



Grace United Methodist Church

July 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

God, Let us come together rejoicing.

For nothing can separate us from your love.

Not life nor death.

Not prejudice nor power.

Not our grief nor our fears.

Not the wrongs we have done nor the wrongs done against us.

Love comes to us still.

When nothing feels certain, this truth remains:

The Spirit is our constant companion, ushering us toward life. Amen

SCRIPTURE READING

Philippians 1:23-24

But I don't know what I prefer. I'm torn between the two because I want to leave this life and be with Christ, which is far better. However, it's more important for me to stay in this world for your sake.

SERMON

Pastor Nate Nims

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.

OFFERING

CLOSING SONG

"Sanctuary"

Guide to Prayer and Study

Monday, July 27

Read - Nehemiah 8:1-10

Notice - As this passage of Nehemiah begins, the people have forgotten the core of their religious tradition. As the Torah scroll is read aloud and interpreted for the people, they have moments of grief and loss because they realize they've fallen short of the covenant with God. However, Nehemiah says this day is not made of mourning or weeping. When Nehemiah says, "joy from the Lord is your strength" what images come to mind? Have you ever experienced a joy that wasn't your own, and yet became your joy? Why do you think that someone like Paul, who experienced so much suffering, could consistently experience and express joy?

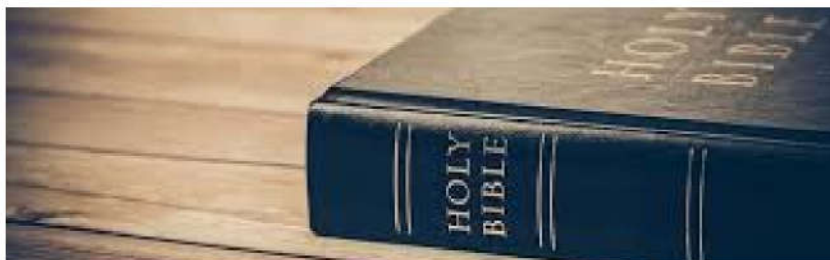
Pray - God, even in the midst of my grief, your presence and promise of healing and hope remains. When I cannot feel joy for myself, help me to remember the joy you have, because your joy is my strength. Amen.

Tuesday, July 28

Read - Psalm 22:1-6, Matthew 27:46

Notice - While on the cross, Jesus quotes Psalm 22:1. What is fascinating about the passage from Matthew is that Jesus does not quote the Psalm in Hebrew as he would have known it religiously. Instead, Jesus quotes Psalm 22 in Aramaic, the non-religious, everyday language of the region. By speaking in Aramaic, Jesus' cry of desperation and distance from God is amplified all the more. Take some time today to think back through your life and any experiences that made you feel like the Psalmist or Jesus. How was your understanding of God challenged or inspired by those experiences? What helped you through those experiences? While Psalm 22 begins with despair, it ends with trust and hope. How does it help to know that the Bible contains this honest expression of life and faith and doubt?

Pray - God, there are moments in which we feel abandoned and alone, yet your love remains. When we cry out and feel forsaken, help us to see your grace and peace unfold around and within us. Amen.



Wednesday, July 29

Read - Jeremiah 6:13-17

Notice - In this passage from Jeremiah, the people of Israel aren't facing the seriousness of their situation as much as they are avoiding it. Instead of dealing with the issues at hand, they've manufactured a false hope that's empty. Why do you think we often know what the next right step is, but have trouble taking it? Has it ever been easier for you to come up with an excuse to avoid the next right step, than it has been to take the next right step? What advice did you not listen to, that now you know the wisdom of?

Pray - God, even when I said I wouldn't listen, you kept putting people in my life to proclaim your grace and peace. Even when I knew the next right step to take and did all I could to avoid it, the Spirit moved and showed me the way to go. No matter what I listen to, say, or do, God, your love remains. Help me to live into your great love today and every day. Amen.

Thursday, July 30

Read - Matthew 11:28-30

Notice - In the First Century, the teachings of a Rabbi was often referred to as a yoke. The interpretation of the scriptures, especially the Law, was complicated in the First Century, as it is today. Jesus reduced the law to loving God and loving others, while the yoke of other teachers encouraged separation and discrimination. How do the heavy loads that you carry find rest in the teachings of Jesus? What can grace and peace liberate you from today?.

Pray - Jesus, so often I tell myself I have to be right enough, smart enough, moral enough, good enough, and forget that in your eyes I am, no matter what, enough. Show me your grace and peace that makes me enough, that makes me loved and worthy. Amen.

Friday, July 31

Read - 1 Peter 3:5-7

Notice - As the Wesley Study Bible notes, "Wesley is famously quoted as writing, 'The Gospel of Christ knows of no religion but social; no holiness but social holiness...' For Wesley, holiness is evidenced through acts of mercy, especially towards the poor and the needy."* When have you, as it's written in verse 10 of our reading today, been a source of restoration, empowerment, and strength for someone else? When has someone else been that for you? In either or both instances, where did you see power and glory of God's grace and peace?

Pray -Jesus, your love draws us together towards healing and wholeness. Help me to accept and to live with your grace and peace today. Amen.

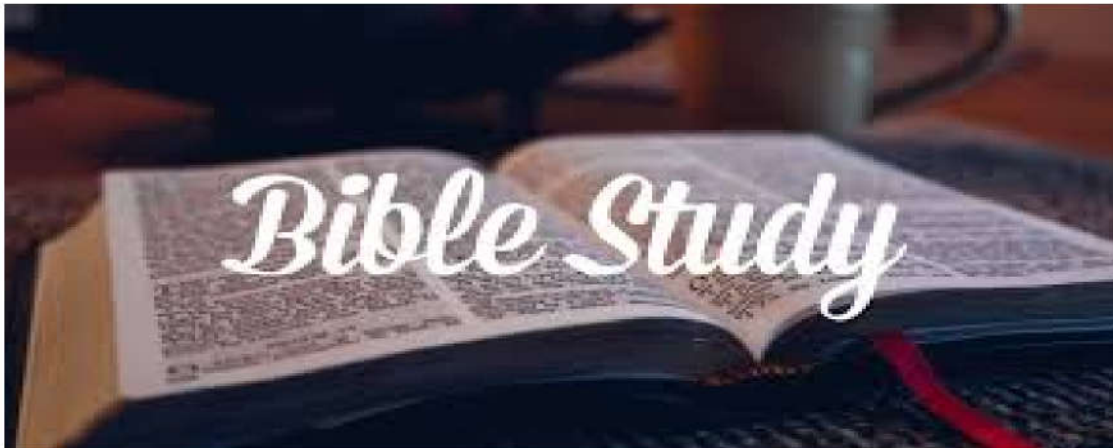
*Wesley Study Bible, CEB, page 1565

Saturday, August 1

Read - Proverbs 3:5-7

Notice - In English translations of the Bible, fear is often best translated as awe or wonder. How does awe in the midst of creation and the cosmos humble you and help you to turn away from evil and move towards grace and peace? Throughout this past week, have you been able to feel God move in your heart and not only your head? As you look at the week to come, what would it look like to turn away from evil and keep your paths straight?

Pray - God, keep me humble and keep me hopeful. Fill in my heart the awe that moves me toward grace and peace. Amen.



ANNOUNCEMENTS

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.

Resources from the Upper Room are available to all as part of the COVID-19 response. If you would like a hard copy, but are unable to come to the church to get one, call Charlene in the church office at 515.255.2131 to have one mailed or emailed to you. English and Spanish editions are available. You may also listen to the daily devotional on the phone by calling 1.877.600.7218. To see all available study and worship opportunities currently available, please go to www.upperroom.org/covid-19.

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 Iowans 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.

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.

The Grace Administrative Council has decided to continue worshiping online throughout July. Currently, Polk County represents about one-third of the positive cases of COVID-19 in Iowa. We are beginning to look at some ways that we can slowly, and safely, begin to use our facility again for mission and ministry. As future decisions are finalized, with the safety of our community and congregation in mind, we will communicate it with the congregation. .

Our church staff will continue to work primarily from home and all in-person activities at the church remain on hiatus. If you have any questions you can contact Pastor Nate at natenims@gracedesmoines.org or call the church office. Pastor Nate checks his church voice mail a couple of times a week.

We have many regularly scheduled live-streams on Facebook and YouTube. You can also always catch our videos at gracedesmoines.org. Our new schedule of live stream events is:

Sunday - Worship at 10:15 am on the GraceDesMoines Facebook and YouTube pages

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.

Would you like to be a Liturgist? As we continue to worship online, we would like to have liturgists to help with the service. If you would like to help with readings and prayers, please email Nate at natenims@gracedesmoines.org.

Kits for the at-home Knights of the North Castle Vacation Bible School

are ready to go! Contact Coreen Witke to make arrangements for pick up or delivery. Typically, VBS is for kids who are 3-years-old through 5th grade, but the activities will be fun for a variety of ages. Lessons are presented via videos that were produced by Cokesbury and most of the supplies are included. There are just a few household things you will need to find. Email Coreen at coreenwitke@gracedesmoines.org with questions or to arrange contactless delivery.

"Be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his power." Ephesians 6:10

Ann Naffier, Legal Director of Iowa Justice for Our Neighbors (JFON),

will be the featured speaker in our third immigration forum sponsored by Church and Society. The virtual forum will be available by Zoom or on Grace's Facebook page on July 27 at 7:00 pm. Grace United Methodist Church has long been a site for Iowa Justice for Our Neighbors monthly legal clinics. JFON provides free, high-quality immigration legal services, education, and advocacy. Ann will be talking about JFON's critical work with refugees and asylees in our communities and some of the barriers people fleeing violence in their home countries are now encountering as they attempt to enter or legally remain in the United States. Please contact Laura Sands at laurasands@mchsi.com if you have questions about this forum.

Please continue to keep your Grace friends and family in your prayers.

Think about the persons that you often sat by in the sanctuary or the people you'd share a cup of coffee with. Could you send them a letter this weekend or even make a call to check in on one another? If you need help finding a phone number or address, please contact the church office.

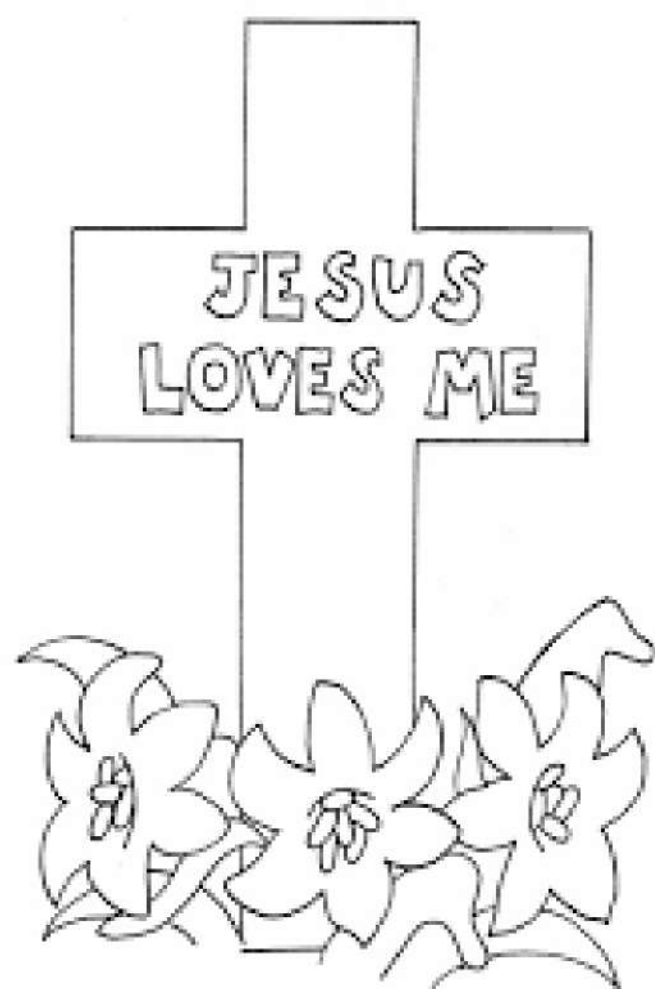
Member Updates

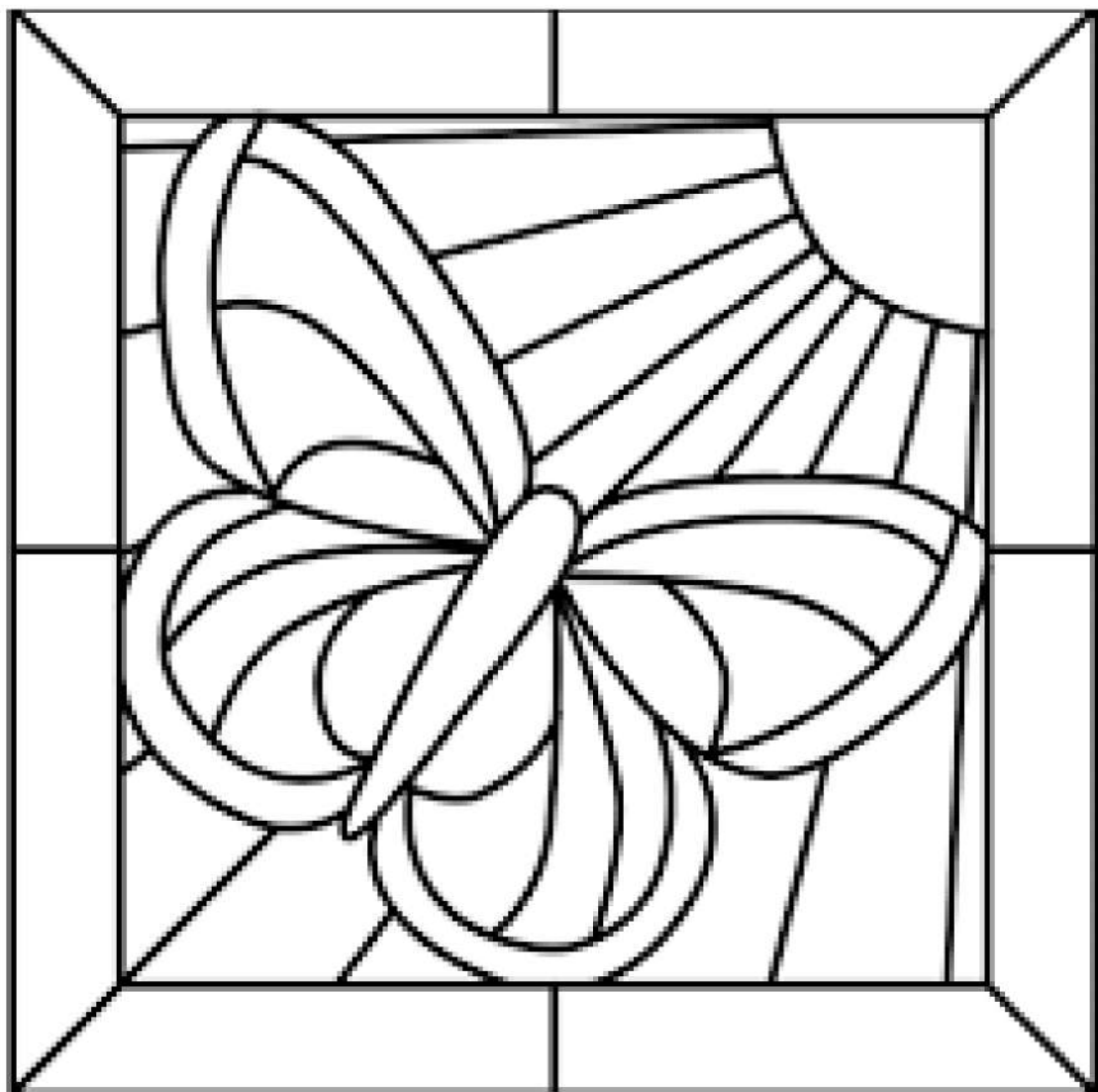
Two weeks ago, **Renne Ellingson** suffered a massive stroke and has also tested positive for COVID-19. Thankfully, Renne has been moved out of the ICU and is no longer on a COVID-19 floor. Renne is still struggling with speech, and remains paralyzed on her left side, but is responding to and following along with conversations. Renne is currently in room 763 at Mercy and is able to receive cards.

Yvonne Welshhons will be celebrating her 80th birthday on August 2 and is celebrating with a card shower. Cards can be sent to Yvonne at 910 NE 45th St, Ankeny, IA 50021

Annette Nelson's home caught fire recently. Thankfully, Jacob and Emily were staying with their dad the night of the fire, but sadly, in addition to the fire damage, the family dog passed in the fire. Annette stayed in the hospital for a couple days due to burns and smoke inhalation, but was released last weekend. A Go Fund Me has been created to help the family and can be found at <https://www.gofundme.com/f/foutch-family-house-fire>

Stephanie Freier suffered a massive aneurysm last month. Since being released from the hospital, Stephanie has recovered miraculously well. Greg Freier is thankful for all the prayers and support they have received from Grace and their friends. A Go Fund Me has been created to help Stephanie and can be found at <https://www.gofundme.com/f/freierfamilyhelp>





WORSHIP LEADER: Rev. Nate Nims;

RESOURCES USED IN THIS SERVICE:

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

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Des Moines, IA 50311

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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

or on our YouTube page..