



GRACE COVENANT
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH



GRACE NOTES

April 2024
Vol 42, Nbr 4

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.

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

In-Person Worship and Online Worship every Sunday on Facebook and Zoom.
Visit gcpc.org for links!

He is Risen! He is Risen indeed!

Easter is a favorite of mine. The music, the color, the hope and promise of resurrection reminds me each year of the glory of the risen Christ. Thankfully Easter is a season and not just a day. The next several weeks we will continue in the season of Easter and in actuality, every Sunday is a little Easter.

As we enter into Easter and the hope of things made new, we will also begin the work of transition which actually I would prefer to call transformation. We are at the beginning of the process and in the next few months will be asking for responses from the congregation.

Who is Grace Covenant right now? What old remnants of identity needs to be shed so the new can emerge? What excites you about the future of GCPC and what are programs that have run their course and need to be put to rest? Give those questions some thought and dig into the emotions under those thoughts. Change is difficult, but is a necessary piece of growth.

I am excited to jump into this work alongside you and to discover the amazing plans God has in store.

Grace and Peace, Pastor Karen



Are you in pursuit of some trivia?

Join us as the Care and Connection team again hosts an **Evening of Intergenerational Trivia**, on Friday, April 12, 5:30–7pm.

The illustrious Jake Schmidt will be our fearless leader. We are asking participants to bring finger foods, either a light appetizer or a dessert. There will be a sign-up on April 7 in the church concourse, but please make sure to mark your calendars now. Oh, and last but not least, there will be prizes for you trivia-minded! GCPC is the place to be!

MUSIC NOTES

MUSIC IN WORSHIP

**April 7th – 2nd Sunday of Easter
Bright Sunday**

Music leadership by Grace Mountain (Bluegrass)
Christopher Callender, director

**April 14th – 3rd Sunday of Easter –
Music Appreciation Sunday**

Music leadership by Chancel & Exaltation! Singers,
Praise Team, & Charter Ringers

**April 21st – 4th Sunday of Easter
Earth Sunday**

Organ led. Chancel & Exaltation! Singers anthem
“I Sing the Mighty Power of God” arr. Benjamin Harlan
with Chancel Brass & Percussion

April 28th – 5th Sunday of Easter

Organ led. Chancel & Exaltation! Singers anthem
“Abide with Me” arr. Molly Ijames

MARK THESE CONCERT DATES ON YOUR CALENDARS

Sunday, April 21st – 3:00pm

EncoreKC! Choir Concert, “Spring Swing”

Pam Smith Kelly, artistic director
and **EncoreKC Brass**

Jim Kelly & Darryl Prater, directors

Held at Village on Antioch Presbyterian Church
14895 Antioch Road, Overland Park, KS

Sunday, April 28th – 4:00pm

East Hill Singers Concert

East Hill Singers are a choir made up of inmates from
Lansing Correctional Facility plus Community Singers.

You won't want to miss their songs and stories.
Many thanks to Mission Team for coordinating
this inspirational concert.

Sunday, May 5th – 6:00pm

Bell Fest XXXIV

This year's theme is ...

THE CLASSICS: FROM BEETHOVEN, TO FOLK, SACRED, & ROCK

All four of our handbell/chime ensembles will ring.
We'll also have some fun sing-a-longs, Classical piano
and vocal solos, and some of our young dancers will
perform to “Rockin' Robin”... plus a few more surprises.

At Bell Fest, we will be collecting items to support the
P.E., Music, Library & Art teachers at Rosehill Elementary
School. Please consider purchasing an item from their
wish list and bringing it with you the night of May 5.

<https://amzn.to/4au1daA>

As always, it will be a blast!

Friday, May 31st – 7:00pm

Rezound Handbell Ensemble Concert

Rezound Handbell Ensemble is an exceptionally
talented auditioned handbell ensemble in the KC area.

Our own Trey Bures, Lindsay Callender,
Jill Endaya-Allen, and Marshall Allen
are ringers in this outstanding ensemble.



Clerk's Corner

The Session held our stated meeting on March 18. In addition to the Session members and Deacon representative, this year's confirmands, Morgan Krug and Conor Schesser, attended with Joel Ilten, one of their confirmation mentors.

Karen talked to us a bit about "technical leadership versus adaptive leadership" and how we need to engage members of the congregation as we make changes as we go through the interim process. She is planning to have conversations with different groups in the congregation, possibly working through the Covenant Groups.

Our Director of Christian Education position has been approved and posted in multiple places. A search team is in place which consists of members of Personnel, Youth, and Children's Teams. Keep an eye out for it and feel free to share it on social media or with folks you know who might be good candidates for the position.

Our Youth have been gathering with youth from Village on Antioch and Knox Presbyterian. Lindsay Callender will continue as Youth Coordinator through the spring and summer. We look forward to Youth Sunday on May 12, which will include Confirmation this year.

Kristy Shaw is working on plans for our 40th anniversary in 2025. If you have suggestions or want to get involved, please reach out to her.

Our facility continues to provide challenges. Insurance will be covering the cost of replacing furnace units which were damaged by the broken pipe, but now we have hail damage, too! There's always something.

We hope to see many folks at Trivia Night on April 12. Our teams continue to do the bulk of the heavy lifting, and as Session we try to coordinate their efforts. As always, if you have questions, feel free to reach out to any Session member.

— Melanie Townsend, Clerk of Session

Page Turners April 4 Book Discussion

While Justice Sleeps is a legal thriller novel by American politician and writer Stacey Abrams. Page Turners will be discussing this book on **Thursday, April 4, at 7pm** in the home of Teresa Ilten, 5408 W. 97th Circle in Overland Park. The Ilten's live on a small cul-de-sac just east of Nall on 97th Circle. Please carpool if possible. Contact Teresa Ilten, 913-515-1087, if you are coming or for questions. Hope to see you there!

East Hill Singers Concert at GCPC — April 28, 4pm

Save the afternoon of April 28 to attend this unique and uplifting concert!

The East Hill Singers choir consists of volunteer singers from the community and inmates from the minimum-security unit at Lansing Correctional Facility. There is little that is more unique than a prison choir performing outside of the walls. Supported by the men who volunteer their time to the choir, the inmate singers learn more than music; they function as a team with accountability to each other. Being welcomed as artists and given the opportunity to connect helps prepare them to return to community life.

Please attend and support this unique event! Learn more about the Prison in the Arts program at <https://www.artsinprison.org/>



The Reusable Bag Challenge during Lent was very popular!

The Earth Care team challenged GCPC to give up single-use plastic bags and submit photos of their bags!

Children's Team



Camp Firelight Vacation Bible School

Camp Firelight will be open for our VBS Campers ages 4 - 5th grade. Our camp will be open on June 3 - 7 from 9am - Noon. If you would like to register your camper, please visit our registration page found at <https://www.gcpc.org/vbs>.



We request your registration by May 27th along with a \$10 registration fee for all campers. Friends and family are welcome to join us, please have them register as well. We can't wait to experience Camp with you this year.

Volunteer to help with VBS!

If you would be able to volunteer one or more days, sign up here: <https://gcpc.org/camp-firelight/vbs-volunteer.html>
We are so excited to have your help, you're gonna love it!

To keep our registration fees low, we will be asking for donations in April and May. Be on the look out for our online amazon wishlist and our donation board outside the sanctuary. Every donation helps create the Camp Firelight environment and experience that will inspire our children for years to come.

Join us for VBS Crafting on Friday, April 5th!

Our decorating committee would love some extra hands in preparing some of the decor that will transform the church into Camp Firelight. Join us in Heartland Hall on Friday April 5th from 4-6pm to begin work on some of the decor. We recommend you bring a good pair of scissors with you. **RSVP to Christy Soule or Kristy Shaw please.**

Children's Events at a glance

April 5, 4-6pm	VBS decoration workshop
April 7	ATW, Music & Sunday School
April 14	ATW, Music & Sunday School
April 21	ATW, Music & Sunday School and Smash
April 28	ATW, Music & Sunday School

Thank you!

Once again our volunteers shine! We held a successful egg hunt on Saturday March 23rd. Our children and families enjoyed easter activities in Heartland Hall before hopping around during our egg hunt. These events create wonderful memories for all and we are so grateful for a congregation who works to provide such opportunities. Your efforts make a difference to many and you are appreciated.



SERVICE - MUSIC - ARTS - SPORTS - HANG-OUT

Once a month, SMASH happens!

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.

In March, our SMASH kiddos met to talk about the Maid of Israel.

Join us again on April 21, from 4-6pm.

New to Children's Ministries at GCPC? Welcome!

We are glad you are here. To get an overview of our children's ministry program, see our January 2024 newsletter or visit our web page: <https://gcpc.org/children-youth/children/>



Baker/ Reynolds Memorial Scholarship Application

Scholarship funds are available to be awarded to high school youth from Grace Covenant Presbyterian Church who have been active in youth and/or music activities during their high school years. Awards will be determined based upon the funds available for use in the scholarship fund and the number of qualified applicants.

This scholarship is intended to reward and recognize students who embody the commitment to church, community service/mission, and education that was shown by Regina Reynolds and Larry Baker. It is open to any current 9th–12th grade student active in Grace Covenant Presbyterian Church activities such as Sunday school, volunteer activities, Youth Connect, worship, music and mission. This is a one-time only award intended to help pay for expenses related to an upcoming educational activity such as attending college, a religious conference, or a music and mission trip.

Applications are due to the church office by April 28, 2024. For more information and a copy of the application, please contact Lara Schesser at lara.schesser@gmail.com.



GCPC is Certified as a PC(USA) Earth Care Congregation

Grace Covenant Presbyterian Church was certified as an Earth Care Congregation by the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)'s Presbyterian Hunger Program through February 2025. The Earth Care Congregation certification is designed to recognize churches that make the commitment to take seriously God's charge to "till and keep" the garden.



This status speaks to the serious commitment that Grace Covenant Presbyterian Church has made to care for God's earth. To become an Earth Care Congregation, our congregation affirmed an Earth Care Pledge to integrate environmental practices and thinking into their worship, education, facilities, and outreach.

Started in 2010 by the PC(USA), the goal of this program is to inspire churches to care for God's earth in a holistic way, through integrating earth care into all aspects of their church life. The Earth Care Congregation certification honors churches that make that commitment and encourages others to follow their example.

"Grace Covenant Presbyterian Church is just one of the 331 churches in our denomination that chose to dedicate themselves to intentional care of God's earth this year. This congregation's activities and commitment brings hope to their community and indeed to the world. We believe that Grace Covenant Presbyterian Church will inspire others to respond intentionally to God's call to care for the earth," says Jessica Maudlin, Associate for Sustainable Living and Earth Care Concerns for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

For more information on the Earth Care Congregations program visit: www.pcusa.org/earthcarecongregations.

Earth Day

April 22nd is the 54th anniversary of Earth Day in the United States. In 1970, Earth Day was founded as a day for education and demonstration around environmental issues. An April day was selected between spring break and final exams to maximize college student participation nationwide. The theme for 2024 is "Planet Vs. Plastics" - 60% reduction of all plastics by 2040. www.earthday.org/earth-day-2024

COMMUNITY EVENTS:

Eat Local & Organic Expo

April 6, 9am-3pm

Johnson County Community College

Free admission, Free Parking

eatlocalexpokc.com

Kick off farmer's market season at the Eat Local & Organic Expo! Shop with more than 30 **KC Food Circle™** farmers who pledge to meet high standards for growing plants and mushrooms, beekeeping and raising animals. Attendees can talk directly with farmers as they sign up for weekly farm shares, buy transplants for their gardens, and get the freshest early spring products for their dinner tables.

The Expo was created to help **KC Food Circle™** farmers get a boost of income at the start of farmer's market season. Here are the pledges farmers agree to so consumers can shop with confidence: kchealthykids.org/farmers-pledges (Source: Greenability Magazine)

SciFun Saturday: Earth Day!

April 20, 1-4pm

Museum at PrairieFire

5801 W. 135th St., Overland Park, KS

Free admission.

This is a family event with engaging earth-themed activities and crafts. For more information, go to: <https://www.visitthemap.org/events/scifun-saturday-earth-day>



GCPC Kairos Celebrates Earth Day

April 14 (during worship, 9:30am)

Patty Smithson will share a Children's Message on April 14th about valuing the Earth, the importance of native plants to pollinators and the difference between annual and perennial plants.

April 14 (during Sunday School, 10:45am)

On April 14th, Jo Randolph will be presenting a Sunday School class titled, **Carbon Offsets - What are they? What is their function? How can we select the effective offset?**

Jo and Rick use carbon offsets to reduce greenhouse gas emissions or increase carbon storage to compensate for their electricity use and emissions generated from their travels. The Randolph offsets involve donations to non-profit The Giving Grove. Kansas City Community Garden is the local affiliate of the Giving Grove and a representative will be sharing about this organization along with Jo at the Sunday School Class. Please join us!



April 24, 11:30-1pm

The Giving Grove is presenting an educational program at the **Giving Grove Planting Promise Luncheon 2024**.

Celebrate The Giving Grove and the impact of its affiliate programs on communities across the United States. Florence Williams, best-selling author of *The Nature Fix*, will be the featured speaker. From forest trails in Korea to groves of eucalyptus in California, Williams has investigated the science at the confluence of environment, mood, health, and creativity. Using this research, she will share with us the powers of the natural world to improve health, inspire innovation, and improve relationships.

Tickets are Required. Purchase information and more details can be found here: <https://www.givinggrove.org/planting-promise>



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CHURCH STAFF

Interim Pastor, Rev. Karen Wright

karen.wright@gcpc.orgext. 10

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

Youth CoordinatorLindsay Callender

lindsaymichelle0130@gmail.com

Finance AdministratorTara Hyder

.....finance@gcpc.org

Organist Linda Dover

Audio/Visual Technician Jason Turner

Contemporary Music Coord. Carrie DeVries

Contemporary Music DrummerJill Endaya

Child Care CoordinatorCarolyn Chaffin

Wedding CoordinatorKristy Shaw

Funeral CoordinatorMary Sue Thomas

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ELDERS

Joy Circo	Jaylee Soule
Barbara Douglas	Tom Stroud
Katie Hearn	Melanie Townsend, Session clerk
Jane Knoche	Bill Turner
Angela Krug	Michala Walker
Lara Schesser	Mary Ann Weyforth
Jake Schmidt	
Kristy Shaw	

SUPPORT STAFF

Deacon ModeratorJean Hampton
 Operating Committee..... Angela Krug,
 Lara Schesser, Katie Hearn, Tom Stroud
 Newsletter Editor/Marketing..... Kim Krueger
 Prayer ChainCheryl Johnson
 Website AdministratorsKim Krueger,
 Patrick Bell, Christy Soule

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Facebook: facebook.com/GraceCovenantPresbyterian

Instagram: @gcpc_overlandpark

MINISTRY UNITS

Congregational Nurture Unit Moderators

Care and Connections....Mary Ann Weyforth

Worship and Music..... Kathy Bures,

Katie Hearn

Education Ministry Unit Moderators

AdultTom Stroud

Children Angela Krug

Youth..... Lara Schesser

Reach Out Ministry Unit Moderators

Kairos Rick Randolph

MissionMikki Walker

Welcoming Kathy Williams

Supportive Ministry Unit Moderators

Facility Liz Chandler

Generosity Vacant

Finance..... Beth Lillian

Personnel Kevin Mason

Worship Schedule

9:30am Worship

In-Person, Facebook & Zoom

Visit gcpc.org/online for links

Upcoming Newsletter Article Deadlines

May 2024 issue - Deadline, April 19

June 2024 issue - Deadline, May 21