

Grace United Church of Christ

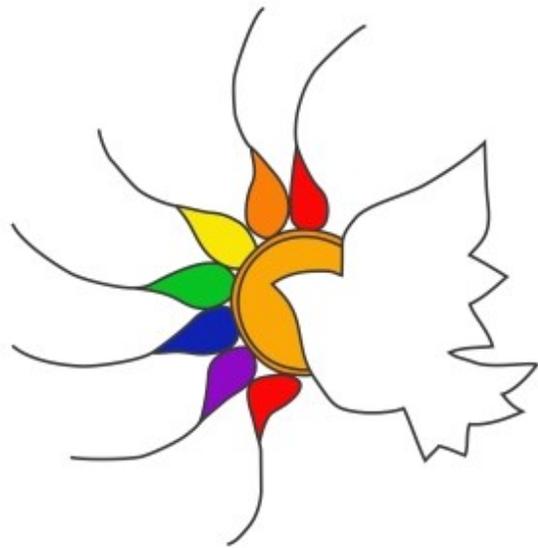
# Shalom

May 2015

Rev. Katie Cort, Pastor

Lynn K. Miller, editor

Thank you to story contributors and proofreaders.



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## Resurrection is Real

Welcome to Eastertide! In the Christian church, Easter is not just one day, but a whole season of 50 days leading to Pentecost on May 24. Fifty days for us to consider what resurrection looks like in our lives, the life of the church, and the life of the world.

Here at Grace, we will contemplate the gifts of resurrection, bring them with us to Pentecost where we celebrate the “birth of the church,” and then the following week we will have our Congregational Meeting where we will discuss how Grace church will be putting the ideas of rebirth and new life into action.

I would ask you to prayerfully consider how you are being called to join into these conversations and plans. Our teams and task forces will need people to staff them; our events will need people to support them. Also, we will be looking to hear your ideas for how Grace might proceed into the future. What events would you like to see? How should worship look? How should we be present in our community and in the world? How can we support each other, ourselves, and others?

God is still speaking, to each one of us, and we all hold one piece of Grace’s identity. The promise of resurrection encourages us to bring those pieces together and see how they might fit in various ways to make different pictures, shapes, constructions, and installations. I invite each one of us to bring our piece to the table during this time, inclusive of all the truly marvelous colors, designs, glitter, shadows, jagged edges, soft textures, and other beauty they encompass.

I await the future with great excitement, knowing Grace UCC has so much love for the people of this world, and so very many wonderful gifts to offer. I know God has called each and every one of us to this place in this time for this work in this moment. Easter is here! Resurrection is real! Alleluia!

~ Pastor Katie

## **News About the Safe Church Policy and Background Checks**

As many of you know, recently the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania strengthened its child protection laws. One main change is the need for background checks to be completed and passed by *anyone* who cares for, provides leadership for or teaches children. The background check is not difficult or time consuming. It does, however, need to be completed by July 1.

Any of you who provide care in the nursery, teach in Sunday school or lead programs that include children, will be hearing from the Safe Church Task Force in the next several weeks. We will explain how to have background checks done – you can apply at home and we will provide resources here to initiate the process as well. After you complete this process, the official report will need to be given to the church for our records. If the cost of a background check poses a hardship it will be covered by the church.

Of course, anyone can have a background check. If you plan on working with youth here or on an association or conference level, get a job working with children, or would like to have a background check “just in case”, you can complete the process as well. Contact Suzanne MacGregor, Robin Cain or Jeffrey Hamilton if you have any questions or concerns.

Grace will be offering several informational events to explain the issues around child abuse, identifying it, and responding to it. Since people at Grace are unpaid, this training is not required. However, it is helpful and will allow us to keep our church insurance rates down in the future. Members will soon receive a letter detailing Grace’s compliance to be a Safe Church.

~ Safe Church Task Force

## **Geranium Orders Due for Pentecost**



We will be placing red geraniums in the church for Pentecost Sunday, May 24. Order forms will be in the bulletins. Orders are due by Sunday, May 10. Each plant costs \$4.50 payable when the order is placed. Make checks payable to "Grace UCC" and give your order to an usher or place it in the “give as you go” basket or in the church office mailbox. You may take your flowers home after worship Pentecost Sunday. Thank you.

~ Worship Team



## Congo Life Campfires are Back

May is such a great month. We celebrate mothers. We see the flowers that bloom after the rains of early spring. We have our first holiday weekend of the summer, as well as Pentecost that same weekend. So much joy in one month.

May also brings the return of monthly campfires at Grace with the first being scheduled for Friday, May 8 at 7:30pm. Bring a snack to share around the fire, a beverage, and your lawn chair or blanket. Congo Life will supply hot dogs, sticks, snacks, and of course, a fire. We'll be doing these each month so if you can't make this one, you can join us around the campfire June 5, July 17, and August 14.

Looking ahead to June, mark your calendar for Saturday, June 20 as Grace hosts a dulcimer seminar (see related article on page 6). As part of the day's events, Grace will be holding a bake sale from 2-4pm, with the monies raised benefitting our church. We need donations of baked goods, as well as a few folks to staff the bake sale table.

Please note...Congo Life will now meet the second Monday of each month at 6:30pm.

Finally, THANK YOU to all those who made soup and brought bread for our Sunday lunches during Lent. The soups were wonderful and the choices of bread plentiful. Congo Life could not have hosted these lunches without your help. Again THANK YOU to all who cooked, baked, bought, and participated.

Congo Life has more activities coming. Stay tuned to *Shalom*, the Sunday bulletins, and Sunday announcements for details.

~ Congregational Life Committee

### **Questions? Concerns? Suggestions?**

Talk with a Council member:

President: Amy Southall

Secretary: Ve Wolfe

Congregational Life Committee: Jessie Dombach

Endowment Committee: Karen Wentz

Evangelism and Outreach Committee: Nick Santaniello

Property Committee: Rob MacGregor

Spiritual Life and Growth Committee: Amy Fishburn

Stewardship–Mission Committee: Denise Pfeiffer

Member-at-Large: Suzy Luber

Pastor: Rev. Katie Cort

## **Think Spring!** **Think Memorial Garden.**

Spring is coming and the Memorial Garden is in bloom, encouraging people to walk through, sit awhile, and visit with friends. As you enjoy the beauty of the garden, you may want to consider helping in one of the following ways:

- ☞ Donating for the purchase of plants, rain barrels, benches, a canvas canopy for services in inclement weather, or signage to indicate that the Memorial Garden is sacred space.
- ☞ Pre-paying for an interment as a means of doing end-of-life planning
- ☞ Making a tax-deductible gift to the Memorial Garden

To speak with someone about any of these opportunities, please see Suzy Luber, Verna Labrador, or Dottie Book.

~ Memorial Garden Committee

### **Making Change with Joyful Noise**

Bring your loose change the first Sunday of each month for the Joyful Noise Collection (received May 10 due to the Cape May retreat). Coins collected in May will go to Back Bay Mission, a community ministry of the United Church of Christ serving the Mississippi Gulf Coast and the wider church community. By its faithful witness for social justice and compassionate service to people who are poor and marginalized, this program helps many people. Our gifts will help Back Bay strengthen neighborhoods, seek justice, and transform lives.

### **Join the Book Group Gathering**

The Starbucks Book Group will meet Thursday, May 21, at 10:30am at the Fruitville Pike Starbucks store. We will begin a new book, a novel titled *God's Only Daughter*.

A synopsis: "When two holy sisters discover a little girl in the wood and take her back to an orphanage, she mysteriously insists that Jesus is her brother. It is an entertaining, thought-provoking tale that takes place at the end of WWII."

Talk to Suzy Luber, Verna Labrador, Jessie Dombach, Ve Wolfe or Dottie Book. Or simply COME JOIN US!



## Centennial Capital Campaign Update

Total campaign contributions as of March 31 have reached \$132,818. Thank you! In June a letter will be mailed to the congregation concerning the final phases of wrapping up the Centennial Capital Campaign.

~ Centennial Capital Campaign Committee



## Strengthen the Church Offering Helps Reimagine the Future

The Strengthen the Church Offering of the United Church of Christ will be received Pentecost Sunday, May 24. Shared at the conference and national levels, Strengthen the Church largely supports youth ministries and full-time leaders for new churches in parts of the country where the UCC voice has not been heard.

Each day, visions and dreams are created in the hearts of many in the United Church of Christ. Through the Strengthen the Church offering, they can become a reality. As God calls our congregations to be “church” in new ways, your gift will plant new churches, awaken new ideas in existing churches, and develop spiritual life in our youth and young adults. Because of this offering, many more will hear the good news that “God is still speaking”.

Plan to share in this offering May 24 to “Invest in the Vision”.

~ The Stewardship-Mission Committee

*Grace United Church of Christ Presents:*

## **The First Annual Dutchland Dulcimer Gathering**

Friday, June 19 and Saturday, June 20

The Mountain Dulcimer Players of Lancaster and Grace Church are hosting a gathering of mountain and hammer dulcimer, ukelele and penny whistle players.

Friday, June 19, at 7pm Guy and Sharrie George will perform in concert, along with Chip the Bird. The Georges are a talented couple, seen as some of the best players of their respective instruments. Sharrie plays guitar and ukulele; Guy plays steel drums, hammer dulcimer, penny whistle and just about anything else you put in front of him. (Jeff Hamilton and Robin Cain have spent several weeks with them in classes and can rave about them if you ask.) The concert is free, with a good will offering opportunity.

The fun continues Saturday, June 20, from 9am to 4:30pm as we host the first (we hope of many) Dutchland Dulcimer Gathering, a day of workshops and music. Five instructors will be teaching various levels of mountain and hammer dulcimer, ukelele and penny whistle. All participants must register. The registration fee of \$20 includes a continental breakfast, a delicious lunch catered by the Whistlestop Cafe, snacks, and more! Plus Congo Life Committee will be selling treats Saturday afternoon.

Instructors Guy and Sharrie George, Carol Walker, and Rob Lackey charge \$15 per workshop, payable to the teachers on the day of the event. We'll also have free introductory workshops on ukelele (Sharrie George) and mountain dulcimer (Jim Fawcett), with a limited number of loaner instruments available.

Individual lessons are available if you would like to try your hand at any of these instruments. (Steel drums are easy...and fun). The church will be filled with people from the area, and out of state, to learn and play. There are no dulcimer diva's. All ages and experience levels are welcome. If the weather's right...a little outdoor Caribbean music will be heard.

To learn more, check [www.lancasterdulcimer.com](http://www.lancasterdulcimer.com), or speak with Jeff Hamilton or Robin Cain. In addition to the Dutchland Dulcimer Gathering, for several years, in part as a result of Bing Futch and Butch Ross's concerts, Grace has hosted the largest dulcimer club around. Over the past few years, we have grown from three members to more than 30. We meet three times each month...with over 20 playing at times. It is a great community of caring people – truly a fellowship of persons who care well beyond the hours we play (see photo, right).

Mountain Dulcimer Players meet at Grace every first and third Saturday from 10am to noonish, and third Wednesday from 7pm to about 8:15. All are welcome.





## **Grace Presents an Evening With Timbré**

Grace UCC opens our doors and invites you to attend a handbell concert given by Timbré Ensemble Wednesday, June 24 at 7pm. Timbré, from California, is an advanced small ensemble focusing on classic and avant-garde original handbell literature. They seek to advance the artistic growth of handbells by setting high standards of musical performance and by encouraging composers to write new works for handbells, either alone or in combination with other instruments and voices. The members of Timbré run handbell workshops and are considered excellent handbell clinicians.

Timbré will be attending the Handbell Musicians of America Area 2 Festival in Scranton and are pleased to perform this concert while visiting Pennsylvania. A free-will offering will be collected, and light refreshments served after the concert.

Grace members and friends can help with housing the members of Timbré or bringing food to a potluck dinner for them at the church. The housing and potluck are just for one night, Wednesday, June 24. Then, Thursday morning, hosts will provide breakfast and transportation back to the church. Sign up on the sheets in the narthex or hallway if you can help.

~ Memorial Bells of Grace



## **Ring with Memorial Bells**

Bell ringers are needed starting in late August or early September. The bell choir typically rings one Sunday a month September through May. We may occasionally ring at off-site events or participate in bell festivals. Rehearsals are Mondays from 7-8pm. Please join us. You will have a ringing good time. Talk with Jeff Clouser or email [memorial-bells-of-grace@comcast.net](mailto:memorial-bells-of-grace@comcast.net).

## Come to the Spring Congregational Meeting



All members and friends of Grace are invited to the spring congregational meeting Sunday, May 31, following worship and a soup and bread luncheon. Please be present as we reflect on the 2014-2015 year and look forward to the upcoming year of ministry together at Grace.

# Grace United Church of Christ

*Welcoming All  
Sharing Love  
Proclaiming God's Grace*

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