

OCTOBER 2023

# GRACE NOTES

No. 10 [pekingrace.org](http://pekingrace.org)



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## October 2023



## Community



# PASTOR'S CORNER

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



“One generation will praise your works to the next one, proclaiming your mighty acts.” – Psalm 145:4

You could say that this has been the motto of Grace since the beginning. For us to be standing before God, the city of Pekin and the world around us, then at the heart of it all must be a desire for each generation to praise God and proclaim that work from one generation to the next.

When we gather on October 15th to celebrate 175 years of ministry, we will be doing so with several goals in mind. We will first want to praise God, not just as we always do on a Sunday, but in a way that reflects on just how far we have come. Then we will want to look at our past; we can learn so much about who we are by doing just this. Then, we must live into this scripture and look to our future. We must look at what it means for us to take seriously the obligations of proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ to Pekin and to the world.

As we get ready for this time, I want to ask you all to do a few things for me.

Pray for Grace daily at 1750 or 5:50 p.m. (it's the closest thing to 175 we could find). Pray for your connection to the church and for our church to reach the community around us in meaningful ways.

Make a plan to come. Best of intentions without plans rarely succeed. The easiest way to plan on coming is to follow the link on the bottom of this note and register for the lunch that will follow our 10 a.m. worship service that morning. It also includes you bringing a little something to share as a part of that meal.

Invite someone to Grace... for the 175th sure, but in the next month we will explore our mission and vision through the sermon series “Community.” This is an ideal time to share what we are all about and what you have invested in as a member of our community.

Support Grace. If you have not taken time to financially support Grace this year, then now is a great time to do so as we come out of the summer low months, and allow us to finish all of our yearly plans.

# PASTOR'S CORNER

Go the extra step, consider your donation to our goal of raising \$175,000 for the 175th anniversary. These funds will support our repairs to the sanctuary walls and painting . . . our fixing the sound quality of the Family Life Center with acoustic tiles . . . and lastly, our funding resources that will be used over the next three years to move us from up to 175 persons in average worship to 350 so that our mission can prepare to celebrate what God has done in our 200th Anniversary.

Friends, it is truly an exciting time for all of us here at Grace. You are amazing to be in ministry with and I know that God is doing great things through all of us!

Peace + Grace,

Pastor Eric Swanson

[Registration for 175th Anniversary Luncheon](#)

Grace staff meets for a biweekly meeting for devotions, planning and praying.



# PASTOR'S CORNER **A Commitment to 175 More Years!**

With our 175th Anniversary, we wondered what gift to give to the church. Like all major anniversaries, one should consider a gift that honors the commitment to the relationship and the hope for what is yet to come. With that in mind, we have developed a plan for our 175th anniversary as a congregation. We propose to seek gifts that are above and beyond the budgeted giving of \$175,000. This would come from all of us working together to make an extra effort to see what we might do for this church. Gifts can be made all at once or over the course of the next year based on your needs.

We propose that the gift honors our past by covering the expenses related to re-painting the Sanctuary, cry-room, and stairwells. This work was recently completed and reflects an investment in the Sanctuary and our 110+ year old space of worship. We spent roughly \$40,000 on this work in total and are glad to see the space looking fresh once again.

We propose part of the gift to meet the current needs of the Family Life Center by purchasing acoustic tiles to tame the sound in that space. As we celebrate our meal together and you are walking around, it will be clear that the way sound bounces off the walls in that space makes it hard for speaking events in general. We have had some paid sound engineer work done to model the room, and their proposal would have us spending, again, roughly \$40,000 on panels that would stand up to the times we use the space as a gym and look good while providing an enhanced environment for worship, meals, and community events.

We would plan to meet our future with \$75,000 designated for meeting the needs of growing our congregation to between 300-400 in average weekly in-person attendance over the next three years. We know that not a single campaign or program can do this, so we propose having the resources available to meet the evolving needs of evangelism and the responsive work that helps people make Grace their home.

Lastly, we have about \$20,000 leftover. This fund would be available one of two ways. First, we acknowledge that even with the best of intentions, often times a capital campaign of this nature will have a negative impact on the operations budget. In order to respect this, we put a small buffer into the campaign to offset any negative impact it has. If this fund is not needed to offset any negative impacts and we meet the operating budget while the campaign is happening, then we as a congregation would have a vote on how to use these funds to missional impact in the community, thus leaving an even bigger impact on the community around us.

We know that for some, this will be a great and fun effort, and you are ready to support it today. For others, this will be a yearlong commitment that requires intentional sacrifice to support. We honor all those who upon seeing the blessings that others gave to support Grace for 175 years, now wish to help us propel Grace forward into a future for many, many more years to come.

We will have commitment/celebration cards available for everyone as a part of our Celebration Sunday.

Peace + Grace,

Pastor Eric Swanson



# UNITEKIDS CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

**Emmy Thies**  
Director of Children & Family Ministry

UNITEkids have gotten back into the groove - sometimes literally! UNITEkids have been loving the opening song and dance time each week. They've learned "Jesus Loves Me," "This Little Light of Mine," and "I am a C-H-R-I-S-T-I-A-N."

They've also been learning something important about Jesus each week - that Jesus loves us, that Jesus is the Light of the world, and that Jesus is our Good Shepherd.



**UNITEkids is open to PreK-2nd graders and meets at Grace every Wednesday night from 5:30 - 6:30 p.m.**

# UNITEKIDS CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

**Emmy Thies**  
Director of Children & Family Ministry

## UNITE Bible Buddies Groups Meeting at Grace

Monday Nights  
5:30-6:30 p.m. and 6:30-7:30 p.m.

Wednesday Nights  
6:30-7:30 p.m.

If your 3rd-5th grader would like to join a group, please contact Emmy at:

[ethies@pekingrace.org](mailto:ethies@pekingrace.org)



UNITE Bible Buddies, Hadley and Kash, worked on "God Rules" from session one in The Gospel workbook.

Bible Buddies will spend three months studying parts of the Gospel - God Rules, We Sinned, God Provided, Jesus Gives, and We Respond.

## Save The Date for the Children's Ministry Christmas Event!!

RSVP to Emmy at [ethies@pekingrace.org](mailto:ethies@pekingrace.org) to reserve your family's spot at this returning Grace UMC tradition.

If you are interested in helping serve breakfast or provide supplies, please contact Emmy.

## Santa's Prayer Breakfast

Saturday, Dec 16

9-10:30 AM

Grace UMC, 601 N. 4th St.



Bring the family for a delicious breakfast with Santa.

Food, music, prayer, and the big guy in red – all pointing back to the reason for Christmas –

**JESUS!**

**Everyone is invited . . .  
Join our Children's Ministry . . .  
All-Church, Family Game Night!**



**FAMILY GAME NIGHT!**

**Friday, Nov 3rd**  
**6-7:30 PM**  
**Grace UMC**  
Games, snacks, & drinks provided

**Don't miss out on all the  
intergenerational fun!**

## Radical Grace Youth October Plans

A series on doubt and questions from Exodus

### October 4th

When you doubt yourself, God can still use you.

### October 11th

#### Movie night/lesson

When you doubt what God is doing, it's okay to ask questions.

#### Watching:

"I Can Only Imagine" before lesson.

**\*\*\*Arrive at 6 p.m.\*\*\***

### October 18th

When you doubt God's plan, God still offers guidance.

### October 25th

When you doubt God can be trusted, God still takes care of you.



### Youth Activities

**10/13**

MercyMe Concert in Bloomington

**Arrive at the church by 4:45 p.m, leaving promptly at 5:00 p.m.**

**10/15**

Youth celebrating 175th Anniversary

**12/5**

Christmas Dinner



# Road Trip



- Please register by October 4
- Be at the church by 4:45 p.m.
- Leaving the church by 5:00 p.m.
- 101 South Madison Street
- Bloomington, IL  
(approximately 45-55 minutes away)

# YOUTH MINISTRIES

**Jill Stoner-Crouch and Brionna Goodin**  
Co-Director's of Youth Ministries



RADICAL youth group (and Mr. & Mrs. Potato Head) would like to thank everyone that participated, prayed, donated, bought a potato & worked at the Amazing Spuds Marigold Festival Booth.

**We are grateful, thankful & blessed at how our family here at Grace stepped up!**

It would take too long to mention every single person that helped, but we do want to give a shout out to **Marianne Oltmann & Chris Booher**. They've helped keep this group together for the past 6-7 months. The "behind the scene" effort and time they have sacrificed is beyond a "volunteer" title. We cannot thank them enough.

Would you like to know how much money you helped raise?  
(Drum Roll, please!)

**\$4,173.83 !!!**

**And, that's after expenses!**

**We cannot wait to see what God has in mind for this gift!**

# YOUTH MINISTRIES

**Jill Stoner-Crouch and Brionna Goodin**  
Co-Director's of Youth Ministries





**Save the Date!!!**



**Tuesday, December 5, at 5:30 p.m.**

Join us for a time for fellowship, good food, music and a guest speaker.

This is a wonderful way to kick off the holiday season. We are looking for ladies that would like to be involved in decorating a table and sharing their place settings.

**For more information, please call Jill Crouch @ 309.241.2917.**

Tickets are \$15.00 and will go on sale Oct. 1, 2023.

There will be limited seating.

UNITED WOMEN IN FAITH

# Grace United Women in Faith Pecan Sale



**Drive-Thru Order  
Pick-up Date:**

**November 18th**

**10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.**

16 ounce packages of Mascot Mammoth Pecan Halves: \$12.00  
12 ounce packages of Chocolate Covered Pecans: \$12.00  
10 ounce packages of Cinnamon Glazed Pecans: \$12.00  
7-Way Tins: \$30.00

**To order, please call:**  
Church office: 309-347-7131  
Carol Booth: 309-256-0075

**Christmas Church Ornaments  
are still available for \$10.00!**

**Please have the exact amount when paying with cash.**

Checks should be made payable to: Grace United Women of Faith

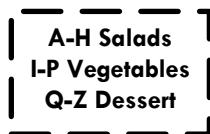
All proceeds will be used toward the mission needs of women and children.

### 175th Celebration

We will be having a Celebration for Grace United Methodist Church's 175th year of existence. For that Sunday, we will have one service so we can worship together as a family. The service will start at 10:00 a.m. and it will be followed by an old-fashioned potluck. There won't be a Saturday Service this week.

Reservations for the dinner are requested. Go through the app or follow this link to reserve your space. Reservations are asked to be turned in by October 6. We will be ordering extra food, so please come even if you did not register.

The church will provide fried chicken but all sides will be brought in by church members. In order to make sure we have a variety, we are asking people to bring a dish assigned by the first letter of your last name.



### New Sermon Series

"Community: Growing Together in God's Love" is the theme for our mission and vision series this year. This will be the series that take us into our 175th Anniversary weekend and into the work of Grace UMC for taking us into our next 25 years. We have been a successful church because of the nature of our coming together in community and we will thrive into the future by embracing legacy.

### Saturday Servants

The next Saturday Servants will meet October 14 from 8 a.m. - 12 noon. Different projects will be worked on around the church. If you are interested in helping, all you have to do is show up. Pastor Eric will have various projects you can help with. This ministry will continue through the winter months and usually happens on the second Saturday of the month.

### Mike Caringello Memorial Hunger Walk

This year, the Mike Caringello Memorial Hunger Walk will be Monday, October 9, 10:00 a.m. at Mineral Springs Park. Mike, a longtime leader in our community and Grace United Methodist Church, he was an usher, acolyte, and greeter for years, and started the Hunger Walk several years ago. Over the years, thousands of dollars have been raised to feed people in Pekin. Mike had a deep compassion for the hungry. He took seriously Jesus' command to "feed my sheep."

The income from this year's Hunger Walk will be evenly divided between Pekin Outreach Center, Grace United Methodist Church Food Pantry, and the Salvation Army.

Send your donation to Grace United Methodist Church or bring it to the park October 9 at 10:00 a.m., and walk a mile or two around the beautiful lagoon. The challenge is to double your gift from last year. Come join the fellowship and let's feed some hungry people!

### Book Club

Book club meets at 10 a.m. on the second Tuesday of the month. The next meeting will be October 10 in the library of Pekin Estates. All are welcome! If you need more information, have questions or want to know what book they are reading, please call Sandy Isenburg at 309-241-1411.

### Grace Softball

Please congratulate the Grace Softball team. They came in second place overall and were wonderful representatives for Grace United Methodist Church!

### Maui Help

Thank you for giving to Maui. Grace United Methodist Church sent \$1,115.00 towards the relief efforts in Maui. Thank you for caring for others.

### All Saints Day List

Below is a list of people Grace Church has lost during the past year. We will be honoring these people at our All Saint's Day Service on November 1st. If there is someone you have lost and would like to add to this list, please let the office know by October 16. We would love to remember them with you! There will be a chance for you to light a candle for loved ones past and present, even if they are not recognized and named on the screen.

### Church Members

Dean Allen  
Fran Anderson  
Joyce Antonini  
Richard Becker  
Henry Cakora  
Debbie Dial  
Vickey Farson  
Clarence Filyaw  
Jack Hall  
Mitch Mitchell  
Pat Mitchell  
Paul Pearson  
Norma Rupp  
Lyla Talley  
Jill Weber  
Ron Weyhrich  
Terri Zimmerman

### Friends of Church

Brittany Nicole Sharp  
Ronald L. Giddens  
Theresa Smith  
Jim Smith  
Sharon Robinson

### Directory

It's been five years since we've compiled a pictorial directory, so 2023 is the year to create a new one. We are hoping that everyone will sign up to get their picture taken. All are invited to be a part of the directory; members, as well as other Grace attendees. Please sign up online using the links below for the date of your choice, or call the office to schedule your photo session.

[October 15](#)

[October 20](#)

[November 3](#)

During the directory photo sessions, volunteers are needed to update the personal contact information for all. Please contact the office if interested, and would like to volunteer in this capacity.

We will be collecting birthdates, phone numbers, addresses, email addresses, and family connections for our data base so we can continue to enhance our communication.

### Charge Conference

We will be hosting the charge conference on October 8 at 5 p.m. Remember all church members may attend this meeting. It will be held in the Gary Ford Family Life Center. If you cannot attend but would like a copy of the report that is turned into the conference, you may pick it up at the office after the conference date.

### Thanks for Volunteering!

As with any non-profit entity, volunteer work is crucial. Sally Morris has been assisting long-term with the offering counting and data entry. Thanks for your time and efforts!



## October Birthdays



Angie Anliker	1
Lisa McKenzie	6
Beverly Harvey	6
Karen Sassman	8
Charles Dietrich	8
Christie McDuff	12
Judy Weber	12
Tammy Hicks	12
Jennifer Booher	15
Kathy Davis	16
Doug Orrick	17
Trent McClain	19
Ross Schaefer	19
Donna Bradshaw	19
Melanie Tennell	20
Ben Wilson	20
Chad Lhamon	20

Mike Ingles	21
Chuck Evans	21
Carol Stallwitz	21
Aaron Hunter	24
Marjorie Miller	24
Kim Nierstheimer	25
Melissa Oltmann	25
Judy Becker	25
Gene Harmon	25
Donna Sassman	26
Jill Rimington	26
Jennifer Manchester	27
Ashlee Sholty	28
Jill Peterson	28
Ken Herbig	28
Tammy Presley	28
Kathy Sciortino	28
Sarah Williamson	29
Amy Wilson	30
Tonya Bruns	30
Bill Feuchter	30
Carolyn Huls	31



# Connect!

601 N. 4th St.

Pekin, IL

309-347-7131

secretary@pekingrace.org

pekingrace.org

## Worship Times

Saturdays 5:30 p.m.

Sundays 9:00 a.m. & 11:00 a.m.

## Office Hours

M-TH 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

*Closed 12 p.m. - 1 p.m.*

## Prayer Concerns

George Melloy

Grant Golden

Jim Rimington

Les Seman

Nancy Ridgeway

Ron Robinson

Diana Jacobson  
*(mother of Thomas Jacobson)*

The Family of Fran Anderson  
on her passing September 25th

The Family of Paul Pearson  
on his passing September 26th

The Family of Sharon Robinson  
on her passing September 26th  
*(Mother of Jay Presley)*

*Names are kept on the prayer list for four weeks. If you would like to be kept on longer please call the office.*

### October 4

Ticket payment is due for the Youth if attending the Mercy Me Concert

### October 6

Cut-off for the registration date for the 175th Celebration Meal

### October 8

Charge Conference, GFFLC  
5:00 p.m.

### October 8

T-Shirt Pickup, a.m.

### October 9

Hunger Walk, Mineral Springs Park  
10:00 a.m.

### October 10

Book Club  
Pekin Estates Library, 10:00 a.m.

### October 13

Youth attend the Mercy Me Concert in Bloomington, 4:45 p.m. - 10:00 p.m.

### October 14

Grace Drive-Thru Food Pantry  
Hospitality Area, 11:00 a.m.

### October 14

Saturday Servants, 8:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

### October 15

175th Celebration at 10:00 a.m.  
*(Directory Pictures)*

### October 20

Directory Pictures

### October 28

Grace Drive-Thru Food Pantry  
Hospitality Area, 11:00 a.m.

### November 3

Directory Pictures

### November 3

Family Game Night, 6:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.  
All are invited!

### November 5

All Saints Day Services at the Church and Town Hall, 10:00 a.m.

### November 18

Pecan Drive-thru Order Pickup Date,  
10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.