

NOVEMBER 2023

GRACE NOTES

No. 11 pekingrace.org



highlights

November 2023

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PASTOR'S CORNER

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



Friends,

What a celebration the 175th Anniversary was for Grace! I want to thank each and every one of you for the time and energy that you poured into making this moment great. We had people helping with the Memorial Garden, the lunch, the pictures, the worship service, the history and so much more. This celebration only could happen with the love and help of all of you. So, from the bottom of my heart, thank you!

With our 175th, there has been a push to get some things accomplished at the church that I want to talk about this month. We made a huge ask, that together we could raise \$175,000 beyond our yearly budget in the course of this next year. The ask was for multiple reasons.... the first was to honor our past, to re-paint our Sanctuary at the end of the summer. This was needed as there were many places that had been stained, damaged, and faded. The next was really a charge to finish some work that could have been a part of our new addition build in 2013. The sound in the Family Life Center is hard to manage. We struggle each week in worship, speaking events are difficult, and large groups of people talking are amplified by the strong bounce of acoustics off the walls. We propose adding professionally designed and church member-installed tiles that would balance out that room to make it more useable for all the various events that happen in there. Then, we set aside some funds for one of two causes, to meet any setbacks a campaign may have on the budget, knowing that past fundraisers have had negative impacts on the yearly budget, even with the best of intentions. The last part is for Evangelism, and that is what I wish to talk about for the rest of this article.

We proposed \$75,000 for the next 3 years to take us from a church of roughly 175 to a church of about 350 in weekly in-person attendance, as well as taking us from 40 or so virtual a week to 80 virtual a week. The Gospel of Jesus is to always meet those who have not yet heard it in a way that transforms their lives and then to do that very work. For those of us in the church, we don't always understand why this message has not yet permeated the lives of those we know. But we desire them to experience the change Jesus offers, one from death to life.

Over the next three years, these funds would be used to help us market the church, to attempt new programming that is directed towards new people, and to help engage those new people into ways of living with Grace that keep them engaged for the long haul. Our desire is really to not only reach a new generation with the Gospel of Jesus, but to equip them to be the next generation of leaders that the church (ours and the greater church) needs.

Each and every one of us will have space to work towards this goal. This will require our financial support, and it will require our offering of time, talents, and personal resources. I know that each day I am setting aside time to work on ways to reach those who the church has not been effective at reaching in my lifetime. I pray for this cause, and I work intentionally towards efforts that bridge the divides. I ask of this from all of you today...

Pray for this vision every day... at the times that work for you.

Offer yourself to the cause of invitation. If all of us invite 10 people who are close to us a year, we are likely to double in 3 years. If we are afraid to speak to those close to us and only reach to those at the periphery, it takes 100 people to get the same effect.

Talk to me about space you feel the Spirit drawing us as a church to reach that we have not attempted today... it will be the work of not just us who are clergy, but of the entire church that help us reach this goal.

This goal exists because it is likely we need that number of people to maintain the ministries we love for the long term. It's the number we at Grace were at in our peak of health and growth (at each major growth phase of the last 175 years) and most importantly, it's the number that the Spirit keeps leading our teams towards as we dream about the future of this church.

Thank you for taking part in the ministry of Grace, I can't wait to see what God does through us next!

Pastor Eric



UNITEKIDS CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

Emmy Thies
Director of Children & Family Ministry

Bible Buddies and UNITEkids small groups have been building friendships and learning together! UNITEkids continued learning the "I Am" statements of Jesus through October. Below you can see them building gates as we talked about how Jesus is the Gate for His sheep. UNITEkids is open to PreK-2nd graders and meets at Grace UMC every Wednesday night from 5:30-6:30. No need to register - show up and enjoy!



All Bible Buddies groups, 3rd grade through 5th grade, and the UNITEkids group will take a break from meeting during the Thanksgiving week. No kids programs the week of November 20th. All children's programming will resume the following week starting with Children's church on November 26th.



Bible Buddies have enjoyed beautiful October nights playing on the playground after completing their lessons!

So far they have studied "God Rules" and "We Sinned" in their Gospel workbooks. Next up is "God Provided," how God loves us so much that He provided Jesus to save us.

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

RSVP to Emmy at 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!

**November
Radical Grace
Youth Group**
11/1 Great Leaders
Follow Through
11/8 Great Leaders Choose
to Love
11/15 Parents OPEN HOUSE
& THANKSGIVING
11/22 NO YOUTH
GROUP ENJOY FAMILY TIME!
11/29 Great Leaders
Follow God's Lead

Hey Parents! Be our guests 11/15 @ 6:30, for a Radical Youth Open House. Check out where we meet & learn about what we do every week. We will also be going over some **very important** information for our upcoming Ladies Christmas Dinner Fund-raiser, and our WinterXtreme Trip.



Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, set an example for the believers in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith and in purity
1 Timothy 4:12

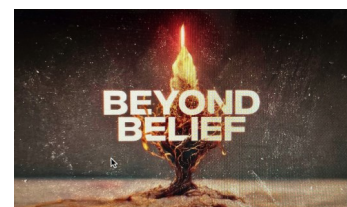
October has not been a trick but a treat ...as we explored BEYOND BELIEF: A 4-WEEK SERIES FROM EXODUS ON DOUBT & QUESTIONS.

SERIES OVERVIEW:

The Bible is full of things that seem almost "beyond belief." Sometimes that's because the stories we read on its pages are miraculous — especially the story of Exodus. Like, did God really split a whole sea in half, speak to Moses from a burning bush, or rescue all those people from enslavement? Other times, the Bible says things that sound a little too good to be true — like, is God really as loving, kind, patient, or powerful as Scripture says? And can God really use each of us to do big things in the world? In this four-week series from the book of Exodus, we'll explore what the story of Moses and the Israelites can help us discover about doubt and belief. We'll talk about how, when you doubt yourself, God can still use you. And we'll see how, when you doubt God, it's okay to ask questions because God still offers guidance and always takes care of you.

We've been making some great memories and look forward to many more.

Love, Hope & Peace!
Jill & Brionna



RADICAL YOUTH MINISTRY

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



Grace 175th Anniversary

Emmy provided activity bags we used to have for the children to enjoy during the service.



Schedule for the Day

- Church open for Fellowship & History Displays 8:00 a.m.
- Worship Celebration 10:00 a.m.
- All Church Pictures 11:40 a.m.
- 175th Memorial Garden & Solar System Dedication 11:45 a.m.
- Followed by a potluck & fellowship

Pastor Eric even wore his pastoral robe in honor of the traditions of the past and he entered through the door that is behind the pulpit.



It was great to worship together as one church family!



Grace Radical Youth helped with the service by being liturgists and helping serve communion.







Wow!!! What a celebration for our Grace 175th Anniversary.

This church family was built on a foundation of pillars of the community who demonstrated God's plan to love. Our beautiful service with a wonderful message, angelic music, and special fellowship helped us realize our blessings of living in a community of believers who reach out and share with others God's message.

One of the special times included showing our praise through the Memorial Garden we planted. This was a team effort by our congregation. Duane and Jed Bruniga thought that the garden could be enjoyed through the years and complete our garden areas. Lee Oltmann designed the garden and congregational members gave donations toward plants, rocks, grass, and the wall for the garden.

A huge essential worker was Keith Culp, who created the vision given to him. Many long days were donated by Keith through the project with Pastor Eric often helping out. Some more essential workers for the garden were Keith Bonnett, Dave Dunn, Tom Dault, Chris Onken, Rebecca Onken, Janine Culp, Lee Oltmann, Duane Bruniga, Jed Bruniga, Lisa McKenzie, Jim McKenzie, Nic Culp, and the staff keeping things organized.

We were thankful for the Matheny's donation of the beautiful stone commemorating the garden. We hope you will enjoy thinking of our heritage and future as you enjoy the beautiful garden that God has provided. Thank you to all who contributed.





There was a place you could get your pictures taken. What a wonderful way to remember this day.



Charge Conference

Grace Church hosted the Charge Conference last month. If you would like to have a copy of the reports that were submitted you may pick yours up from the church office.

All Saints Day List

This is the list of people Grace Church has lost from November 1, 2022 through October. We will honor these Church members who passed this year at our All Saint's Day Service on November 5. The church member's names will be displayed on the screens, name will be read and a candle will be lit in remembrance of them. In addition, there will be a time of remembrance for friends of Grace Church. You are welcome to come up during this time and light a candle in remembrance for your loved one. We are asking Grace church to say a prayer for the families of these loved ones and thank God for their lives .

Church Members

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

Friends of Church

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

Saturday Servants

The next Saturday Servants will meet November 11 from 9 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 on the second Saturday of the month.

Mike Caringello Memorial Hunger Walk

The recent Mike Caringello Memorial Hunger Walk raised \$1,689.50. A big thank you to everyone who walked and or donated money for the Walk. Several were not able to walk but still donated to the cause. If you would like to add to the total, you may still do so. Please send or bring you gift to the church office. Thanks for caring about the hungry of Pekin.

Phil Icenogle

Book Club

Book club meets at 10 a.m. on the second Tuesday of the month. The next meeting will be November 14 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.

New Board Members

At the Charge Conference, the new board members were nominated and elected. There is a little bit of overlap as the new members are welcomed to the board as soon as they are approved at Charge Conference. Grace would like to thank the new members for their willingness to be a part of the leadership board here at Grace. The new members include: Todd Tennell, Chris Onken and Rachel Doan. Please pray for wisdom and understanding and clarity as the board continues to lead us into this new leadership model. At the end of the year, Greg Ranney and Rich Kriegsman will step down from the board as their terms will be over. Please take some time to thank them for their commitment and service.

Commitment Cards

Grace Church has mailed out the commitment cards for this next year. If you did not receive a commitment card in the mail please contact the office so that we can make the necessary changes to our system or pick up a card from the information station in the foyer.

Remember Grace Church runs on the donations that are given to the operating fund. These donations go to the day-to-day expenses required to run a church. A commitment to the operating fund helps the church not worry about meeting the bills, so the church can focus on providing programs and ministries for all. Together we can do more. Please pray over and return your commitment card as soon as you can.

Also included in the commitment card was a special donation request for the 175th anniversary.

Picture Directory (Last Picture Date)

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. Call the office to schedule your photo session. We are in the process of opening up another date as all these current dates are full.

November 3

November 5

November 17

November 19

If for some reason you were unable to attend any of the picture dates, we have you covered! You can send us a family picture to use. Make sure you email us a digital version of the picture to secretary@pekingrace.org.

Family Game Night



Radical Fundraiser: Women's Christmas Dinner

It's time to get your tickets for the Radical Women's Christmas dinner. It will be held on Tuesday, December 5 at 5:30 p.m. Some of the church ladies are busy planning on how they will decorate the tables for this event. Tickets are \$15.00 for one person. If you would like to buy a table and invite your friends cost would be \$120. There are still some tickets and tables left. Contact Jill Crouch, 309-241-2917, or the church office, 309-347-7131 for tickets.

Miriam Circle

Miriam Circle will meet at 9:50 am at C.B. SMITH on Wednesday, November 15th, to read with the Kindergarten students. All women are invited. Contact Mary Myers for more information.

On Wednesday, October 18, they met and read with students and delivered homemade book bags for each child.



Prayer list procedure

To be put on the prayer list, you will still need to contact the office and let them know you would like to be on the prayer list. You can contact the office by phone, email, letter, or the app. Once the office has been notified, they will put you on the list. We will include first and last names so the congregation can send out encouraging cards and reach out to those needing extra support. The names will automatically be removed from the list after *four weeks*. If you still need prayers after those four weeks, please notify the office again and you will be kept on the list. The office will also be maintaining a staff only prayer list. If you would **only** like to be on this list, please make this known and clear when the prayers are requested. This list is not posted to Facebook or shared with the church community.

Welcome New Church Members

We would like to welcome some new members to Grace Church. If you see them around make sure to congratulate them, invite them to work alongside you, and pray for them. We welcomed the following members:

Matthew & Cynthia Fitzanko
Marj Oesch
Keith and Janine Culp
Chelsea Tennell
Trey & Melanie Tennell



Keith & Janine Culp

Volunteer Opportunities

Van Drivers for Wednesday-We are looking for a couple volunteers willing to drive the church van to pick up youth for Radical.

Youth Group-The youth group needs a few more adult volunteers coming alongside the group to help connect with the Junior high students.

Food Donations- Looking for someone to buy and donate food that can be put in the freezer for times when the hospitality snack bar needs some last minute filler items. Generally, this is purchasing pastries or donuts that are stored in the freezer until needed.

UNITEkids Volunteer-Emmy is always looking for adults to help with the UNITEkids. Emmy needs 10 more people willing to volunteer for Bible buddies, UNITEkids and various events.

YouTube editor-Looking for someone to edit past YouTube posts. If interested let the office know. This could be a monthly or yearly service.

United Women in Faith: Pecan Sale

Pecan Sale! They are taking orders as close to the pick-up date as possible. To order contact Carol Booth, 309-256-0075, or the church office, 309-347-7131. An order form is also in the hospitality area of the church. The United Women in Faith are selling Mascot Mammoth Pecan Halves (16 oz), Chocolate Covered Pecans (12 oz.), Cinnamon glazed pecans (10 Oz), and 7 Way tins. Also available is a church ornament. Order pick-up will be November 18 from 10:00 a.m. -1:00 p.m.

Happy Thanksgiving!

The staff at Grace would like to wish you all a safe and happy Thanksgiving time. We are truly blessed to be able to work together with you for the furthering of God's kingdom. Thank you from the bottom of our hearts for your help and support!

Food Pantry

The food pantry is looking for donations of unused 2024 calendars and gently used devotional books. Place in the bin in the hospitality area.

November Birthdays



Pat Moser	1
Fred Vogt	3
Nancy Ridgeway	3
Nancy Kriegsman	4
Kate Wyman	5
Ann Vogt	6
Peg Gorsage	6
Holly Hoffman	7
Cole Stoner	9
Melissa Troutman	10
Derek Stout	10
Nola Booher	11
Larry Crouch	11
Naomi Comstock	13
Benjamin Clark	14
Mallory Ingles	14
Kitty Robinson	15

John Troutman	17
Sharon Danner	18
Chris Bergstrand	18
JJ Tassart	18
Pat McMullin	19
Marshall Stoner	19
Miles Wilson	21
Ben Bruns	21
Catherine Englebrecht	21
Kathy Manz	22
Eloise Feuchter	23
Jaclyn Mulvey	26
Katelyn Tassart	27
CJ Booher	28
Charles Dancey	28
Jason Kennemer	29
Nanette Mulvey	30
Rebecca Onken	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

Office Hours

M-TH 8:30am-4:30pm

Closed 12pm-1pm

Prayer Concerns

Barb Hill

Bonnie Thompson

Dean Albertson

Greg Ranney

Les Seman

Margarete Hall

Pat Pearson

Ron Garman

Sarah Hunter

Tammy Seman

Names are kept on the prayer list for four weeks. If you would like to be kept on longer please call the office, 309-347-7131.

November 2

United Women in Faith, Executive Meeting, 1 p.m.

November 3

Directory Pictures, GFFLC, 2:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.

Family Game Night, 6:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.,

November 5

All Saints Day Services

Directory Pictures, GFFLC, 10:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.

November 8

Leadership Board Meeting, 6 p.m.-8 p.m.

November 11

Grace Drive-Thru Food Pantry, 11 a.m.

Saturday Servants, 9 a.m. -12 p.m.

November 12

Town Hall Meeting, GFFLC, 10:00 a.m.

November 14

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

November 15

Radical Open House for Parents,

Mason Building, 6:30 p.m.

November 17

Second Payment Due for Radical Winter Xtreme

Directory Pictures, GFFLC, 2 p.m. - 7 p.m.

November 18

United Women in Faith Pecan Sales Drive-Thru times

10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

November 19

Directory Pictures, GFFLC, 10:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.

November 20

Bible Buddies *cancelled*

November 21

Grace Notes Articles Due

November 22

Communion at Pekin Estates *cancelled*

Bible Buddies and UNITEkids *cancelled*

Radical *cancelled*

Church office will close at 12:00 p.m.

November 23

Happy Thanksgiving! Enjoy your families!

Office will be closed.

November 25

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

November 26

Get your angel off the angel tree

(return presents by 12/10)