

OCTOBER 2022

GRACE NOTES

No. 10 pekingrace.org



highlights

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OCTOBER 2022



This is church without you....
Let us not give up meeting together, as some are
in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one
another—and all the more as you see the Day
approaching.

Hebrews 10:25



PASTOR'S CORNER

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



“Uphill, both ways”

How many of us have heard someone tell us that when they were going to school that they had to walk, uphill, both ways? Usually this is used to describe the toughness of the individual, the time they grew up in, or their perceived contrasting effort against a new generation. The truth is that if you indeed went the same direction both ways, then you had to go downhill at some point and uphill another. It should have been equal. The perception that you had to work hard is what matters. The perception that things were more difficult is what is intended.

I lead with this because right now, in church, and in much of our lives, it can feel like we are going uphill both ways. We have come such a long way since the world seemingly shut down on March 13th of 2020. We have been faced with the recovery of that season. We have faced the recovery of an every increasingly divisive culture in our greater society. We face the struggles of an inflation economy that seems to strap most everyone financially. On top of all of that, we learned this past week that the population of people who self-identify as Christian in the United States is set to fall below 50% in the near future, making Christianity a minority faith in our culture.

It can sure feel like we are going uphill again, and again, and again....

But I want you to know that to go uphill is to still have movement, purpose, and faithfulness.

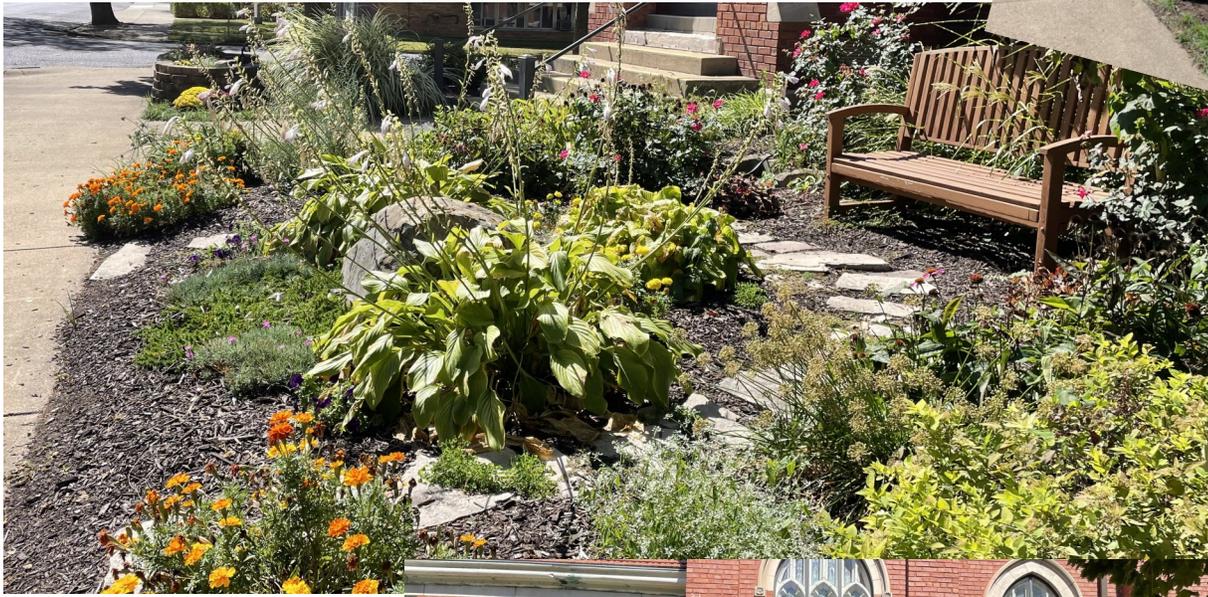
Here at Grace, we have uphill statistics. Since my arrival 3.25 years ago, I have officiated 55 funerals with most of them coming from our active congregation. Our budget is down about \$65,000 from when I first arrived. You can see that those, and other pieces of similar information, make it hard for us to look forward with the optimism and dedication that is required to move forward up yet another hill.

But I want to share with all of you a few more pieces of information.

Here at Grace, we are up 5 people for in-person worship each year through our first COVID re-opening. In the nation, this past 12-month period on average church in-person attendance is down 28% from the start of the 12-month period. That means, churches are down 28% from their new, already low, COVID numbers. We are up, more than 3%. Our Budget is down, but it is finally nearing a “right sizing” that reflects what we truly had been able to provide through our current active worshipping congregation. Our Youth have dipped, but the biggest statistical growth of a church Youth program is the Children’s program and that one is up in our local church and neighborhood connections.

Friends, uphill work leaves you wanting easy times. We have been doing uphill work for a long time now, but the faithful road is still upward. We face a time when it may not feel great, but just like sore muscles, the results of our work is found in relationship to the effort we give. I know that hard work is still before us all and I am ready to do that because of the church, the mission of Christ in the world, the hope of Jesus, the promise of resurrection. It's worth it!

Eri Swanson



CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

Emmy Thies
Director of Children & Family Ministry

UNITEkids is back in action, meeting weekly on Wednesday nights from 5:30-6:30! From October through March, UNITEkids will meet in the gym at Grace. Please join us!



Our September activities focused us on trusting God. We memorized and choreographed actions to this month's memory verse:

⁵ Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding. Proverbs 3:5 NIV.



The 3rd-5th graders worked through trust games to reinforce the theme of the month.



Kindergarteners through 2nd graders explored the 7 days of Creation in September. They examined shells, made art with fall leaves, looked at a bird's nest up-close, and experimented with solar print paper. And, they focused on how God created all of these magnificent things! We are each part of God's Creation and we can **trust** that He will take care of us.



Leon was our youngest member yet to step up and pray for the whole group!



There is a growing group of Pre-K UNITEkids, and we have wonderful Pre-K teachers. Share with your family and friends that this opportunity for the youngest Jesus-followers is available!



TCRC

These guys have been doing such a good job keeping the church clean and tidy. They are extremely hard working. If you would like more information in regards to the services they provide, you may contact Carolyn Dollison at carolyn@tcr.org or call her at 217-766-0264. Estimates are free.

Here's a picture of our cleaning crew. Pray for them and the program. If you happen to see them, tell them thank you!



Grace Café

We are still looking for volunteers to get involved with this ministry. The office is passing names along to the organizers. If you are interested in helping let the office know.

Grace Bazaar

The United Women in Faith (UMW) in lieu of Springerles will be selling pecans and Christmas ornaments again this year. Also, they will be selling RADA dishcloths. Drive Thru date is November 12. Prices are not known at this time, but if you want to order some now, call Carol at 309-256-0075. More details in November newsletter.

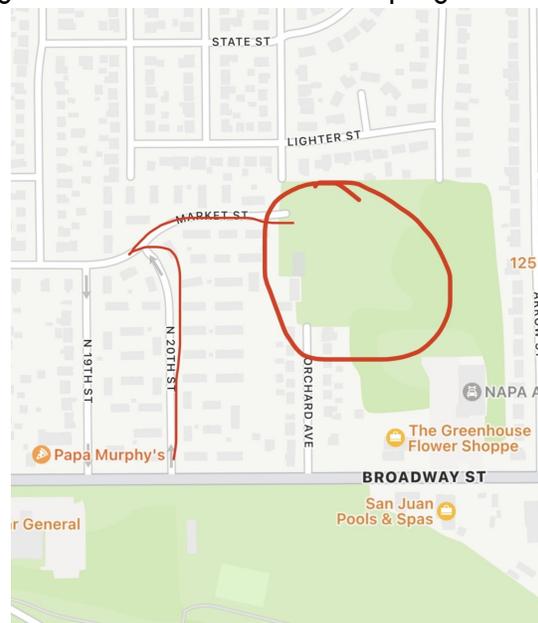
Thank You!

Dear Grace UMC,
Thank you for the very kind and very generous scholarship. But I especially want to thank the church community for warmly welcoming me and supporting me through the years, and allowing me to be a part of something larger than myself. Thank you!!

Anna Soupos

Family Weenie Roast

Saturday, October 29th at the Pekin Housing Community Center. Look for signs. To get there you will take 20th street, then a right on Market Street. Market Street runs right into the community center parking lot. There will be a costume parade at 11:15am followed by a weenie roast from 12pm-2pm. This is a great way to connect your kids or grandkids with the UNITEKkids program.



Giving on the App

Just to let you know, you may turn in prayer requests and see past sermons on the Grace app. In addition, there is a giving feature you can set up on our app.

Sanctuary Choir and Bells

Sanctuary Bells and Choir have begun. We are happy to be enhancing the worship life of the church. There is still room to learn a new skill by playing bells and/or singing with the choir. You will be a welcome addition to either group any time.

Bells: Monday 4:45pm to 5:30pm, Balcony
Choir: Wednesday 6:00pm to 6:45pm, Sanctuary

Book Club

Book club meets second Tuesday of the month. This month they will meet Tuesday, September 9 at 10:00am in the library at Pekin Estates. Come to the Pekin Estates with the book *Rainwater* by Sandra Brown. If you need more information or have questions, call Sandy Isenburg 309-241-1411. Men and women are



welcome.

Men's Fellowship

All men are welcome. Every Tuesday they meet together, 8:00am-9:30am, in the hospitality area. They enjoy coffee, donuts, and fellowship.

Men's Sports Group

Seasonal Meetings-Play softball during the summer. Volleyball and basketball are played during the winter. All meet on Mondays. Contact Chris Booher, Rod Teaney or David Dunn for more information.

UNITEkids Parent Group with Pastor Eric

This group meets every Wednesday, during the UNITEkids time, 5:30am-6:30am at Grace United Methodist Church. The study varies depending on the interests of the group. Con-

Women of Faith Groups

Contact Barb Berardi for more info

- Miriam Circle: 3rd Wednesday of the month, 9:30am, Hospitality Area
- Susannah Circle: 4th Thursday of the month, 9am, Hospitality Area
- Rachel-Sarah Circle: 4th Thursday of the month, 11:30am, Miller Center

Sunday School

between Sunday Services

Journey, 10am, Upper Room

Phoenix Rising, 10am, Lower Level 2

Children's Ministry

- UNITEkids: Every Wednesday 5:30am-6:30am
- Children's Church: 9:15am, Lower Level 2
- Youth Ministry: Radical, Every Sunday 4pm-6pm

Grace Pantry

Various dates: this link shows remaining dates for 2022. They always need helpers and strong backs. Contact Gloria Ranney or the office for more information.

<https://pekingrace.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/Pantry-Dates-2022.pdf>

Various Maintenance Crews

- Inside Repairs/maintenance: Let Pastor Eric or the office know if you are willing to help out with repairs around the church.
- Family Life Center Maintenance Crew: setting up chairs and tables and tearing down set-ups after events, including service.

Snack Packs

Monthly commitment to pack up the snack packs. See Gloria Ranney for more information.

Funeral Dinners

Serving at Funeral Dinners. We are in desperate need of some more servers. Please let the office know if you would be available to help.

Carpets cleaned

We are now without the lovely stain that was by the door along with many others. Our cleaning crew has even mentioned that the company we hired did a great job cleaning our carpets.



Lines Repainted

Church Leadership Board (*Meetings scheduled vary*)

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

The next **Town Hall** will be on **December 4 at 10:15am** in the Family Life Center. Please plan to attend.

Patricia Mitchell	1	Charles Evans	21
Angela Anliker	1	Carol Stallwitz	21
Brian Carroll	2	Dave McDuff	23
Brody Carroll	4	Brody Teaney	23
Wyatt Weidner	5	Marjorie Miller	24
James Mckinley	5	Kim Nierstheimer	25
Lisa McKenzie	6	Melissa Oltmann	25
Beverly Harvey	6	Judy Becker	25
Shannon Cox	7	Wendell Harmon	25
Karen Sassman	8	Donna Sassman	26
Charles Dietrich	8	Judith Kimzey	26
Aaron Spicher	9	Jill Rimington	26
Harold Mitchell	10	Jennifer Manchester	27
Carter Garthaus	10	Kathy Sciortino	28
Christie McDuff	12	Ashlee Sholty	28
Molly Ingles	12	Jill Peterson	28
Addison Warsaw	12	Kenneth Herbig	28
Tammy Hicks	12	Tammy Presley	28
Timothy Irby	14	Sarah Williamson	29
Hayden Grubbs	14	Heather Knight	29
Jennifer Booher	15	Amy Wilson	30
Kathleen Davis	16	Tonya Bruns	30
Bradley Shindlecker	16	William Feuchter	30
Douglas Orrick	17		
Trent McClain	19		
Ross Schaefer	19		
Donna Bradshaw	19		
Melanie Tennell	20		
Benjamin Wilson	20		
Chad Lhamon	20		
Theresa Zimmerman	21		
Mike Ingles	21		



Connect!

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Pekin, IL
309-347-7131
secretary@pekingrace.org
pekingrace.org

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

Saturday, October 8
Hunger Walk, Mineral Springs Park 10:00am

Monday, October 10
Office Closed for Columbus Day

Thursday, October 13
Drive-through Food Pantry at 4:00pm

Saturday, October 29
Drive-thru Food Pantry at 11:00am

Saturday, October 29
Family Weenie Roast, 11:15am

Prayer Concerns

Arlen Booth
Brittany Sharp
Carol Moorhouse Dahlgren
Cathie Ripper
Jack Hall
Kyree Travis
Lee Oltmann
Lyla Talley
Mark Weber
Nancy Ridgeway
Norma Rupp
Paul Pearson
Ronald Weyhrich
William Keltner

