

GRACE COVENANT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

LEARN, CONNECT, AND PARTICIPATE

GRACE NOTES

June 2026
Vol 44, Nbr 6

God draws us together as a welcoming and faithful community, attentive to the Spirit's leading, to worship with joy, grow as disciples, and share our gifts in service to God and neighbor.

With gratitude for where we have been and hope for where God is leading us, we are sent to serve Christ in the world—extending Christ's love, strengthening community, and living out the gospel through lives of grace, justice, and compassion.

11100 College Blvd.
Overland Park, KS 66210
913-345-1256
office@gcpc.org
gcpc.org

In addition to in-person worship, our service is also livestreamed on our website home page, Facebook and YouTube channel.

A Season of Growth: Welcoming Summer at Grace Covenant

"For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven."
— Ecclesiastes 3:1

Summer is nearly here, and at Grace Covenant that means something special: children filling the halls with energy, music returning in new ways, and opportunities for all of us to connect more deeply with the life of the church.

On June 7, we'll celebrate **VBS Sunday** as our children and youth help lead worship and share the joy and excitement of Vacation Bible School. Communion will move to the following week as we make space to celebrate all that God has been doing through this ministry

Beginning June 14 and continuing through the summer, our **worship series "Reports from the Field"** will highlight the ministries that help Grace Covenant thrive. Through dialogue sermons and conversations, we'll hear from ministry teams about what they do, why it matters, and how others can get involved.

On June 21, we're excited to revive a beloved GCPC tradition with the musical **"Table for Five ... Thousand!"** retelling the story of the loaves and fishes. For many, it will bring back cherished memories; for others, it will be a joyful introduction to a new tradition.

Church is more than a building or a program — it is a body, and every part matters. Whether you've been here for years or are still finding your place, summer is a wonderful time to learn, connect, and participate in the life of this community.

Summer schedules may scatter us, but we hope this season gives you reasons to gather, experience the holy chaos of VBS, be moved by music in worship, and discover new ways to serve and belong. Join us whenever you can — in person or online.

Blessings, Pastor Karen





Movie Night at Grace Covenant!

Charity Redefined, Tuesday, June 23, 6:30pm

Join us for a meaningful evening of learning, conversation, and community as Grace Covenant hosts a showing of the powerful documentary *Charity Redefined* on **Tuesday, June 23 at 6:30pm** in the sanctuary.

Based on the work of SowHope, *Charity Redefined* challenges traditional ideas about charity and international development. Rather than focusing on handouts or outside organizations directing solutions, the film highlights a different model — one centered on empowering women, preserving dignity, and partnering with local leaders who understand the needs of their own communities.

Charity Redefined reveals how trust-built partnerships and women's empowerment create lasting, authentic change.

Through exclusive access to SowHope's field work and global partnerships, the documentary explores sustainable, locally led approaches to combating poverty in the developing world. It offers an inspiring look at how communities can create lasting change when local people are equipped, trusted, and empowered to lead.

A free-will offering will be collected during the evening to support the ongoing work of SowHope. SowHope is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization based in Grand Rapids, Michigan, dedicated to inspiring women around the world by promoting wellness, education, and economic opportunities. By partnering with local leaders who design and implement sustainable solutions, SowHope empowers women to rise out of poverty and transform their communities. Learn more at sowhope.org.

All are welcome to attend!

To watch the trailer for *Charity Redefined*, visit YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kaN0LWcpyPM>

Learn more about SowHope at sowhope.org and about the film at charityredefined.com.

Little Pantry, Big Impact

Did you know the Little Food Pantry at Grace Covenant Presbyterian Church — located at the corner of Nieman & College Blvd. — recently celebrated its 5th birthday?

The pantry was originally installed as part of Jenna's Girl Scout Gold Award project, and thanks to the generosity of our church family and neighbors, it continues to serve our community every single week.

Inside the pantry you'll find non-perishable foods like canned soups, beans, vegetables, fruit, pasta, peanut butter, boxed meals, snacks, crackers, granola bars, bottled water, and occasionally hygiene and beauty items. Some days the pantry is completely emptied by those in need. Other days it's half full — a reminder that this ministry truly matters.

A special thank you to Erin Huff and all of the volunteers who help check and restock the pantry throughout the week.

Want to help?

- Donate non-perishable food or hygiene items
- Help restock the pantry
- Place donations in the collection box at the weekday entrance

Together, we are sharing God's blessings with our neighbors. Learn more at <https://gcpc.org/ministries/little-food-pantry.html>



Patrick O'Halloran



Doug Tilton

Wrap Someone in Prayer and Care

Do you know how to knit or crochet?

Have you ever wanted to learn? **The Prayer Shawl Ministry** is looking for caring hands and compassionate hearts to help create beautiful shawls for members of our church family who are facing illness, grief, recovery, or other life challenges.



Each shawl is more than yarn and stitches — it is a tangible reminder of God's love, comfort, and the prayers of a caring congregation. These handmade gifts often bring warmth, encouragement, and peace during difficult seasons.

Whether you are an experienced crafter or a beginner willing to learn, you are invited to join this meaningful ministry. Yarn and patterns can be provided.

This is a wonderful opportunity to use your creativity and gifts to bless others in a deeply personal way. You can work from home at your own pace while becoming part of a ministry that quietly shares comfort and hope. If you would like to participate or learn more, please contact Cheryl Johnson at agathatoo@gmail.com.

Care & Connections Groups

At Grace Covenant Presbyterian Church, we believe meaningful relationships are at the heart of a thriving faith community. Our **Care & Connections Groups** are open to everyone—members, visitors, friends, and seekers alike—and offer opportunities to deepen faith, build friendships, serve others, and share life together. With more than 20 small groups meeting throughout the week, there are many ways to get involved and find your place at GCPC.



Some groups focus on study, exploring Scripture, books, and spiritual topics, while others center on service, volunteering in the community or supporting church ministries. Still others gather simply for fellowship, meals, and conversation. Groups meet at church, in homes, restaurants, and throughout the community, bringing together people of all ages and interests—readers and runners, singers and crafters, workers and seekers. Wherever you are on your faith journey, there is a place for you to connect and belong.

Visit <https://gcpc.org/ministries/connection-groups/>

Adult Education in June!

Join us right after worship in Room 3 for Adult Christian Education at 10:45am. Whether you come every week or have not made it down the hall lately, there is a place for you. We have a wonderful variety of classes this summer — thoughtful, practical, and engaging, with something new each week.

On **June 7** we'll gather for *"Speaking with Grace: Advocacy and the Life of the Church,"* led by Rick Randolph. We'll explore how advocacy can grow out of our Christian faith — not as partisan argument, but as a faithful way of loving our neighbors, seeking justice, and giving voice to compassion in the public square.

On **June 14**, we are especially pleased to welcome Doug Tilton and Vilmarie Cintrón-Olivieri for *"Still Sent, Now Walking Alongside: PC(USA) Global Mission in a New Season."* Doug will be joining us by Zoom from Africa to help us better understand changes in PC(USA) global mission and what it means for the church to continue walking alongside partners around the world.

There will be **no Sunday School on June 21** in observance of Father's Day.

On **June 28**, Stephen Wing will lead a class titled *Journaling: A Friend At The End Of Your Pen.*

There will be **no Sunday School on July 5** due to the 4th of July holiday weekend.

On **July 12**, Patrick O'Halloran will present *Why the Church Sings – Part II*, and on **July 19**, Patrick O'Halloran will continue the series with *Why the Church Sings – Part III.*

KAIROS Clues

A Great Big Thank You, Thank You, Thank You!

As we closed the 16-year project of collecting shoes, we challenged you to donate more in this one month than we had ever collected before — **AND YOU DID IT!** For April 2026 alone, GCPC and Belléz Design Studio (*a long-time partner in this endeavor*) collected **1,050 pairs of shoes!** Your generosity has helped others in our KC metropolitan community... putting shoes on babies from the Argentine Baby Closet; providing garden wellies & street shoes for the volunteers, workers, and homeless at Cherith Brook Catholic Worker house; shoeing single mothers who now have the opportunity to have a pair of shoes they couldn't or wouldn't buy for themselves; and shoes sent to the national organization Soles4Souls who share to keep shoes in circulation, putting shoes on bare feet, supporting local entrepreneurs by helping create jobs, and sustaining small businesses, keeping shoes out of the landfill for a cleaner planet for all God's Creation. Thank you!!

Plogging!

Start a new activity as you walk/run this summer — plogging, the activity of picking up litter while jogging. Take a bag with you and pick up items that don't belong along the walkways and roadways you are walking. You can put many items into your recycling container once you get home. Some will belong in the trash, but you will have reduced the items that would have possibly made their way into our waterways.

KAIROS Bulletin Board

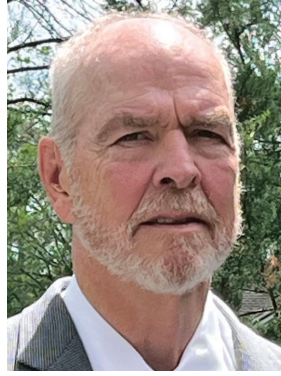
Be sure to check the KAIROS bulletin board outside of Heartland Hall for information on the upcoming Primary Vote (August 4), Johnson County Master Gardeners' Garden Tour, and more activities you can do for Peace, Justice and Environmental issues.

Thank You Church Family!

Thank you to everyone who has cared for me over the past three months. I appreciate all the cards, flowers, blankets, shawls, notes, visits, sweet treats, meals, transportation, prayers, etc. It's too numerous to list all the ways you have shown me care, comfort, love and support. I really don't know how I could have faced these challenges without my family and church family. A sincere thank you to all.

—Blessings, Johnnie Baker

Dr. Rick Randolph Honored with Two Humanitarian Awards



GCPC KAIROS Team member, **Dr. Rick Randolph**, a longtime servant leader in medicine, humanitarian care, and global mission, recently received two distinguished awards recognizing his extraordinary commitment to serving others both locally and internationally.

Rick received the **Beloved Community Award from Kansas**

Interfaith Action (KIFA), an annual award honoring individuals and organizations who champion social justice, human rights, and advocacy across Kansas. Rick was recognized for his work with a variety of Kansas organizations as well as his ongoing humanitarian service in Ukraine through Global Care Force. He also received the **Humanitarian Award from the Kansas Academy of Family Physicians**. This award recognizes family physicians who demonstrate extraordinary and enduring humanitarian service both locally and internationally. Rick's work in Ukraine with Global Care Force was a significant part of this recognition. A retired family physician and retired U.S. Army Colonel, Rick devoted his career to caring for people in times of crisis. He previously served as Senior Chief Medical Officer for Heart to Heart International, deploying to numerous natural disasters around the world. Among his many assignments, he served for five months as Chief Medical Officer of an Ebola Treatment Unit in Liberia during the Ebola crisis. Today, Rick continues his humanitarian work through medical missions in formerly occupied areas of Ukraine, bringing care, compassion, and hope to communities deeply affected by war. These awards reflected not only Rick's remarkable professional accomplishments, but also his deep commitment to serving others with courage, humility, and compassion. We celebrate this well-deserved recognition and give thanks for the many ways Rick continues to make a difference in the world.

It's Hard to Believe...

It is hard to believe that it's been 10 years since my first day at GCPC! Every day I am amazed by the spirit of volunteerism and love that I see come through the doors of this church. Thank you for all the cards with words of thanks and to the "angels" who decorated my office for a Friday morning surprise. I am truly blessed to work with such a joyous community.

—Patrick Bell

MUSIC MINISTRY

June will be a full and exciting month in the music ministry at Grace Covenant, with children, youth, adults, and community partners all helping shape worship through song. We are grateful for the many ways music continues to tell the story of faith in our congregation.

June 7 - Vacation Bible School Sunday - Our Vacation Bible School participants will share music from their week and help bring the energy, Scripture, and spirit of VBS into Sunday morning worship.

June 14 - Belle Voci - We are excited to welcome Belle Voci, our soprano/alto partners from EncoreKC!. Their musical leadership will be a meaningful addition to worship and a wonderful opportunity to hear voices from the wider Kansas City singing community.

June 21 - Mini-Musical Workshop: "Table for Five ... Thousand!" - On June 21, during worship, we will present a read/sing-through workshop of "Table for Five ... Thousand!" a children's musical based on the miracle of the loaves and fishes. This will be a relaxed worship experience where children, youth, and adults help tell the story together through music. Joy! Singers, Celebration! Singers, youth, and Summer Choir will all be featured in accessible ways, with no memorization, costumes, or polished staging expected. The goal is to help our children lead us in worship while gently reintroducing musical storytelling in a way that feels meaningful, welcoming, and fun.

June 28 - EncoreKC Act II - On June 28, we are excited to welcome another ensemble from our partners at EncoreKC!, Act II. They will join us in worship and share music with the congregation, and we look forward to the energy, experience, and musical richness they will bring.

Musical Read/Sing-Throughs for "Table for Five ... Thousand!"

In preparation for "Table for Five ... Thousand!" we will hold read/sing-throughs during the Sunday School hour.

Read/Sing-Through Schedule

May 31 - Joy! Singers and Celebration! Singers

June 7 - Joy! Singers, Celebration! Singers, and adult participants

June 14 - Joy! Singers, Celebration! Singers, and adult participants

All ages and skill levels are welcome. You do not have to be a traditional "choir" member to participate. These rehearsals will help everyone become familiar with the music, walk through the basic flow of the presentation, and understand

how each group fits into worship on June 21.

We ask that **Joy! Singers and Celebration! Singers attend at least two of the three read/sing-throughs**, if possible.

Adult participants are asked to attend at least one.

Participants may also review scores and rehearsal tracks through Dropbox outside of rehearsal.

No memorization is required, and perfection is not the goal. We are keeping things relaxed and manageable so that children, youth, and adults can tell the story together with confidence and joy.

Calling All Brass Players

We are hoping to have a **brass-led service in early July**, and we would love to have you join us. If you play trumpet, horn, trombone, euphonium, tuba, or another brass instrument, please consider being part of this special worship service.

Interested in Donating an Anthem?

One meaningful way to enrich the music ministry at Grace Covenant is by donating an anthem in honor or memory of a loved one, in celebration of a special occasion, or simply as a gift to support worship through music.

Anthem donations help us continue building a thoughtful and vibrant choral library for the congregation. These gifts allow us to choose music that supports the life of the church, strengthens our worship, and gives our singers meaningful texts and melodies to offer throughout the year.

Upcoming Music Wing Updates

We are aiming to begin updates to the Music Wing during the **second week of June**. Projects may include painting, stripping, mounting, decorating, organizing, and generally refreshing the space for the year ahead. We could always use a few extra hands.

Want to Get Involved?

If you are interested in participating in the mini-musical workshop, joining the brass-led service, donating an anthem, helping with Music Wing updates, or receiving access to scores and rehearsal tracks, please email patrick.ohalloran@gcpc.org. Thank you to everyone for helping make this such a full and meaningful season of music at Grace Covenant.

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

SMASH Finishes Strong in May!

SMASH is for kids K–5th grade and meets on the 3rd Sunday of each month during the school year.

SMASH wrapped up the year in a big way with an exciting Olympic-themed evening centered around the idea of “Finishing Strong!” Thanks to Christy’s incredible planning and leadership, the night was packed with energy, fun, and meaningful moments for everyone involved.

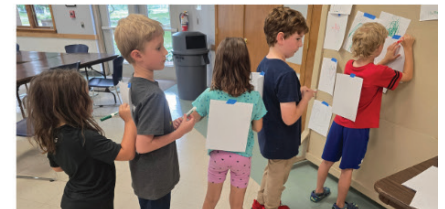
We were thrilled to welcome **13 children**, along with **6 adult volunteers** and **4 youth volunteers** who joined after their youth group activities wrapped up. Their enthusiasm and willingness to help made the evening even more special.

Activities throughout the night kept everyone moving, creating, and laughing together. The Aberdeen craft station invited children to pot “**Seeds of Encouragement**,” a reminder that even small acts of kindness and faith can grow into something meaningful. Kids also enjoyed a variety of Olympic-inspired activity stations, including **paper horse racing**, a **blind Pictionary challenge**, an **obstacle course**, and **word games** that brought out both creativity and teamwork.

Of course, no SMASH night would be complete without snacks! Everyone enjoyed a delicious summer-inspired treat featuring popsicles and a fun shark-themed ocean drink, giving a little taste of the summer season ahead.

The evening ended with parachute fun and a meaningful time of celebration as we **recognized six fifth graders who will be moving up to youth group next year**. We are excited for all that lies ahead for them and grateful for the joy and energy they have brought to SMASH.

It was a wonderful way to close out the year while building excitement for Vacation Bible School, which is just around the corner. We can’t wait to see everyone again for another summer of faith, friendship, and fun!



CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

VBS is here!

The church activity and decibel level will increase significantly June 1-5, from 9am-Noon as VBS participants and volunteer staff enjoy a week of fun WINTER sports during our **SNOWBALL MOUNTAIN CHALLENGE!** Thank you to all of our amazing planning committee, decorators, volunteers and donation helpers! What an incredible week!

Join us in worship on Sunday June 7th, 9:30am, as we share some of our songs and stories from VBS. *Following worship, stop by Heartland Hall* to see some of our work on display and perhaps you can engage in an activity or two from VBS too!

If you would like to donate a t-shirt or scholarship a participant, you can do so here:

<https://onrealm.org/gcpc/-/form/give/VBS>

Volunteer Opportunities for 2026-27 School Year

As summer begins, our Children's team begins planning for the new school year. **We are in need of volunteers in several areas:**

- Sunday School teachers for our youngest kiddos. We'll offer a class for ages 2-3 and 4-5.
- Our elementary kiddos will continue with our Workshop rotation which requires:
 - Shepherds to accompany the kids to the rotation each week
 - Teachers to lead the rotation each week
- Our Awakening to Worship program requires a storyteller and 2 greeters each week. Our greeters can be Youth!
- SMASH K-5th grade Sunday School meets monthly and requires many hands on deck!
- Join the children's team! We need more helpers on our team that makes it all happen! Let us know if you'd like to join us!

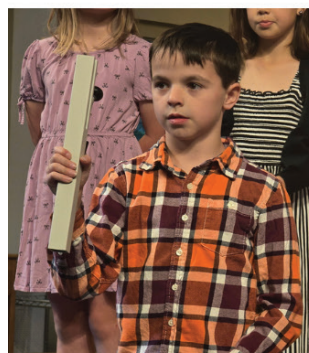
Training is provided for all roles, and the rewards are endless as you develop relationships with our GCPC children.

Please consider if you are being called to help this coming year. If you feel called or have questions, please reach out to anyone on children's team or e-mail gcpcchildren@gmail.com.

Happy Summer Everyone!

If you are new to Children's Ministries at GCPC, welcome! We are glad you are here. Our regular programming takes a pause during the summer but will be back up and running again in mid August. To get an overview of our children's ministry program during our school year, please visit our web page:

<https://gcpc.org/children-youth/children/>





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gcpc.org



GRACE COVENANT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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CHURCH STAFF

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- Finance Administrator**.....Tara Hyder
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- Director of Music Ministries**.... Patrick O'Halloran
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- Praise Team Director**.....Carrie DeVries
cdevriesbe@olatheschools.org
- Organist**.....Linda Dover
- Audio/Visual Director**.....Jason Turner
Email both addresses if you need a video or audio played in worship. Send on the Wednesday prior to Sunday's worship. darktrainfilms@gmail.com; gcpc.media@gmail.com
- Praise Team Drummer** Jill Endaya-Allen
- Child Care Coordinator**.....Carolyn Chaffin
- Wedding Coordinator** Kristy Shaw
- Funeral Coordinator**Caroline Becher, Ashley Jeffries

ELDERS

- | | |
|-----------------|-------------------|
| Johnnie Baker | Frank Slovick |
| Paul Bruns | Jaylee Soule |
| Chris Cabe | Eileen Thomson |
| Debbie Campbell | Michala Walker |
| Barbara Douglas | Mary Ann Weyforth |
| Kevin Johnson | Melanie Townsend |
| Andrew Sellers | Session Clerk |
| Kristy Shaw | |

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- Operating Committee..... Paul Bruns, Barbara Douglas, Mikki Walker, Johnnie Baker, Melanie Townsend, and Rev. Karen Wright
- Newsletter Editor/Marketing..... Kim Krueger
- Prayer Chain Cheryl Johnson
- Website Administrators Kim Krueger, Patrick Bell

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Worship and Music.....Debbie Campbell, Barbara Douglas
- Education Ministry Unit Moderators
AdultKevin Johnson
Children Kristy Shaw
Youth.....Chris Cabe
- Reach Out Ministry Unit Moderators
Kairos Andrew Sellers
MissionMikki Walker
Welcoming Kathy Williams
- Supportive Ministry Unit Moderators
Facility Paul Bruns
Generosity Jane Knoche, Eileen Thomson
- Finance..... Beth Lillian
Personnel Kevin Mason

Worship Schedule

9:30am Worship

Streaming on YouTube, Facebook, gcpc.org

Visit gcpc.org for links

Upcoming Newsletter Article Deadlines

July 2026 Issue - Deadline June 19
August 2026 Issue - Deadline July 19