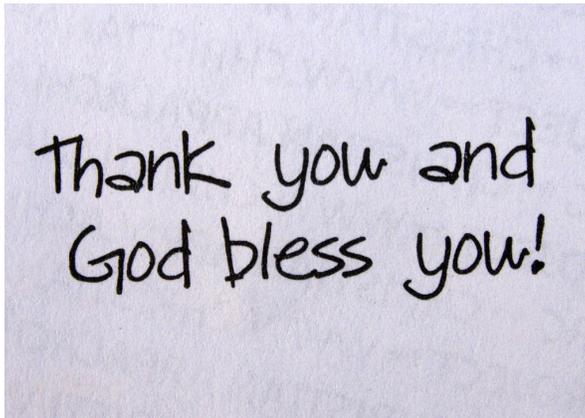
A Note of Thanks

Several weeks ago, the announcement was made that Pastor Nancy Hunter will end her ministry with Grace Church on April 28, 2024. Pastor Nancy led the Christian Education Ministry and enriched our liturgical and worship life sharing the Good News with the Children. She served well and we are thankful for her faith in God and her love for one another.

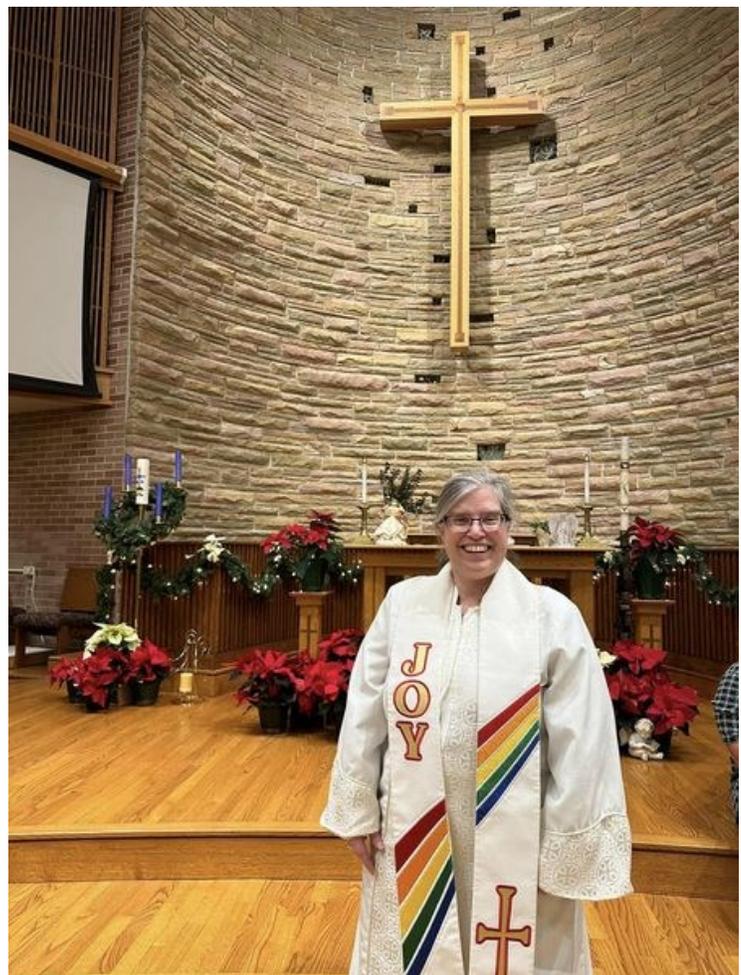
Our lives are marked by seasons of change. Saying goodbye is difficult. It is difficult because we have cultivated and nourished our love for one another. Paul wrote to the Philippians 2:13, *“What I’m getting at, friends, is that you should simply keep on doing what you have done from the beginning...Redouble your efforts. Be energetic in your life of salvation, reverent and sensitive before God. That energy is God’s energy, an energy deep within you. God himself is willing and working at what will give him the most pleasure.”*

Goodbye and God bless Pastor Nancy. We pray that you will carry on and find a new way to serve. Thank you for being a part of Grace Church and looking forward to building a new relationship.

Pastor Romir Esguerra



Good Luck!!



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

HAPPY BIRTHDAY APRIL

- 4/03 ~ Joan Landers, Brian Parro
- 4/08 ~ Amber Kolodziej
- 4/10 ~ Donald Lutz
- 4/10 ~ Chuck Pons
- 4/11 ~ Gary Hecht
- 4/12 ~ Sheryl Caudle
- 4/13 ~ Matthew Meinhart
- 4/15 ~ Matthew Sabella
- 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
- 4/29 ~ Eileen Hicks

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 27 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 ATTEND-ENCE	WORSHIP 8AM	CHILDREN'S SUNDAY	ADULT SUNDAY
March 3	83	21	22
March 10	78	26	17
March 17	79	21	16
March 24	90	21	16
March 31	150	EASTER	Maundy 53



Bring May flowers

