

MAY 2022

GRACE NOTES

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highlights

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*"The bee is more honored than other animals
not because she labors,.....*



....but because she labors for others."

— Saint John Chrysostom

PASTOR'S CORNER

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



Over the course of the last couple of years it feels like the world has been running at break-neck speed with change after change after change.... We have seen some things come and go. We have seen other things come and they now seem to be permanent. The pace of things, and even some of the things that changed, can be hard on many of us. The desire is to simply want to sit down and lock into what we know.

Now there is always a need for some Sabbath (we are dealing with that topic in our next sermon series) but there is also going to always be a need for us to move. The series we are in right now as we come out of Easter is about how God is calling his people to let go so that they may move. The defining narrative of the Old Testament was that God would take his people out of slavery and into the promised land. God would do it not through the tactical brilliance of a leader but through the very power of God moving despite the leader's talents and in line with the leader's faithfulness to respond to the calling of God. The New Testament is the same way. God shows again and again that faithfulness to the disruption of Jesus into one's life (all the healings really were a form of disruption), one can find healing and wholeness.

So where does this leave us? It leaves us in a place where we need to expect that God will forever be calling us into opportunities to let go of where we are so that we may journey with God towards God's ends. We need to be open. We need to be ready for faithful action. We need to be brave.

This applies to us as the individuals and to us as the church. As a local church or as the greater capital C Church, we must be ready for God to change us. The problem for many of us is that we have found comfort in the predictability of the church. Yet again, God is unpredictable. Jesus would make a tradition that was largely exclusionary, inclusive of the gentile. Jesus would make what had been unclean and restore it to life. Jesus would set a blaze of faith into the hearts of those who heard his message, felt his healing, or saw those who had been in his presence. This blaze of faith would radically change the world, repeatedly. And when that blaze would become out of hand in the ever-fragile grip of us humans, God would do God's work again and rebirth his church.

Friends, we are in a space where the changes we see before us, the ones we feel the under currents of, and the ones we have yet to acknowledge will be for our life and the ever-resurrecting church of Jesus Christ for the world. Some of us may be tired of the pace of Change, but for me, I am excited to see what God might do next as we let go for dear life...

Eric Swanson

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

Emmy Thies
Director of Children & Family Ministry

Make sure to follow us on **Facebook**
by joining the
UNITEkids Pekin UMC group.



Nursery-preschool egg hunt.



Even the youth helpers got in on the fun!



CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

Emmy Thies

Director of Children & Family Ministry



The 2022 UNITEkids Easter Egg Hunt was a lively event with many kids and multiple new families in attendance! The nursery to preschool age kiddos enjoyed their own hunt while it was still light out, and everyone played games while they waited for the glow-in-the-dark hunt for the older kids. We took a moment to notice the darkness falling and how that darkness related to the first Holy Saturday, when Jesus' friends, family, and followers were mourning the loss of Jesus. Then, we looked on at the glowing eggs as a reminder that Easter would come with the sunlight in the morning – a symbol of Jesus' resurrection! We thanked God for Jesus, and then the kids ran to grab eggs.



It was beautiful to see bags and buckets full of glowing light!

April Memory Verse:

In this world you will have trouble. But be encouraged! I have won the battle over the world. John 16:33b, Nlrv

May Memory Verse:

But those who trust in the Lord will receive new strength. They will fly as high as eagles. They will run and not get tired. They will walk and not grow weak. Isaiah 40:31 Nlrv



Upcoming Calendar for May:

UNITEkids will meet May 4, 11, 18, and 25th from 5:30-6:30 PM at Pekin First, 1315 Court St. **May 25th will be an end of school year celebration!**

Make sure to follow us on **Facebook** by joining the **UNITEkids Pekin UMC** group.

Upcoming Important Dates:

Wednesday, May 25, 5:30PM-6:30PM End of Year Celebration at Pekin First

Sunday, June 12th from 11:00 AM - 1:00 PM join us for Lunch & Water Games on the lawn at Pekin First!

July 25, 26, 27, and 30, Vacation Bible School Dates. Be sure to check future posts on Facebook for places, dates, and times.

Wednesday, August 31, Weekly UNITEkids will resume for 2022-2023 school year.

Save the date for VBS!!



May Altar Flowers

May 1st – In memory of Syd Graffis

May 8th – In loving memory of Jeffry Stoner by Marshall and June Stoner and family.

May 15th – Silk arrangements

May 22nd – In loving memory of Terry Lohnes by Sharon Lohnes

May 29th – Silk arrangements



Repair Work

The church has accepted a bid from Mac-cianti building. The insurance company is understanding that the repair needs to correct any problems that are discovered during repair not just a cosmetic masking of the damage. Hopefully, within the next few weeks, the repair work will be scheduled. They are scheduling the work so it will start on a Monday and be finished before church on Sunday. Pastor Eric is creating a contingency plan for worship if repairs cannot be completed before services. We know this will be a disruption in the office while the repairs are going on as power will need to be shut down. Please be aware of this. As it will be difficult to conduct business as usual and give us your patience during this time. We will do our best to make the necessary arrangements to create as seamless of a transition as possible.

Book Club

Book club will meet Tuesday, May 10, at 10:00AM in the library at Pekin Estates. All are welcome. Come with the book read, ready to discuss. If you need more information or have questions, call Sandy Isenburg 309-241-1411.

Illinois River District Invite

Copied from Invite

The Illinois River District will be hosting an in-person Pre-Conference briefing on Thursday, May 26, 6:00PM at the University United Methodist Church, 2818 N. University St., Peoria. This briefing will be led by Conference Director of Connectional Ministries, Curtis Brown. We hope to see you there. *Bradley Watkins II*

District Superintendent

New Sermon Series

Our sermon series for the next three weeks will be about leaning into change, facing the fear that is inherent in that change while embracing the way that through change we might see life. This series is based off of the work of Matt Miofsky, Lead Pastor at The Gathering UMC in St. Louis and his book by this same title is a worthwhile read for anyone in the journey of faith.

Grace UMC College Scholarships

Application 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, 2022, **No late submissions will be accepted.**

Survey

Please take the time to fill out our Giftedness Survey. The church will be using this survey as a resource to find members of the church who are interested in helping in different areas of church ministry. The goal is to try and get people involved in church activities and make sure to include members that have a passion, giftedness or interest in a particular need. Just a reminder, you will always be asked to help and not appointed. This will give the office and leadership a resource. We are asking people who may be interested in helping in that way, instead of calling all 300 members to find someone interested. ***This will also be used as a check to make sure your contact information is correct in our new system.***

<https://pekingrace.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/timetalentsurvey.pdf>

Please return the survey to the church office by May 29th.

GUMC FOOD PANTRY AND SNACK PACK INFORMATION

So many programs, events, and life situations came to a complete stop when the Covid 19 pandemic overtook our country and world. However, our church was able to continue its outreach commitment to provide food to those who need some help with groceries. Always masked up and keeping distances, our Pantry team members were able to pack sacks and bags of food and distribute it twice a month... every month! We distributed the monthly bounties of food through a drive-through process at the front of our church; we have continued to use this method of distribution.



Cars lined up for the Food Pantry.

During the year 2021, our Pantry served 1,187 families feeding 3,172 individuals! Fast forward to the first quarter of 2022: as of April 14th, we have served 295 families with 871 people being fed... and that's with having one Pantry day closed because of a heavy snowstorm! Along with our amazing, dedicated, extremely hard-working Pantry team, this success is also very dependent on the four ladies who together make 130 phone calls twice a month to remind our guests of our pantry time! Our neighborhood and traffic are also reminded by signs on the church's corners during those weeks.

Along with these workers and callers, our Pantry would not exist without Midwest Food Bank. If you'd like to see miracles, come by our church around 2:15 when we get back from Midwest on the Thursday Pantry days... the trailer and van are so overloaded with bigger loads than the month before! A year ago, Gloria thanked God and told Him that we were getting more than enough food. His answer... "No, you're not!" and He continues to load us with so much more... and Midwest volunteers play Jenga fitting every box in somewhere!



Load of food from Mid-West

However, God didn't stop there. In the past few years, we have received 3 FREE new upright freezers to hold all of the frozen food that He sends our way monthly!

Similarly, but on a smaller scale, our church was able to continue our Snack Pack program with Willow School through the pandemic and the safeguards. We would leave our full tubs on the school porch and pick up the empty tubs there. Now we do get to put the tubs in the entry way. In the 2021-2022 school year, 55 students received a snack pack each week for 32 weeks... 1,760 snack packs! This school year we have 80 students receiving a pack each week!

These programs are filled with so many spiritual moments and miracles each month. Many thanks for your donations through the years. If you are interested in helping with the Pantry or Snack Packs, please call Gloria Ranney at 309-353-3102. Pantry schedules are available at the church.

Church News



It takes a mountain of volunteers to keep the Food Pantry and Snack Pack program running. The volunteers help with many things. Just a few are.....

- Call people to inform dates
- Load/unload cars/trailors
- Set up food stations to hand out food
- Help gather food together in hospitality area from various rooms in the church
- Drive church van to deliver food
- Pick up food from mid-west and unload at church
- Stuff bags with inspirational items
- Load up snack pack bags on a weekly basis

If you are interested in helping with the Pantry or Snack Packs, please call Gloria Ranney at 309-353-3102.



HELP!

If you know someone who is not connected to the internet, please let the office know. We would like to get them on our weekly mailing list. We still want them to be connected to Grace. The office will call them to see if they would like to be added to the list.

Update Contact Information

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

UMW

June 9, 2022 they will hold a general meeting at 1PM in the GFFLC. Anita Wildenson will present the program on "Bold Women." Dessert with coffee and water will be offered. The call to Prayer and Self-Denial Offering will be collected at this meeting.

Pekin Grace App

Check out the new Pekin Grace UMC App! Install this app on your phone or tablet. It allows an easy place to go to connect to videos, links to Facebook, see upcoming church events. Also, from the app you can go right to various social media platforms. It even has a link to the web-site creating an easy way to check the church calendar. Check it out!

New Member Class

Are you interested in joining Grace Church and becoming a part of this congregation? We would love to have you. A new member class will start May 8th at 10:00am in the Chapel. Class will run for 4 weeks. No pre-registration necessary. Pastor Eric will lead the class. Come and make a commitment.

Church Leadership Board

(Meetings scheduled for 4th Thursday of the month)

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



Leadership Board Meeting – April 20, 2022

Our first Town Hall meeting was held on Sunday, April 24, to serve as an opportunity for our congregation and board members to meet and connect, so preparation for that event was a main topic of discussion at the April board meeting. Other items on the agenda included:

- *a report from Morton Bank on our financial portfolio
- *an update on the construction repair project time line
- *goals to help us realize the vision of our church
- *teams to implement Grace UMC ministries

You are always welcome at Leadership Board meetings. These are usually held on the fourth Thursday of each month, from 6:00 PM to 8:00 PM. Check with the church office for confirmation of time and dates as those occasionally change.

The next Church Leadership board meeting will be Sunday, May 15 at 12:30PM in the Upper Room.

Our church looked so beautiful with the Easter lilies! Donations of sponsorship were made in honor of the following children of God. We thank God for blessing us with these very special people! We just wish we had more time with them. Please take a moment of quiet reflection to honor them.

In memory of **Jeffry Robert Stoner** given by his family

In memory of **Rich Giddens** from Jane Giddens

In memory of **Jack Kuntz-Father, Doris Mulvey-Mother** From Ed and Nanette Mulvey

In memory of **Loved ones** from Norma J. Bell

In memory of **Wes Icenogle and Katie Icenogle** given by Phil and Judy Icenogle

In memory of **Jim McMullin** by Pat McMullin

In memory of **Carolyn Jackson** given by her husband, Donald Jackson

In memory of **Family** given by Joy Wojtas

In memory of **Family** given by Carol Gustoff

In memory of **Neil Johnson** given by Lynn Johnson

In memory of **David, Gary and Julie Kelly** given by Margaret Kelly

In memory of **Harry & Louise Deakin** given by Marv & Judy Brown & family

In memory of **Larry Stone** given by Willowdean Stone

In memory of **Carol Wright** given by Barb & Pete Wright

In memory of **Dr. David Danner** given by Sharon Danner

In memory of **Our Parents and Brothers** given by Greg and Gloria Ranney

In memory of **Jeff Peterson & Jean Morris** given by Jill Peterson & Sally Morris

In memory of **Ted and Ethan Hebner** given by Norma Hebner

In memory of **Troy Dean Allen and Family** given by Dean and Betty Allen

In memory of **Ken Garman; Dan & Virginia Trantham**

given by Tim, Amy, & Ryan Trantham

In memory of our **Grandparents & Great-Grandparents** given by Tim, Amy, & Ryan Trantham

In memory of **Doug Miller, Marge, Swede, Nelson, and Christie Luft**

given by Joanne and Marjorie Miller

In memory of **Frank and Gladys Dale** given by their son, grandchildren, great grandchildren and great-great grandchildren: John & Jean Esther Dale, Esther & Steve Scarpello, Barbara & Jeff Wild and Family, Wendy Dale & Family, Julia & Michal Tye & Family





Kat Doering	1
Anna Booher	1
Dianna Miller	3
Kendra McDaniels	4
Kyle Nelson	4
Joan Heiser	5
Jay Presley	5
Lucy Whitman	5
Tommy Dault	6
Marti Smith	6
Joe Hunt	7
Kristen Hunt	8
Dale Hicks	8
Emmanuel Hunter	9
Marge Monroe	9
Ethan Hunt	10
Devin Burks	10
Gene Wyman	10
Hailey Rodcay	10
Alexandra Betzelberger	12
Sharon Lohnes	12
Tyler Miller	13
Jill Garman	13
Krue Scoles	14
Mike Schaefer	14
Nick Hill	15

Cari Ranney	15
Patsy Groch	16
Sydney Hinrichsem	17
Roy Johnson	17
Rita Larson	18
Dawn Turnbow	18
Harriet Canopy	19
Chase Ranney	19
Michael Ripper	20
Evan Pearson	20
Madilyn Stranz	21
Jan Darnell	22
Vicky Farson	22
John-David Cohoon	22
Brandie Stranz	22
Jayson Presley	22
Izzy Robinson	22
Neil Viviano	23
Michael Isenburg	23
Hailey Bucklin	23
Heather Harrison	23
Lila Thies	23
Kendall Garman	24
Lucas Holly	25
Shirley Moore	25
Kelen McDaniels	27
Dustin Scott	27
Miley Volz	28
Haylynn Scott	28
Sam McClain	29
Willowdean Stone	29
Joe Stoner	29
Seth Ranney	29
Stefanie Stout	30
Owen Taylor	31
Andrew Hannan	31

Connect!

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secretary@pekingrace.org
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Worship Times
Saturdays 5:30pm
Sundays 9:00am & 11:00am

Thursday, May 12

Drive-through Food Pantry at 4 PM

Thursday, May 15

Church Leadership Board Meeting, 12:30PM

Wednesday, May 25

UNITEkids End of Year Celebration
5:30PM-6:30PM

Saturday, May 28

Drive-through Food Giveaway, 11AM—Noon

We can draw many parallels between honey bees and Christians....

Your words may be awkward. Your prayers may be meager. Your testimony may not be the most dramatic or exciting. No matter who you are, and no matter where you are, God can use you. In fact, sometimes it's the most ordinary of people that God uses to do the most extraordinary things for His glory!

The honey bee isn't concerned about whether it's the strongest flyer, or whether it pollinates the most plants; no, the honeybee concentrates on the job at hand and remains focused. That's how we need to be in our Christian walk. Keeping our focus always on the Lord.

<https://www.hopereflected.com/christian-living/published-work/lessons-honey-bee>

Prayer Concerns

Arlen Booth

David Champlin

Larry Dial & Family

Jane Evans

Tony Fulk

Blake Griffin

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

