

amazing

IN YOUR LIFE | IN OUR COMMUNITY | IN THE WORLD

Grace

A monthly publication for members and friends of Grace Presbyterian Church in Walnut Creek, California

May 2023

Dear Grace Church Family,

What a beautiful Easter Sunday celebration we had last month! The morning was sunny and warm, the new Easter banners brightened the Sanctuary along with more than 100 people, and the music was inspiring.

These weeks after Easter bring us to the ancient season called “Eastertide,” the 50-day period before Pentecost that gives us time and space to contemplate and digest the implications of the resurrection of Jesus.

A quote from Sister Joan Chittister captures the captures the essence of this season: “It’s at the tomb that we discover things about ourselves. *Easter it is not so much about the resurrection of Jesus as it is about our own.* Unfortunately, we so often miss it. Jesus, you see, is already gone from one tomb. The only question now is whether or not we are willing to abandon our own. Are we willing leave the old trappings behind and live in the light of the Jesus, the Christ, whom the religious establishment persecuted and politicians condemned?”

Abandoning our tombs and comfortable trappings is *not* an easy task. Leaving behind old habits and familiar practices may be one of the most difficult demands of discipleship. And yet, the resurrection of Jesus is an invitation to do just that. It’s a summons to live beyond our limited human expectations that are shattered at the empty tomb. *Jesus, you see, is already gone from one tomb. The only question now is this: are you are willing to abandon your own?*

As we move into Eastertide, I want to highlight some of the activities and ministries here at Grace:

The Grace Church Monthly Concert series, which ran from September to April, was a wonderful success. The music ranged from classical to hymns and Christmas carols and the many musicians and vocalist were spectacular. A big “thank you” to our Music Director, Jumi Kim, for her immense effort in planning and organizing the concerts.

The Grace Cooperative Preschool children joined us in worship on Sunday, April 23 and shared three joyful songs. The Preschool has been part of Grace for more than 50 years and continues to provide an exceptional service to the community. Please keep the Preschool, its staff, teacher, parents, and children in your prayers.

The Wednesday Bible Study has been a weekly gathering of faithful members and friends who enjoy reading and discussing the scripture passage that is the basis for the upcoming sermon. They are a lively and inquisitive group who help to bring the Bible to life with their keen observations and comments. Please join us, via Zoom on in person, if you are interested. No special “Bible knowledge” is required!

Progress on the Micro Homes Village planned for the Grace parking lot continues. The building plans and other permits have been submitted to the city of Walnut Creek. The next steps are working out the details of the lease and other agreements with Hope Solutions.

Finally, the Session is considering the future of the Earth Care Ministry. There is a meeting on Sunday, April 30 to gauge interest in “resurrecting” the committee. If you are interested and were not able to attend the meeting, please let me or the Church Office know.

Grace and peace, *Mark*

Submit articles for the next issue by **May 14**

Office Hours

**Tuesday-Friday
9:30—3:00**

**The office is closed
on Monday and Saturday**

Reach us anytime by email:
gracepreschurchwc@gmail.com

Phone: 925-935-2100

Sr. Pastor Mark Burnham:
925-433-5459 or
revmrb@gmail.com

Pastor: Rev. Mark Burnham

Pastor Emerita: Charie Reid

Music Director: Jumi Kim

Treasurer: Linda Neyer

Asst. Treasurer: Geri Rentz

Financial Scty: Faye Hutchings

Office Manager: Judy Williams

Preschool Director: Joy Martin

MAY

SUNDAY WORSHIP

- May 7 – Romans 1:1-17
- May 14 – Romans 5:1-11
- May 21 – Romans 6:1-14
- May 28 – (Pentecost)
Acts 2:1-4, Romans 8:14-39

MAY Birthdays

GESSICA JOHNSTON	5/11
LAVENIA BLACK	5/13
SONJA LUSCHER	5/14
SARA ALLEN	5/19
ROGER REABER	5/23
MARY MUNSELL	5/25

Curious About Church Membership?

Visitors who want to learn more about Grace Church or seek Church membership are invited to let Pastor Mark know of your interest. He will answer your questions about being a Presbyterian and what you need to do to be a member of Grace Church.

THANK YOU!

I'd like to thank you all for the cards, emails, texts and phone calls offering support and help following my recent surgery. Your prayers, concern and positive thoughts have aided in my recovery. The people of Grace are Grace-ious, indeed.

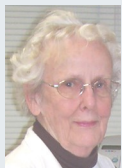


Sally Day

I would like to thank all of you who have provided goodies for Fellowship these past months. It seems as if all has gone well. I appreciate the clean up that you have done also. Good job, faithful servants!! You are so appreciated.



Rosalyn Cannelora, Discipleship



In Memory of
Phyllis Carman
May 5, 1928 —
March 7, 2023



Glenn Watkins
May 7, 1932—
April 23, 2023

Legacy Sunday is May 7

Thank you to those who have remembered Grace Presbyterian Church in their will or trust. More than 60 years after our founding, Grace Church is still a strong and vital force for good in our community. Your legacy gifts support our continued influence and growth.

If you have any questions about Legacy Giving please check out the website "Leave a Legacy" page or contact Financial Secretary Faye Hutchings for more information.



Free Concerts Will Return in September

The Hymn Festival on 4/23 delighted the audience with fabulous soloists singing, organ and piano solos, the magnificent sound of the choir and a fun sing-a-long. Concerts will resume in September. Our free Concerts are about one hour, easy-access parking. Freewill offerings are welcomed. Bring a friend.

Mother's Day—Chocolate Demonstration

In honor of Mother's Day, be sure to come to Fellowship time on **Sunday, May 14** for a fun chocolate making demonstration. Samples will be available for tasting.



Hannah Circle to Meet Tues., May 9 at 10 am in the Library

May 9 is the last meeting of the 2022-2023 Bible Study year. Light refreshments will be provided. Lesson 9 in our Study Guide is "Sabbath and Community", Scripture: Acts 2:42-47. What are the most challenging aspects of our own Sabbath journey, especially regarding community? We hope to focus on widening our community involvement. The 2023-2024 Year will bring us a new Bible Study, "Sacred Encounters" The Power and Presence of Jesus Christ in Luke-Acts by Olive Mahabir.

Hope to see you on May 9, Blessings and Peace, Geri and Jan



Mission Giving

Grace donors have contributed over \$6,000 to the *One Great Hour of Sharing* offering. Thank you.



We are still collecting bread tags to support a **Rossmoor Lion's Club service project**. Bread tags can be turned in for a wheelchair for a needy child. There is a collection box next to the food barrel in the Narthex.

Grace Welcomes New Members

In January of 2023, Grace Church welcomed **Mark and Betsy Werner** into membership. Between them their blended family includes six children and 11 grandchildren. The Werners moved to Rossmoor in 2020, in the middle of the pandemic.

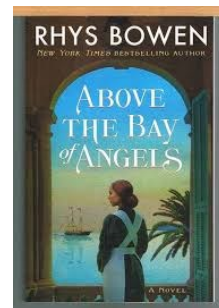
In addition to having families, both Mark and Betsy had busy professional careers prior to retirement. Mark grew up in Yuba City and earned two Bachelor's degrees and an MBA before beginning a 35-year career as an engineer and senior estimator. His prominent projects included large highways, pipelines, light rail, monorail, hydro-power plants, bridges, tunnels and airports! Mark, an Eagle Scout, has volunteered as a scoutmaster and Sunday School teacher. He enjoys fishing, skiing, hiking, tennis, pickleball and ballroom dancing. He is also a singer and currently sings in the church choir.

Mostly raised in Canada, Betsy attended Mt. Holyoke College, St. Andrew's University and later Medical School. She volunteered at a mission hospital in India and worked with the Cree Native tribe prior to beginning her practice. While raising four children, her practice included student health in West Virginia, private practice in Gilroy, CA, public health work and the last 15 years with Kaiser Permanente. Betsy retired after a 35 year career. She now spends three or more days per week caring for two nearby grandchildren.

Betsy and Mark have also traveled extensively to seven continents since retirement. We are delighted to have this dynamic couple as part of the Grace family.

Book Club News— Next meeting Sun. 5/21 at 11:30 in the Library.

We will be reviewing "Above the Bay of Angels" by Rhys Bowen. Teaser...Bella Waverly only means to comfort the woman felled on a London Street. In her final dying moments the dying woman thrusts a letter into Bella's hand. It's an offer of employment in the kitchens of Buckingham Palace for an aspiring cook from the country... Of



interest: the Hotel in the novel was actually built in Nice for Queen Victoria.

For future meetings, we talked about these other books/authors of interest.

1. *The Pillars of the Earth* by Ken Follett. Everyone at the meeting has read this 900-page novel. We might consider selecting another of his novels since everyone enjoys his work.
2. *A Very English Murder* by Verity Bright. It is a lightweight cozy mystery set in the 1920s.
3. *Lessons in Chemistry* by Bonnie Gamus. This was her debut novel published in 2022. The Guardian noted, "it's a polished, funny, thought-provoking story ... it's hard to believe it's a debut".
4. *A Game of Fear* written by Caroline and (her son) Charles Todd. Their crime stories are set during WWI. They have two series in print featuring - Scotland Yard Inspector Ian Rutledge a WWI survivor who suffered from shell shock - and Bess Crawford, a battlefield nurse who served in France.

- Blessings, Geri

Holocaust Remembrance Held on Sunday, April 16

On Sunday, April 16, Grace held a Yom HaShoah or Holocaust Remembrance ceremony. Present were guests from two local Jewish communities. The participants from B'nai Israel of Rossmoor included, Cantor Amy Daniels, Paula Krauss, (B'nai Israel Leadership Council), Carol Akawie, and Irene Friedman. Werner Gottlieb and Elaine Highiet who are members of Temple Isaiah in Lafayette also participated. The ceremony was brought to a close by Jumi Kim accompanying violinist Helen Chen, who played the haunting theme from the movie *Shindler's List*. The guests lit six candles commemorating the six millions Jews who lost their lives in the Holocaust. Also, gracing the table in the sanctuary was a vase of yellow tulips which also symbolized the 6 million who lost their lives. The color yellow symbolized hope and renewal.



By Pat Devine-Cummings

Preschool Open House and Fundraiser a Success

On Sunday, April 23, the children of Grace Preschool, accompanied by Lavenia Black, delighted church go-ers with singing during the worship service. After, there was an open house where families, alumni and Grace members and friends were invited to tour the school, participate in a raffle, eat from the food truck and view a real firetruck. The fundraiser earned the school \$6,205. Thanks to all who participated and donated.





2100 Tice Valley Boulevard
Walnut Creek, CA 94595
Sunday Worship at 10 AM
<https://www.gracewc.org>
May 2023

Address Service Requested
Dated Material

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WELCOME STATEMENT

*We welcome and celebrate
all who join with us*

—the young and the old,
the rich and the poor,
the gay and the straight,
the strong and the weak,
the meek and the brave—
and though we are
different one from
another, we are united
in loving and praising God
and in loving each other.

In-person SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICES are at 10:00 AM.
Join friends for Fellowship time after church.

Livestream worship link is at www.gracewc.org - Sundays at 10:00 am

Watch recordings of worship services anytime at www.gracewc.org

Listen to the latest Sunday sermon on your phone. Dial 925-236-2487

MAY 2023 GATHERINGS AND MEETINGS

Every Wednesday at 10 am, Bible Study in the Library or on Zoom

Sunday, May 7 at 10 am, Communion and Legacy Sunday

Tuesday, May 9 at 10 am, Hannah Circle Meeting in the Library

Sunday May 14 at 11 AM, Chocolate Making demonstration at Fellowship

Sunday, May 21 at 11:30 am, Book Club in the Library

Sunday, April 28 at 11:30 am, Meeting of Session in the Library