



GRACE COVENANT
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH



GRACE NOTES

May 2024
Vol 42, Nbr 5

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!

We all love a good story.

Humans were built for stories. They are one way to pass on history and stories help us understand the why behind what we do. Stories weave a colorful tapestry and each thread has an importance in the greater picture.

I want to hear the stories of Grace Covenant.

- How did GCPC become the church it is today?
- Tell me about the mobile in the Narthex, the art wall, the decisions that were made in designing the sanctuary and about all the traditions that continue and those that have lived their life.
- What has shaped and formed you at Grace Covenant?
- What has shaped and formed the congregation?
- What is important to you and why?

Not only will stories help me learn about individuals and the congregation, but the stories will be helpful as we look toward the 40th anniversary of the ministry of Grace Covenant Presbyterian Church.

Tell me a story!

—Rev. Karen Wright
karen.wright@gcpc.org
913-345-1256, ext. #10



MUSIC NOTES

MUSIC IN WORSHIP

May 5th – 6th Sunday of Easter
Music leadership by Praise Team

May 12th – 7th Sunday of Easter
Youth Sunday! “New Beginnings”

Music leadership by Celebration! Choir & Spirit! Singers (2nd-8th graders) + a Parent Quartet singing “Through the Window” by Ruth Elaine Schram, Spirit Ringers ringing “All Creatures of Our God and King” arr. Kevin McChesney. Also, Chancel & Exaltation! Singers will sing “All Things New” by Elaine Hagenberg

May 19th – Day of Pentecost

Organ led. CHEX anthem “Spirit, Spirit of Gentleness” arr. Michael Hassell with Miles McDonald, alto sax

May 26th – Trinity Sunday

Music leadership by Praise Team

MARK THIS DATE ON YOUR CALENDAR

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. Celebration! Chimes, Spirit! Ringers, Jubilation! Ringers, and Charter Ringers will ring Classics from one or more of our genres.

We’ll also have some fun sing-a-longs, a Classical piano solo by Chris Krug, a Classical vocal solo by Carrie DeVries, and some of our young dancers will perform to “Rockin’ Robin” and much more!

At this year’s Bell Fest, we will be collecting items to support the P.E., music, library, and art teachers at Rosehill Elementary School. Please consider purchasing an item from their wish list and bringing it with you the night of May 5th.

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

As always, it will be a blast!



Rezound!
Handbell Ensemble

CONCERT

Friday, May 31
7:00 PM

GRACE COVENANT
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
11100 COLLEGE BOULEVARD, OVERLAND PARK, KS

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.
Free admission • rezound.org



Good Faith Network

In 2023, Grace Covenant joined the Good Faith Network, an interfaith organization working to address homelessness, lack of access to mental health care, and lack of affordable housing in Johnson County. In the three short years it has been operating, Good Faith Network has made real progress in moving the needle on these issues. Largely because of the activism of GFN:

- A crisis mental health center is opening this summer;
- The county is looking for funding sources for an affordable housing trust fund;
- A housing coordinator was hired and started work for the county in January 2023.

Good Faith Network continues to press forward and advocate for progress on these issues. One of the primary ways this is accomplished is by ensuring a large turnout at the annual Nehemiah Action Meeting. This year, GFN hopes to assemble more than 1,500 county residents at the meeting, to show the power of organized people and demonstrate to elected officials that Johnson County voters are engaged with and care about these issues. Grace Covenant's goal is to send at least 50 people.

Can you be one of our 50 people?

The 2024 Nehemiah Action Meeting will be May 7 at 6pm, at the Church of the Resurrection, 13720 Roe Ave., Leawood, KS 66224. Please let one of the GCPC team leaders know if you plan to attend, need help with transportation, or have any other questions: Mikki Walker, Tim Hayden, Don and Joy Wilson, and Dave Pack.

Reusable Bag Challenge Winner — Marcia Turner!

During Lent, the Earthcare/KAIROS team challenged all GCPC members to take a photo every time they used a reusable bag during Lent, and send those photos in. Whoever uploaded the most photos would be the winner!

Thirty-six photos were submitted; the winner with 21 photos was Marcia Turner! It's hard to estimate exactly how many disposable bags avoided those photos represent, but it's surely a lot of trash that will now not take up space in the landfills. Many thanks to everyone who participated — a few of the photos are included here — and to Kim Krueger for her help with the photo upload page and other assistance she provided. **Keep up the good work GCPC, and remember your reusable bags!**

Thank You!

Grace Covenant is fortunate to have in its congregation several gifted writers who are willing to step forward by sharing their thoughts in daily devotions. For the recent Lenten devotional season, these members are thanked:

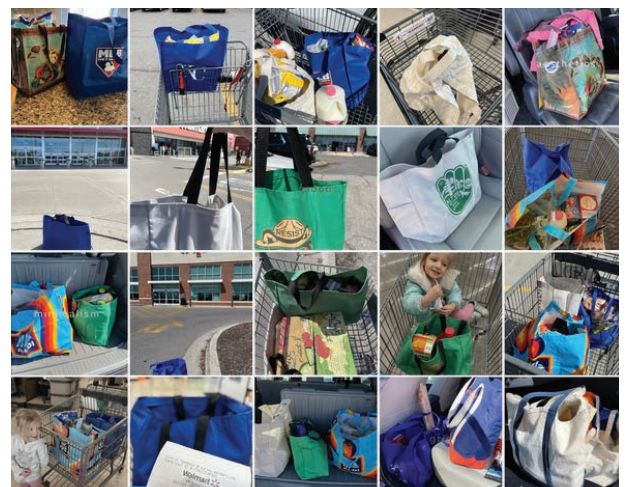
Stephen Wing, Nancy Kalesz, Cindy Schendel, David Pack, Andrew Frye, Barbara Douglas, Sarah Evans, Cheryl Johnson, Nelson Townsend, Kevin Johnson, and Harold Frye.

The distribution of daily devotions would not be possible were it not for the efforts of Patrick Bell in the office, and by Kim Krueger who lays out the devotions publication, and shares it online.

Sanctuary Flower Donations

Our flower supplier for many years closed their doors in October. In researching other shops, we found that the price for a small vase had increased to \$65 with an additional \$11 delivery charge. Luckily, we have available to us beautiful permanent arrangements made by our own Linda McMaster. If you do make a donation for Sunday Sanctuary Flowers, that money is automatically put toward the specific communion offering for that month. If you would like the money to be directed to the church's general fund, please indicate that when donating.

Contact Chelly King, or the church office, for more information.



Children's Team



Camp Firelight Vacation Bible School

May is our final month of planning for our Camp Firelight Vacation Bible School.

Our camp will be open June 3–7, 9am–12pm. Registration is open for our VBS Campers, age 4–5th grade.

Please visit our registration page found at www.gcpc.org/vbs.

We request your registration by May 27 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.



If you would be able to volunteer one or more days, please visit our registration page and you'll be directed to the volunteer page at www.gcpc.org/vbs. **Our volunteers will meet in Heartland Hall on May 19 for a light lunch and training.** If you are unable to make it, please let us know so we can be sure to get you general VBS information and important safety guidelines.

To keep our registration fees low, we will be asking for donations. Visit our online Amazon Wish list (<https://bit.ly/GCPCVBSDonations>) and our donation board outside the sanctuary. Every donation helps create the Camp Firelight environment and an experience that will inspire our children for years to come.

We will have several decorating sessions open to anyone who would like to help. Please watch the midweek and announcements for dates and times.

Children's Events at a Glance

- May 5 ATW and Music for the Sunday School hour
- May 12 Youth Sunday. No ATW. Music & Sunday School
- May 19 ATW, Music & Sunday School, VBS Volunteer Training and Smash

Thank you!

As we wrap up another awesome school year of our programs, we are reminded of our blessings. Our children's faith journeys continue to soar through inspiration from our many volunteers. Thank you to all who participated in one way or another with our programs. We couldn't have had such a great year without you.



SERVICE - MUSIC - ARTS - SPORTS - HANG-OUT

Once a month, SMASH happens!

This popular program is an activity for kindergarten through 5th/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 April, our SMASH kiddos met to talk about Daniel and the power of prayer. **Join us again May 19, 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/>



Welcome New Members!



Eldonna Chesnut

Eldonna lives just about a mile from the church and has been in Overland Park about five years. She is divorced and has one son, Justin and two dogs, Biscuit and Cassie. Eldonna has been a Presbyterian her entire life. Prior to moving to Overland Park, she lived in Gardner KS and was very involved with First Presbyterian Church of Gardner, participating in Bible school, mission work, and serving as a Deacon and Elder.

Eldonna works for Johnson County Department of Health and Environment as the Child Care Licensing Division Director. Her staff contracts with Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE) to conduct all child care licensing regulatory visits for day care homes, child care centers, preschools, and school age programs in Johnson, Miami, and Franklin County. She is also heavily involved in state, regional and national public health associations (in leadership roles) as well as several local/state child care related groups. Eldonna's passion is public health and children.

For relaxation she loves to read fiction books, watch TV and go out to dinner with friends. Eldonna is a big Chiefs fan, and loves to travel, especially taking Caribbean Cruises.



Dixie Selvidge

Dixie grew up on a farm near Stockton, MO, attending a one-room schoolhouse for her initial eight years of education. After graduating from Stockton High, she pursued college at SMS (now Missouri State) and Drury College in Springfield. Following a brief teaching stint in Springfield, Dixie moved to Topeka, KS, teaching third grade for five years before marrying Ken Selvidge in 1966, settling in Kansas City. Amidst raising their children, Dixie cherished being a stay-at-home mom for 17 years, deeply engaged in their school activities.

Dixie's husband Ken's career led them to California for 13 years, where she did some substitute teaching and obtained her California teaching credential. Upon relocating to Kalamazoo, Michigan, she began a fulfilling role with a rural Head Start program, transitioning from home visitor to supervisor over three years, which was an immensely rewarding experience.

With their children grown, Dixie and Ken returned to Missouri, residing in Parkville for 22 years until Ken's passing in 2020, prompting her move to Lenexa to be near daughter, Elizabeth. Eager to integrate into the community, Dixie found solace and warmth at Grace Covenant Presbyterian Church, drawn by its vibrant atmosphere and familiar faces. Engaging in various activities, from Rachel/Ruth PW Circle, AATPT Book Club, Ladies Lunch Bunch and Dinners for 7 or 8, to charitable endeavors like the Red Bag Program, Dixie has found joy and purpose in contributing to the welfare of others.

"As I embrace this new chapter, I'm grateful for the friendships forged and the opportunity to continue supporting meaningful causes, cherishing both old connections and new beginnings," says Dixie.



Noren Family

The members of the Noren family include Nick, Amanda, daughter Josie (*who will be 3 on May 11th*) and their dog Patch, a blue-heeler beagle. They found Grace Covenant because their realtor mentioned Pioneer Preschool for Josie. Nick and Amanda attended and were welcomed immediately and love how inclusive GCPC is.

Amanda is a Clinical Research Coordinator for gyn, melanoma and preventative clinical trials for KU Cancer Center. She loves to run, read, and bake, and has enjoyed the book club for young mothers.

Nick works at Garmin in Tech Support for the Golf Team. He enjoys trying new breweries around town and playing golf. Both Nick and Amanda love to spend time outside and travel to the mountains.

Josie loves the nursery and Sunday School. They are open to learn how to become more involved at Grace.



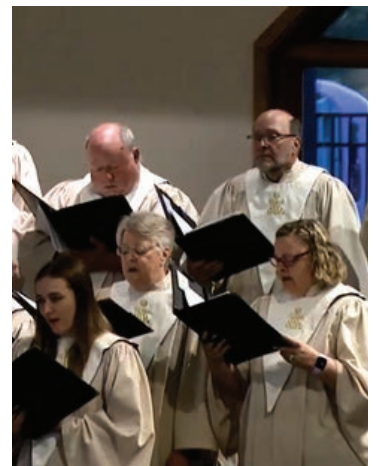
Joy Slayton

Joy moved from eastern Missouri, where her son Patrick now lives, to Lenexa in 2022 to be closer to her twin daughters, Mary and Diane, and her five grandchildren living in this area. Her oldest granddaughter, her husband (*now with the Old Cowtown Museum*) and their two boys (ages 9 and 8) are getting settled in Wichita – “it will be wonderful to have them so much closer,” she says.

Joy’s interests include knitting (her designs have been published in national knitting magazines), spinning, cooking, baking, music, and gardening. Joy met her late husband at Park College in the late 1950s.

Joy is looking forward to continuing to get better acquainted and hopes to contribute to the warm and welcoming community she has found at GCPC!

(Photos: Moments in worship on April 28, 2024)



Clerk's Corner

Session held our regular called meeting on April 15. We heard faith statements from this year's confirmands and approved them for membership in Grace Covenant. They will join on Youth Sunday. We are so excited to have Morgan Krug and Conor Schesser as full-fledged members of the church — they are already such an integral part of our church family.

We had extensive discussion of security in the building inspired by a few incidents with unknown folks in our building. While we always want to be hospitable, we also want our building to continue to be a safe place for those who use it. The easiest way to do that is to limit the number of doors that are unlocked. The weekday entrance will continue to be unlocked during the week when staff and volunteers are in the main office. On Sundays, we will NOT be unlocking the weekday entrance — please plan to use the main wooden doors to enter the building. The west entrance will be locked before worship starts. The other best practice is for all of us to be welcoming — greet folks that you don't know and use the buddy system!

Karen led us in a discussion about what we see when we are in the building and where we see energy in the life of our congregation and our ministries. We look forward to engaging the entire congregation in storytelling this summer — why do we have things or do things? What have been important events for each of us in our time here, whether that's four months or four decades?

Another hot topic was the elevator. We see the elevator as an essential part of making our building hospitable to all who use it, but repairs will be expensive. Facilities team is soliciting additional bids for repairs.

We also discussed the recycling shed by the west entrance. Grace Covenant has long been committed to earth care and started collecting recycling decades ago when curbside recycling was not widely available. Now most of us recycle at home and there has not been a group responsible for hauling things to a recycling center in some time, which means the shed has become a nuisance. Unless a team claims responsibility for it immediately, it will be removed since it is no longer serving a purpose.

Financially, 2024 is off to a good start. The search team has interviewed some DCE candidates and continues to reach out to seminaries and tweak our profile on the PCUSA matching service to try to connect with the right candidate.

Personnel Team has approved a six-week sabbatical for Rebecca Prater this summer. After 18 years of keeping us all in tune, she needs a little time to study, plan, and regroup.

We also heard reports from the Arab Christian Fellowship, the last Presbytery meeting, and the 40th Anniversary Committee; we heard about the upcoming East Hills Singers concert, Bell Fest and Good Faith Network meetings. Grace Covenant is truly an active Congregation!

If you have questions or concerns, please contact any member of the Session.

—Melanie Townsend, Clerk of Session



Moments in Worship - Music Appreciation Sunday





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Follow us on Social Media!

Facebook: facebook.com/GraceCovenantPresbyterian

Instagram: @gcpc_overlandpark

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CHURCH STAFF

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karen.wright@gcpc.orgext. 10

Director of Music Ministries

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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 Drummer.....Jill Endaya

Child Care Coordinator.....Carolyn Chaffin

Wedding Coordinator.....Kristy 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 Moderator.....	Jean Hampton
Operating Committee.....	Angela Krug, Lara Schesser, Katie Hearn, Tom Stroud
Newsletter Editor/Marketing.....	Kim Krueger
Prayer Chain.....	Cheryl Johnson
Website Administrators.....	Kim Krueger, Patrick Bell, Christy Soule

MINISTRY UNITS

Congregational Nurture Unit Moderators

Care and Connections....	Mary Ann Weyforth
Worship and Music.....	Kathy Bures, Katie Hearn

Education Ministry Unit Moderators

Adult	Tom Stroud
Children	Angela Krug
Youth.....	Lara Schesser

Reach Out Ministry Unit Moderators

Kairos	Rick Randolph
Mission	Mikki Walker
Welcoming	Kathy Williams

Supportive Ministry Unit Moderators

Facility	Liz Chandler
Generosity	Jane Knoche
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

June 2024 issue - Deadline, May 21

July 2024 issue - Deadline, June 21