

Grace Notes

March 2023

"Come Home to Grace"

From the Minister:

There are many spiritual practices from a number of Christian groups. One tradition we often think of in March is Celtic Christianity, although actually, many of us don't know of the tradition, we only know of St. Patrick and the Youngstown parade! There are 12 practices of Celtic Christianity I will share with you from now until Easter. I'll put them in the newsletter, the newsflash, etc. Just save each one and you'll have them. I believe they can help us keep sensing that God is indeed active in our world and with each one of us. The first Celtic spiritual practice is:

Thresholds

Thresholds, like in a doorway, are the spaces between when we move from one room to another, or from one time to another, as in the threshold of dawn to day, or from dusk to dark. A threshold is from one space to another, as in times of pilgrimage or in moving from secular to sacred space. A threshold is moving from one awareness to another, as in times when old structures, long familiar and comforting to us start to fall away and we begin to envision something new. These are also called "Liminal spaces," that is, the space between here and there, whatever that is. Here are some other thresholds: from high school to college/adult life beyond, from work to retirement, from home to a nursing home/managed care, from single to married, from married to singlehood again, from life to death. When you are in these spaces, you are on your way to somewhere else. Rightly so, the Celts considered these sacred spaces. There is no need to be fearful in the threshold. God is with you there, just as God has been with you before you arrived in the threshold.

The Celtic peoples had a love of edges and boundary places, perhaps as the result of living on an island, but they also held a keen sense of the Otherworld as a place just beneath the veil of this one. I had a Christian minister/friend who shared his idea of heaven, that it is, indeed, here, it is just a dimensional shift to get there, almost a "parallel dimension."

Celtic Christian monks were also drawn to edge places, inspired by those who fled to the desert. They found their own threshold places, such as Skellig Michael, a jagged stone island jutting out into the Atlantic on which the ruins of a monastic community are still perched on top. Maybe you have a favorite place like that? Let me know.

Here is the spiritual practice: Become aware each time you cross a threshold, or are in one. It can be almost harmful to be in a threshold and not recognize it. It can certainly be stressful. This threshold might be across a doorway, in moving from one activity to another, or the thresholds of the day, especially at dawn and dusk, or the great thresholds of life I listed above. Pause at each of these and offer a short prayer of gratitude. One of my favorite scriptures that may be helpful in thresholds is this (because a crossroads of any type in life IS a threshold):

*Thus says the Lord: Stand at the crossroads, and look, and ask for the ancient paths,
where the good way lies; and walk in it, and find rest for your souls.*

—Jeremiah 6:16

Grace and Peace and Faith in the Thresholds of life! -*Pastor Rob*

March Worship

We are working our way, step by step, through the wilderness of Lent. There are six Sundays in Lent. One was February 26th. The last will be Palm Sunday, April 2. The other four Sundays are all in March. So, after we make it through March, we only have Palm Sunday, April 2, and then Easter on April 9. Can you walk with us through our Lenten worship?

Sunday, March 5, 10:00 a.m. 2nd Sunday in Lent Scripture: Psalm 51 Sermon: “Lost and Found in Psalm 51” Have you ever had a time in life you felt profoundly lost and you didn’t know what to do, what direction to follow? This sermon is for you.

Sunday, March 12, 10:00 a.m. 3rd Sunday in Lent Scripture: John 4:5-42 Sermon: “The Scuttlebutt and the Stream of Living Water” My friends, ever feel you are “on the out?” Redemption is just a sip away . . . Immediately after worship, we’ll gather on and in front of the chancel and sing “Happy Birthday” to Beatrice at the Mission School of Hope. It will be recorded and we’ll send it to her!

Sunday, March 19, 10:00 a.m. 4th Sunday in Lent Scripture: Various Sermon: “The Dreams of Maewyn Succat” Ever have a significant dream that guided you in life, caused you to change direction? Maewyn Succat had four! Do you know who Maewyn Succat was? There are many Celtic saints. To name just a few: Columba, Colmcill, Brigit of Kildare, Brendan the Navigator, Canice, Ruadhan of Lothra, and of course, we all know of Patrick. Maewyn was one of the Celtic saints. Come and find out the amazing things he did. This is the Sunday closest to St. Patrick’s Day, so wear green! We’ll have some Irish/Celtic themed hymns and music.

Sunday, March 26, 10:00 a.m. 5th Sunday in Lent Scripture: John 11:1-45 Sermon: “The Last Nail in the Coffin” We know the amazing story of Lazarus. Do we know the world-changing repercussions? The bells will play, directed by Natalie Biller.

Confirmands

The confirmation class is making good progress toward being conformed as members of Grace Church! They will meet on Sunday, March 12 and Sunday, March 26 after worship. They are invited to be readers on the 12th and the 26th if available. Although their schedules are busy and often conflict with meeting times, they have been faithful in making up the classes they missed!

Fair Share

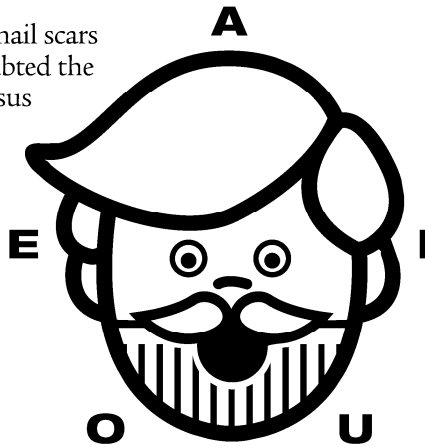
It is Fair Share time! Get your Fair Share giving in, in early march so we can include it when we send it off to the National Association of Congregational Christian Churches, to support what they do for us: support in missions, youth events, consultations, finding a minister, financial advice, annual meetings, minister’s convocations, etc. The amount is \$15 per member (not per household). Many denominations are \$28-35 and more. Just make the check to “Grace Church” with a notation at the bottom: “Fair Share.” This is only requested. The NACCC has no power to demand we pay this “or else.” Many denominations dictate that this must be paid, often called “per capita” (per head).



SEEING AND BELIEVING

Until Thomas saw Jesus' nail scars with his own eyes, he doubted the resurrection. What did Jesus tell Thomas?

Directions:
Use the code to fill in the vowels and complete
John 20:29, NIV.



"B _ c _ _ s _ y _ _ h _ v _ s _ _ n m _ ,
oo oo oo oo oo oo oo oo oo oo oo oo

y _ _ h _ v _ b _ l _ _ v _ d ;
oo oo oo oo oo oo oo oo oo oo

bl _ ss _ d _ r _ th _ s _ wh _ h _ v _ n _ t
oo oo oo oo oo oo oo oo oo oo oo oo

s _ _ n _ nd y _ t h _ v _ b _ l _ _ v _ d ."
oo oo oo oo oo oo oo oo oo oo oo oo

JOHN 20:29, NIV

Answer: "Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed." John 20:29, NIV



GRO News:

*** Our first **Drive-Thru Rigatoni Dinner** of the year will be Tuesday, March 21. Meals are \$8 and include rigatoni and meatballs, salad, roll and butter and cake. Spread the word. We will need people for prep in the morning and servers in the afternoon. We will also need cakes and of course, customers. It will be nice to see our customers again both regulars and new ones!

*** We will be visiting our shut-ins in March with a "Welcome Spring" treat. Everyone is invited to join us.

*** We are blown away by your generosity! We were able to donate \$250 to the Shriner's Children Hospital in January and over \$900 in supplies and money to the Way Station to help with the East Palestine crisis. Grace Church is awesome! Thank you!!!



Congratulations to CHS 7th grade girls who went undefeated in the Eastern Ohio Athletic Conference champion basketball team! Our own Reagan Bell is part of this team!! Congratulations, Reagan ♡

Consistory Meeting of February 2023

Members Present: Matt Bell, Chris Eisenbraun, Rob Joy, Gary Scullion, Tim Reeser, Diane Barnes, Leslie Eisenbraun, Jim Brinker, Jack Sitler, Sharon Frost, Debbie Rohm and Ann Gustafson.

Excused: Steve Barnett, and Sharon Frost

I. Devotions – February: Matt Bell

March: Tim Reeser

II. Duties – February Usher: Jack Sitler

Elevator: Matt Bell

March Usher: Matt Bell

Elevator: Gary Scullion

Communion 2/26 First Sunday in Lent – Diane Barnes

4/6 Maundy Thursday, 4/9 Easter, 5/28 Pentecost, 7/9 Mid-Summer's Communion, 10/1 World-wide Communion, 10/29 All Saints, 11/19 Sunday before Thanksgiving, 12/24 Christmas Eve.

III. Informal Discussion/Goal Setting: Discussion on train accident and what if there was a similar disaster. Discussion on supporting the city of East Palestine. Discussion on honoring the local police and fire department. Rob would like to have the confirmands attend a consistory meeting, asked for dates.

IV. Communications: Ray Wagner and Judy Bott thanked Grace Church for the Christmas gift card by writing a thank you note. A thank you note for the donation from Columbiana Meals on Wheels. A thank you note for the donation from NACCC.

V. Approval of Minutes: January minutes reviewed; 1st: Jack Sitler, 2nd: Chris Eisenbraun, motion passes.

VI. Financial Secretary Report (M. Bell):

January Current Fund income: \$10,501.63. Budget monthly income \$13,570.00, \$3,072.30 under budget. Annual 6% received, \$3,072.30 under budget. The Current Fund is in the red \$291.40. January Current Fund expense: \$18,191.94. Budget monthly expense \$13,570.00. \$4,621.94 over budget. Annual 11% expensed, \$4,621.91 over budget.

Motion to accept the report. 1st Tim Reeser, 2nd Jack Sitler, motion carries.

VII. Financial Committee Report (M. Bell): There is no update from Church Budget on the giving's envelopes.

VIII. Pastor's Report:

Ministry of Word and Sacrament

Worship: 5 regular services.

Communion: 1: 1/22

Baptism: Jesse, Jesse Jr and Leo James

Deceased/Funerals: 0

Marriages: 0

Ministry of Visitation: 9

Counseling: 0

Ministry of Youth/Teaching: Confirmands met 1/18 and 1/22

Continued on page 6



MARCH BIRTHDAYS

- 3/1 Lois Jones
 Logan Cope
- 3/2 Jodi Scott
 Logan Cope
- 3/12 Marsha Wolf
- 3/14 Kenny Wilson
- 3/17 Virginia Reeser
- 3/18 Brian Cope
 Melodie Cyrus
- 3/21 Richard Cope
 Anna Joy
- 3/25 Jerry Hughes
- 3/26 Phil Swope
- 3/30 Steve Barnett



MARCH ANNIVERSARIES

Amanda & James Butler
 March 7, 2009

Those Ministering This Month:

Liturgists:

- 3/5: Alison & Paige Hoskinson
 3/12: Linda Surace
 3/19:
 3/26: Confirmands

Usher: Matt Bell

Elevator Attendant: Gary Scullion

Candles: Lisa Bircher

Thank You!

To our Grace Church Family,

Your many heartfelt expressions of sympathy at this difficult time of Gil's passing, are not only a comfort but a source of strength for my family and me. We are so Blessed to have you all in our lives. Thank you, Betty Fennell, Natalie, Matt and families

Many Thanks to Consistory and members of Grace Church for helping The Order of The Eastern Star of East Palestine by purchasing out Pepperoni Rolls for Super Bowl Sunday. Our organization is dedicated to helping others in need. The rolls this year were made at the home of a sister in Salem. With out Masonic Temple closed until at least June because of the train derailment, it will be difficult to meet out financial needs to help in the community and I, as a member appreciate your help.

God Bless. Linda K Surace

Dear Grace Church,

I really appreciate the gift given to me. Thank you.

I love working with the bells and being a part of Grace Church's music ministry. It means a lot to me.

Blessings, Natalie

Dear Grace Church,

All of us at the Columbiana Area Meals on Wheels would like to thank you for your continued support to our program. Your generous donation of \$500.00 from the Street Fair BBQ will help us keep this much needed program continuing in our community.

Sincerely, Colleen Welton, Program Coordinator

Dear Grace Church,

On behalf of Salem Regional Medical Center's Foundation, please accept our sincere appreciation of your generous donation of \$500 in support of the Oncology Program.

Thank you, Amy Reed, Dir. Of Development, SRMC Foundation

Dear Grace Church,

Thank you for your recent gift to the NACCC in the amount of \$500.00. This donation will be applied to the MOMC-Churches Fund.

Blessings in Christ, Rev. Dr. Ashley Cleere, Ex. Dir., NACCC

Women's Guild Ham Loaf Fundraiser

The Women's Guild is making ham loaves as a fundraiser.

The price will be: 1 lb loaf \$7.00
 2 lb loaf \$14.00

Please get your order in now! Call Marcy in the church office, or see Connie on Sunday.

Administrative Ministry: Consistory 1/9 and Columbiana Ministerial Assoc 1/24.

Communication: 1 newsletter, 5 newsflashes.

Other:

Looking Ahead:

Upcoming communion: 2/26 communion in fellowship hall. Annual Meeting is Sunday 2/26. Ash Wednesday 2/22 at 7pm in the chapel

Next Consistory: March 6th.

2023 Events: Minister's Convocation is 4/17-20. NACCC Annual Meeting is at Headquarters in Milwaukee 6/24-27.

Rob Vacation: Undetermined yet.

Thinking ahead: Christmas Eve day in 2023 is on a Sunday. Again, we have a bit of a squeeze: Folks will tend to either go to Christmas morning at 10:00 a.m. or Christmas Eve at 7:00 p.m. Some churches will only have the evening service.

2023 Events: Minister's Convocation is 4/17-20 (cannot attend). NACCC Annual Meeting is at Headquarters in Milwaukee 6/24-27. We should send someone, it has been a while.

IX. Unfinished Business: Coffee Hour discussion. Matt spoke on the suggestion that was made by Mark Frost on seeking funding from the government for full-time employee and organizations affected by covid (we do not qualify).

X. New Business:

XI. Committee Reports

-Evangelism (Leslie) – met on February 1st. Planning on having football (and other organizations) dinners for Columbiana High School. Open job posting for a Youth Director. Great meeting with exciting ideas.

-Worship Design and Music (Diane/Rob) – Ray and Rob are planning services.

-GRO (Diane) – suggestion box for SF donation. \$500 for American Legion (Wreaths Across America), \$500 Lampost Farms (Ministry and Education), \$500 Meals on Wheels, and \$500 Salem Regional Medical Center. Also gave \$500 to The Counseling Center, \$500 NACCC, and \$1,000 to the local United Way.

-Endowment (Matt) – Laurie is working on financials

-Property (Chris) – Has met and would like to present to the congregation for the repairs to the roof. Money (\$81,185.00) would be coming from Memorial Fund and anonymous donations. Matt Bell made a motion to request a vote by the congregation to approve up to \$82,000 (to be paid by Memorial Fund) for the repair to the flat roof on the church. Chris seconded; motion passed. Updated hours on the north lawn sign.

-Elders (Jack) – had an Elders meeting. Mark Frost and Dwight Dorwart did not accept payment for Supply Pastor. Working on Employee evaluations and will have an Elders meeting. Chris is the 2023 Elder President.

-Women's Guild (Ann) – no report, meeting on Tuesday 2/7.

XII. Adjournment & The Lord's Prayer

Next Meeting March 6th, 2023 at 7pm.

Grace Notes

Grace Church of Columbiana
140 S. Main Street
Columbiana, OH 44408
330-482-4532

Pastor: Rev. Dr. Robert Joy
Secretary: Marcy LaVogue
Office Hours: 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., Monday—Thursday
E-mail: gracechurchofcolumbiana@comcast.net
Web: www.gracechurchcolumbiana.com

Office: 330-482-4532
Pastor's Home Phone: 330-892-0512
Worship Service: 10:00 a.m.

