



REAL FAITH | REAL STORIES | REAL GRACE

GRACE NOTES



It finally happened.

We were sitting here, waiting for the words of wisdom (or at least some kind of entertainment) to come and we drew a blank. That's it. Nothing. No witty sayings, no humorous stories. Nothing, nada, zilch.

It must be the after effects of the holiday season. It's easy to feel a little bit numb after the pace of activities that goes on, not only at church but at the schools and in the community. So instead of some deeply profound message, let us say simply *"Thank you."*

We like to think that all pastors have the same dream—to be part of a congregation that is really alive with activity, focused in mission, and looking forward to what lies ahead. That is where we are at now and it is thanks to many of you. We're not pretending that we don't have "interesting" challenges possibly coming our way at Grace Covenant; it's just that so many other wonderful things are happening in the life of the church that we can't help but believe everything will work out in the end.

Look inside the pages of this GRACE NOTES (*together with last month's issue*) and you'll see what we mean—vitality and enthusiasm are everywhere at GCPC and we're glad to be part of it!

—Mitch & Sue Trigger

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.

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In-Person Worship and Online
Worship every Sunday on Facebook
and Zoom.

Visit gcpc.org/online
for links!



MUSIC NOTES

MUSIC IN WORSHIP

January 1st – New Year’s Sunday

Praise Team led worship.

January 8th

Epiphany, Baptism of the Lord, and Star Sunday

Organ led worship. Kat Mason, flute solo. Chancel & Exaltation! Singers anthem, “How Bright Appears the Morning Star” by Johann Kuhnau, arr. John Leavitt with Donna Heer & Chris Lindsay, violins. Patrick O’Halloran, director.

January 15th

Organ led worship. Chancel & Exaltation! Singers anthem, “Set My Feet on Solid Ground” by James E. Clemens.

January 22nd

Praise Team led worship.

January 29th

Organ led worship. Chancel & Exaltation! Singers anthem, “Within These Walls” by Pepper Choplin.

February 5th

Music Appreciation Sunday

Music shared by Joy! Singers (4s-1st graders), Celebration! Choir (2nd-5th graders), Praise Team, Chancel & Exaltation! Singers, Charter Ringers, & Chancel Brass. **We will also recognize & celebrate Linda Dover’s 25th Anniversary as GCPC’s Organist.**

Update on Rebecca Prater’s Medical Leave

Our Director of Music Ministries, Rebecca Prater, has begun the recovery process following her inner ear and cochlear implant surgery. Her surgeon has recommended a six-week recovery period, so Rebecca should be back in the office on Monday, February 6th. She is grateful for your many acts of care and support and is especially thankful for your prayers.

Please contact Kathy Bures or Celia Nicholas if you have any questions during Rebecca’s medical leave.



LOOKING AHEAD TO MUSIC IN 2023

We’d love to have you join us this semester in making music at GCPC. Please contact the director of the ensemble to let them know of your interest in participating so they can be ready for you.

Children’s Ensembles

10:45am on Sundays, Joy! Singers (4s-K) will have their music time at the beginning of Sunday school under the direction of Emily Hussey & Hilary Schmidt in **Room 25 beginning January 8th.**

10:45am on Sundays, Celebration! Choir & Chimes (2nd-5th graders) will have their music time at the beginning of Sunday school under the direction of Pam Kelly, Lara Schesser, and accompanist, Angela Krug in **Room 15 beginning January 8th.**

Youth, Young Adult, & Adult Vocal Ensembles

7pm on Tuesdays, Praise Team – Vocals, Strings, Keyboards, & Percussion (Youth-Adults) will rehearse in Sanctuary under the direction of Carrie DeVries **beginning January 10th.**

7:05pm on Wednesdays, Chancel & Exaltation! Singers (aka CHEX – 6th graders-Adults) will rehearse in **Sanctuary.** They will be under the direction of Patrick O’Halloran through February 5th and Rebecca Prater for the remainder of the semester. **Rehearsals resume on January 11th.**

Youth and Adult Handbell Ensembles

6pm on Wednesdays, Charter Ringers (Adults) will rehearse in Room 1 under the direction of Christ Krug & Celia Nicholas, co-directors **beginning January 11th.**

1pm on Sundays, Jubilation! & Exaltation! Ringers (Youth & Adults) will rehearse in Room 1 under the direction of Kathy Bures. **Their rehearsal start date is TBA by their director.**

Intergenerational Instrumentalists

As scheduled by the director, the **GCPC Orchestra (8th graders – Adults)** rehearses in Sanctuary under the direction of Pam Kelly. **They are scheduled to play in worship on Sundays, March 12th & April 30th.**

Grace Studies: For Kids

Pre-school 2-4 years:

Happy New Year! The Pre-school children will grow in grace and gratitude this year! They will gather to explore and respond to God's grace and be sent out to love and serve God.



Remember that when our children are at home, families can use these tools to explore God's grace and gratitude each day:

- Grace Sightings: the weekly Bible story with age-appropriate activities for your family to do at home.
- Audio Recordings: the weekly Bible story brought to life by endearing readings and sound effects.
- E-book: the quarter's colorful illustrations, Bible stories, and Grace Sightings in iBook and Kindle formats.

Find these tools at:

www.pcusastore.com/GGGdownloads.

K- 5/6th Grace Makers:

With the new year comes joy! Our Grace makers will be learning some practices that can help them through times of sadness and times of joy. They will also learn that there can be joy in times of sadness and God is with us every step of the way. They will learn these lessons through a creative writing workshop and an art workshop.



Everyone is welcome to check out our workshop rotation classes, take a walk down the first-floor hallway in the east wing and see what's happening.

Children's Ministry Opportunities

Awakening to Worship is our wonder and worship program for children ages 4-1st grade and meets following the children's sermon weekly. We invite children in elementary school to continue participating and experiencing worship as they move into the sanctuary for worship with the wider family of Grace Covenant.

Worship Bags are in place to help busy hands and hearts. Worship Bulletins are available from the ushers every week and are on two age levels.

Through the first chapters of Matthew, we follow Jesus from birth to his early ministry as crowds are drawn to him, to hear his word, to feel his touch. Their hearts and souls yearn for his good news. To those who have very little, he finds their blessings and encourages them to be a blessing to others—to be salt, flavor, and spice in a world in need, and to be light, illuminating God from the hilltops. Jesus sifts through the worries people carry to the kernel of truth—seeks first God's kingdom and everything else will be all right. Through the metaphor and imagery—salt, light, birds of the air, dressed-up flowers in the fields, and specks and logs—Jesus knows where people are in need and how to capture their imaginations and their hearts. In the final story of the quarter, Jesus tells of two house builders, a wise one and a foolish one, a house built on a sturdy foundation and a house that will be washed away in the storm. Jesus calls for his hearers to not only hear but also do what he has taught. His message is to bless others, be salt and light, seek God first, do not judge others, and follow his teachings. Will we be like the wise builder or the foolish one?

Joy! Singers: Our preschool – 1st grade children enjoy singing under the leadership of Emily Hussey and Hilary Schmidt.

Celebration! Singers: Angela Krug, Lara Schesser and Pam Smith Kelly bring their talents to leading the Celebration singers. The children are not only singing; they are ringing chimes!

SMASH: Once a month, SMASH happens! We ordinarily meet the third Sunday of the month from 4 – 6 p.m. in Heartland Hall. This popular program is an activity for kindergarten through 5/6th graders combining sports, music, arts, service, and "hangout" time and offers a time for children to be nurtured in faith by building relationships with a variety of adults of all ages.



Grace Studies: Adult Study Opportunities

Follow Me: Forgiveness

January 8; Meets in Room 3; Leadership shared

Zoom in at: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83829790055?pwd=MnpSL1MwS2VBbWN0OEU5aFJGaTJLdz09>

Meeting ID: 838 2979 0055, Passcode: 723297

Forgiveness is a gift and not a reward. It is how God moves toward us to restore what is broken between us: *"I, I am He who blots out your transgressions for my own sake, and I will not remember your sins" (Isaiah 43:25)*. Thus, when we forgive one another, we participate in God's work or way of being in the world. In this study, participants will consider four acts in the practice of forgiveness. This is a process we all go through continuously. Together they compose a spiritual practice that is at the heart of Christian life in community. • Name sin • Receive forgiveness • Forgive others • Build a bridge



Christian Living Opportunities

January 8: Conversation and Contemplation

Meets in Room 4.

Zoom in at: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83815237214?pwd=TVh4VWZldC9hbGJCL1k5dIVjWVlwUT09>

Meeting ID: 838 1523 7214, Passcode: GCPC2022

Join us for a one session presentation. Watch or more details to be announced in the Midweek Announcements email. Don't get the emails? Contact the church office to sign up.

January 15: A Presentation by The Good Faith Network

Meets in the Sanctuary. To Zoom in, use the worship service Zoom link.

GCPC has been invited to join in The Good Faith Network of Johnson County. The Good Faith Network is an interfaith organization building people power with 23 diverse congregations across Johnson County. The network builds a collective voice so large it can't be ignored. They organize and use that voice to advocate for changes that address the root cause of our community's most pressing problems. Recently, they've been working to address the mental health and homelessness crises in Johnson County, as well as affordable housing. Join us for a presentation by Pastor Laura Guy. Pastor Guy will explain more about what The Good Faith Network is, the work they do, and what GCPC would be committing to if we joined. Congregational interest and feedback will be critical to the decision making process — we hope to see lots of people there!

January 22 – An Earth Care Conversation

Meets in the Sanctuary. To Zoom in, use the worship service Zoom link.

The Adult classes will join together to discuss our commitment as an Earth Care Congregation of the PCUSA. Jo Randolph will lead us through the process of evaluating our work in 2022 and discussion of what more we can do together.

January 29 – Annual Meeting - No Sunday School Classes

There will be no Sunday school classes on January 29 because of the Annual Meeting. There will be nursery for our infants through pre-school age children in room 22. K-5/6th grade students will enjoy activities in the youth café and youth room 19a downstairs in the east wing. Children's Team members will supervise.

The Annual Meeting will be held in the Sanctuary immediately following worship. Online participation is available through Zoom. The church office will share the Zoom link in upcoming communications.

Gather At the Table Workshop Series with Rev. Sue

For 2nd Graders and their Parents

Workshop Dates - February 5, 12, and 19
Time 4-6pm in Room 3.

Sharing the stories and practices of faith will have an impact on a child throughout their lifetime. The Sacrament of Communion is one of our most treasured practices.

Rev. Sue invites you to join her for a very special program about the Sacrament of Communion called, "Gather at the Table." Together participants will learn about Communion, what we do and why we do it. This is a family workshop and all families of 2nd grade children are invited to attend.

The program will conclude with the families participating in the Sacrament of Communion (*their first Communion*) on Sunday, March 5 at the 9:30am worship service. If you would like to participate, please RSVP to Rev. Sue at sue.trigger@gcpc.org.



Soup + Pie = Fellowship

Saturday, January 21, 5-7pm

Heartland Hall

Join us for a special evening of food and fellowship! We will enjoy a variety of delicious soups and pies made by members of GCPC.

Sign-up and let us know what you would like to bring using this link to SignUpGenius:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/70a0a45a4a722a4fc1-soup>

This event was a huge success last year so don't miss this fun time of fellowship! This event is being coordinated by the Care and Connections Team.

SMASH Sunday!

Service, Music, Art, Sports, Hangtime

Arise! Shine With Hope!

January 15, 4-6pm

Our January SMASH will focus on another one of our VBS pathfinders, "Arise, Shine with Hope!" and will be held on January 15th from 4-6pm. Living in Hope will be a great way to start our new year. Please RSVP for your children to Christy Soule at christysoule@yahoo.com.

Over the past two years, our SMASH kiddos have been making and sharing projects with residents of Aberdeen Village. We are so excited to be able to visit our friends in person in December. During our visit, our children did some Christmas caroling and then passed out handmade ornaments. We returned to GCPC for some Holiday fun and games with our parents included too.



YOUTH PAGE

Schedule – Progressive Dinner

The GCPC Youth Spring schedule is now available and there are a couple of important dates to note. For starters, we are having our progressive dinner and white elephant gift exchange on January 8 this year. It's always hard to schedule a youth Christmas event at a time when students are having finals, so we decided to wait this year. Also of special note is Youth Sunday which will take place on March 5. Our seniors have already started planning. Most Sundays we will stick with our current Reconnect events that go from 10:45–12:45 but we will likely throw in some evening planning times prior to Youth Sunday.

MLK Weekend

In years past we have regularly joined other youth in the Heartland Presbytery for an annual service event and tubing at Snow Creek on MLK Monday. It's been a few years since we have been able to make that happen, but this year we are happy the event is back! We will be heading to First Presbyterian in Leavenworth to make a few hundred sack lunches for Harvesters to hand out. We will also have some fun activities as well as a time of recognition for MLK and the Civil Rights Movement. Then, weather permitting we will head to Snow Creek for some tubing.

Souper Bowl of Caring

Please mark your calendars for the Souper Bowl of Caring. We will be collecting non-perishable food donations and monetary communion offering gifts throughout January and finalizing on February 12. Donations will be used to help feed our local hungry brothers and sisters in Christ.

Upcoming Events

- Progressive Dinner and White Elephant Gift Exchange – January 8
- MLK Service/Fun Event – January 16
- Souper Bowl of Caring – February 12 (collecting donations throughout January)
- Youth Super Bowl Party – February 12
- Youth Sunday – March 5



Clerk's Corner

The Stated Meeting of the Session was held on December 19, with all Session members in attendance (some in person and some on Zoom). We were joined by Deacon Terra Howard and several Team moderators.

We passed a motion from Personnel Team that would eliminate Session meetings on church staff holidays. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day and Presidents' Day fall on the days of Session meetings annually and Juneteenth and Easter Monday will sometimes fall on the days of Session meetings. Going forward, an alternate Session meeting date will be selected at the Session meeting in the month prior to a Session/Staff holiday conflict. Immediately, this means that the Session will meet on **TUESDAY, JANUARY 17, 2023** instead of Monday. At the January meeting we will select an alternate date for February.

Nominating team has identified three **new Deacons** for the coming year, but continues to look for a few more. If you have any interest in serving GCPC in this way, please contact Bill Turner.

As we move into 2023, **Personnel Team** has established a plan for looking at the appropriate type and level of staffing for our Congregation that is consistent with our core values and goals.

Speaking of core values, please plan to participate in **Visioning Day on February 4 from 9am-12pm**. This is an exciting time to explore how Grace Covenant is growing and connecting and how we can continue our work in this community.

Finally, we engaged in **Budget Discussion**. The Finance Team presented a draft budget for the year. As always, the two biggest pieces of our budget are staff salaries and facilities maintenance. We all love our staff and want to pay them well and our 30-year-old facility continues to need care (including a new fire detection system as the existing system malfunctions frequently). Many ideas we explored including raising Pioneer Preschool's rent, asking the congregation to increase pledges, decreasing contributions to Heartland Presbytery, shifting the GCPC fiscal year, and deferring staff raises. Jim Byrd will update the proposal based on input from the Session and Team Moderators and Session plans to vote to approve a working budget for 2023 by the end of December. The budget will be shared with the congregation once approved and we ask that if you have questions or concerns you speak directly with a Session member or attend as Session meeting.

Respectfully Submitted, Melanie Townsend, Clerk of Session





GRACE COVENANT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Inclusive. Family Oriented. Welcoming.

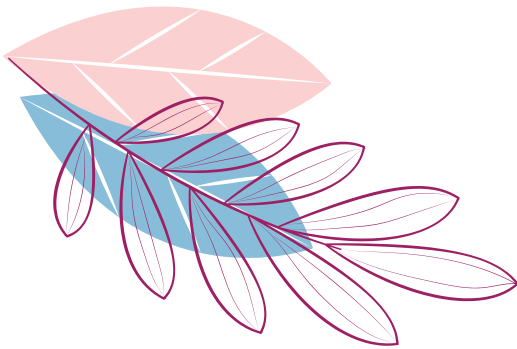
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gcpc.org

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Instagram: @gcpc_overlandpark



CELEBRATING GOD'S ALL ENCOMPASSING LOVE!

CHURCH STAFF

Co Pastors

- Office hours: Monday-Thursday
Mitch Trigger, mitch.trigger@gcpc.orgext.18
Sue Trigger, sue.trigger@gcpc.orgext.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. Carrie DeVries

Contemporary Music Drummer.....Daniel Cole

Child Care Coordinator.....Carolyn Chaffin

Wedding Coordinator.....Lara Schesser

Funeral CoordinatorMary Sue Thomas

ELDERS

Jim Byrd	Angela Krug
Ric Cummings	Jake Schmidt
Miles Dalton (youth)	Terri Monrad
Andrew Frye	Joy Circo
Katie Hearn	Tom Stroud
Melanie Townsend	Lara Schesser
Jane Knoche	Bill Turner

SUPPORT STAFF

Deacon ModeratorMeredith Watson
Operating Committee..... Terri Monrad,
Ric Cummings, Katie Hearn, Angela Krug
Newsletter Editor/Marketing..... Kim Krueger
Prayer ChainCheryl Johnson
Website AdministratorsKim Krueger,
Patrick Bell

MINISTRY UNITS

Congregational Nurture Unit Moderators
Connections and Care.....Jake Schmidt
Worship and Music..... Kathy Bures,
Katie Hearn

Education Ministry Unit Moderators
Adult Tom Stroud
ChildrenErin Frye, Angela Krug
Youth..... Bill Turner

Reach Out Ministry Unit Moderators
Kairos Rick Randolph
Mission.....Mikki Walker
WelcomingKathy Williams

Supportive Ministry Unit Moderators
Facility Liz Chandler
GenerosityDavid Sutherland
Finance..... Terra Howard
Personnel Kevin Mason

Worship Schedule

9:30am Worship
In-Person, Facebook & Zoom
Visit gcpc.org/online for links

Upcoming Newsletter Article Deadlines

February 2023 issue - Deadline, January 20
March 2023 issue - Deadline, February 21