

APRIL 2022

GRACE NOTES

No. 4 pekingrace.org



highlights

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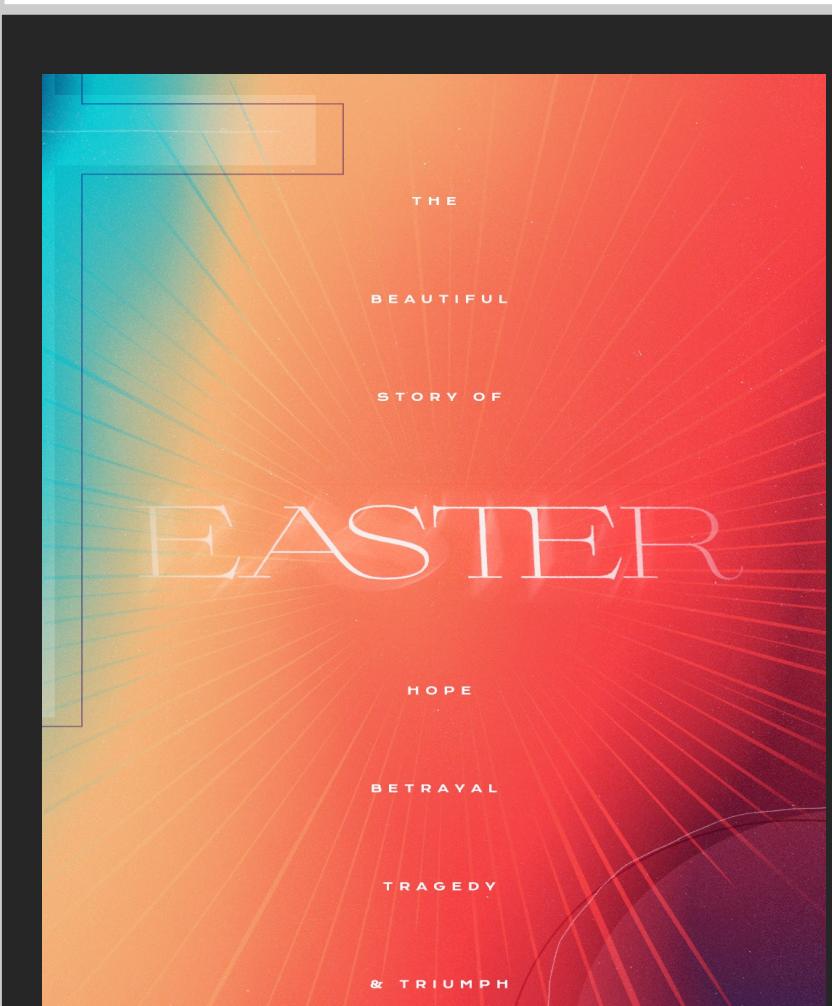
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PASTOR'S CORNER

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



Resurrection is at hand!

Easter is upon us in just a couple weeks. Easter is the penultimate Sunday of worship for those of us who follow the message of Jesus. This is the day we honor that Jesus overcame the powers of sin and death. This is the day that we proclaim life in the face of death. This is the day...

This is the day that the church wakes from the fear of that Dark Friday/Saturday. As Jesus followers were afraid of the unknown, Jesus met his followers during their fear and doubt. Jesus allowed them to grow in that space. Jesus transformed that fear and doubt into something powerful, redeeming, and hopeful for those of us in faith today.

Easter is the day that the excluded met the profound. The women who ran to the tomb were likely those who were not really accepted in their communities. The women were not allowed to be the “disciples” of Jesus, and yet they would be the ones who went to anoint his body. They were likely rejected in many ways, but they were met with the most profound acceptance one could hope for in Jesus. How, too, are we to bring acceptance to the people around us with the presence of Jesus.

Lastly, Easter is a passive day for many that can lead to the surprising gift of life that Jesus offers. Both in Jesus’ life, and in his death, people who didn’t plan on being changed by Jesus would be. The criminal who acknowledged Jesus would understand his power and his love by the end of the day. How many of us need to be surprised by the presence of Jesus during our trials? If that is you, may Jesus do something so profound in your life that you cannot help but proclaim him boldly at any risk.

Easter is upon us... It brings with it a message of life. May you know that message well and share it abundantly.

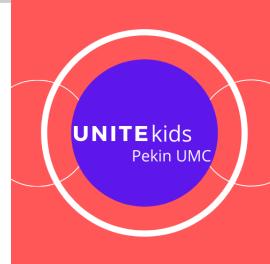
A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Eric Swanson".

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

Emmy Thies
Director of Children & Family Ministry

UNITEkids will move locations for April and May.

We will meet at:
Pekin First United Methodist Church,
1315 Court St, Pekin



Weds, April 6th and 20th – UNITEkids at Pekin First from 5:30PM-6:30 PM

UNITEkids has a praise report – we are GROWING! Children's Ministry has been blessed with getting to know new families and kids in the last 3 months. That means MORE children are gathering to pray together, learn about Jesus, and get to know one another. Hallelujah!



All throughout **March**, the kids focused on cooperation. We talked about how the Body of Christ relies on the cooperation of many different people, with different gifts and interests. The kids also played games that strengthened cooperation and communication skills.

March Memory Verse: Two people are better than one. They can help each other in everything they do. Ecclesiastes 4:9 NIV



UNITEkids

Easter Egg Hunt

**Saturday, April 16th
at Grace UMC, 601 N. 4th, Pekin**

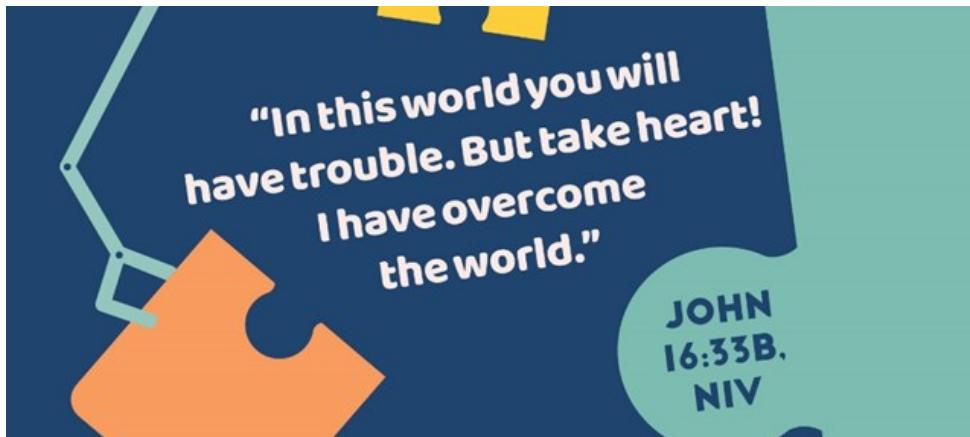
7:30 p.m. Nursery-Preschool Egg Hunt

**8:00 p.m. K-5th Grade *Glow-in-the-Dark*
Egg Hunt**

In **April**, UNITEkids will focus on Holy Week and learn about what each day of Holy Week was like for Jesus. Then, UNITEkids will end Holy Saturday (Black Saturday) with a celebration! Please join us for a glow-in-the-dark egg hunt at night.

Out of the darkness of Holy Saturday, came the light of resurrection on Easter Sunday!

**April Memory
Verse**





Upcoming Calendar for UNITEkids

- Wednesday, April 6,** UNITEkids moves program to First for remaining nights, 5:30PM-6:30PM
- Sunday, April 10,** Palm Sunday, (*kids can take home a palm branch after service*)
- Wednesday, April 13** UNITEkids at First 5:30PM-6:30PM
- Wednesday, April 13,** No UNITEkids due to Spring Break
- Saturday, April 16,** Easter Egg Hunt by age groups, at GUMC,
7:30PM Nursery-Preschool Egg Hunt
8:00PM K-5th Glow-in-the Dark Egg Hunt
- Sunday, April 17:** Children's Church at 9:00AM Worship Service
- Sunday, April 17,** Easter Services (*Easter Worship Bags will be available for use at all Easter Services*)
- Wednesday, April 20** UNITEkids at First 5:30PM-6:30PM
- Wednesday, April 27,** No UNITEkids
- Wednesday, May 25,** Last UNITEkids of this school year, 5:30PM-6:30 PM

Keep watching the *UNITEkids Pekin UMC group*
on Facebook for Summer Activities!



There is still time, if your family would like to "catch-up" with Miss Emmy, please email her at ethies@pekinfirst.org to set a date/time to meet at McDonald's and just hangout! She would love for the whole family to come, and the meal is paid for.

Please be in prayer for Children's Ministry. If you would like to get involved, email Emmy at ethies@pekingrace.org!

Upcoming Events & Dates for Radical

Fundraisers/Activities for Youth

- Saturday, April 2**, Prepare Jumer's Rolls, 8am-2PM
- April 3**, Sell Jumer's Rolls, 9AM-11AM.
- May 15, Pancake Breakfast** In between services 10AM –12PM
- May Spring Retreat** to East Bay Camp (More info to come)
- July 8-16th, Mission Trip** to Waco, TX



***Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation;
the old has gone, the new has come!
2 Corinthians 5:17***

Church News

United Methodist Women

United Methodist Women is now United Women in Faith! The move is part of a refreshing of the organization that includes a new logo and an array of new and improved programs to nurture current members and welcome new women to join to put their love in action on behalf of women, children, and youth.

The organization announced the new operation name in the March-April edition of **Response**, its bimonthly magazine for members, and launched the rebrand with a new website at www.uwfaith.org Thursday.

The new programs are fruits of research conducted over the past five years with more than 24,000 United Methodists and women of other Christian traditions participating in the surveys, focus groups and interviews. This input informed the prayerful discernment of staff and elected leaders.
Copied from UMW Newsletter

Repair Work

Our church leadership board asked for clarifications and additional information for the bids that came in. We are currently waiting for the adjustments to be made and the bids to be returned.

Sermon Series

We will be continuing the series called Breaking Open. It is a six part series that takes us on the journey of lent and prepares us for Easter.

Sermon Series: Let Go

Based on the Book, **Let Go** by Rev. Matt Miofsky, we will be using the exodus story as a roadmap for how change looks when you are following God's lead, learning how to manage the uncertainty and fear often caused by change. We will be using faith to successfully transition during times of change, to be the person they were created to become and live the life they were created to live.

Thank you!

Dear Grace UMC,

Thank you so much for being the absolute best gathering space we could ever imagine for the first annual Community Prayer Breakfast. From start to finish, you were so easy to work with and went above and beyond. Thank you for everything! Your thoughtfulness is very much appreciated.

With Gratitude,
Pekin Chamber

Volunteer Opportunities

Call the office if you are interested 309-347-7131 in ministries and serving at the church. Or send an email to secretary@pekingrace.org. The office will get you connected.

College Students

If you would like to receive the **Upper Room** during the school year, please make sure the office has your address and let them know you would like to be included in the Upper Room mailing. We would be honored to continue to be a part of your faith development by sending these to you as you are away at school.

Townhall Meeting

The church will be holding a townhall meeting on April 24 in between services, approximately 10:15AM-11AM. It will be held in the Gary Ford Family Life Center. This is a chance to become informed and to raise any questions you may have. You will also be able to meet the board members. We thank them for their willingness to serve Grace Church and pray that God will bless them in their ministries here and in the world. They are doing the hard work of envisioning how the governing body of Grace Church will work in the future. Thank you! Thank you! Thank you!



Church News

Easter Lilies

You may now sign-up to sponsor an Easter Lily. We no longer use real flowers as a courtesy to those who have allergies. We still would like to be able to honor those special people in our lives. If you would like to sponsor a lily you may email the secretary and let her know or use the form provided in the foyer and give to the church office. The cost to sponsor a lily is \$10. You may specify which church program you would like the money to go towards. (For instance youth, UNITEkids, food pantry, or general fund just to name a few.) Flowers will be displayed in the sanctuary starting April 22. A screen will be created for the sanctuary and the hospitality area listing who the Lilies are honoring this year.

Link to form

<https://pekingrace.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/Easter-Lilies-Form-1.pdf>

THE CUT-OFF DATE FOR SPONSORING IS MONDAY, APRIL 10TH.

Easter Cantata

The Easter Cantata will be a continuing celebration after Easter this year. As stated in the publication, *The cantata will retell the days following Christ's resurrection, depicting the instance when Jesus appeared to the disciples.* Please join the 11 AM service on May 1 and enjoy the Cantata, Once Upon a Morning. What a blessing we can hear God's word shared in Song. Hope you can make it!

Grace Country

Grace Country will no longer be leading us in worship in the evenings here at Grace. They feel at this time God is leading them into different ministries. We thank them so much for the times we were able to enjoy these fun evenings. We pray that God will continue to use their amazing talents to the glory of his Kingdom.



Christmas Offering

Part of the offering at Christmas time went to the conference kids. So far the conference has raised 2.2 million dollars in gifts and commitments of the 2.5 million they wanted to raise. Money will be used for The baby Fold, Chaddock, Cunningham Children's Home, Lessie Bates Davis Neighborhood House, and Spero Family Services. They are hoping to raise the remaining amount before the next Annual Conference .

Facebook Prayer Group

Our Church does have a prayer group on-Facebook. It is under Pekin Grace UMC Prayer Group. It is a closed group. This means you have to request to be a part of it. Just to be clear, if you post a prayer on this group, and you want it included in the weekly email, you will need to call the office. These prayer requests are not automatically being shared to the church email.

Basement Labels

To help clear up some confusion with the basement, the office personnel will be using the following labels. Please use these when you would like to reserve an area for your group.

- **Music library and Office:** Jim's office
- **Lower Level 1:** Music Rehearsal Area
- **Lower Level 2 :** UNITEkids Area

Rides

In the event that you are having difficulties and are needing a ride to doctor's appointments or others things, Kathy Towne, our leader for Congregational Care has helped people out in this way.

Susannah Circle

This Circle will be meeting on April 28th at 9:00 in the restaurant at the Highrise building. Circle members need to RSVP by April 21 to Carol Booth to ensure proper set up.

Church News

April Altar Flowers

April 10

Given to celebrate Jack's Heavenly Birthday! by Jane Giddens

April 17

Sponsored Lilies (more info to come)

April 24

In loving Memory of her children
Eric & Rena Faichney by Barb Faichney

Parents and Grandparents

Palm Sunday all kids may take home a palm branch after the each service. Easter Worship Bags will be available for use at all Easter Services. Check the display near the Gary Ford Family Life Center. If it is empty be sure to ask an usher or the information station for help.

Book Club

Book club will meet Tuesday, April 12, at 10:00AM in the library at Pekin Estates. They will discuss the book *The Moonlight School*, by Suzanne Woods Fisher. All are welcome! Come with the book read ready to discuss. If you need more information or have questions, call Sandy 309-241-1411.

Update Contact Information

Please let the office know when your contact information changes. We need addresses, phone numbers, birthdates and emails. We are trying to get all of the data correct in the new system.

Subsplash

Our church is working on migrating over to a new Church data management system, mobile app, streaming, and online giving platform known as Subsplash. We would love it if every person in the church could take some time and download the app from their favorite app store. Log in and create a profile, get connected with our calendar, make prayer requests, find your favorite sermons, and donate all in one space. There will be a video posted on how to do all of this on our church webpage, church Facebook page and YouTube page. If you need some personal assistance with this, just come by the office and we will help you out.



Church Leadership Board (*Meetings scheduled for 4th Thursday of the month*)

Barb Berardi, Chris Booher, Sue Crowell, John Darnell, Alisha Dault, Kyle Harrison, Rich Kriegsman, Amy Wilson, Greg Ranney, and Brian Garman.

The Church Leadership Board has been busy working on designing our Leadership Covenant, 2022 Goals with measurable information, working towards our repair work on the handicap entrance, investigating a potential Solar grant and much more. We know that this is a time for us to lean into the work of knowing ourselves and creating the systems that enable us to grow.

To help us all be as informed and included as possible, we are going to host several Town-Hall meetings. The first one will be April 24th between services in the Family Life Center. These will be 30/45-minute times for a brief sharing of what is going on and time for question and answers.

Please join us for the next Church Leadership board meeting April 28, 2022, 6:00PM-8:00PM.

Quick and Easy guide to UMC denominational division

For most of us who are going about the busy work of being the local church, it can be hard to know what is going on in the international body that is the United Methodist Church. Because it is hard, I am going to endeavor to make a quick guide to what has happened, is happening and what is anticipated in the next two years or so. We are doing this because there is a long-standing division in the denomination that is expressed around issues of human sexuality but in reality, goes further beyond that.

- 1968 - United Methodist Church is born from the last of the great mergers of historically Methodist denominations.
- 1972 - The Book of Discipline added “the practice of homosexuality is incompatible with Christian teaching” and that gay ministers and marriages are not allowed in the churches (no previous written restrictions)
- Since 1972 every General Conference has faced votes on changing this language and denominationally it has remained a near 50/50 split. In some places the divisions are wider, in the US it is 80/20 in favor of changing that language and allowing inclusion from recent poles. In many places in Africa, it's 20/80 in favor of change, with some places having the practice of homosexuality illegal in secular as well as religious areas.
- Much of the exclusion work has been through reform and renewal groups in the church such as “Good News,” “Wesleyan Covenant Association,” and “The Global Methodist Church.” There has also been a strong outside the denomination group, “The Institute for Religion in Democracy” who are a political group that has been a part of every denominational split over human sexuality we have seen in the US over the last 40 years, they do a lot of funding. These groups are largely incompatibilists, disagreement is not allowed.
- Much of the pro-inclusion work has come from “Reconciling Ministries Network,” nationally and many smaller groups within Annual Conferences. IGRC for Unity is a group in our conference that seeks inclusion from a compatibilist stance, one where we may disagree on details of how we express our faith on human sexuality but strictly agree on the faith in Jesus we share.
- 2019 - There was a special session of General Conference to try and reconcile the growing division witnessed in the denomination. A commission had been gathered to work on this for 3 years and they relied on work largely done in the past 8 years of denominational study. The plan that had been created was rejected by traditionalist groups. What did pass was provisions for separation because of differences on human sexuality.
- 2020 - The General Conference was to gather but postponed (it cannot by church law be canceled) because of COVID. This Conference has further been postponed 2 more times due to COVID and international travel struggles around VISA applications.
- 2022 - Because of the postponement, the Global Methodist Church announced that they are officially forming their new denomination for traditionalist pastors and churches. They will open on May 1st of 2022 and likely see a first major movement of clergy and churches over a 14–18-month period. Those wishing to leave will need to have paid the last 2 years apportionments and pension liability for clergy who had served that church.
- For those who are compatibilists, remaining UMC does not require any formal votes or actions. Also, no changes to the UMC are to be made until the General Conference can meet again.

This is a bullet point quick guide. There are many articles written on this, and some of the better ones are easy to find from Pastor Eric's Facebook profile. Anyone with questions or concerns is always welcome to call the church and set up a time to talk.



Scott Kriegsman	1
Nick Bruns	1
Ryan Cakora	2
Justin Holder	2
Robert Irby	2
Trent Moberly	3
Jack Meron	3
John Beard	3
Alicia Marsden	4
Dawn Walker	4
Ryan Hinrichsen	5
Mariah Teaney	5
Maegen Miller	5
Pam Cochran	7
Brian Towne	7
Joanna Carroll	7
Sawyer Myers	7
Selah Swingle	8
Chuck Shields	8
Amanda Allsup	8
Zachary Garman	9
Diane Ingram	10
Judy Gordon	10
Rachel Doan	11
Jennifer Otey	11
Sam Neff	11
Scott Taylor	12
Angela Hannan	12
Peggy Golden	13
Nancy Spencer	13
Sterling Burks	13
Matt Bloom	15

Carol Gustoff	15
Garrett Williamson	16
Mattie Meron	16
Lydia Collins	16
Karson Orrick	16
Diane Aupperle	16
Zed Marsden	17
Ray Long	17
Sam Kriegsman	17
Charles Hanley	18
Delaney Sciortino	18
Asher Moberly	19
Anna Evans	19
Mike West	19
Norma Rupp	19
Jill Crouch	19
Quinn Angelo	20
Grant Bresnahan	20
Kayleigh Campbell	20
Drew Hicks	21
Tinley Dutton	21
Jaclyn Cakora	22
Sarah Butler	22
Avery Pearson	23
DJ Hicks	23
Wilda Carlton	23
Carol Groch	24
Brennan Jacobson	24
Jarilyn Thomas	25
Kendra Swisher	25
Dustin Cather	27
Will Strickler	28
Sam Strickler	28
Madeline West	29
Karissa Graham	29
David Johnson	30

Connect!

**601 N. 4th St.
Pekin, IL
309-347-7131
secretary@pekingrace.org
pekingrace.org**

**Worship Times
Saturdays 5:30pm
Sundays 9:00am & 11:00am**

Sunday, April 10
Palm Sunday

Thursday, April 14
Drive-through Food Pantry at 4 PM

Thursday, April 14
Maundy Thursday Service, 7PM

Friday, April 15
Good Friday Service, 7PM

Saturday, April 16 No Chapel Service

Sunday, April 17
Easter

Sunday, April 24
Town Hall Meeting, 10AM-11AM

Thursday, April 28
Church Leadership Board Meeting, 6:00PM

Saturday, April 30
Drive-through Food Giveaway, 11AM—Noon

Sunday, May 1
Easter Cantata, 11 AM



Prayer Concerns

Arlen Booth
David Champlin
Alisha Dault
Larry Dial & Family
Jane Evans
Tony Fulk
Jack Hall
Dale Hicks
Jerry Klopfenstein
David Maxwell
Roberta Moussalli
Paul Pearson
Cathie Ripper
Brittany Sharp
Lois Shields
Derek Stout
Carla Terry
Kyree & Rachel Travis
Ann Vogt
Mark Weber
Ronald Weyhrich