HOLY WEEK SERVICES

APRIL 14 - PALM SUNDAY - Chris Schroeder preaching

The Easter Egg Hunt (young children) and Scavenger Hunt (older kids) will take place following the 10:00 a.m. service

THURSDAY, APRIL 18 - HOLY THURSDAY - 7:00 p.m.

This service begins in Fellowship Hall and includes a series of prayer stations that invite the congregation to enter into Jesus’ last night with his disciples. The stations represent Jesus’ actions that evening: foot washing, confession, prayer and celebration of Holy Communion. The service concludes in the sanctuary with the solemn stripping of the altar, a service combining silence, singing, and movement, and is especially designed to be accessible to all ages.

FRIDAY, APRIL 19 - GOOD FRIDAY

3:00 p.m. - “A Service of Darkness” by Dale Wood, brought by the Chancel Choir
7:00 p.m. - Tenebrae Service - a contemplative service around the cross. Come enter Jesus’ passion told through word, song, silence and candlelight.

SATURDAY, APRIL 20 - EASTER VIGIL - 8:00 p.m.

Pastor Dane Wood preaching

One of the earliest celebrations of the church, the Easter Vigil, begins around sundown on Easter Eve and tells the entire story of God’s work of salvation. This is the first service of Easter and includes a service of light, a service of the Word, a service of Baptismal covenant and a service around the Table, or Holy Communion. Grace is partnering with other United Methodist churches in Baltimore in a shared Easter Vigil here at Grace.

APRIL 21 - EASTER SUNDAY - 10:00 a.m.

(Because of the Easter Vigil the night before, we will have only one service at 10:00 a.m.)

APRIL 28 - A CELEBRATION OF SERVICE

Like last year, we will dedicate this Sunday to a variety of service projects throughout the church.

The morning’s schedule will be:

9:30 a.m. - Worship in the sanctuary

10:00-11:30 a.m. - Service Projects - a series of ways to serve those in need in Baltimore and around the world.
A Pastoral Letter from Rev. McCullough in light of General Conference 2019

Dear Members and Friends of Grace Church,

When the General Conference of the United Methodist Church met last month in St. Louis, MO, their deliberations focused upon the church's stances pertaining to homosexuality. Our current Book of Discipline states that "homosexuality is incompatible with Christian teaching" and prohibits same-sex weddings from being held in United Methodist Churches or being officiated by United Methodist clergy, as well as prohibiting the ordination of practicing homosexual persons. Grace, as a Reconciling congregation, joined others across our denomination who were working and hoping to reverse these stances and move into a more open and inclusive church. On the conference's last day, delegates approved what is known as the Traditional Plan, which affirms the existing language and stances, and adds stricter accountability standards. Delegates also adopted a "gracious exit" plan for churches wishing to leave the denomination. If upheld, the Traditional plan would go into effect in 2020.

As the Lead Pastor of Grace, I first want to affirm Grace’s commitment to be a church that welcomes all. Everyone is welcome into the life of Grace, with all of who you are. I know the General Conference has caused ripples of pain, confusion, grief, and anger through our congregation, the larger community, and the denomination. If you have been hurt by this decision or experienced a sense of exclusion from the life of the church, know that you are seen, wanted, and loved at Grace, always. Your heartache is shared by many. Furthermore, Grace is a Reconciling congregation, participating in a larger network of efforts to bring about the full inclusion of our LGBTQ brothers and sisters in the church’s life and ministry. We will persist in our dreams and efforts towards God’s kingdom of justice and love.

General Conference delegates have asked the Judicial Council, which is the “Supreme Court” of the United Methodist Church, for a declaratory ruling on the constitutionality of the Traditional Plan. Parts of the Traditional Plan were previously ruled unconstitutional. Amendments were added to the plan during General Conference. The Judicial Council will consider the Traditional Plan as passed when it meets April 23 - 26, 2019. A ruling is expected during their meeting. As I shared with the Church Council at its March meeting, I am asking Grace to hold steady until the Judicial Council ruling has been made.

As we hold steady, though, know that conversations continue about Grace’s witness to God’s love, Grace’s ministry to all, and the future of the church. I, along with Pastor Dane, am in conversation with clergy colleagues, sister churches, ministry partners, and denominational leaders. The Church Council at Grace discussed General Conference’s decision at its March meeting, and is poised to continue our conversation and discernment when we meet next on April 30th. I commit to you that we will keep the congregation informed as the conversations unfold, so that we may discern God’s guiding spirit together. And I invite your prayers during this pivotal time. Pray for each other, for those who are especially hurt by this decision, for the congregation and ministries of Grace, for Christ’s church, and for how God might work in and through us in the days ahead.

Grace and peace,

Rev. Amy P. McCullough
Music at Grace Concert Series

Bach in Baltimore

Sunday, April 7th 4:00 p.m.
“A Spring Fete” Cantata 49 and 84 along with Handel’s Organ Concerto, Op. 4, No. 4
under the direction of T. Herbert Dimmock
Chris Schroeder, organ
tickets: www.bachinbaltimore.org

Good Friday - April 19th
3:00 p.m.
The Chancel Choir will present the moving and reflective Choral Meditation A Service of Darkness by Dale Wood.
This work is based on the seven last words of Christ and is an adaptation of the ancient Tenebrae service. The word Tenebrae comes from the Latin meaning darkness. The Tenebrae is an ancient Christian Good Friday service that makes use of gradually diminishing light through the extinguishing of candles to symbolize the events of that week from the triumphant Palm Sunday entry through Jesus’ burial. This increasing darkness symbolizes the approaching darkness of Jesus’ death and of hopelessness in the world without God. The service concludes in darkness, sometimes with a final candle, the Christ candle, carried out of the sanctuary symbolizing the death of Jesus. The worshipers then leave in silence to ponder the impact of Christ’s death and await the coming Resurrection. The service will feature prayers and a congregational hymn. Please join us as we reflect on Christ’s crucifixion on our journey toward Easter.

PALM SUNDAY
APRIL 14th
Join us in our celebratory Palm Sunday worship as the Youth and Sunday School Children’s Choirs lead us in worship that morning at 10 a.m.!

CELEBRATION OF CHRIST’S RESURRECTION
Easter Sunday
April 21st
Join us at our 10:00 a.m. worship service as the Chancel Choir, accompanied by organ, brass and timpani lead us in worship!
Easter EGGstravaganza

Palm Sunday, April 14 at 11:15 a.m

An Egg Hunt will be held for children and toddlers through Grade 3

If you’d like to bring your own basket, please do so!

Parents, please plan to hunt for eggs with your children.

A Scavenger Hunt will be held for older children, Grade 4 and higher.

We hope your family will join us for this wonderful event to celebrate the Easter season. We are in need of adult volunteers for the morning. Please indicate if you can assist or contact the Church Office - 410-433-6650.

Yes! My child(ren) would like to participate in the Easter Eggstravaganza.

___ My child is between the ages of 0 and 4
___ My child is between the ages of 5 years and 3rd grade
___ My child is in 4th grade or above.

Child(ren) names: ________________________________

I can volunteer that day. Name ________________________

Phone or email _________________________________

Please RSVP by Sunday, April 7 so that we will have enough eggs and activities for all.

Easter Lilies and Memorials

What more appropriate time than Easter to remember those who are special to us. You can do this by placing a lily in the Chancel for Easter Sunday services or by contributing to the special music for that morning.

Please return the order form to the church office with your check no later than Wednesday, April 10. Thank you.

EASTER LILIES
I/We wish to order ___ lily(ies) at $12.00 each (total $_______)

in honor of ______________________________________________________

in memory of ____________________________________________________

EASTER MUSIC
I/We wish to make a gift of $_______ to Easter Music

in honor of ______________________________________________________

in memory of ____________________________________________________

NAME: _________________________________________________________ Envelope No: _________

(Please print name as you wish it to appear in bulletin)
Warmest wishes to those of our Grace family celebrating birthdays in April:

1. Thomas E. Green, Jr.
2. Omar Calderon, Elise DeFilippis, Zachary Green
3. Mary Frances Manning, Ryan Riddle
4. Eva Metz, Mary T. White
5. Wonwoo Lee
6. Josefina Mian, Nila Murray, Bruce S. Rice
7. Diana McGraw
8. Hayes Hudkins, Missy Laytham
9. Robin Benfer
10. Georgia Barnes, Quinn Bathory-Gimigliano, Riley Bathory-Gimigliano, Leah Sukri
11. Brian Pflaum, Allegra Schmidt
12. Sheldon Lebowitz, Lely Yanega
13. Nancy S. Blackwater, Todd Canter, Lindsay Cheek
14. Maggie Grandsire, Peggy Thorne, William Wilkerson
15. Dick Fulton
16. Jeffrey Keenan, Earline Patenaude, Wilma Starkey
17. Thomas A. Green, Leigh Howe, Margot Wittich
18. Campbell Barnes, Marin Heath, Sara Nichols, Ken Rhoad, Bryce Schmidt
19. Amy G. Pflaum, Kate Scott
20. Bob McIntyre
21. Caroline Breeden
22. Elisabeth Dahl (Davis), Emily Riddle, Hayden White

Book Drive for Reading Partners

A Lenten Mission opportunity

Grace Church members volunteer each week through the Reading Partners program at Dallas Nicholas Sr. Elementary School. The program needs early and middle reader books for its students as each student is offered regular opportunities to take a book home to read. During Lent, there is a special box in the glass entryway to receive your donations. Should you have any questions, please contact Maureen Danz - maur.danz@verizon.net.

On February 25, Chris Schroeder, Grace’s Minister of Music and Organist, wrote on Facebook. “I enjoyed presenting an organ demo to some young people at Grace Church’s Preschool this morning! It’s always great when you can show youngsters the pipe organ up close and personal!”

Grace Book Club

The book for April 8th is Saturday Evening Girls Club by Jane Healy

Join the discussion at 7:00 p.m. in the Parlor.

Within the Family at Grace

BIRTHS

Sara Grace Van Lenten
new daughter of Celia and Craig Van Lenten
granddaughter of Sara Nichols
niece of Susanna N. Sowells and Drew Landgren
March 7, 2019

Mackenzie Mae Cook
parents: Matthew and Amanda Cook
grandparents: Ken and Juliana Eicher Cook
great grandfather: Bruce Eicher
aunt and uncle: Diane and David Eicher
January 31, 2019
We give because we care

The Mission-Outreach Committee thanks you for your continued giving and mission-focused mindset. Thanks to your generosity as well as legacy endowments, the committee was able to give more than $34,000 in 2018. The following organizations and ministries were supported through gifts from Grace last year.

- **Curamericas** - “Curamericas partners with communities abroad to save the lives of mothers and children by providing health services and education.” Founded by our own Henry Perry.
- **Hampden Family Center** - "Provides programs and support services for all who live, learn and work in the Hampden community.”
- **Heart’s Place Services** - Provides low cost housing, weekend food, and coats for families with children in Baltimore.

- **International Rescue Committee** - Provides Refugee services and placement in Baltimore and worldwide.
- **Manna House** - "Manna House provides the homeless and poor of Baltimore City with the assistance and support to move toward independence and stability. We help transform people’s lives by feeding them first.”
- **Susanna Wesley House** - The mission of the Susanna Wesley House is to assist women in need and their dependent children; to provide a safe, clean home; and to ensure a viable program for the residents to obtain independent living.
- **The Samaritan Community** - Provides assistance to meet the needs of families and individuals who are in crisis and wish to improve their lives in Baltimore.

Coming again this summer!

We are excited to announce that our evening meal ministry will be returning this summer. We will be serving meals again in the Wilson Park North neighborhood, and this time we are partnering with Wilson Park Christian Community Church, located on York Road. We’ll be serving dinner from that church each weekday evening, beginning the week of June 17 and continuing through August 31. Look for details in the weeks ahead.

Nine youth and three adults will be traveling to Harrisburg, PA to participate in a Youth Works Mission Trip June 16-21. We will be partnering with other youth groups from around the area. We will have the opportunity to serve with local children’s programs, community gardens and senior care facilities. Other activities will include assisting in local neighborhood associations with small home repair, community beautification and cleanup projects.
A Blessing - I
On the Sunday before General Conference, we prayed for the United Methodist Church and then you offered a prayer and blessing over me as I prepared to serve as a witness to and volunteer at the conference in St. Louis. By now you are aware of the actions taken by the General Conference. What you might not be aware of is the hurt and harm that was done not only to the LGBTQI community but also to the United Methodist Church here in the United States. We now have to wait to see what the future holds for the United Methodist Church.

While I have now been to four General Conferences, this one was very different from our normal conferences held every four years which deal with the church business and mission. This special conference was called to deal with the church’s position on homosexuality. That made it very personal for me and to so many others who were attending.

During my time there, it was your prayer and blessing that helped me through the hurtful debates and actions. I give thanks for Grace Church and to so many of you who reached out to me while in St. Louis. How thankful I am to be part of a congregation that expresses love to all. That is not the case for so many others who I worked with in St. Louis. I want to thank you, my faith community, here at Grace for your acceptance of me and the many other LGBTQ persons and families in our congregation. You are a blessing to us all.

– George Kahl

A Blessing - II
Pastor Amy & Dane,

When Carl and I decided we wanted to find a church family to join we were immediately attracted to Grace because of the outward display of acceptance that the simple rainbow flames represented on the front sign. I’m not sure I can put into words how much this small symbol means to me. Of course seeing rainbow flags on store fronts, car bumpers, above city hall or even splashed across the white house is a pretty amazing feeling. But seeing this symbol on the main sign of a church, above the door, and pinned on the chests of ushers and greeters, especially in a place known for rejection and judgment of our community, bring a level of joy and peace that I can explain.

All that said, it wasn’t until this past Sunday’s service that I felt the complete and unconditional love that Grace has for the LGBT community and to the same degree, our family. I know a lot of thought and prayer probably went into that service and I want to make sure you know just how much I appreciated it. I’m not sure how well I was able to hide it but I was moved emotionally more than I ever have been before at church. In particular the two songs chosen for communion and the final song were extremely powerful and moving. I’m having a hard time putting into words what hearing them sung by Christians, in a church, meant to me but just know it was one of the most moving experiences of my life.

Please pass along my sincerest appreciation to all who had a part in planning that service. Thank you both for your courageous leadership. I’m comforted to know that whatever happens to the United Methodist Church at large, Grace will remain a place where God’s love surrounds our family.

- Justin Graves

A DAY OF SERVICE - 2018
These photos are from last year, but watch for details for our next Celebration of Service on Sunday, April 18 beginning with worship at a single service at 9:30 a.m. and several service projects to choose from in the 10:00-11:30 a.m. time.

GEDCO needs food donations
We have received a “GEDCO Cares” food pantry alert! Their shelves are particularly low in canned tuna and canned fruit. Donations may be delivered to 5502 York Road, Baltimore, MD 21212 behind St. Mary of the Assumption Catholic Church. But all non-perishable food items are welcome.


* * *

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- Justin Graves
SOCIAL JUSTICE @ GRACE

Last year the Social Justice Committee made the decision to support a refugee family. We contacted the International Rescue Committee and a presentation was made to the congregation. Subsequently, volunteers came forward for training and an extensive security check. Months passed before a family was assigned to our two teams. Members of Team 1 are Priscilla Newton, Mirlene Perry, Claire Greenhouse and Wayne Schmidt, and Team 2 are Holly Troyer, Diane VanSciver, Kimmy and Mike Barron and Carl Hickey.

The IRC works to bring refugees into this country and to assist them in their resettlement. These refugees had been displaced from their homes. They have endured hardships that few of us would ever know and they lived in refugee camps until their were selected to come to the U.S. They come legally and they sign a promissory note to pay back the cost of their transportation. Once in the U.S. they are given support by the IRC for at least 8 months. They are placed in affordable housing, assisted in gaining employment, offered some classes in English and are helped as they learn new resources and a new culture.

This is where the Family Mentor program becomes so valuable. The 3 basis goals are helping with the English language, socialization and community integration. The ultimate goal is to achieve self-sufficiency. Someone on the team meets on a weekly basis with the family. A translator is provided for the first “get to know you” session and then the teams are on their own.

Let me tell you about Team 1’s family. They are from the Congo and they speak Swahili. We do not know why they chose to leave the Congo nor do we know if they left family behind. We cannot ask about their past. We only know that it was not good. We were told that our family consisted of parents aged 39 and 35 and 6 children aged 2-15. Upon our first visit in December we were surprised to find that their 7th baby, Abraham, had been born here in Baltimore.

The father had been a tailor but is now working as a janitor. Their small apartment is in southeast Baltimore and he takes 4 buses to work the night shift at UMBC for $11/hour. In these few short months we have bonded. The family trusts us and they look to us for guidance and for visits. We have helped them to establish a checking account; assisted them in making a budget; provided winter coats and heavy clothing and like “doting” grandparents take pleasure in giving small treats to the children.

As difficult as it is to communicate with each other, we have learned that there is no language barrier when it comes to respect, trust, caring, kindness and, most importantly, love. How fortunate we are to have this experience in helping this special family.

– Claire Greenhouse

(A report Claire made during the Hymn Festival: The Peaceable Kingdom, on February 17, 2019)

Don’t be confused! This is a photo from 2018, but it’s not too early to start thinking about

GRACE’S ANNUAL GALA & AUCTION
benefitting the Backpack Ministry. The committee is already planning this year’s event scheduled for Saturday, May 4.

Planning and setting up for this event is a challenge made easier with the help of many. If you would like to join the planning committee or assist with the set up on the day of the event, please contact Sue Williams at benwillies@hotmail.com or the church office.

You can also help by donating to the auction! Have extra gift cards you aren’t going to use? Donate them to the auction. Do you have a special skill or expertise? Consider offering a lesson as an auction item.

One small step for your kids... one giant leap for God’s Kingdom! Blast off with the first VBS to land on Mars! Cokesbury’s To Mars and Beyond will help kids discover the wonders of God’s universe. They’ll become Voyagers on a journey through space, exploring where God’s power can take them. Beginning in your Assembly area - an outpost on Mars - they’ll lift off to distant planets on special missions to collect power sources. Along the way, they’ll learn how God walked with heroes of the Bible, and that God is always with them, too. Add to the adventure with out-of-this-world fun, learning, and timeless Bible stories that inspire kids to give glory to God, who is able to do far beyond all that we could ask for or imagine! Wildlife Adventures will return as part of the VBS program! Each day a different animal shares in the Bible experience. Kids have the opportunity to be up close and personal with some of God’s amazing creatures.

JUNE 24-28, 2019 9:00-12 noon
Children ages 3 and older extended day 12 noon to 4:00 for additional cost

trisha@graceunitedmethodist.org
BSA “Second Fiddle Shoppes”

featuring decorative furnishings
and decor from previous SYMPHONY DESIGNER SHOW HOUSES plus...

Local Crafters - handmade jewelry, candles, hand-crafted chocolates, accessories & more...

Bargains Galore in the ENCORE SHOP! “Nearly new” household items, jewelry, toys...

Food - baked goods, pizza, snacks, beverages...

“Pop-up Concert” presented by BSO musicians

Saturday, May 18, 2019
10 AM - 4 PM
Grace United Methodist Church
$2.00 donation at the door
Door prizes every hour!

The Baltimore Symphony Associates (BSA), the volunteer arm of the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra (BSO) will be holding this one-day fundraiser at Grace. Everyone is invited! The BSA supports the educational programs of the BSO such as mid-week concerts for about 55,000 Baltimore area school students and the famous OrchKids program.

Vacation Theatre School

August 19-23, 2019
Children ages 5 years and older
9 AM - 3 PM
Throughout the week we will prepare to put on a play for Friday night! We will work on learning lines, painting and setting the stage, practicing with microphones, and everything that goes on behind the scenes to put on a play, all with time for theatre games! Friday night the play starts at 6:30 p.m. Children will stay all day to prepare.

There will be a potluck dinner before the play for the families.

Questions? Please contact Trisha Wetzelberger or Samantha Southern
trisha@graceunitedmethodist.org
samantha.southern@gmail.com