



Grace United Methodist Church

April 26, 2020

OUR WELCOMING STATEMENT

God's love is for all and God's grace is present in all creation. God's spirit draws us into community. We are filled with genuine care and love for one another.

Honoring the diversity of our faith journeys, our welcome is extended to all – people of all races, sexes, ethnic backgrounds, generations, physical and mental abilities, economic conditions, sexual orientations, gender identities, and gender expressions. No matter who you are, no matter where you are in your life, you are welcome here.

We are all invited to bless this church with our love, our presence, and our participation.

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

VIRTUAL PASSING OF THE PEACE

May God's peace be with us all.

OPENING PRAYER

Holy One, as our spirits huddle together with grief and hope, fear and joy, let your peace be upon us. Keep us from closing off our hearts. Wherever we encounter wounds, may we be a healing presence, a community of compassion and solidarity. Amen.

SCRIPTURE READING

Matthew 7:7-14

Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; the one who seeks finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened. Which of you, if your [child] asks for bread, will give [them] a stone? Or if [they] ask for a fish, will give [them] a snake? If you, then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your [God] in heaven give good gifts to those who ask [God]! So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets. Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it.

SERMON

"Is This About God or Us? Yes"

Pastor Nate Nims

OFFERING

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

THE PRAYER JESUS TAUGHT

Our Father (Creator, Mother)†, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil, for thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

CLOSING SONG

"You Will Be Found" from *Dear Evan Hansen*

by Benj Pasek & Justin Paul

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_l0msPMEick

Guide to Prayer and Study

Monday, April 27

Read - Proverbs 15:1-4

Notice - Many of the Proverbs have a bit of a scattershot quality to them. But in these four verses, the Hebrew sages put together four wise sayings that address the quality of human speech, both in its ability to wound and damage, but also to heal and give life. The Common English Bible translates the Hebrew word in Proverbs 15:1 as “sensitive,” and other translations use “soft” or “gentle.” For some, such words give an impression of weakness. But a later proverb said, “A commander can be persuaded with patience, and a tender tongue can break a bone” (Proverbs 25:15). When have you seen wisely chosen words break down barriers that harsh speech would only have made higher and more rigid?

Pray - God, help my mouth not to “gush” with foolish words. Grow in me your spirit that can make my speech more and more a “tree of life” for the people I meet. Amen.

Tuesday, April 28

Read - James 1:19-21

Notice - Scholar David Allan Hubbard wrote, “Harsh, vindictive speech—even though apparently based on God’s Word—is not the way to accomplish God’s justice.” Through the centuries, issues like slavery, the role of women in ministry, sexuality, and gender identity have triggered such speech from Christians against other Christians. How can the “humility” of which James wrote move us away from destructive speech and toward living into what James called “the word planted deep inside you”?

Pray - God, make me ever more “quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to grow angry.” You know that’s not my natural condition, Lord—but I know you can change me from the inside out. Amen.

Wednesday, April 29

Read - James 1:22-25

Notice - After describing the danger of hasty, ugly words, James moved on to describe “the word planted deep inside you” (James 1:21) that we should follow. He called it “the law of freedom,” God’s wisdom, above all as Jesus taught it. James’ words about the law of freedom were rooted in Jesus’ teaching. Jesus said, “I give you a new commandment: Love each other. Just as I have loved you, so you also must love each other. This is how everyone will know that you are my disciples, when you love each other” (John 13:34-35). In what ways have you found greater freedom as you’ve grown in your ability to love even.

those you dislike or disagree with?

Pray - Holy Spirit, I want my life to bear your signature. So fill my life with your fruit. As others watch me, may they daily see me growing more and more like the person you want to shape me to be. Amen.

Thursday, April 30

Read - James 1:26-27

Notice - James used strong language—not angry, but strong. He said if people don't control their words, "their devotion is worthless." Some people then (and now) used angry, ugly criticisms of "the wicked" (however they defined that) to try to show everyone else how devoted they were to God. It didn't work, James said—speaking that way was disobedience to God, not devotion. True devotion, he said, shows when we care for and help the weak, not in reckless speech. We live in a world where tweets, anonymous comment boards and a 24-hour news cycle seem, at times, to bombard us with contentious, belittling speech. James wrote that one aspect of devotion to God is "to keep the world from contaminating us." How do you actively seek to keep our world's barrage of negativity from contaminating you? What choices help you do that?

Pray - Almighty God, you love me. You know that elevated blood pressure and a pulse racing from anger are hurtful, not helpful. Guide me toward your pure, peaceable approach to life. Amen.

Friday, May 1

Read - 1 Colossians 3:8-10

Notice - As Paul wrote to the Christians in Colossae, he recognized that there is an unbreakable connection between who we are on the inside and what we say for others to hear. He named anger, rage, malice, slander, obscene language and lying as things to "set aside." The first three are attitudes, but they inevitably show themselves in the harmful kinds of speech the apostle named in the last three items on the list. Scholar William Barclay said we can turn the items in this list about speech into positive commands. The first two, he said, tell us that a Christian's speech must be KIND, and it must be PURE. How easy or hard do you find it to speak in those ways if you feel anger, rage or malice toward someone? How can we be kind in our speech even when it is necessary to make an honest appraisal of another person?

Pray - Jesus, when Paul said I should "set aside" these bad things, he used a word that means "taking off a garment." Help me discard nurtured anger, and the ugly speech it produces, as I would a dirty, worn-out shirt, and to put on your new way of life. Amen.

Saturday, May 2

Read - Ephesians 4:25-32

Notice - Scholar N. T. Wright, commenting on Ephesians 4:25-32, said, "Living as a Christian demands that we grow up in our thinking: you have to learn to identify your own moods and behaviour patterns, to see which ones are going in the right direction and which ones in the wrong direction ... we should regard our moods, and the speech which flows from them, as we might a strong but wilful horse, which needs to be reminded frequently of the direction we're supposed to be going in." When did you last say words that hurt, and then ask yourself, "Why did I say that?" What helps you to understand your "interior landscape" better, to keep you from blurting out words you regret and wish you could take back?

Pray - Lord of my life, be Lord of my words. Let the words of my mouth and the meditations of my heart be pleasing to you, Lord, my rock and my redeemer. Amen.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Just a reminder that all in-person meetings are cancelled for the time being.

If you need assistance setting up a video or audio conference, please contact the church office.

AMOS is launching a COVID-19 Survey to understand how this public health and economic crisis is impacting members of our communities. This survey is another tool to hear stories of what Central lowans are experiencing, reach out beyond our usual contacts, and invite others to act with us during this isolating time. Information received with this AMOS survey will be shared with institutional leaders to help support our community.

AMOS COVID-19 Survey Link: <https://www.123formbuilder.com/form-5369321/>

If you know of Grace members who would appreciate receiving hard copies of worship bulletins, sermons, and other reading materials, please call Charlene in the church office with their names. Information packets will be mailed each Monday.

Applications are now open for the 2020-2021 Grace Foundation/Bolsinger Scholarships. Get your electronic copy on the Grace UMC Website. Application must be received by April 30th, 2020. -Grace UM Foundation, Scholarship Committee

Keep growing in faith at home. Pastor Nate (and Irene) have helped us stay in touch via the internet during this coronavirus isolation time. There is another way to supplement those efforts so we can grow in faith while we are apart. Grace currently has a membership to Amplify, a media ministry of the United Methodist Publishing House. You can look at free options at <https://amplifymedia.com/>, even without the Grace "code" for our membership. If you would like to look at other content, please email bob.dean@iaumc.net for information on how to access all the materials with Grace's code.

Grace will continue to be online and in the mail only in accordance with federal guidelines. Thank you all for your prayers, support, patience, and gratitude during this time. In days like these, while some are working harder than ever before, and others are not working at all, while some can go about their day as if nothing changed, others have felt everything change. We have to continue to be a people worthy of being called Grace and that is who you are and what you are sharing with one another.

We have many regularly scheduled live-streams on Facebook. Even if you don't have facebook, you can always catch our videos at gracedesmoines.org. Our new schedule of live stream events is:

Sunday - Worship at 10:15 am

Monday - Bible Study and Sermon Q&A at 11 am

Tuesday - Guide to Prayer and Study at 9 am

Wednesday - Nate at Noon (soup and sermon)

Thursday - Spiritual Practices at 4 pm

If you have had trouble finding the livestreams either on facebook or on our website, make sure that while with Grace online you 'refresh' your browser and if all goes well you should be able to join us live. If you ever miss a livestream, don't worry, you can always catch it later on 'Nate TV' at gracedesmoines.org

Thank you all, again, for your continued support and prayers.

If there is anything our church can do to help, please don't hesitate to let us know.

Church and Society Immigration Forum

On April 27 at 7 pm, the Church and Society Committee will present a 60-minute virtual session on a current US Immigration Policy whose legality is under consideration by the Supreme Court. Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) is a kind of administrative relief from deportation. The purpose of DACA is to protect eligible immigrants from deportation. DACA is for people who came to the United States when they were children and are going to school or have graduated in the United States. DACA gives young undocumented immigrants: 1) protection from deportation and 2) a work permit. DACA status expires after two years, subject to renewal.

The current administration has vowed to end the program. Courts have blocked the administration's efforts to end the program. However, these decisions have been appealed and the Supreme Court will soon rule on its legality. The decision from the Supreme Court could come at any time.

The goals of this session are to alert our church community to what the Supreme Court's decision could mean for DACA recipients and to the impact terminating this program could have on our country and to prepare us for actions we may want to take individually or as a congregation depending on the Court's decision.

The event will be on Zoom and will do our best to connect the stream to Facebook.

You can join on Zoom here:

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86518958825?pwd=cWJNOG5US29xZUdlIdIAxRjlpclIdlZz09>

Meeting ID: 865 1895 8825

Password: 079660

One tap mobile

+16465588656,,86518958825#,,079660# US (New York)

+13126266799,,86518958825#,,079660# US (Chicago)

As we get closer to the event we will publish and share a Zoom link and the forum will be recorded so if you miss it at 7 on the 27th you can always catch it at another time.

Please contact Laura Sands (laurasands@mchsi.com) if you have questions.

Support Grace and look good too! You can order your own Grace shirt from our friends at Eight Seven Central through May 3. Proceeds from the sale will help Grace continue to give back to our community. Order yours online today at <https://graceunited.eightsevendcentral.net/product/men-template-copy/>

Subscribe to the Beyond the Red Doors weekly email for information on upcoming events by going to www.gracedesmoines.org. Scroll toward the bottom of the page until you see the “Beyond the Red Doors” section and follow the instructions to subscribe.

WORSHIP LEADER: Rev. Nate Nims;

RESOURCES USED IN THIS SERVICE:

Call to Worship and Unison Opening Prayer from enfleshed (www.enfleshed.com.)

All music used under OneLicense A-727197

Guide to Prayer and Study modified from cor.org

† In hymns, prayers, and liturgies, use language that makes worship meaningful, enriching, and inclusive.



Grace United Methodist Church
3700 Cottage Grove
Des Moines, IA 50311
gracedesmoines.org
phone: 515.255.2131
email: info@gracedesmoines.org

Like us on Facebook and follow us on Twitter at GraceDesMoines

In-person services are suspended for the time being. Please join us online for worship.
Watch the livestream of the 10:15 am service on the GraceDesMoines Facebook page.