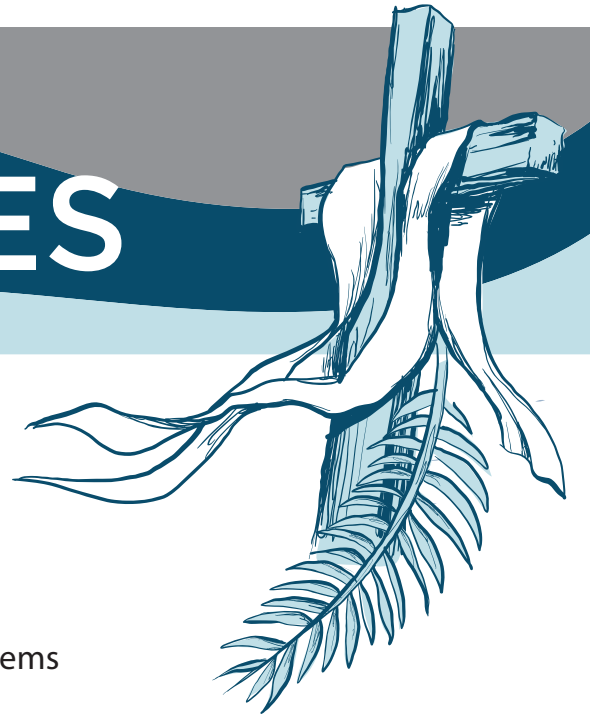




REAL FAITH | REAL STORIES | REAL GRACE

GRACE NOTES



What God Wants

February is the second coldest month of the year and has the tendency to be one of the gloomiest months of the year. Like January, February can often be gray and cloudy and cold. It seems like the perfect month to begin the season of Lent.

Historically, the purpose of Lent in the early church was the preparation of the believer for Easter through prayer, mortifying the flesh, repentance of sins, almsgiving, simple living, and self-denial. Today during Lent, many Christians commit to fasting, as well as giving up certain luxuries in imitation of Jesus Christ's sacrifice during his journey into the desert for 40 days; this is known as one's Lenten sacrifice.

We suggest a different way of observing Lent for us today. Instead of giving up luxuries or anything else *we* determine we should *temporarily* sacrifice, we're going to offer of some ideas of what *God* wants us to sacrifice – and not temporarily. Each Sunday for the first five Sundays in Lent, we'll be looking what God wants us to give up so that we can live a better life, for ourselves, our families, and our community. Please join us, in person or on-line, for "What God Wants," beginning Sunday, February 26.

"O Lord, make this Lenten season different from the other ones. Let me find you again. Amen." — Henri Nouwen

May peace be with us all,
—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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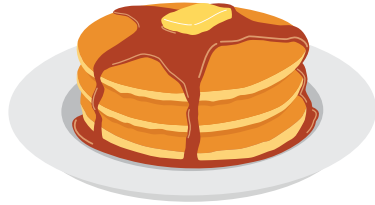
In-Person Worship and Online
Worship every Sunday on Facebook
and Zoom.
Visit gcpc.org/online
for links!

Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper

February 21

5:30 – 7pm

Heartland Hall



Shrove Tuesday is the last day before the season of Lent begins. Pancakes are eaten on this day because they contain fat, butter and eggs which were forbidden during Lent in some communities. In our tradition, we encourage all to consider their relationship to God and how they may do something to help others during Lent.

There will be pancakes, sausage and of course Tang to drink. We will enjoy fun activities and BINGO for everyone.

Reservations may be made by going to the Sign-up Genius: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/70A0A45A4A722A4FC1-shrove1>. Or you may contact the church office. All will pay at the door. \$5.00 per person, families no more than \$20. (Parents and children only. Sorry grandparents.)

Can you help? We are looking for volunteers to assist with cooking, set up, decorating, and clean up. We also need 12 griddles. If you can help us out, sign up at the same link above or contact Rev. Sue at the church office.

Where Jesus Walked

**Ash Wednesday Interactive
Worship Experience**

February 22, 4-7pm in the Sanctuary

Begin the season of Lent with time for quiet reflection through this interactive program of visual and tangible art. This spirituality center will include a sequence of reflections on places Jesus walked. You will want to allow 30 – 45 minutes for this service. The imposition of ashes will be available at the conclusion of your walk. **Please arrive no later than 6:30pm so that we may conclude at 7pm.** Individuals and families are welcome. There will be an activity table for pre-school and older children while parents enjoy the walk.

MUSIC NOTES

MUSIC IN WORSHIP

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, & Organ

We will also recognize & celebrate

**Linda Dover's 25th Anniversary as GCPC's Organist
Stay after Worship for a Reception in Heartland Hall**

February 12th

Praise Team led worship.

February 19th – Transfiguration Sunday

Organ led worship. Chancel & Exaltation! Singers

Anthem: "Shine On Us" arr. Bruce Greer

Rebecca Prater, director

February 26th

Praise Team & Charter Ringers lead worship.

March 5th – Youth Sunday

Our youth lead all aspects of worship including the music

LOOKING AHEAD TO MUSIC IN WORSHIP & MUSIC EVENTS

HOLY WEEK

PALM SUNDAY, APRIL 2nd – 9:30am Worship

Music Leadership by Praise Team,

Joy! Singers (4s-1st graders),

& Celebration! Choir (2nd-5th graders)

MAUNDY THURSDAY, APRIL 6th – 7:30pm Worship

Music Leadership by Praise Team

GOOD FRIDAY, APRIL 7th – 7:30pm Worship

Music Leadership by Chancel & Exaltation! Singers
and Instrumentalists

EASTER SUNDAY, APRIL 9th

9:00am Worship - Music Leadership by Praise Team

11:15am Worship - Music Leadership by Chancel & Exaltation! Singers, Charter Ringers, & Chancel Brass

BRIGHT SUNDAY, APRIL 16TH – 9:30am Worship

Music Leadership by Praise Team

BELL FEST, MAY 7th – 6:00pm

"Give My Regards to Broadway"

*Enjoy familiar tunes from Broadway and Disney musicals
& dress up in your favorite character's costume!*

EncoreKC! Chorus

EncoreKC! Chorus has been Artist in Residence at GCPC for the past year, and at the most recent meeting, Session voted to continue the relationship for the next three years. EncoreKC! Foundation and Chorus are extremely grateful and want to thank GCPC for this ongoing relationship!

Encore KC! Chorus is an organization for singers 50 years and older to provide enrichment to their lives through music, and to build community and diversity. The chorus had its founding seasons in 2019, was shut down by the pandemic in early 2020, and resumed singing in the summer of 2022. The past 18-24 months has been spent establishing the chorus as a non-profit, 501(c)3 organization, with the formation of a supporting Foundation and Board of Directors. Our own Joe Hoffman was invaluable in this endeavor!

Prior to the pandemic, the chorus rehearsed and performed at Asbury United Methodist Church. That venue was extremely difficult to navigate for many of the mobility-challenged and elderly members of the chorus, so throughout the pandemic, leadership of the chorus was searching for a more user friendly venue. The relationship with GCPC solved much of that issue, and it has been such an improvement for the singers to be able to reach rehearsals without having to navigate stairs! However, because of the age and mobility issues, performances require that there be room for a chair for each singer to use throughout the concert. The chorus currently consists of approximately 65-70 singers, with the ultimate goal of 90 singers, and the chancel at GCPC cannot accommodate that many chairs. Fortunately, the chorus has established a relationship with Village Presbyterian Church on Antioch as the performance venue, providing the space and support needed for the chorus members and helping to expand the community outreach of the chorus.

The chorus is supported by tuition paid by each singer, contributions from individual donors, advertisements from corporate entities in the performance programs, and a tribute program which features one of the songs at each performance and gives donors the opportunity to dedicate that song to persons they wish to honor. The foundation and chorus leadership are in process of applying for grants to support and improve the function of the organization also.

The chorus and foundation have prominently included the relationship with GCPC in all of its promotional items, its printed programs at performances and on social media. Encorekcchorus is the Facebook page for the organization, and a website is among the goals for moving the organization forward. Anyone 50 years and older who would like to join the chorus is encouraged to do so! No audition required! The chorus rehearses at 10:45am-Noon on Monday mornings in the sanctuary of GCPC. Registration information will be available on the Facebook page soon for the Spring season, which begins February 13th. The Spring Concert will be April 23rd at Village on Antioch. Plan to attend!! Further questions? Contact one of the GCPC members below who help lead the organization:

Linda Bruns, President, Board of Directors
Sue Trigger, Secretary, Board of Directors
Jim Kelly, Treasurer, Board of Directors

Pam Kelly, Co-Director of Chorus
Lauren Bond, Business Manager, Chorus
Paul Bruns, Chorus Manager
Bob and Linda Dover, Librarians, Chorus



Gather At the Table Workshop Series with Rev. Sue

For 2nd Graders and their Parents

**Workshop Dates - February 5 and 12
11:45am in Room 3, Lunch provided**

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.*

SMASH Sunday!

Service, Music, Art, Sports, Hangtime

**February 26, 4-6pm
Heartland Hall**

For all children Kindergarten through 5th/6th.

Our January SMASH focused on the final pathfinder from our 2022 VBS, "Arise, Shine with Hope!". Our children discussed ways they can rebuild their hope if they are feeling a bit low. Stop by the bulletin board just outside the sanctuary to read their suggestions and add your own.

Please RSVP for your children to Christy Soule at christysoule@yahoo.com.

40 days – 40 items

Lent 2023 begins on Wednesday, February 22 and we have a challenge for you.

Each day of Lent, remove one item from your closet that you no longer wear or need, and put it into a large trash bag (or box). Or, take one book you don't read, or one household item you don't need, and put it into a small box. Talk to your children about putting one toy a day into a box to donate. At the end of the 40 days, donate your items to a place that can share them with someone who can really use them. Consider items such as clothing (including coats), shoes, purses, scarves, etc. Not limited to clothing! Pick items at random, or a theme such as toys, books, CDs/DVDs, housewares, picture frames, etc.

On Saturday, April 8, bring your bags/boxes to the church (GCPC) from 9:30-10:30am. We will place them in Room 21 (*with overflow in Room 3/4*) and the charity Blessings Abound will pick up general items on Monday, April 10 at 10:30am. Other items will be donated to designated charities listed below:

- General items/clothing will be donated to **Blessings Abound.**
- Gently used coats will be donated to the **Johnson County Christmas Bureau.**
- Shoes will be donated to **Soles4Souls.**
- Craft and office items will be donated to **Scraps KC.**
- Books will be donated to the **Friends of the JoCo Library.**

All donation items needs to be in boxes/bags small enough that they can be easily lifted by one person onto the Blessings Abound truck. Blessings Abound shared what they can accept and what they cannot accept: practical housewares, art, small furniture, small kitchen appliances, toys and games (*that are not missing pieces or are damaged*), tools, decor items, clean clothes in good condition, sewing machines and material, pillows and linens, dishes, and cookware. This is not a complete list of items they accept, but should cover the majority of items they will take. They cannot take garage sale leftovers, exercise equipment, damaged items, safety recalled items, items missing pieces. No furniture will be accepted for this activity at the church. If you want to donate furniture to Blessings Abound, you will need to take to the charity yourself at Blessings Abound, 10325 Metcalf, Overland Park, KS, 66212, 913-648-0700.

LOOK for a detailed flyer on this coming out before Lent begins. Start thinking now if you and your family want to take on this challenge for the 40 days of Lent.

Contact Michala Walker, Mission Team, for questions.



February Mission Partner GCPC Little Food Pantry

Donations for February's mission partner will go to our GCPC Little Food Pantry. If you haven't seen it, this pantry is found on the east end of our property along Nieman Road. We stock the pantry with nonperishable items and we see these items moving from the pantry each week. Sometimes the pantry is wiped clean. Volunteers check the pantry twice a week and restock as best we can. On occasion, we see donations added to the pantry from within the community as well.

If you would like to donate to our food pantry, please bring your donations to the weekday entrance whenever you are at church during the month of February. The items most consumed are:

- Small jars of peanut butter
- Noodles & pasta sauce
- Box dinners
- Individual drinks or snacks of any kind

Thank you for participating in this important ministry with us.



Tactile Lap Quilt Project Upcoming Work Days

On January 18, Donna Heer delivered five tactile lap quilts to Harbor Hospice. They were thrilled and shared that these types of quilts are cherished in memory care facilities. We have three upcoming gatherings to sew notions into 6-1/2-inch fabric squares to complete more of these quilts to share.

If you'd like to help with this project, join us on **February 11, March 11 and April 8** from from 10-noon in Room 3 at the church. All you need to bring is your sewing machine and scissors. If you would like to participate, or if you would like to sew from home, contact Donna Heer, taxdheer@gmail.com.



The **Weekend Crafters** held a Mini-Retreat on Friday and Saturday, January 27 and 28th in Heartland Hall. Contact Christy Soule if you would like to be a part of the next mini-retreat.

Grace Studies: For Kids

Pre-school 2-4 years:

The pre-school children will continue to 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:

Our Grace makers will continue learning about joy as a spiritual practice. They will explore ways they can share joy with others and ways they can practice joy in all times and places. They will enjoy a computer workshop, Bible Skills and Games, music and more.



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

February 12, 19; 10:45am

Biblical Interpretation 101

A combined adult study series that meets in the Choir Room. Led by Joel Ilten.

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

Meeting ID: 838 2979 0055

Passcode: 723297

In selecting real estate, the rule is "Location, Location, Location!" In interpreting the Bible, the rule is "Context, Context, Context!" Interpretation is not merely a fancy or a luxury; it is a necessity. Interpretation may not always be a conscious act, but it is always happening when we read the Bible--or anything else for that matter. And fundamental to responsible interpretation is knowledge of and respect for the context of each of the biblical writings. **Joel Ilten** will begin with the principal challenges of faithful interpretation. The class will also outline three major periods of Biblical interpretation and show how it has changed over the centuries and will address the question of why people interpret the Bible differently.

February 26

No Sunday School

Look for information about a congregational brunch sponsored by the Deacons.

The 2023 Lenten Studies

March 5 - April 2, 10:45am

Follow Me: Practice Spiritual Disciplines

Class meets in Room 3. Leadership is shared.

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

Meeting ID: 838 2979 0055 Passcode: 723297

This Lenten study will focus on practices that Jesus engaged in. Participants will dive deeply into actions lived and modeled by Jesus and across Scripture: fasting, prayer, listening to God, embracing simplicity, unplugging, and more.

Spiritual practices are seen as those things Jesus did, said, or embodied; we as Jesus' followers try to do so as well. Many of the spiritual disciplines covered in this unit have emerged over the centuries as Christians have experimented with ways to make space in their lives to be with Jesus and to allow Jesus to transform them.



Inhabiting Eden: Christians, the Bible, and the Ecological Crisis by Patricia K. Tull

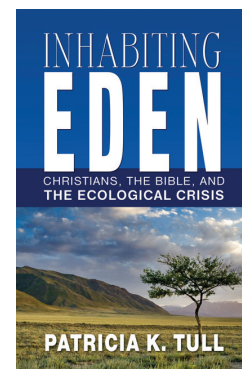
Class meets in Room 4. Leadership is shared.

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

Meeting ID: 838 1523 7214

Passcode: GCPC2022

In this thoughtful study, respected Old Testament scholar Patricia K. Tull explores the Scriptures for guidance on today's ecological crisis. Tull looks to the Bible for what it can tell us about our relationships, not just to the earth itself, but also to plant and animal life, to each other, to descendants who will inherit the planet from us, and to our Creator. She offers candid discussions on many current ecological problems that humans contribute to, such as the overuse of energy resources like gas and electricity, consumerism, food production systems—including land use and factory farming—and toxic waste. Study books are available from the church office or may be picked up during class.



YOUTH PAGE

“Outside The Box” Youth Sunday - March 5

Youth Sunday is coming up soon! We are excited to hear sermons and insight from our 10 senior and experience the creativity of our youth as they focus on what it means to think and live “outside the box.” During the last few years our youth have experienced changes in the way school happens, sports happen, even how church youth events happen. There are some similarities to what life would have been like when Jesus was pushing the norms and causing believers to think and act “outside the box”. As usual it will be planned and led by our youth but is designed for all ages.

“Souper” Bowl of Caring

Our youth will continue to collect food for the Souper Bowl of Caring up until February. 12. This year we have decided to collect food in the sanctuary in front of the communion table so all of our worshipers can see our collection even if they are worshipping online.

Harvesters most needed items include: Canned vegetables (low sodium), Canned fruits in 100% juice, Dried fruit (no added sugar preferred), Canned chicken, tuna, salmon (packed in water), Brown rice, Whole grain pasta, Dried beans or canned low sodium beans, Peanut, almond, or sun butter, Canned soup (chicken, tomato or vegetable), Cereal – hot and cold (whole grain, low sugar preferred), Soap, Deodorant, Shampoo, Toilet Paper.

Summer Trips:

An email recently went out to all GCPC Youth families with several options for summer youth trips. For the summer of 2023 we are considering many options including:

- Mission and Music Trip
- Mission only trip
- Massanetta Middle School Youth Conference
- Montreat High School Youth Conference
- Local Area Mission Experience (high school and/or middle school)

Upcoming Events

- Souperbowl of Caring – February 12
- Youth Super Bowl Party – February 12
- Youth Sunday – March 5





Recycling Notice

For those who use the recycling bins in the church far west parking lot, please note that these will soon no longer be available. Due to dramatic monthly fee increases from the recycling company for use of the bins, the church has decided to discontinue the service. Thank you.

Potluck Lunch Save the Date! February 26!

Enjoy a potluck brunch with your Covenant Group after the church service. The deacons are in the planning process with details to follow. Please check the midweek announcements for information closer to the date.

News from the January Session meeting

- Session voted to renew and extend our relationship with EncoreKC! for the next three years.
- IHN will be asking us to host for one additional week this year (5 instead of the current 4).
- The paper recycling bins outside the church have been removed since they were no longer being serviced for free. Staff members are taking paper home and recycling it there.
- The 2022 budget anticipated a \$72,000 deficit but we ended the year with merely a \$14,000 deficit. Pledges for 2023 currently stand at \$490,000.
- Mark your calendars for Visioning Day on February 4! It's time to make plans to carry GCPC forward!
- Because of President's Day, the February Session schedule has been adjusted. Operating Committee will meet on Monday, February 6 and Session will meet on Monday, February 13. Any Congregation member is welcome to attend!

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

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Rebecca Prater, rebecca.prater@gcpc.org ..ext. 13

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finance@gcpc.org

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Contemporary Music Coord. Carrie DeVries

Contemporary Music Drummer.....Daniel Cole

Child Care Coordinator.....Carolyn Chaffin

Wedding CoordinatorLara Schesser

Funeral CoordinatorMary Sue Thomas

ELDERS

Jim Byrd

Ric Cummings

Miles Dalton (youth)

Andrew Frye

Katie Hearn

Melanie Townsend

Jane Knoche

Angela Krug

Jake Schmidt

Terri Monrad

Joy Circo

Tom Stroud

Lara Schesser

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

March 2023 issue - Deadline, February 21

April 2023 issue - Deadline, March 21