



# GRACE NOTES

Volume 12 Issue 3 March 2024

Dear Church family,

I ran across a folk tale for Easter about three little trees that stood and dreamed of what they wanted to become when they grew up. The year it was written was unknown and the author anonymous. I am paraphrasing the story for Easter and sharing this again.

“Once upon a mountaintop, stood three little trees with big hopes and dreams for the future. The first one gazed upon the stars and said “ I wanted to hold treasure. I want to be covered with gold and precious stones. I will be the most beautiful treasure chest in the world. The second one looked at the small stream flowing on its way to the ocean. “ I want to be carrying powerful kings and travel mighty waters. I will be the strongest ship in the world.” The third little tree looked down into the valley below where men and women worked many hours. I do not want to leave the mountain. “I wanted to be the tallest tree and when people look at me, they will give thanks to God and the grandeur of heaven.”

Time went by and the little trees grew tall. One day three woodcutters climbed the mountain and went to work. He looked at the first tree and with a swoop of his ax, the first tree fell. “ This will become a beautiful chest loaded with treasures. The second wood cutter said this tree is strong and this will become my ship to travel mighty waters. The third woodcutter said that any kind of tree will be good for him and the third tree fell.

The first tree was brought to the carpenter’s shop but the carpenter fashioned the tree into a feed box for animals. The second tree was brought to a shipyard and instead was made into a simple fishing boat. The third tree was confused because all he wanted was to remain in the mountain and point to heaven and reveal the glory of God. The tree was cut into strong beams and left in the lumber yard.

Days passed by quickly and therefore the dreams of the trees were forgotten. Then one night, golden beams of light poured over the first tree. The mother placed her newborn child in the feed box. “ This manger is beautiful, ” the mother said to her husband. The tree was holding the greatest treasure of all. The second tree was out in the lake with a group of weary men and all of a sudden there was a storm. Fear was in the boat. A gentle man in the boat, got up and stretched his hands and the wind and the sea obeyed his command. He was the Messiah. The third tree was startled because he was yanked from the woodpile and heard voices of men and women, some weeping and some laughing. A man was brought forward and was nailed to the tree. He was innocent of the charges and yet he was condemned. The third tree knew that God’s love changed everything. People gazed at the tree and the glory of God in heaven was revealed.

It is a simple story of God’s redeeming love. Sins forgiven. Life was restored. This is Jesus' way. Come and join us in worship to honor Christ the King. From the cradle to the grave, to the day of Resurrection, God demonstrated His power forever more! We rejoice because He lives!

Pastor Romir Esguerra

# EASTER ACTIVITIES AND SERVICES

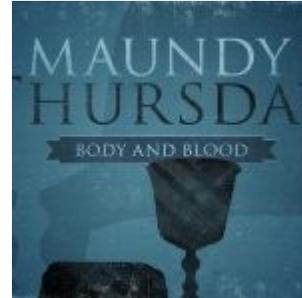
**March 24 Palm Sunday** Return Lenten Jars

8:30am Prayer 10:30am Worship



**March 28 Maundy Thursday**

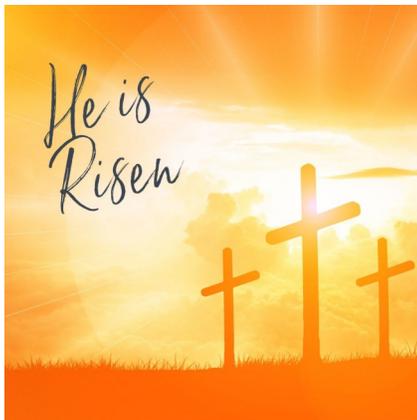
7:00 pm Worship service



**March 29 Good Friday**

**March 30 Holy Saturday** 10:00—11:30 am

Easter Egg Hunt



**March 31 EASTER SUNDAY**

**Easter Prayer and Gathering - 8:30 am**

**Easter Service –10:30 am**

HAPPY EASTER



Christian Education is collecting wrapped candy for the eggs. We thank you in advance for your generous donations to this fun filled hour and half. Takes longer to fill the eggs with candy than to find them.

There is a box by the kiosk for candy donations. The Hunt is March 30th 10—11:30 am



### 'SAVE THE DATE'

Vacation Bible School 2024 is scheduled for Monday, June 24th through Thursday, June 27th.

9:00 am—11:30 am

Mars and Be Yond!

Contact **Diane Morrow** if you are interested.

Restaurant Club will meet at Biaggi's at 2752 Showplace Dr, Naperville on Saturday, April 6<sup>th</sup> at **5:30pm**

**(please note the time difference!).**

Please RSVP by March 31<sup>st</sup> to Diane Parro at 630-430-3808 (text) or [dparro@comcast.net](mailto:dparro@comcast.net) (email).

Please note that we will be in Florida the month of March,



# MARCH

Sun

Mon

Tue

Wed

Thu

Fri

Sat

31 <b>EASTER SUNDAY</b> 8:30am Prayer 10:30 am Worship				7 am Men's Breakfast 	1	2 9-12:00 p Play Pen Sports
3 <b>Communion</b> 8:30am Prayer 9 am Religious Ed 10:30 am Worship	4	5 5-6P Play Pen Sports	6 6 pm Lenten Bible Study 6:15 Bells 7:30 Choir	7 7 am Men's Breakfast	8	9 9-12:00 p Play Pen Sports
10 <b>Friendship Sunday and Pretzel Sunday</b> 8:30am Prayer 9 am Religious Ed 10:30 am Worship	11	12 5-6P Play Pen Sports 6:30p Trustees	13 6 pm Lenten Bible Study 6:15 Bells 7:30 Choir	14 7 am Men's Breakfast 	15	16 10 am Visitation 11 am Funeral for Sue Shetina
17 8:30am Prayer 9 am Religious Ed 10:30 am Worship	18 5pm Daybreak 6:30 Daycare	19 7am Daybreak Breakfast	20 11:30am Pantry 6 pm Lenten Bible Study 6:15 Bells 7:30 Choir	21 7 am Men's Breakfast 	22 <b>Articles for April Grace Notes due into the office.</b>	23
24 <b>PALM SUNDAY</b> 8:30am Prayer 9 am Religious Ed 10:30 am Worship	25	26 6:30 Finance ZOOM	27 6 pm Lenten Bible Study 6:15 Bells 7:30 Choir	28 MAUNDY THURSDAY 7 am Men's Breakfast 7:00P Worship Service	29 GOOD FRIDAY	30 HOLY SATURDAY 10-11:30 am EGG HUNT



## MISSION OF THE MONTH

March – UMVIM-North Central Jurisdiction (#901375)

United Methodist Volunteers in Mission (UMVIM) is the official short-term volunteer sending agency of the United Methodist Church. The North Central Jurisdiction office is charged with resourcing individuals, teams, leaders and UMVIM projects within the jurisdiction. The office maintains a future teams list, sends out e-newsletters and maintains the National Project List. It also assists in Emergency Response Training (ERT) and VIM leader training.

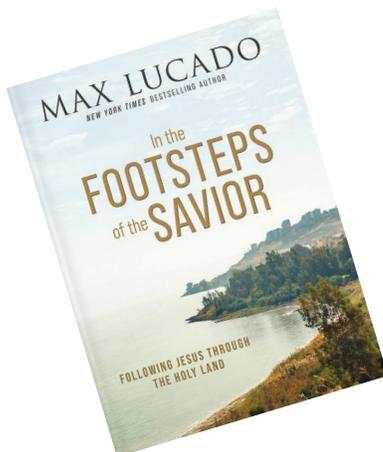
## DAYBREAK SHELTER

The March sign up sheets are up on the bulletin board leading into the sanctuary. All items need to be at church the Sunday before Daybreak. I would like to thank everyone who has supported this local mission during the past year. Diane Lutz

## LENTEN STUDY

### IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF THE SAVIOR

Join us for 'In The Footsteps of the Savior' Lenten Study in person on *March 6th, 13<sup>th</sup>, 20<sup>th</sup> and 27th* from 6:00 pm to 7:30 p.m. We will use the book, **In The Footsteps of the Savior** by Max Lucado. The book is not required but is available for purchase \$15.00. A signup sheet for in person is on the bulletin board in the narthex.



March 6-Wednesday at 6:00 p.m.

March 13- Wednesday at 6:00 p.m.

March 20- Wednesday at 6:30 p.m.

March 27- Wednesday at 6:30 p.m.

# Gratitude Corner

Thank you to everyone who worked on the Statistical Report for the NIC. A very lengthy report that is due the end of February. Many hands make light work. Adrienne Hartman, Church Office

Grace friends, Thank you for your support, prayers and the memorials given to Grace in Mike's memories. Thank you to the ladies for the very delicious luncheon. We sincerely appreciate your kindness. Barb Fisher and family

**A**nother bird friendly coffee sale for the benefit of Grace Church and our migratory birds started Sunday, February 25th. Last Sunday to order is March 10th with a pickup on March 17th. Greg

will have a sign up sheet in the narthex on Sundays.

Questions may be directed to Greg DuBois via email or in person. [grgdubois@comcast.net](mailto:grgdubois@comcast.net)



Grace UMC welcomes home our 'Snowbirds'. Welcome back to chilly Illinois! We hope you enjoyed your warm winter. We know with the grace of God, spring will be around the corner with warmer weather coming our way.





## THANK YOU

The 2024 ASP team would like to thank the great people of Grace UMC for their gracious support in buying potatoes and making monetary donation to the mission trip in June. We were able to make a profit of almost \$1,000. We hope to



We are planning for our 2024 ASP Mission trip in June. We have 2 teams signed up and ready to go. **Teams include the following youth: Paige Anderson, Lili Boyer, Aden Guzman, Reyna Guzman, Stella Guzman, Braydon Hocking, Landon Hocking, Desiree Moran and Nathan Rojas that will be led by the following adults: Eric Anderson, Kara Hocking, Shannon Rojas, Ubaldo Rojas, and Steve Meister.**

If you'd like to sponsor the ASP team we are selling Stocks during March. You can write a check to Grace UMC with ASP in the Memo. Your donation can be **dropped off at a table setup outside the office on Sundays (except March 31, Easter).**

You may also give through Vanco on the Grace website or mail to: Steve Meister, 1116 Cora St, Joliet, IL 60435

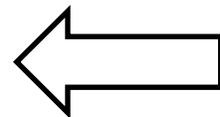
# ASP STOCK SALE



Grace United Women in Faith met Monday, February 13, 2024. Thirteen women shared the business meeting and created seven blankets for the Big Brothers organization. The blankets were blessed in worship on February 18th during Children's Time.



**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



# OUR CHURCH'S FINANCIAL HEALTH

## Grace United Methodist Church

### 2024 Income & Expense Summary

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

	January		Year to Date	
	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual
<b>INCOME</b>	\$29,208	\$20,205	\$29,208	\$20,205
<b>EXPENSES</b>				
Apportionment	\$2,525	\$2,108	\$2,525	\$2,108
Salaries & Benefits	\$18,914	\$18,478	\$18,914	\$18,478
Administration	\$1,129	\$2,886	\$1,129	\$2,886
Programming	\$792	-\$353	\$792	-\$353
Church Buildings	<u>\$11,612</u>	<u>\$7,041</u>	<u>\$11,612</u>	<u>\$7,041</u>
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	\$34,972	\$30,160	\$34,972	\$30,160
<b>SURPLUS OR (DEFICIT):</b>	-\$5,764	-\$9,955	-\$5,764	-\$9,955

1) January pledge income less than expected (minimal prepayment of 2024 pledges)

2) January expenses less than expected - 1Q insurance not yet billed.

# FINANCES

## SPECIAL THANKS

to our Treasurer and Financial Secretary, Jay Wait and Jim Morrow, who keep up with Grace finances at all times. Their hard work and dedication does not go unnoticed. Many hours are put in between these two.

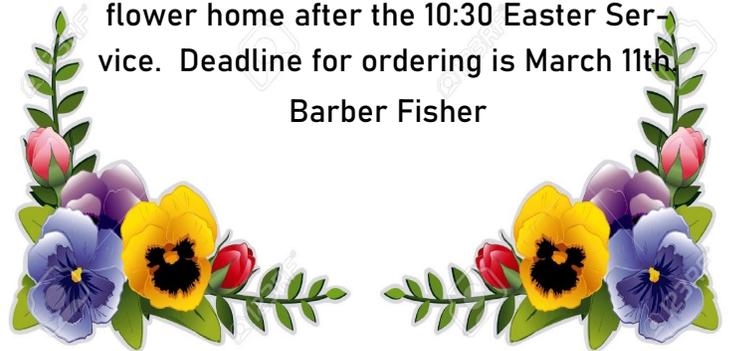
Thank you!



## EASTER FLOWERS

Grace Church will decorate the sanctuary with flowers on Easter Sunday. The flowers may be in honor or celebration of a special event, in memory of a loved one or to the Glory of God. We will purchase flowers from Joliet Junior College at \$9 for hyacinths, daffodils & tulips. Lilies are \$13. If you wish to order flowers, please fill out an order form and include your check made payable to Grace UMC. Place in offering plate or drop off in the church office. Please take your flower home after the 10:30 Easter Service. Deadline for ordering is March 11th.

Barber Fisher



FEBRUARY ATTEND- ANCE	WORSHIP 8AM 10:30AM	CHILDREN'S SUNDAY SCHOOL	ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL
Feb. 4	4/70	22	12
Feb. 11	4/81	17	14
Feb. 18	4/67	14	16
Feb. 25	3/71	25	18





Jim & Joan Norris

March 21, 1964

Carl & Nelly Bessette

March 30, 1985



3/2—Kelly Larson

3/4—Shelby Fraser, Payton Fraser

3/6—Ronald Thorndyke,

3/8—Lucas Dolph

3/12—Nancy Bokoski

3/14—Carl Bessette, Mark Daniel

3/15—Kimberly Kinman

3/18—Meghan Dolph

3/20—Carson Cabreda

3/21—Taylor Shetina

3/23—Eric Leggett, Camdon Hocking

3/26—Bradley Linko

3/27—Nancy Murphy

3/30—Sara Coombs

3/31—Arthur Denklau

## AN IRISH BLESSING

May the road rise to meet you,  
May the wind be always at your back.  
May the sun shine warm upon your  
face,

The rains fall soft upon your fields.  
And until we meet again,  
May God hold you in the palm of his  
hand.

May God be with you and bless you:  
May you see your children's children.  
May you be poor in misfortune,  
rich in blessings.

May you know nothing but happiness  
From this day forward.

May the road rise up to meet you.  
May the wind be always at your back.  
May the warm rays of sun fall upon your  
home, And may the land of a friend always  
be near.

