

APRIL 2021

GRACE NOTES



No. 4pekingrace.org

highlights

April 2021

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And God said, "Let the earth sprout vegetation, plants yielding seed, and fruit trees bearing fruit in which is their seed, each according to its kind, on the earth." And it was so.

Genesis 1:11

PASTOR'S CORNER

Thoughts, dreams and ramblings of someone who just wants to connect you to Jesus



We begin April with Easter, the resurrection of Christ. We proclaim that death does not win. We proclaim that sins are forgiven. We proclaim that you might actually fully live this life that God created for you, now!

This is the essence of what we are doing as the church every day. We are here to bring that new life that we have found in Jesus to everyone. We as the church are starting to feel that in how we are beginning to re-open. We are seeing many of you begin to feel free from the shackles of COVID restrictions and experience hope for new life as you are vaccinated. It is an interesting mirror for us; the season we have had has felt so heavy and as we are getting vaccinated, we are seeing the freedom truly felt. This mirror is a great introduction conversation for us as Christians to share the way we have felt about the weight of our sins holding us captive and the freedom of Jesus opening our lives again.

We have the greatest of opportunities here. The church has a moment in time when the common desires, common language and common experiences of the world around us mirror in a tangible way the very life-giving message of Christ that we are compelled to share.

As we continue to move into the life before us, may we choose to be intentional about sharing boldly with a world that is looking for the hope we can offer them in Christ.

Peace + Grace,
Pastor Eric



CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

Emmy Thies

Director of Children & Family Ministry

We have been blessed with beautiful weather for UNITEkids to be able to get outside and play. AND that opportunity of being outside has made us more visible to the neighbors of Grace UMC – and neighborhood kids have started joining us! Please be praying for UNITEkids to grow throughout the neighborhood, bringing Jesus to the children and families.



A game of freeze tag on the lawn, and the kids LOVE the merry-go-round! It was such a joy to watch the kids break outside to the first few nights of nice weather. It was a sense of freedom. Being in God's creation pulls us closer to Him and reminds us to be grateful for the goodness He places around us.

We are continuing through the books of the Bible and talking about generations of people – in the Bible and in our own lives. We've talked about Adam and Eve, Noah, Joshua, Elijah, and King David, and we've emphasized how Jesus is our Forever King.

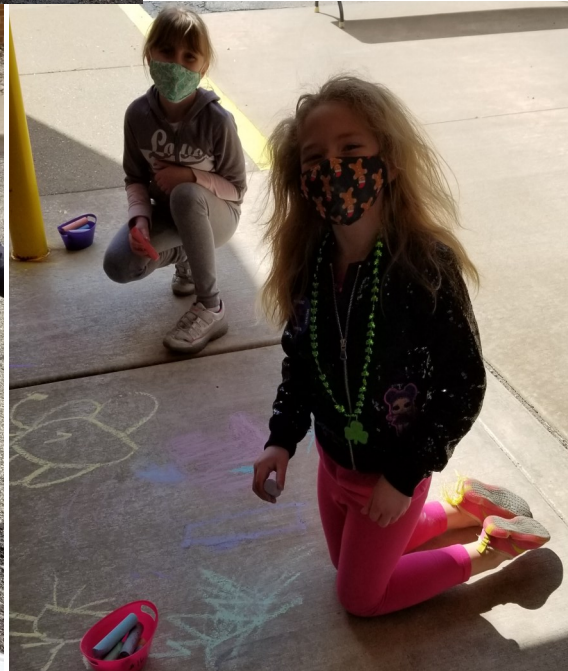
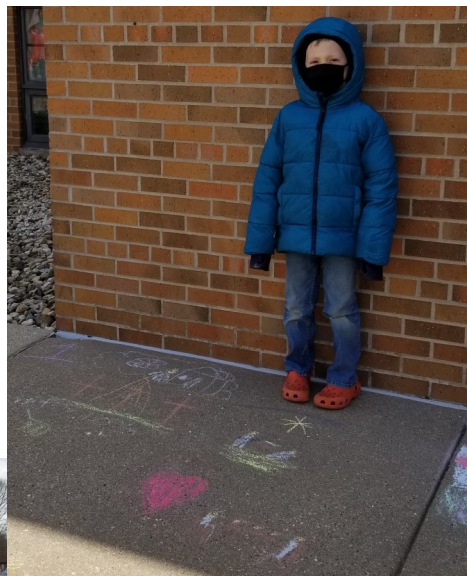


Tayauh, Tinley, and Brantly helped deliver Sunday Family Dinners in the drive-through

As we transition to in-person lessons at Children's Church, Sunday Family Dinners will be phasing out. The dinners and lessons have been a blessing to many families. Thank you to those who have donated towards purchasing groceries! And thank you to the volunteers that have helped with shopping, cooking, and clean-up.

My future goal is to provide a monthly in-person Sunday Family Dinner and activity. Once capacity limits and increased vaccination rates allow, I'd love to see the kids and families come together to have big family-style meals!

On Saturday, March 27, our youth group joined with the youth from First Methodist Church for an Easter Chalk Art Party. Here are a few of their masterpieces:



The new Pekin Outreach Center at 515 Elizabeth Street has been open for one full month: nine hours a day and seven days a week; three daily shifts manned by at least six dedicated volunteers. This has been a month of hard work, new experiences, and awesome blessings.

Between Monday, February 8th and Monday, March 8th, we had 232 visits from guests needing some form of assistance. Most of these were homeless, but all were made to feel at home.

The Center is a place where food is plentiful. There are snacks on all of the tables. Our friends bring crockpots of soup and hot meals to share. We have had donations of pizzas as well as spaghetti, salad and bread. In this one month, 257 meals have been served to our hungry clients. This count does not even include take-out meals, snack pack bags, or extra food which was bagged up for guests to take home.

In thirty days, our washer and dryer laundered 87 loads of clothes, blankets, and sheets that belong to our homeless clients. Additionally, these appliances washed many more loads of the shelter's towels. These towels were used by our grateful guests, who took a total of 79 showers. For those of you who have not yet worked a shift, let me tell you a secret. When we give our guests the opportunity to have full bellies, clean bodies and clean clothes, we give them a very good gift. Most of them are grateful and show their appreciation with respect for our workers and for our facility.

Although our first agency partner did not provide services until the middle of the month, we now have 4 agencies using our Counsel office. Last week, on two of the days, we had two different social service providers assisting our clients. Heartland Healthcare, Phoenix, City of Pekin Community Outreach and Salvation Army are partnering with Pekin Community Center. Together, our intention is to aid and assist needy clients. We have, thus far, provided referrals and assistance to 31 guests. Of those people, 4 received medical appointments and prescriptions for needed medicines. Two of our homeless guests have received COVID tests and vaccines. One of those has been accepted into the RTC shelter. During the cold nights of February, we worked with other agencies to find shelter for several of the homeless living outside. For those still unsheltered, we provided overnight hotel stays for a few. Additionally, we provided 161 supplies, from sleeping bags and propane tanks, to hats, gloves and boots.

In the last 30 days, the Pekin Outreach Center has made new friends almost daily. Due to the kindness of one donor, an airline ticket provided transportation home for one of these friends. Our guest just needed a hand up. By giving that to him, he was able to get home to family and a job in North Carolina. Those volunteers who served and talked with this client, will remember his gratitude and respect for our facility. Another guest was hiking from up North, down to Alabama. He stayed for a short time in Pekin. We offered him meals, showers, clean clothes, and a place to rest. He was always appreciative, polite, and a pleasure to have in the shelter. Several women have come through our doors, seeking assistance, food and rest. Couples living in tents have been here as well. These stories are shared with you to remind us all what our purpose is.

Homelessness comes in all forms. Poverty affects our community in so many ways. Pekin Outreach Initiative has a mission to fight poverty and prevent homelessness. We are here to help: from hot food to haircuts and from counseling to camping equipment. The Pekin Outreach Center has opened our doors to the needy, the homeless and those who seek shelter. Thanks to all of you, we can stay open and continue to help our community.



Hi! My name is Carla Jacobson. I will be helping in the office here at Grace Church on Tuesdays and Thursdays. I am excited to be a part of the office team! I grew up in this church, and my mother worked in the office for many years. I noticed some of her handwriting on different folders in the office. In fact, I still have the office number memorized from when I would need to call her when I was locked out of the house. I will not tell you how many times that happened. I was married in this church 25 years ago to my husband, Thomas Jacobson. We have two grown children, Brennan and Joseph. My boys were both baptized in this church. I like to garden and read. I am looking forward to being a connection and resource for the church, and my prayer is that God will use me. I have a heart to connect people to where they can use their talents to serve God. Give me a call sometime and tell me about your gifts.

Grace UMC College Scholarships

Applications for Grace United Methodist Scholarships are available online or can be picked up in the church office. Deadline for the application to be returned to the church office is May 15, 2021. No late submissions will be accepted.

UMW still has some glazed pecans available at \$12 per bag.

Altar flowers for April:

April 11—In honor of Zachary's 9th birthday; given by Brian, Jill and Kendall Garman

If you wish to provide altar flowers at any time, please call Linda Garman at 387-2924 (home) or 267-1942 (cell).



Please consider letting the office staff know if you have received your COVID vaccination.

We will never require anyone to tell us, but knowing that information can help us safely expand the reach our church can offer for onsite worship. For example, if our worship service is limited to 50 people, we can expand to 70 if we know 20 of the original 50 have been vaccinated.

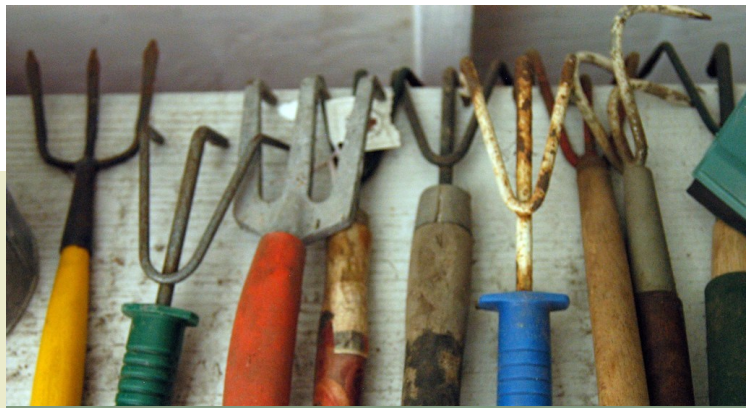
APRIL BIRTHDAYS

NAME	DATE	NAME	DATE
Scott Kriegsman	1	Garrett Williamson	16
Nick Bruns	1	Mattie Meron	16
Ryan Cakora	2	Lydia Collins	16
Justin Holder	2	Karson Orrick	16
Robert Irby	2	Diane Aupperle	16
Jack Meron	3	Zed Marsden	17
John Beard	4	Ray Long	17
Alicia Marsden	5	Sam Kriegsman	17
Ryan Hinrichsen	5	Charlie Hanley	18
Mariah Teaney	5	Delaney Sciortino	18
Maegen Miller	5	Anna Evans	19
Brian Towne	7	Michael West	19
Joanna Carroll	7	Norma Rupp	19
Sawyer Myers	7	Jill Crouch	19
Selah Swingle	8	Quinn Angelo	20
Chuck Shields	8	Grant Bresnahan	20
Amanda Allsup	8	Drew Hicks	21
Zachary Garman	9	Jaclyn Cakora	22
Diane Ingram	10	Sarah Butler	22
Judy Gordon	10	Avery Pearson	23
Rachel Doan	11	DJ Hicks	23
Jennifer Otey	11	Wilda Carlton	23
Sam Neff	11	Carol Groch	24
Scott Taylor	12	Brennan Jacobson	24
Angela Hannan	12	Kendra Swisher	25
Peggy Golden	13	Dustin Cather	27
Nancy Spencer	13	Will Strickler	28
Sterling Burks	14	Sam Strickler	28
Matt Bloom	15	Madeline West	29
Richard Kelso	15	Karissa Graham	29
Carol Gustoff	15	David Johnson	30

Connect!

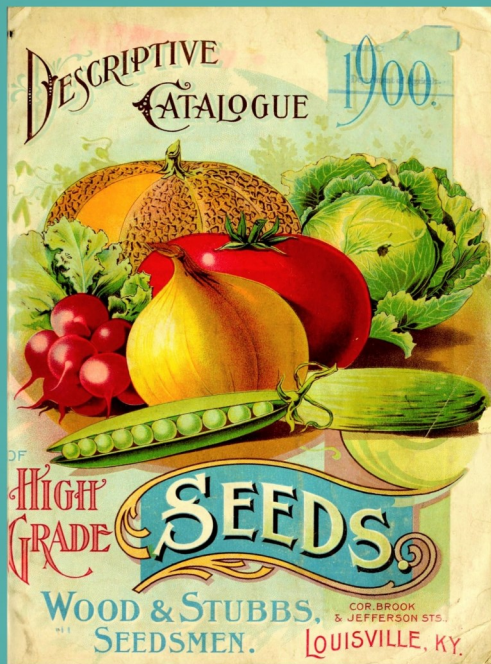
601 N. 4th St.
Pekin, IL
3010-347-7131
secretary@pekingrace.org
pekingrace.org

Worship Times
Saturdays 5:30p
Sundays 9:00a & 11:00a



Prayer Requests

Lois Eertmoed
Jane Evans
Tony Fulk, son-in-law of Kathy and Rick Manz
Jack and Margarete Hall
Barb and Duane Hill
Joyce Hill
The Family of Dave Kelly on his passing
Rev. Tom Neuffer-Emswiler and Sharon Neuffer-Emswiler
Gloria Ranney
Brittany Sharp
Marie Zaayenga



Thursday, April 15
Drive-through Food Pantry at 4:00 PM

Saturday, April 24
Drive-through Food Giveaway, 11:00AM—Noon

Saturday, May 15
Deadline for Grace UMC Scholarship Applications

