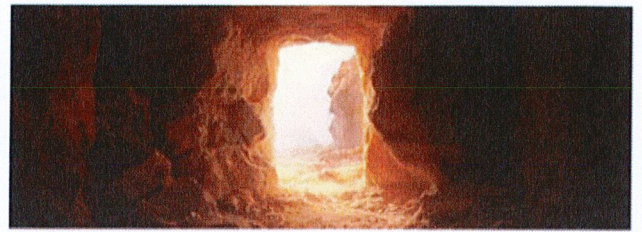


Grace Devotion

Week of March 22, 2026

³² When Mary came where Jesus was and saw him, she knelt at his feet and said to him, “Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.” ³³ When Jesus saw her weeping and the Jews who came with her also weeping, he was greatly disturbed in spirit and deeply moved. ³⁴ He said, “Where have you laid him?” They said to him, “Lord, come and see.” ³⁵ Jesus began to weep.

(John 11:32-35 NRSVUE)



Seeing hope where we expect death
Lazarus

Dear Friends,

This week’s Gospel takes us to a familiar and aching place—the story of Lazarus. It is a story many of us know, yet it still meets us right where we are, especially in seasons of waiting, loss, or uncertainty.

When Jesus arrives in Bethany, Lazarus has already died. Martha and Mary both say the same words to him: “*Lord, if you had been here...*” It’s not an accusation so much as a confession—of grief, of love, of disappointment, and of hope all tangled together. Jesus does not correct them. He does not rush past their sorrow. Instead, he listens. He stands with them. Then, in one of the most human moments in all of Scripture, Jesus weeps.

John tells us plainly: “*Jesus began to weep.*” Before any miracle, before any command to come out of the tomb, there are tears. Jesus shares their grief. He honors their pain. He joins with them in their loss.

For those of us who spend long days waiting—waiting for healing, waiting for strength, waiting for answers—this matters deeply. It tells us that Jesus is not far from our sorrow. He does not stand on the other side of our pain offering explanations. He stands with us, sharing it.

Yet, the story does not end there. From that place of grief, Jesus speaks life. He calls Lazarus by name and invites him to step into the light. Resurrection does not erase the tears that came before it—but it grows from them.

This week, we are reminded that God's promise is not that we will never weep, but that we will never weep alone. Even when change feels slow, even when hope feels fragile, Jesus is there—calling life forward in ways we may not yet see.

May you know this week that you are seen, loved, and held. May Christ's presence bring you comfort, and may hope meet you gently, right where you are.

Prayer:

God of Life, When our hearts are heavy and our waiting feels like it has gone on forever, remind us that You are near. Sit with us in our grief, share our tears, and speak hope into the places that feel closed or lifeless. Call us by name and help us trust that Your love is still at work, even now. Amen.

With Grace and Love,

Pastor Amy

March 22, 2026
Fifth Sunday in Lent

Welcome/Announcements
Westminster Chimes and Prelude

**° Hymn: “Precious Lord, Take My Hand” #463

** Call to Worship

Lector: Come, people of God, and lift your hearts.

Congregation: We come to see clearly and be transformed.

Lector: Open our eyes to see hope where we least expect it.

Congregation: God calls us to honesty, mercy and love in all we see.

Lector: Let us follow Christ, learning to see ourselves, our neighbors, and God more clearly.

Congregation: We worship today, with our eyes and hearts open to God.

** Opening Prayer: (pray silently or aloud)

Gracious and loving God, As we continue in this season of Lent, open our eyes to see—to see ourselves honestly, to see our neighbors with compassion, and to see You more clearly. Lent is a time for our reflections and for examining our lives. Let us recognize our own limits and trust in Your sustaining presence. Transform our hearts and help us follow Christ with courage and love. Amen

** Sharing the Peace of Christ

**+“Love of God” #71

Prayer of Confession/Silent Reflection/Assurance of Grace

** Lenten Statement of Faith

Joys and Concerns
Praying for Others
Lord’s Prayer

Celebration of Our Gifts

** Offertory Response: “Spirit of the Living God” #247

** Prayer of Dedication

° Hymn: “There is a Balm in Gilead” #423

Scripture Reading:

John 11:1-45

Time for the Young at Heart

Message: “Hope in the Waiting”

**+“Give Me Your Eyes” #53

** Final Blessing

** “A Choral Benediction”

Postlude

** Please stand, if you are able.

+ Black contemporary folder

° Blue hymnal

Announcements

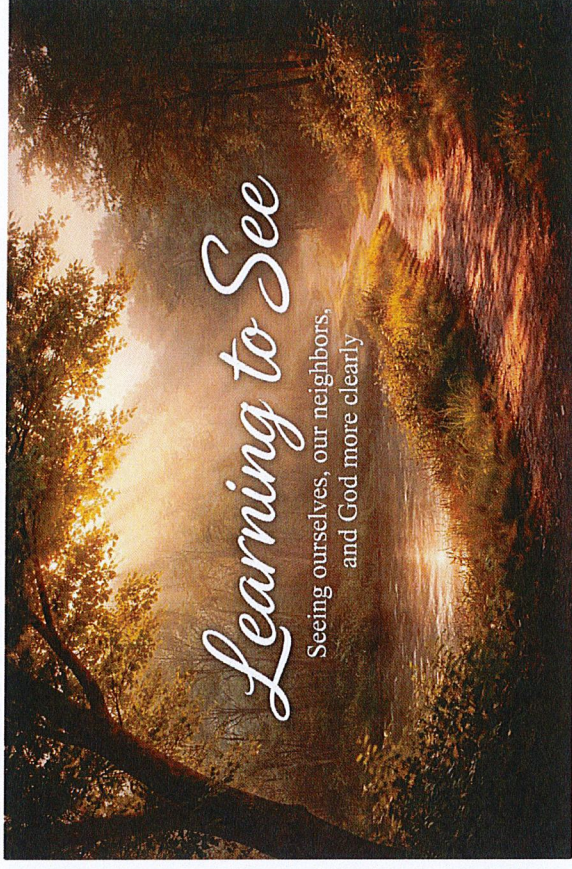
- Sign up to get your picture taken for the new church directory – call the church office to get a time slot.
- Contact the church office or Leslie Grote for more information about our new widower's group that will meet monthly.
- Maundy Thursday will be April 2nd at 7:00 PM, please join us.
- Easter Sunday Sunrise Service, April 5th @ 6:30 AM at Grace UCC and 10 AM service.

Upcoming Events

- PAL – Grace UCC Helpers – March 21st @ 9:00 AM
- Women's Ministry – March 25th @ 7:30 PM - **In Person**
- Mark your calendars for the Grace Parking Lot Yard Sale on May 23rd. More details to come

Upcoming Meetings

- Worship & Music – March 23rd @ 4:45 PM
- Faith Formation – March 23rd @ 6:00 PM



Grace United Church of Christ

100 Fourth Street

Hanover, Pennsylvania 17331

717-632-1146

Prayer Line: 717-632-1146 LINE 3

Thank you for today's Worship Leaders:

Pastor - Amy Fawks

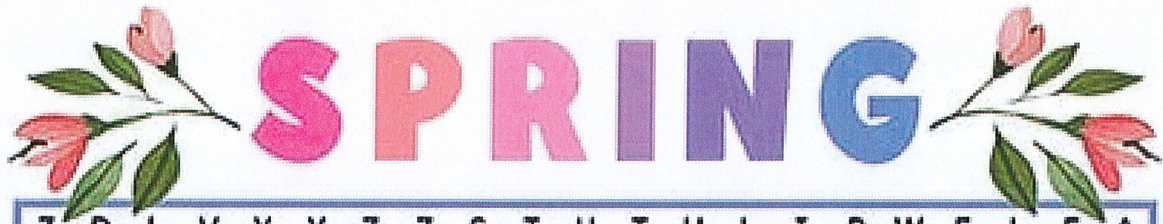
Lector – Joleen Fennell

Organist and Music Director - Christian Keller

Head Usher – Vickie Arnold & Becky Boyer

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 BUTTERFLY
 CHIRPING
 DAFFODIL
 DUCKLING

GARDEN
 GRASS
 LADYBUG
 LEAFBUD
 MEADOW
 NEST
 PICNIC
 PUDDLE
 RAINBOW

RAINDROP
 ROBIN
 SEEDLING
 SPRINGTIME
 SPROUT
 SUNSHINE
 THAW
 TULIP
 UMBRELLA

