



REAL FAITH | REAL STORIES | REAL GRACE

GRACE NOTES



On Sunday, May 23, Grace Covenant will have its first live worship service in over a year, and it comes with some excitement and some hesitancy.

All the staff and a substantial number of our members have received their COVID-19 vaccinations. We'll be instituting a thorough set of protocols for our initial return, including limited numbers of attendees, masks, social distancing and more.

At the same time, we recognize that there will be many of us who will want to wait until the pandemic is as close to finished as possible. Many people have asked if we'll continue on-line worship, and we want to assure everyone that **our on-line worship service is here to stay**. There are many reasons we wanted to have on-line worship even before the pandemic occurred – people who might be ill or injured, people wanting to check out our worship before visiting for the first time, members out-of-town, etc. On-line worship is a valuable ministry tool and one that we've been blessed to expand.

Please trust that the staff and Session will continue to monitor any changes in the national and community recommendations. Since the beginning of the pandemic, the safety and health of our congregation has been the primary concern while continuing a vital ministry presence.

On that note, we hope that everyone understands the incredible job the Session has been doing during this time, including those elders who finished their terms during the first few months of the pandemic. All of the elders have had to keep up-to-date on recommendations from the county, the CDC, the presbytery, and the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). They've had to deal with issues and decisions that haven't been part of the "usual" elder responsibilities and we appreciate their willingness to engage in conversations that have helped the church be "the body of Christ" when many parts of that body couldn't be together. We hope the most challenging part of this pandemic is behind us, but even if there are setbacks, our Session can handle them.

Thanks to everyone who has responded to the call of the Spirit during this once in a lifetime situation – you are all a blessing.

—*Mitch & Sue*

**IN-PERSON WORSHIP
RESUMES ON SUNDAY,
MAY 23RD!**

(see article inside for details)

God gathers us in a welcoming community, with our curiosity and questions, to worship creatively, learn from God's word, share our gifts, and deepen our faith.

With grateful hearts and a spirit of adventure, we go to serve Christ in the world, sharing kindness with everyone, and working for justice rooted in God's love.

**REAL FAITH
REAL STORIES
REAL GRACE**

**11100 College Boulevard
Overland Park, KS 66210**

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gcpc.org

Resuming Work on Workshop Rotation

Would you like to help?

The Children's Team is excited to announce that we are going to resume plans for the Workshop Rotation Sunday School to begin in late summer or early fall! We are building a new and exciting experience for our children to learn Bible stories through workshops in art, science, music, puppetry, games and more. Each week the children will experience a story through one of these workshops.

Leaders will select a favorite area (science, art, etc.), partner with a friend, and lead a workshop for two weeks in a row. There will be 6-8 weeks between your workshops. This is a great way for children to build relationships with our adults.

Rev. Sue will host an IN PERSON workshop on Sunday, May 2 at 11:15am in Heartland Hall to re-introduce the program. Participants are asked to enter through the Weekday Entrance. You must wear a mask, sign in at the registration table in the entrance way and sanitize your hands as you enter Heartland Hall.

If you love working with children and would like to be part of this program, please contact Rev. Sue at sue.trigger@gcpc.org.

Thank You Church Family!

Dear Grace Covenant,
Thank you for your many prayers and support during the losses of our cousins, Joseph Matthews and Willie Johnson. We must say again and again, that we are truly blessed to be a part of such a caring church family!

—*Nathan and Sylvia Littlejohn*



Mission Communion Partner for May

Our Mission Communion Donation Partner for May is **Shawnee Community Services**, a local food pantry and free clothing resource since 1982. We asked their President Sylvia Terry what their greatest food need is in May. She responded:

- canned fruit
- Knorr pasta sides
- potato side dishes such as mashed, scalloped, or au gratin packets
- rice side packets
- their Peanut Butter stock will need to be replenished starting in May

Please bring your donations to the Weekday Entrance and place them in the Communion donation bin, or bring them on Saturday, May 22, from 8:15 to 9:15am during the KCK Hot Lunch Drop-Off.

Noisy Offering Returns on May 23!

Coinciding with our Pentecost celebration we will be making some joyful noise as we drop our loose change in the buckets during the worship service. This is also a nice way for us to remember Shirley Sampson who initiated our coin offering during our worship service. These coins will be added to our Vacation Bible School coins effort starting June 5! Stay tuned for info from VBS on who the recipient will be.

Music Notes

Music in Worship for May 2021

5TH SUNDAY OF EASTER, MAY 2ND

Chancel Ensemble led, Chris Alka, trumpet & Andrew Alka, piano – Karen Kesler, soprano soloist

6TH SUNDAY OF EASTER, MAY 9TH

Praise Team led

7TH SUNDAY OF EASTER, MAY 16TH

Chancel Ensemble led, Chancel Singers I with Bob Dover, clarinet & Donna Heer, violin on the anthem "Hope in Me" by Terre Johnson – (pre-recorded)

This anthem was donated by Jim & Pam Kelly and Bob & Linda Dover in memory of Lauren Bond's father, Dr. Norman E. Bednarczyk (October 12, 1938 – June 22, 2019).

Chancel Singers II with Donna Heer, violin – Katie Hearn, flute – Ky Townsend, cello – and Cal Sweeten, dulcimer on the anthem "Shines the Light" by Susan Naus & Lee Dengler (pre-recorded)

PENTECOST SUNDAY, MAY 23RD

Chancel Ensemble led, Joy! Singers (4s-1st graders) & Celebration! Singers (2nd-5th graders) – (pre-recorded)

Chancel Singer III will sing the anthem "I'm Gonna Sing!" by Mark A. Miller – (pre-recorded)

This anthem was donated by Darryl & Rebecca Prater in memory of Rebecca's sister, Kathy Hovis (November 16, 1948 – February 17, 2020). "And through eternity, she'll sing on!"

TRINITY SUNDAY, MAY 30TH

Praise Team led – "Called Me Higher" by All Sons & Daughters and "Holy Spirit Your Presence" by Bryan & Katie Torwalt

GRATITUDE EXPRESSED TO HOLY WEEK LEADERSHIP

I want to thank each of you for sharing your musical, publishing, advertising, worship decorations, technology, & worship leading gifts to make every single one of our Holy Week services absolutely amazing!

Every effort was greatly appreciated by our congregation, friends, family, community, and me. We often consider the end result, but equally – if not more importantly – are the hours of preparation you give. The behind-the-scenes, the practice, the preparation, the set-up, the creating, the editing... is noticed by our God who sees all things and who fully knows our hearts.

Thanks be to God, the giver of all good and perfect gifts

—Rebecca

Co-Pastors: Revs. Sue & Mitch Trigger

Stewart: You know who you are!

Worship Team: Melanie Townsend, moderator

Music Team: Katie Hearn, moderator

Joy! Singers (4s-1st grade): Emily Hussey, director

Celebration! Singers (2nd-5th grades):

Pam Kelly, director

Praise Team: Carrie DeVries, director &

Daniel Cole, percussion

Chancel Ensemble & Chancel Singers I, II, & III:

Linda Dover, accompanist/organist

Charter Ringers I & II: Celia Nicholas, director

& Chris Krug, accompanist

Instrumentalists: Bob Dover, clarinet –

Katie Hearn, flute – Chris Krug, 4-hand piano –

& Darryl Prater, bell toll

Church Administrator & Website Co-Administrator:

Patrick Bell

Marketing, Newsletter Editor, & Website

Co-Administrator: Kim Krueger

Technical Director of Worship: Miles McDonald

Tech Crew: Joel Kesler, Ray Kowalczewski, Eric Lee, &

Nelson Townsend

Easter Flowering of the Cross & Sanctuary:

Jan Rosche, coordinator & floral designer – Sarah Byrd, Debbie Campbell, Melanie Townsend, & Kathy Williams - committee



Sunday School

Our online Sunday school will continue through May 16, we will continue our online Sunday school program.

2's and 3's Preschool Class

Lisa Cox has created a wonderful Facebook Page featuring the weekly Sunday school class. The lesson includes the colorful Bible story page and Lisa's wonderful voice leading the class. You will find the page at GCPC Preschool Sunday School Stories. www.facebook.com/groups/GCPCstories

4 yrs – 1st Grade

We are blessed to have Awakening to Worship (ATW) at GCPC. ATW is an introduction to worship that offers a creative telling of a Bible story as the children learn about the practice of worship. We are continuing to offer the ATW experience online and this will be the Sunday school class for the 4-year-old – 1st grade children. These lessons will be pre-recorded and available for viewing at your convenience. The weekly links will be uploaded to the website's Christian Education/Sunday School Page.

2nd – 5th Grades

We are having so much fun with our Zoom class! We meet each week from 9am – 9:45am on Zoom. We enjoy learning Bible stories, singing with the Celebration choir, and learning about the mission work of our Mission Team. In order to participate, parents will need to register with Rev. Sue at sue.trigger@gcpc.org. Sue will send you the log-in information, including the password, when she receives your email. Please include your child's name, year in school, and any special needs we need to be aware of for an online class. You can find Sunday school information and the Celebration choir videos on our new Facebook Page. <https://www.facebook.com/GCPC25grades> Content will be updated weekly with information about the coming lessons.

Joy! and Celebration! Singers

In addition to our Sunday school classes, we are blessed to have music time available online, too! Links to our music time will be available on the Sunday School page. Each week our 4 yrs – 1st grade and 2nd – 5th grades will enjoy singing and learning about music and faith. You will see the choirs singing during worship in April and May.



Adult Class

Matthew 25: Vital Congregations Revitalization study

April 25 - May 16 at 11:15am on Zoom

Join us as we embark on an honest conversation about GCPC, sharing unique stories, confessing our realities and discerning the Spirit's call. Each week our leaders will guide us through Bible study, reflection and conversation that will help us as we work to revitalize the church in missional action and faithful discipleship in Jesus Christ throughout our neighborhoods, our nation and the world.

One of the three emphases of the Matthew 25 initiative is church revitalization. Join us as we work our way through a biblical study of what makes a congregation vital. **The study includes 7 marks of a vital congregation:**

1. Lifelong discipleship
2. Intentional Authentic Evangelism
3. Outward Incarnational Focus
4. Empower Servant Leadership
5. Spirit Inspired Worship
6. Caring Relationships
7. Ecclesial Health.

The classes will include reflecting on our congregation and ways that we can celebrate and expand our ministry. Come be part of the conversation.

Zoom Meeting ID: 872 2084 5770

Passcode: GCPC2021.

By the King's Decree...

The Date is set for Vacation Bible School!

June 7 – 11 from 9am – 12pm

To register go to: gcpc.org/Quest

Come to North Castle and join the quest for the King's Armor. All children are invited to be strong in the Lord and in the strength of God's power by exploring how we put on the armor of God. All will take on the role of brave Knights and begin their quest each session by opening the King's Book. They'll explore Old and New Testament stories and discover different pieces of protective armor—the Belt of Truth, the Breastplate of Justice, the Shoes of Peace, the Shield of Faith, and the Helmet of Salvation—at work in the lives of familiar Bible characters, and explore how that armor works in their own lives as they follow and serve God. Get ready to take up the gauntlet and accept the challenge to "armor up" and be strong by remaining with God and sharing God's love in a world that needs it more than ever.



NOTICE: In order to maintain COVID-19 safety protocols, this year's VBS will be open to **children and grandchildren of church members only**. Next year we'll welcome everyone to join us.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED: We will need plenty of helpers and supplies for VBS. If you would like to volunteer to be a leader or help with supplies, please contact Rev. Sue at sue.trigger@gcpc.org.



May SMASH! Pentecost

April 18, 4-6pm for K-5th grades

Pentecost Sunday is going to be a great day of celebration as we celebrate the birthday of the church AND our first in person worship service in more than a year. Our May SMASH will be all about getting ready for the party and parents, you are encouraged to join us. We will learn about the first Pentecost and why it's called the birthday of the church. We will enjoy creating decorations for the Pentecost service on May 23, playing games and more.

Please RSVP to help us safely prepare for supplies and social distance. RSVP to Rev. Sue at sue.trigger@gcpc.org. Please let her know how many children and parents will attend.

Online Giving!

**We have a NEW way to give!
Give via text messaging!**

1. Text 'Give2GCPC' and the amount you want to give to 73256.
2. Click the returned link. Our donation page will open. Enter your credit card information and select which fund you wish to give to.
3. Complete your gift through our secure online portal Realm.
4. A confirmation email is sent.

Realm®, our online church giving portal, offers new and easy ways to give financially to support our ministries. Whether you want to set up a recurring gift or split your donation among different funds, Realm makes it safe and secure to give online. We hope you take advantage of this convenience.

Youth Page

Congratulations Graduates!!!

Our high school and college grads made it through another extremely challenging year and are starting new adventures. We appreciate the role each have played in our church and the role they each will continue to play as the years unfold. We know God has great plans in store for you! From Jeremiah 29:11, "For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future." Grace Covenant will always do our best to be a safe place and a church home for you. Youth Team is planning a BBQ for our graduating seniors as well as last year's seniors. It is tentatively scheduled for June 6.

Congratulations to our high school grads: Sophie Shaw, Jenna Soule, Mara Smith, Tatum Cox, Owen Dalton, Emily Grice

And to our college grads: Emily Albers, Isabel Battaglioli, Jack Cashman, Claire Chaffin, Margaret Hubble, Caroline McDonald, Noah Patton, Tatum Specht, Sumner Holtzman

Youth Activities

We will not meet on Sunday evenings as a full group in May except for May 2. As usual there are many Sunday conflicts and much to do as the school year wraps up and the summer is about to begin. Sunday morning classes will still meet until Memorial Day weekend.

Heartland Camp Update

Heartland Camp is registering students for in-person camps this summer and has had such a strong registration season that nearly all of their programs have a waitlist. The only way to cut down on the waitlisted kids is to be fully staffed for all programs AND have a enough volunteers.

Volunteers can be 18 or older. There are many counseling opportunities in the Parkville Day and Overnight Camps! Contact Jared Briscoe if you are interested - Program1@heartlandcenter.org.

If you are interested in one of the final few PAID Traveling Camp positions follow this link: www.heartlandsummercampjobs.org/positions/traveling-christian-summer-camp-jobs

GCPC Summer Youth Ministry Intern

This summer our Youth Team is seeking a part-time paid summer intern. This is an ideal position for college students on summer break. The Summer Youth Ministry Intern will work roughly 20 hours/wk. and irregular hours are often required. Employment will be late May through early August with flexible start and end dates. Applicants should be at least 21 years old, love God, and love being with youth. Contact Miles McDonald at miles.mcdonald@gcpc.org.

Summer Dates.

- June 21-25 presbytery wide local mission experience week.
- June 7-11 - VBS.
- June -18-19 – Youth and Family Canoe Trip!
- TBD - Montreat Youth Conference for 8-13th grade grads





Clerk's Corner

The April 19, 2021, Session meeting was held via Zoom with Reverend Mitch Trigger serving as moderator. In addition to the ruling elders, deacon Julie Webb, Reverend Sue Trigger, Jane Knoche, and church staff members Rebecca Prater, Patrick Bell, Miles McDonald and Carrie DeVries were in attendance. Mitch opened the meeting at 7:00pm and Sue offered a prayer.

Consent agenda: The minutes of the March 15 Session meeting were approved and the commissioners for the next Presbytery meeting were appointed.

Team minutes:

Nominating team: The team is recruiting elder candidates who will be elected at the June 6 congregational meeting.

Finance team: Additional pledges were received for a total of 141 pledges totaling approximately \$654,000. While there's still a deficit of \$27,600, it's less than the deficit reported last month. Session approved a Finance team motion to approve the budget with the revised pledge amounts.

Clerk's report: With the addition of Teresa and Joel Ilten, and Linda and Joe Hoffman, we have 400 members.

Co-Pastors' report: The co-pastors reported that the Jersalema dance was fun.

Deacons' report: Julie Webb reported the deacons were ready to put the building reopening plans into action, but they found that their covenant group lists were incomplete or inaccurate.

Old business: Building reopening – Session approved starting to hold in-person services on **May 23 at 10:00am**. The service will also be offered virtually. Anyone who wants to attend in-person will need to **make a reservation by calling the church office by noon on the preceding Thursday**. A total of 126 people will be allowed in the sanctuary, which will include musicians, ministers and the deacons who will be checking people in. There will be 6 spots reserved for walk-in guests. **Vacation Bible School will be held in person on June 7-11** but is limited to members' children and grandchildren only because of COVID.

After sharing joys and concerns, the meeting adjourned at 8:45pm and Rev. Mitch Trigger closed with a prayer.

Planning to worship in the sanctuary?

Here's what you need to know:



The number of worshippers will be limited to 126 to maintain safe distancing.

- **Worshippers will need to call or e-mail the church to reserve a seat.**
Reservations will be taken each week between 8:00am Monday and 12:00pm (noon) on Thursday.
E-mail patrick.bell@gcpc.org or call 913-345-1256 to make your reservation.
Reservations will need to be made weekly; we cannot reserve seats beyond one week.
 1. Please let us know how many will be in your group and their names.
 2. Be aware that those who attend in person regularly may be asked to observe online at home from time to time to give everyone the chance to attend in person.

When you Arrive:

- You may enter the church via the Sanctuary entrance (preferred) or the Weekday Entrance.
- You will be greeted by a Deacon or other member who will check you in.
(Look for a table where they will be seated.)
- Those arriving without a reservation may not be able to attend, depending on the number of reservations.
- You will be given a seat assignment when you check in. The Deacons and Ushers will direct you to the proper row where you will find your name on a reserved sign, indicating your seat.
- You will get your bulletin and other information at the Deacon's table.
- Ushers will assist you in finding your seat in the Sanctuary and will dismiss you at the end of the service. Please wait for their direction to exit.
- The Offering will not be collected during the service. You will find a locked box in the back of the Sanctuary where you can put your offering at the beginning or ending of the service.
- On Communion Sundays (beginning June 6), the bread and juice for Communion will be placed at your seat in disposable kit before the service. You are welcome to bring your own elements, but we ask that you do not share them with other worshippers.
- Please note that there will not be congregational singing or spoken prayers during the service. Further instruction will be given during the service.
- Following the service, when there are not planned activities, we ask that people move out of the church building promptly after the end of worship and socialize outside rather than inside the building.

Planning to worship in the sanctuary?

Here's what to do:

Following the protocols set out by the Session is more than just "obeying the rules." It's how we show that we care for the whole body of Christ, not just ourselves. By returning to the church building, you are agreeing to a covenant of behaviors that is designed to extend God's compassionate care to all worshippers.

Confirm you are free of COVID-19 symptoms.

If you are at risk of spreading COVID-19 because of symptoms, exposure, or a positive diagnosis, **worship from home**. When you enter the building, you will be asked to confirm that you are symptom free, and we will mark your attendance, so that we can conduct contact tracing if we have a COVID-positive worshipper.

Wear a mask the *entire time* you are inside the building.

Masks prevent you from spreading the virus to others and are one of the simplest ways to love your neighbor. Masks must be worn over the nose and mouth as long as you are in the building. Exceptions: children age 5 and under, persons with medical conditions that prevent wearing a mask, and those who are hearing impaired.

Practice Social Distancing.

Stay at least 6 feet away from others outside your household, both in the concourse and in the pews. We know you want to hug. Don't do it. Jesus should be able to lie down for a nap between you and the next person.

Sunday School during this time.

Instead of attending Sunday school, plan on enjoying intentional fellowship outdoors following the worship services. (We may go to Heartland Hall in case of inclement weather.)

If possible, continue to give *online*.

We will not pass the offering plates during this pandemic. A lockbox will be provided in the back of the sanctuary for you to drop your offering into, but if you are able to give online, that continues to be the safest and easiest option.

Prepare yourself for things to be different.

Returning to the sanctuary does not mean returning to normal. Basic pieces of our worship, such as congregational singing, will be missing. Beloved faces will be missing too. You are not likely to get to sit in "your" pew. You may experience a variety of emotions from joy to grief to frustration. Extend grace to yourself, the leadership, and your fellow congregation members. This is hard, but God is with us, wherever we worship.

Turn off your Wi-Fi.

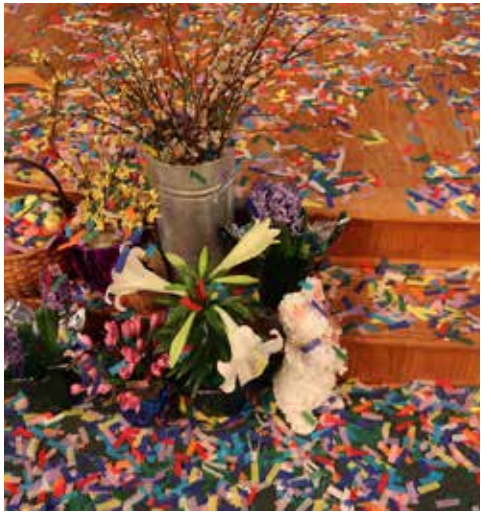
In order to preserve the most bandwidth for us to stream our service live to at-home worshippers, we ask you to turn off Wi-Fi on your devices during the service.





We are Easter People! Joyous Celebration on April 4







GRACE COVENANT

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Inclusive. Family Oriented. Welcoming.

11100 College Boulevard
Overland Park, KS 66210
Phone: 913-345-1256
Fax: 913-345-1198

gcpc.org



Follow us on Social Media!

Facebook: facebook.com/GraceCovenantPresbyterian

Twitter: @GraceCovPres

Instagram: @gcpc_overlandpark

CELEBRATING GOD'S ALL ENCOMPASSING LOVE!

CHURCH STAFF

Co Pastors

- Office hours: Monday-Thursday
Mitch Trigger, mitch.trigger@gcpc.org.....ext.18
Sue Trigger, sue.trigger@gcpc.org.....ext.15

Director of Music Ministries

- Office hours: Monday-Wednesday, Friday
Rebecca Prater, rebecca.prater@gcpc.org .. ext. 13

Church Administrator

- Office hours: Monday-Friday
Patrick Bell, patrick.bell@gcpc.org ext. 10

Director of Youth Ministries

Technical Director of Worship
- Office hours: Monday-Thursday
Miles McDonald, miles.mcdonald@gcpc.org.. ext. 17

Finance Administrator..... Tara Hyder
Mon. 8-4; Tues./Weds. 8-12; /Thurs./Fri. by Appt.

Organist..... Linda Dover

Contemporary Music Coord...... Donna Goeckler

Contemporary Music Accomp...... Carrie DeVries

Contemporary Music Drummer..... Daniel Cole

Technical Director for Worship.. Miles McDonald

Child Care Coordinator..... Carolyn Chaffin

Wedding Coordinator..... Lara Schesser

Funeral Coordinator..... Mary Sue Thomas

ELDERS

Jim Byrd	David Minaschek
Ric Cummings	Terri Monrad
Andrew Frye	Diane Schmit
Tim Hayden	Sophie Shaw
Cheryl Johnson	Jenna Soule
Terry Kolich	Susan Sutherland
Lynn Long	Marcia Turner
Mike Mattix	

SUPPORT STAFF

Deacon Moderator..... Anita Hadel
Operating Committee..... Tim Hayden,
Cheryl Johnson, Susan Sutherland, Mike Mattix,
Diane Schmit
Newsletter Editor/Marketing..... Kim Krueger
Prayer Chain..... Cheryl Johnson
Website Administrators .. Kim Krueger/Patrick Bell

MINISTRY UNITS

Congregational Nurture Unit Moderators

Connections and Care..... Vacant
Worship and Music..... Melanie Townsend,
Katie Hearn

Education Ministry Unit Moderators

Adult Maggie Blankers
Children Erin Frye, Angela Krug
Youth..... Kaki Conti

Reach Out Ministry Unit Moderators

Kairos Rick Randolph
Mission Mikki Walker
Welcoming Vacant

Supportive Ministry Unit Moderators

Facility Marc Feyh
Generosity David Sutherland
Finance..... Jim Byrd
Personnel Kevin Mason

Worship Schedule

10am Online Worship
until otherwise announced.
Visit gcpc.org/online for links

Upcoming Newsletter Article Deadlines

June 2021 issue - Deadline, May 18
July 2021 issue - Deadline, June 22