



# Grace Notes

WINTER 2024 EDITION

*Grace*  
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH



WE GATHER



WE GROW



WE GO

300 E. Gartner Rd., Naperville, IL 60540  
630-355-1748 | [www.peopleofgrace.org](http://www.peopleofgrace.org)

# Grace Notes

Grace United Methodist Church | 300 E. Gartner Rd., Naperville, IL 60540 | 630-355-1748



## In This Issue

- Winter & Spring Concert Series
- Join a Small Group in 2024!
- United Women in Faith Combined Unit & Circle Meeting
- Grace Youth Ministry Happenings
- Children & Family Ministries Events
- Ash Wednesday & Lent
- ...and much more!

## 2024 Bible Year Challenge



In an effort to live into our mission of forming disciples of Jesus Christ who further the Kingdom of God, we are seeking to spend the new year deepening our connection with God and others by reading the entire Bible together from Genesis to Revelation from January to December.

The Bible contains what we believe is our defining story as Christians, and yet less than 11% of American Christians have ever read the Bible in full. Only about 15% have read half. Reading the Bible can be intimidating. There's confusing words, names, and places. There's troubling parts full of violence, destruction, and anger. We're busy people who have more to do than we have hours in a day. But together we can do this!

By signing up below, you will receive daily emails from Pastor Eric that contain the scriptures to read for the day (about 3 chapters), along with a link to an audio recording of Pastor Eric reading the scripture to you. You are also registering your participation so that you can be asked at a later time to indicate how much of the challenge you've completed. If you complete 50% or 100% of the readings by the end of 2024, Pastor Eric will make a donation to Feed My Starving Children in honor of your accomplishment. In addition, for 100% completion, you will receive a custom made "Bible Year Challenge" metal medallion.

We will be using a resource called "The Bible Year" which you may purchase [by clicking here](#) that offers a weekly summary of the passages and daily devotional reflection questions. This resource is not required but highly recommended.

While you may do this challenge on your own, if you would be interested in discussing each week's readings in a small group, Pastor Eric will lead discussion study groups on **Monday evenings and Wednesday mornings beginning January 8 and January 10**. Please register by clicking below and indicate if you might be interested in one of those, or indicate that you are interested but at a different time. A private Facebook page will also be created for you to join to post thoughts for discussion with others about your readings each day.

If you have any questions, please contact Pastor Eric at [eric.blachford@peopleofgrace.org](mailto:eric.blachford@peopleofgrace.org) or call the church office at 630-355-1748.

Register for the Bible Year Challenge at  
[peopleofgrace.org/biblechallenge](https://peopleofgrace.org/biblechallenge)



## Winter and Spring Concert Series at Grace!



### Winter Concert of Classical and Ukrainian Music

Sunday, January 7 at 2:00PM

Featuring Myroslav Mykhailenko and Julia Perekhozhuk

We are thrilled to welcome back Myroslav Mykhailenko at the piano with friend and special guest, Julia Perekhozhuk, a wonderful young violinist also from Ukraine. The concert is free and open to all. A love offering will be taken to support these young musicians further their musical studies.



### Ohio State University Men's Glee Club Concert

Saturday, February 24 at 7:00 PM

Everyone is invited to the OSU Men's Glee Club concert presented under the direction of Dr. Robert Ward. The Ohio State University Men's Glee Club was organized in 1875. It is the oldest of hundreds of student organizations available to students at the university. The group has exemplified the university's dedication to tradition, excellence, and diversity.



### Lift Every Voice Gospel Celebration 2024

Saturday, April 20 at 4:00PM

Join us for an uplifting and soul-stirring evening of gospel music like no other on Saturday, April 20 at 4:00PM featuring Mikel Mays & the Divine Sound Gospel Choir! Our 'Lift Every Voice Gospel Celebration' is a musical journey that will touch your heart and lift your spirits. Visit [maysmusic.org](http://maysmusic.org) for information and tickets. Everyone is welcome!



### NaperVoice's Spring 2024 Concert

Sunday, April 21 at 4:00PM

Save the date for the NaperVoice Spring Concert on Sunday, April 21 at 4:00PM.

### A Caroling We Went!

Thank you to everyone who joined us on Saturday, December 16 for Christmas Caroling. We visited many and brought holiday cheer along the way!



## Join a Small Group in 2024!

### Sunday Morning Groups

**New Connections** (Room 227) is a casual gathering for coffee and conversation for 30-40-somethings. The group occasionally dives into deeper study. New members always welcome!

**The Forum Class** (Room 232) is a faithful and welcoming group that enjoys a spirited study of the scriptures as well as presentations from guest speakers, often incorporating discussion and thought-provoking audio/visual material. Beginning January 7, the Forum Class will begin the Bible Year Challenge that Pastor Eric Blachford has announced. Everyone is invited to join us on this exciting journey. Contact Sandy Bray [via email](#) for more information.

**Hearts on Fire** (Room 250) gathers each Sunday morning with a welcoming atmosphere to share in fun but challenging and meaningful discussions around faith and discipleship. Join us in January to discuss *The Gospel of Mark* by Amy Jill Levine. Contact Bob Pacanowski [via email](#) for more information.

**Portico Collective** (Room 231) is a welcoming "come as you are" group for all ages. Portico is a safe place to wrestle with your doubts and questions. Contact Traci Weilemann [via email](#) for more information.

**Questors** (Room 254) welcomes all adults to participate in presentations/discussions on a variety of topics, contemporary living issues, religious history, and Biblical studies. Class offers mission and fellowship opportunities. Contact Bobbi Khant [via email](#) or Pastor Doug Bowden [via email](#) for more information.



### Weekday Groups

#### Mondays, Wednesdays, & Fridays

**Temple Builders** meets on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays at 9:00AM in the Activity Center for exercise and strength training. Contact Keia Carter [via email](#) for information.

#### Mondays

**Sisters Study** meets on Mondays at 1:00PM in Room 254. Every six to eight weeks a new book or topic is discussed. Contact Kathy Carey [via email](#) for more information.

**Progressive Christianity** meets on the second and fourth Mondays of the month at 7:00PM in Room 254 and on Zoom for open discussion of various non-traditional theological ideas. Contact Becky Lindsay [via email](#) for more information.

#### Tuesdays

**Caring Connections** meets on the first and third Tuesdays of every month at 1:00PM to 2:00PM in the Gathering Space. Volunteers in this ministry meet to write cards, notes, make phone calls, and reach out to those in need of a little extra care and connection to our Grace family. Donations toward postage are appreciated. Contact Missy Hoekstra-Hecht [via email](#) to volunteer or for further information.

**Parenting with Grace Mom's Faith Formation Group** meets on Tuesdays (beginning January 16) at 7:00PM to 8:15PM in Room 231. Unique challenges and joys come with raising a family, and we believe in the power of community to support and uplift one another. This small group is for moms of all ages and stages to come together, share experiences, and grow in faith. Register at [peopleofgrace.org/moms](https://peopleofgrace.org/moms). Please contact Melissa Pomeroy [via email](#) or Stefanie Abderhalden [via email](#) with questions.

#### Wednesdays

**Portico Collective** meets on Wednesdays at 5:00PM to 6:00PM in Room 231. This all-ages, drop-in discussion group is led by Chris Weilemann. A great place to wrestle with your doubts and questions. Contact Traci Weilemann [via email](#) for more information.

#### Thursdays

**Thursday Morning Bible Study** meets at 9:30AM to 10:30AM in Room 254 and on Zoom. Current topic is *Jesus in the Gospels*. Leander E. Keck, beloved Professor of New Testament and Retired Dean in the Yale Divinity School, is the author of the Study Manual for *Jesus in the Gospels*. He is a teacher/writer, who will guide us well in 30 weeks of study. Contact Pastor Doug Bowden [via email](#) for more information.



## Fellowship Groups

**Over 50 Fellowship** group meets every other month for lunch with a speaker and discussion. We meet in Fellowship Hall at 12:00PM and have a catered lunch. Bring \$15.00 to pay for lunch. Contact Dick Trondsen with questions at 630-624-2034. Everyone over 50 is welcome to join us!



**Thursday, January 11 - Antique Roadshow.** Enjoy a discussion of current trends in the world of antiques and collectibles led by John Leonard, owner of Leonard Auctions of Addison, IL. John's discussion will include the impact of "minimalism" on the overall antique market, and will offer reviews of items you submit. Everyone is encouraged to bring a favorite keepsake for appraisal and commentary.

**Thursday, March 14 - In Jeopardy.** Three GUMC staff members will compete in a specialized version of the popular TV game show.



**Guys Gathering Together** is a group for men who share common interests. Get out, eat, have fun, and have enjoyable conversations about various topics in a casual setting that impact each of us in today's world. The goal is to build relationships with other men around common values of integrity and honesty, while learning with and from each other. The cost is \$15 per guy and includes a catered meal. If the cost is prohibitive, please contact Bob Pacanowski via email. Register at [peopleofgrace.org/guys](http://peopleofgrace.org/guys).

**Friday, February 9** at 6:00PM to 8:30PM

**Friday, May 17** at 6:00PM to 8:30PM

## Support Groups & Seminars

**DivorceCare Support Program** is a safe place where caring people come alongside you as you find healing from the pain of separation or divorce. Learn more at [peopleofgrace.org/divorce](http://peopleofgrace.org/divorce).

**Drop-in support group** Thursdays at 6:30PM, January 4 & January 11

**Group meeting** Thursdays at 6:30PM, January 11 through February 15



### Parenting with Grace Seminar - Creating Inner Wealth: Filling Our Bank with Values

All parents, grandparents, and caregivers are invited on **Wednesday, January 31 at 5:00PM to 6:00PM**.

Learn how to have "I See You" moments in your household in order to fill up the "banks" of those you love by creating values that create an inner wealth. In this hands-on, interactive seminar, you will learn practical tools. Open to all! Register at [peopleofgrace.org/parentingseminar](http://peopleofgrace.org/parentingseminar).

### Legacy Planning Seminar

The Grace Church Foundation is pleased to invite you to a complimentary seminar, "The Benefits of a Trust and Other Ways You Can Leave a Legacy," on **Sunday, February 25 at 12:00PM** in Room 254. Attorney Ted Kuczek of The Law Firm of Kuczek and Associates will present (in layman's terms) the difference between wills and trusts and how you can name Grace Church Foundation as a beneficiary. This is a free event but please register at [peopleofgrace.org/legacy](http://peopleofgrace.org/legacy) to reserve your spot. Please contact Scott Oats at [scott.oats@peopleofgrace.org](mailto:scott.oats@peopleofgrace.org) with questions.



## United Women in Faith Meetings

### January Meeting

United Women in Faith will meet on **Tuesday, January 16 at 9:30AM** in Fellowship Hall for a combined Unit Meeting and Circle Meeting. During this meeting, we will have our Pledge Service given by Laurie Chesla and our Call to Prayer and Self-Denial Program given by Diana McIlvane. Learn how United Women in Faith plan to continue to nurture current members and welcome new women of diverse backgrounds in focusing on serving in missions for women, youth, and children locally, nationally, and worldwide. "All Women in Faith" are welcome!

### February Meeting

United Women in Faith will meet on **Tuesday, February 6 at 9:30AM** in Fellowship Hall. Jeannie Dina will speak about the Indian Prairie Parents' Council Winter Wishes Program and the wonderful opportunity for community members to give back and make a difference in the lives of families who are struggling in the Indian Prairie School District #204.

For more information about United Women in Faith, contact UWF President, Kathy Carey, [via email](mailto:kathy@peopleofgrace.org) or visit [peopleofgrace.org/united-women-in-faith](http://peopleofgrace.org/united-women-in-faith).

## United Women in Faith Book Group

Join the Grace UWF Book Group on the fourth Wednesday of the month at 12:45PM in person at the church with a ZOOM option to discuss the book of the month. Please contact Cathy Connor [via email](mailto:cathy@peopleofgrace.org) for more information and Zoom link.

### 2024 Books

January 24 - *The Reading List* by Sara Nisha Adams

February 28 - *Spider Bones* by Kathy Reichs

March 27 - *Crow Mary* by Kathleen Grissom



United  
Women  
in Faith

## Grace Youth Ministry (G.Y.M.)

### MLK Day of Service

Come join Grace as we honor Martin Luther King, Jr. with a day of service on **Saturday, January 13**. Stay tuned for more details!

### Winter Games

All youth are invited for Winter Games on **Wednesday, January 24 at 7:00PM**. Join us for snow angel contests, snowman building, and sledding on the church hill. Friends always welcome!



### Help Tackle Hunger

Grace Youth Ministry invites you to participate in Soup-er Bowl of Caring on **Sunday, February 11**. A special offering will be taken at the end of each worship service and all proceeds will benefit Marie Wilkinson Food Pantry in Aurora. Can't be here on February 11? No worries, [visit your pushpay account and donate electronically](#). All are welcome to wear your favorite team jersey or t-shirt to worship. Together we can help tackle hunger one meal at a time!



### Youth Bowling

All youth welcome to join us for Youth Bowling on **Wednesday, February 21 at 7:00PM**. A permission slip is required for each participant. Register at [peopleofgrace.org/youthbowling](https://peopleofgrace.org/youthbowling).

### Ash Wednesday Experience

All are welcome to join us in the Sanctuary on **Wednesday, February 14 at 5:00PM** for an Ash Wednesday Experience. An interactive, family-friendly service targeted at teaching the meaning of Ash Wednesday as we begin the season of Lent. The Children's choirs will offer special music and attend regularly scheduled rehearsals following the service.

### Youth Summer Missions

It's time to begin thinking about (and planning for) Side x Side and Hope @ Home 2024, youth summer mission experiences. High school, college, and adults are eligible for Side x Side and incoming 6th grade students through incoming 8th grade students and adults are eligible for Hope @ Home (here in the Chicago area). If you are interested in either experience, please visit [peopleofgrace.org/ysmsurvey](https://peopleofgrace.org/ysmsurvey) to share your feedback so we may begin to plan a positive experience. Our first information meeting for both Side x Side and Hope @ Home will be **Sunday, February 25 at 12:30PM** in the Sanctuary.



## Our Weekly Schedule



Wednesday night G.Y.M. takes a holiday break through January 3, resuming on January 10.

### Sunday Mornings

9:15AM to 10:15AM  
Junior High & Senior High Faith Formation

### Wednesday Evenings

7:00PM to 8:00PM  
G.Y.M. (Bible Study/Youth Fellowship)

Please contact Gaye Lynn at [gayelynn.loufek@peopleofgrace.org](mailto:gayelynn.loufek@peopleofgrace.org) with questions or for more information about Grace Youth Ministries.

## Thank You, Grace!

### KidsAboveAll

Thank you to all who adopted a child in the Christmas wish list drive for KidsAboveAll. Over 50 gifts were delivered to the distribution center on Saturday, December 9, and their staff was extremely grateful! Thank you for making a difference in the life of a child!

### Keeping Our Covenant

United Women in Faith broadened our Children's Sabbath commitment to Indian Prairie School District 204 by inviting us to contribute rolls of wrapping paper and gift cards to the District 204 Winter Wishes campaign. Grace Church, you did not disappoint! Thank you for your generosity and for *loving out loud* during this season of Advent as we prepare for Christmas!



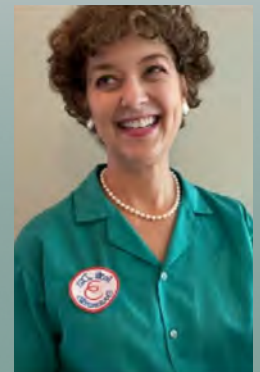
## Galentine's Tea with Julia Child

### Friday, February 9 at 1:00PM to 2:30PM

Register at [peopleofgrace.org/galentines](https://peopleofgrace.org/galentines) for a fundraiser benefiting Youth Summer Missions.

*A Living Portrayal featuring Leslie Goddard as Julia Child*

Women of Grace, and friends and neighbors, are invited to enjoy an afternoon of tea, treats, and Julia Child as portrayed by Leslie Goddard. Tickets are required and are \$25 each. Group sales are available. Register now - space is limited to 100 seats! All proceeds will benefit Youth Summer Missions.



## Children and Family Ministries

### Nursery and Preschool Care

6 weeks to 4 years on Sundays at 7:45AM to 11:45AM in Room 130.

### Children Faith Formation for 4 years to 5th Grade

Sundays at 9:15AM to 10:15AM in Room 123 LL.



### Sunday Fundays

Register at [peopleofgrace.org/sundayfunday](http://peopleofgrace.org/sundayfunday) for **Sunday, January 21 and Sunday, March 17.**

Sunday Fun Days are themed Sunday school days on the third Sunday of the month at 9:15AM to 10:15AM. These are VBS style days. Children 3 years and fully potty trained and up are welcome and invited. (Regular Sunday school is still for 4-year-olds and up). Youth are welcome and invited to serve and have fun, too.

**Sunday, January 21 - PJ's on a Snowy Day.** Snuggle up in your comfy jammies and have some snowy fun.

**Sunday, March 17 - Laughter and Leprechauns.** Celebrate St. Patrick's Day with lots of laughter and look for some leprechaun fun as we learn about St Patrick.

### KinderTot Fun Days

Register at [peopleofgrace.org/kindertot](http://peopleofgrace.org/kindertot) for **Mondays - January 22, February 26, and March 25 at 9:30AM to 10:30AM.**

Calling all kids under Kindergarten! Grab your favorite adult(s) and come have some themed winter/Bible fun! Each week will have a different theme that includes play, music, a story, a prayer, and building relationships with other KinderTots and their favorite adults. Friends and neighbors are invited and welcome to be part of the fun. It's a great time to hang out and get to know others in a play setting.

**Monday, January 22 - PJ's and Pals.** Wear your PJ's and hang with pals while we learn about friendship.

**Monday, February 26 - Winter Fun.** Let's have some winter fun together.

**Monday, March 25 - Easter Eggstravaganza.** Spring into Easter with some 'egg'citing fun.

### Faith, Food, & Fun

Register at [peopleofgrace.org/faithfoodfun](http://peopleofgrace.org/faithfoodfun) for **Sunday, January 28 at 5:30PM to 7:00PM.** Everyone is invited to this all-church event for all ages. We will start with a community meal prepared by the Hesed House cooking team and then engage in some faith and intergenerational fun together in Fellowship Hall. Come and learn through interactive ways about homelessness and how Grace serves the Hesed House in Aurora. Hesed House is the second largest homeless shelter in Illinois. For over thirty years, Grace volunteers have been serving a hot dinner, hot breakfast, and sack lunches on a monthly basis. We will have family-oriented activities to raise awareness of homelessness and have a virtual tour of the Hesed House. The cost is \$5 per person or \$20 per family. An offering will be taken to help fund the Hesed House food costs. We ask that each household contribute by bringing either cookies or cut-fresh fruit to share.



### Growing in Faith Together: DoNot Forget to Pray

Register at [peopleofgrace.org/gift](http://peopleofgrace.org/gift) for **Sunday, February 18 at 9:00AM to 10:15AM.**

Parents, grandparents, and families are invited to the children and youth Faith Formation hour to be with their children, grandchildren, and youth. Growing in Faith Together (GIFT) is a gift of time for the family unit to learn and practice how to grow in faith together through a hands-on, interactive, and fun way to incorporate prayer into your life during the Lent Season. We will be equipped with how to grow in our faith together during the Lenten Season.

### Cricut Night

Register at [peopleofgrace.org/cricut](http://peopleofgrace.org/cricut) for **Wednesday, February 28 from 5:00PM to 7:00PM.**

Do you have a Cricut but are afraid to take it out of the box? Do you own a Cricut and never used it? Have you thought about a Cricut and wondered how they work? Are you an expert on the Cricut and want to share tips? Come get/share helpful tips, try your hand at a fun Easter/Spring craft, or just come hang out for some fun with other people who Cricut. Bring a snack and let's Cricut together. Light refreshments will be provided. We will have a two-hour session. You can stay the whole time or come when you can. If you have a Cricut, bring it with you and all of your supplies. If you don't have a Cricut, we will give a tutorial on how to use it, and then have a project for you to work on. The cost is \$5 per person. Led by Jenn Wills and Pastor Kim Neace.

## Grace Church Foundation 2023 Report

The Grace United Methodist Church Foundation was established to focus on the church's future. The Foundation receives, manages, and distributes financial and other resources to be used for programs and projects which enhance or supplement the work and vision of Grace Church. It also fosters an awareness of opportunities for giving through wills, trusts, retirement accounts, life insurance, etc.



We are grateful that the generous donations from past and present members, families, and friends of Grace have given the Foundation many opportunities to support the church's ministries in 2023. The following is a summary of the Foundation's major initiatives and accomplishments in 2023.

Reliable and well-maintained facilities and grounds are critical to the Grace Church ministries. The Raise the Roof campaign addresses numerous critical facilities maintenance projects. As an incentive to meet the Raise the Roof goal, the Foundation committed to match 50% of new pledges in 2022 and 2023 to this project. Memorials are used to fund this commitment. A number of large trees on the church grounds were potentially dangerous and needed attention. The Board and trustees decided to use the Foundation's Landscaping Fund to hire a professional company to do the work. The church replaced the AED defibrillators and memorials were used to purchase the new units.

Education remains an important part of the Foundation's support for further developing the leaders of our church including pastors, staff, lay leaders, and youth. In 2023, our education endowments supported church leadership, music ministry, and youth ministry.

This year certain leaders and staff attended the Leadership Institute 2023 at the Church of the Resurrection in Kansas City. The institute equips, encourages, and inspires ministry leaders. Churches from all over the country attend and share ideas. The Institute provides tips and tools designed to build leadership development and growth.

The director of the bell choirs attended the Handbell Musicians of America National Seminar in Texas. At this seminar, she brainstormed with other directors and met composers of many of the pieces played at Grace and attended many classes and concerts.

The Foundation provided a \$1,000 scholarship to one of our youths attending North Central College, a United Methodist affiliated institute, to support their academic and spiritual growth. This scholarship was matched by the United Methodist Higher Education Foundation and North Central College.

Continuing Educational endowments have been established through legacy gifts from Ruth Gish and family members honoring Rev. George Gish, and Dorothy Kline. These endowments provide a stream of income used for continuing education of the church's leadership. There are also NCC scholarship endowments established by Anna Stephenson and Robert Lehman.

The church's website is a vital method for communicating with the congregation and the community. People searching for a church or considering visiting Grace will visit the website first. A new website was created in 2023 and paid for through the Kline Christian Initiative fund.

The Foundation supported many events and initiatives for the Children and Family and Youth ministries including Fall Festival, Trunk or Treat, Sunday Fun Days, Kinder Tot Summer Days, Pizza, Play, and Praise night, Faith, Food, and Fun day, and Vacation Bible School. The Holloway Children's and Youth endowments were used for these events.

The above examples show the impact and importance of legacy gifts on the current and ongoing ministries of Grace Church. If you would like additional information or wish to discuss, confidentially, the best way for you to make a gift, please feel free to contact me, or Pastors Cindy Marino, Eric Blachford, or Mark Himel.

On February 25, the Foundation will sponsor a seminar "Benefits of Trusts and Other Ways to Make a Legacy Gift." An estate attorney will lead this seminar in a small, friendly environment. Mark your calendar. More information is available in Grace Notes and the weekly enews.

If you have already named the Grace Foundation in your financial planning, please let the Foundation know by contacting me. We would like to thank you!

In Christ,

Scott Oats

Grace United Methodist Church Foundation, President

### Foundation Board Members

Scott Oats, President and  
Secretary

John Abe, Vice President

Scott Skooglund, Treasurer

Gina Gramarosso

Tim Ford

Susan Patton

Missy Hoekstra-Hecht



<i>Save the Date!</i>				
JANUARY				
1/7/2024	Sunday	2:00PM	Piano/Violin Concert Featuring Myroslav Mykhailenko & Julia Perekhozhuk	Sanctuary
1/11/2024	Thursday	12:00PM	Over 50 Fellowship Group	Fellowship Hall
1/13/2024	Saturday		MLK Day of Service	
1/16/2024	Tuesday	9:30AM	United Women in Faith Combined Unit Meeting & Circle Gathering	Fellowship Hall
1/21/2024	Sunday	9:15AM to 10:15 AM	Sunday Funday - PJ's on a Snowy Day	122, 123, Fellowship Hall
1/22/2024	Monday	9:30AM to 10:30 AM	KinderTot Fun Days - PJ's and Pals	122, 123, Fellowship Hall
1/24/2024	Wednesday	7:00PM	Youth Winter Games	Church hill and field
1/27/2024	Saturday	8:00AM to 3:00PM	Prairie Central Leadership Training	Barrington UMC
1/28/2024	Sunday	5:30PM to 7:00 PM	Faith, Food, and Fun	Fellowship Hall
1/31/2024	Wednesday	5:00PM to 6:00PM	Parenting with Grace Seminar: Creating Inner Wealth: Filling Our Bank with Values	Fellowship Hall
FEBRUARY				
2/6/2024	Tuesday	9:30AM	United Women in Faith February Meeting	Fellowship Hall
2/9/2024	Friday	1:00PM to 2:00PM	Galentine's Tea with Julia Child (Youth Missions Fundraiser)	Fellowship Hall
2/9/2024	Friday	6:00PM	Guys Gathering Together	254, Activity Center
2/11/2024	Sunday	All services	Soup-er Bowl Sunday	Sanctuary and Activity Center
2/14/2024	Wednesday	9:00AM to 1:00PM	Ash Wednesday Open Imposition of Ashes	Sanctuary
2/14/2024	Wednesday	5:00PM	Ash Wednesday Experience Family Worship	Sanctuary
2/14/2024	Wednesday	7:00PM	Ash Wednesday Traditional Worship	Sanctuary
2/18/2024	Sunday	9:00AM to 10:15AM	Growing in Faith Together: Donut Day	Fellowship Hall
2/21/2024	Wednesday	7:00PM	Youth Bowling	Offsite
2/24/2024	Saturday	7:00PM	The Ohio State University Men's Glee Club Concert	Sanctuary
2/25/2024	Sunday	12:00PM	Legacy Planning Seminar	254
2/25/2024	Sunday	12:30PM	Youth Summer Missions Informational Meeting	Sanctuary
2/26/2024	Monday	9:30AM to 10:30 AM	KinderTot Fun Day - Winter Fun	122, 123, Fellowship Hall
2/28/2024	Wednesday	5:00PM to 7:00PM	Cricut Night	Fellowship Hall

Learn more about all our upcoming events at [peopleofgrace.org/events](https://peopleofgrace.org/events)



### January Food Pantry Collection

Our January Pantry collection will benefit Common Pantry located at 3908 N. Lincoln Ave. on the NW side of Chicago. They have had to increase their food purchases by 36% since local grocery stores are not donating as much and food donations from people have also dipped. They especially rely on monetary donations like ours so please donate visiting [peopleofgrace.org/give](https://peopleofgrace.org/give) and selecting the "Love Loaf" option.

### February Food Pantry Collection

Our February Pantry collection will benefit Loaves and Fishes in Naperville. They continue to see an increase in the number of people visiting the pantry and a decrease in food donations. To meet a variety of clients' needs, they offer a Senior Home Delivery program, satellite pantries in surrounding counties, and 'Online shopping' for clients' convenience. Please give generously to Grace's Love Loaf at the Welcome Desk or donating via Push Pay at [peopleofgrace.org/give](https://peopleofgrace.org/give) and choosing the "Love Loaf" option.



## Lent Begins on February 14!

Ash Wednesday, February 14, marks the beginning of Lent – a time for reflection and preparation for Easter. Lent is a time when many Christians prepare for Easter by observing a period of fasting, repentance, moderation, and spiritual discipline. Ash Wednesday emphasizes two themes: our sinfulness before God and our human mortality. Our services focus on both themes, helping us to realize that both have been triumphed through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

We invite you for Ash Wednesday Worship and the Imposition of Ashes on Wednesday, February 14:

**9:00AM to 1:00PM** - Open Imposition of Ashes in the Sanctuary

**5:00PM** - Ash Wednesday Experience Family Worship

**7:00PM** - Traditional Worship

Learn about our upcoming Lenten sermon series at [peopleofgrace.org/lent](http://peopleofgrace.org/lent).



## Lent Book Contributors Needed

Contributors are greatly needed for our annual Lent book of devotions.

Our theme is ***Wandering Heart: Figuring Out Faith With Peter***, exploring how we find Jesus at each step along our life's journey. Please consider offering an original devotion, poem, artwork, or photo to this beloved Grace Church tradition. For more information, visit [peopleofgrace.org/lent](http://peopleofgrace.org/lent) to download the guidelines or contact Barb Ceruti [via email](#).



## Grace Notes Publications

In 2024, Grace Notes will be published on a quarterly basis on January 1, April 1, July 1, and October 1. The deadline for submissions for the April 1 newsletter is March 20.

We welcome your announcements for the **weekly enews, website, and blog**. The deadline for submissions is Wednesday at Noon to appear in the Friday enews. Please send your questions and submissions to [communications@peopleofgrace.org](mailto:communications@peopleofgrace.org).

## Grace Notes Monthly Newsletter

Grace United Methodist Church  
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[www.peopleofgrace.org](http://www.peopleofgrace.org)  
We Gather | We Grow | We Go

## News from the Staff-Parish Relations Committee

The Staff-Parish Relations Committee is pleased to announce that Patti Cash is coming aboard as our new Business Operations Facilities Manager, effective January 15. You may know Patti from her recent work as Grace's part-time Communications Director. In her new role, Patti will manage the facility and operations, working closely with the pastors, staff, and Trustees. She will ensure the staff is trained as well as develop and manage policies for all the building systems to ensure they are running smoothly. She will coordinate major repairs, conduct safety inspections, and oversee all aspects of the office. In addition, she will continue to manage the church's communications and marketing efforts.

Patti comes to us with over 25 years of experience working with small businesses and non-profit organizations in a variety of roles. Most recently, she has been a communications and marketing consultant for several United Methodist churches and small businesses. Having served on the Prairie Central District Shepherding Team for the last five years, she brings a wide range of skills and experience to Grace.

Patti and her spouse, Larry, live in Woodridge and have three grown children. They are active members of the Woodridge United Methodist Church. She will make a great addition to our team as we welcome in the new year. Please join us in congratulating Patti on her new position.

