

Grace Notes

Grace United Methodist Church Sullivan, Missouri

March 2008

Steve's Scribbles

Opportunities for service and ministry are always presenting themselves. Sometimes those opportunities are new and never-been-done-before. Sometimes those opportunities are familiar, and in need of a little "re-furbishing". The ministry opportunity that is presenting itself to the people of Grace is in the latter category.

For several years, we have had an active and vital ministry to the residents of Redwood Manor. They have participated in their own Sunday School class, or visited in other classes. And they have had an active part in worship, serving as acolytes, singing in the choir, and finding their place as a part of this caring congregation called Grace.

Now, that ministry needs some sprucing up. Due to the comings and goings of some of the leaders of this ministry, teachers and transportation providers, this unique service has lost some of its momentum and energy. At this point, we do not have a Sunday School class for this group, and transportation is provided in a catch-as-catch-can kind of way. This is not anything to panic about, since a part of the life-cycle of almost any group contains times like these. But it is something at which we need to be looking.

Is this a ministry that we want to continue to offer? As with any viable ministry, it takes a certain amount of commitment and energy to make it work efficiently. If we decide that it has served its purpose, how do we bring it to a graceful conclusion? If we feel that God is still calling us to this ministry, how will we people it? Who will step forward and say, "Here I am, Lord"?

These are the kinds of questions that we will be thinking about in the next few weeks. If you have any thoughts on the matter, I would like to hear from you. If you think that God may be calling you to this ministry, as a driver, or a teacher, or in some other capacity that we maybe haven't thought of yet, I would also love to hear from you!

Opportunities for ministry and service are always presenting themselves. God continues to call us beyond the comfortable and the known. Sometimes it's to another country; sometimes it's out in the community; and sometimes, it's literally, right in our own backyard!

Shalom,
Pastor Steve

Worship in March

The pathways of Lent lead us to a hill, a cross - and a resurrection! It's not too late to be a part of the journey!

March 2 - The Path of Joy - Holy Communion
Nehemiah 8:9-12

March 9 - The Path of Sabbath
Genesis 2:1-3

March 16 - Palm Sunday - The Path of Compassion
Matthew 2:1-11

March 20 - Maundy Thursday - Choir Cantata - "Song of the Shadows"

March 23 - Easter Sunday - The Path Where There Is No Path
Scripture: Matthew 28:1-10

March 30 - Living Beyond Easter
1 Peter 1:3-9

March Is Heifer International Month

Since my son Todd has Llamas along with horses, goats, chickens, dogs, etc. I have found them very interesting. I never could figure out what good they were, but Heifer International has a plan. There are so many things that can be selected from the Heifer International catalog. In March we will be collecting money for shares if a knitting basket. A share is \$50. A completed knitting basket is \$500 which includes: a pair of Llamas and a pair of sheep. The amount of wool these hardy animals can produce is just amazing, and in capable hands, it becomes almost like currency. Won't you help this month by giving the Heifer International and the knitting basket? Thanks.

Myrna Johnson

Prayer Chain

I don't know where the idea came from that you had to have a computer to be on the prayer chain. We have many callers and prayer partners who are telephoned with the requests. If you want to help pray with us for the many needs of the church, Sullivan and the world, give me a call. 860-5549
Myrna Johnson

Community Dinner



The Community Dinner in March will be cabbage jambalaya. People last year enjoyed it. April's dinner is tater tot casserole; however, we need someone to supervise the April preparation since Judy B. will be out of town. Please keep up donations and assistance.

United Methodist Women

At the March 11 meeting of the United Methodist Women, Connilee Boehne from the Child Advocacy Center will be our guest speaker starting at 1:00. Come learn about what this area is doing to help with child abuse problems. The business meeting and refreshments will follow. All women are invited. Please join us.

The Return of Communiversality

Beginning on Thursday, April 17, and continuing each of the next three Thursdays, we will once again be offering Communiversality, an opportunity to gather for a meal, and learn something new. We will begin each Thursday with a light supper at 5:30 PM, and then, at 6:00 PM, offer a variety of classes. Some of them will be on-going classes for each of the four Thursdays. Others will be self-contained in one evening. Some of our subjects under consideration are a Self-Defense Class, a Cooking/Recipe Sharing Class, a study of World Religions, a Sign Language Class, and presentations on a variety of subjects including the Civil War, Meramec Caverns, and a First Aid/CPR Class. Mark your calendars now for the last two Thursdays in April, and the first two Thursdays in May, and be a part of Communiversality!

MILITARY PRAYER REQUESTS

Doug Archambo, Texas
Nathan Shelton, Iraq
Shawn Stumpe, Iraq
Jake Rice, Afghanistan
Michael Richards, Iraq
William Burkhardt, Texas



Thank You!

Please accept this “thank you” and my deep appreciation for your prayers, cards, visits and the many kindnesses extended to me during my “down time” over the past months. What a wonderful and caring church family! Thank you, thank you.

In Christian Love,
Ruth Dace



Trustees' Corner

As usually happens around Grace, as soon as one problem is solved, another crops up. I just discovered a large hole in the tip of the east wall of the Sanctuary that needs to be repaired, along with the rest of the “woodpecker” holes in that wall. Also, the Parsonage, the poor stepchild of the church, needs a lot of work that we’ll address in the coming year. It seems that we forget about working on the Parsonage when there can be just as much to do there as on the Church, only on a smaller (sometimes) scale.

This year will be one where we will need to address some ongoing problems with our infrastructure that can’t be put off any longer. We still need to do something about our leaking roof. The parking lot can’t go another year without work. The east wall of the Sanctuary may very well need to be replaced very soon before further problems develop. This is all going to cost money, and I’m going to ask the Finance

Committee, and the Administrative Council to develop a plan to come up with funds to do these repairs.

People have told me I’m such a downer for bringing up all these problems, but, unfortunately, this is part of my duties as a member of Grace. Along with coming to Church every Sunday, and tithing what I can afford (or think I can afford), my job, along with the rest of the Trustees is to keep a roof over our heads so we can worship God as we wish to.

Leonard L. Butts
Chair, Trustees

Maunder Thursday Cantata



Maunder Thursday

On Thursday, March 20, at 7:00 PM, the Adult Choir will present the cantata *Song of the Shadows*, a beautiful and haunting musical evocation of the feelings and events of Christ’s passion and death. As is traditional on Maunder Thursday, we will share in Holy Communion, and as the cantata makes its way inevitably toward the events of Good Friday, candles in the sanctuary will be extinguished, representing the overwhelming darkness and despair of that event. You will not want to miss this powerful and moving worship experience!

Why a Fish?

One of the most significant statements the early Christians used was “Jesus Christ, God’s Son, Savior.” Because Greek was the universal language then (the New Testament books were written in Greek), Christians often said and wrote, “Jesus Christ, God’s Son, Savior” in Greek. That phrase, if printed as an acrostic (using the first letter of each word), looks like this:

I = Jesus, CH = Christ(anointed), TH = God, U = Son, and S = Savior



The acrostic forms the word ICHTHUS, which is Greek for fish. If Christians needed to know where to gather for worship, they could look for a fish and perhaps an arrow pointing in the right direction. Persecuted Christians, seeing a fish on the door of a home or business, knew it was a safe place by fellow Christians.