



Grace United Methodist Church

July 18, 2021

OUR WELCOMING STATEMENT

We celebrate God's gift of diversity and value the wholeness made possible in community equally shared and shepherded by all. We welcome and affirm people of every gender identity, gender expression, and sexual orientation, who are also of every age, race, ethnicity, physical and mental ability, level of education, and family structure, and of every economic, immigration, marital, and social status.

We acknowledge that we live in a world of profound social, economic, and political inequities. As followers of Jesus, we commit ourselves to the pursuit of justice and pledge to stand in solidarity with all who are marginalized and oppressed.

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

WELCOME, ANNOUNCEMENTS, AND GREETING ONE ANOTHER

PRELUDE

CALL TO WORSHIP

Sometimes we say to ourselves,

**“Our bones are dried up and our hope is lost;
we are cut off.”**

But God says through the prophet Ezekiel,

“I will open and raise you from your graves.

I will attach tendons to you and swaddle you in flesh and skin.

And I will bring you into the land that was promised to you.

O Dry bones, I can and will breathe you back to life.

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OPENING HYMN UMH 302 "Christ the Lord Is Risen Today"

OPENING PRAYER

God of Ezekiel, You at great cost, became tendons, flesh, blood and bone,
And in death you opened up your grave in the name of promise. **Would you**
make us a people who behold that promise as our dry bones shake in strange
lands? We fall asleep to the sound of bones rattling, would you wake us with
your breath? Give us the strength to crawl out of our graves. Amen.

WELCOMING OF NEW MEMBER CATHY KURTZ

SCRIPTURE READING

Ezekiel 37:1-14

SERMON

"Fear and Death"

Pastor Nate Nims

PASTORAL PRAYER AND THE PRAYER JESUS TAUGHT

Our God (Father, Mother, Creator) 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
OFFERTORY

CLOSING HYMN UMH 707 "Hymn of Praise"

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE



In Loving Memory

A memorial service to celebrate the life of Dr. Eric Jayne will be held at Grace on Saturday, July 24, at 2:00 p.m. A reception with light refreshments will follow the service. Please keep all those who mourn Eric's passing in your prayers



We invite you to attend the **Open Table** on Thursdays from 6:00 pm to 7:00 pm in Room 201. As our name implies, we model our group off the belief in the Methodist Church that all are welcome to the communion table, and we likewise welcome ALL including our LGBTQI family, agnostics, and anyone who has been hurt by the church to our weekly discussions. We are an open-minded and open-hearted group meeting weekly to discuss faith, spirituality, and social justice. We strive to create a space where contemplation, conversation, and questions are welcome, and uncommon hospitality can take root. We value open dialogue, foster relationships, and seek to create a community where we can both challenge and support each other as we explore what it means to live out our Christian faith.

If you are looking to reconnect with others following a year of COVID isolation, if you are interested in wrestling with questions of our common humanity, if you are searching for another way to hear God's voice, or if you just like the idea of sharing light snacks and soda with other flawed humans - please consider joining us for a night! Come to the table.

Grace is trying something new with Vacation Bible School this year. We will be meeting on Wednesday evenings from 6 to 7:30 p.m. from July 7 through August 4. Our goal is to be outside for all of our activities, but we have space reserved inside in the event of inclement weather. In addition, we will have an at-home option for those who would prefer to participate at home. The link for registration is below. Any questions? Contact Coreen Witke at 515.255.6400 ext. 230 or coreenwitke@gracedesmoines.org.
<https://gracedesmoines.mycokesburyvbs.com/>



2021 Thanksgiving Ingathering

It's that time of year again. School supplies will be going on sale in July, and we will be accepting donations for the 2021 Ingathering soon. You may place your items in the receptacle in the church entryway. These items are used during natural disasters and, more generally, to help those in need.

Below are the items needed to complete each kit. If you have any questions about the items, you may contact Liza Blair (841-223-2372 (please text first); lp23holding@vishoo.com) or Jean Kerber (878-733-3887). For information about making the cloth bags, contact Susan Ryon (515-828-8511).

Personal Dignity Kit Contents:

- 1 Bath Hand Towel - No kitchen towels and please avoid the larger plush towels. We have limited space in the bag.
- 1 Bath Washcloth - No dishcloths
- 1 Adult Toothbrush - No multipacks
- 1 Bar Soap - 3-4 oz
- 1 Shampoo - 16-18 oz
- 1 Deodorant - 2-3 oz - stick, roll on, or pump
- 1 1-gal Re-sealable Plastic Bag
- \$2 donation for razor and toothpaste

All items must be NEW

Student Kit Contents:

- 3 Notebooks -1 subject spiral 8" x 10 1/2"
- 1 Ruler - 12" long with metric
- 8 Pencils - unsharpened
- 1 Pencil Sharpener
- 1 Pencil Eraser - 2" or larger
- 1 Box 12 Colored Pencils
- 1 Box 24 Crayons
- 1 Pair of Scissors - student round tip

Place in a one handle cloth bag.

Guide to Prayer and Study: July 19-24

Monday, July 19

Read - Isaiah 40:27-31, 46:3-4

Notice - Today's readings likely came from a time when the Israelites were returning to their ruined land after decades in exile. It was a long and difficult journey from Babylon to Jerusalem, which we see with Isaiah 40's references to "stumbling" and "walking". The Israelites were weary, and feared that God was, too. But these prophetic texts said God never forgets God's people. Israel (and we) could always hope and trust in God, because God has pledged to support us all our lives—and our God never grows tired like we do. Isaiah wrote that God's "understanding is beyond human reach" (40:28). Our need to control, our challenge with "letting go," inexorably runs into our inability to control time. Even the best health and fitness programs cannot (honestly) promise to halt the aging process. How can really trusting in a God who's vastly wiser than you renew your strength by setting you free from the need to try to control life's uncontrollable realities?

Pray - God, when I'm worn out, you are still full of eternal energy. As I age, you remain the same creative, caring God you've always been. Help me learn more and more to trust your timeless love. Amen.

Tuesday, July 20

Read - Psalm 71:17-19, Psalm 92:12-14

Notice - In what ways can our culture's constant messages about the struggles of growing older influence your spending and behavior? In what ways, even subtly, do signs of age lead you to think less of yourself or other people? Do today's readings challenge any of your attitudes or actions? What is one way you want to revise your thinking about older people in the light of these Bible texts? Whether you're 16 or 86, to what extent can you say, like the psalmist, "You've taught me since my youth, God, and I'm still proclaiming your wondrous deeds!"? What people, from younger siblings or neighbors to grandchildren (or even great-grandchildren), do you have a chance to influence by your example and verbal sharing? Whatever your age, join the psalmist in resolving, "Lord, I will help others remember nothing but your righteous deeds."

Pray - God, I'm so used to hearing (and saying) things like "too old" or "too green" that it's a joy to see that the Scriptures, and you, show no age bias. Free me from those biases, too. Amen.

Wednesday, July 21

Read - Luke 2:25-38

Notice - This text is often read at Christmas, but it also carries a generational message. Here were Mary (probably in her early teens) and Joseph, bringing an infant to the Temple to dedicate to God. Who greeted them? Simeon, so old that as soon as he'd seen Jesus he said to God, "Now let your servant go in peace," and Anna, an 84-year-old widow. The young couple didn't brush the elderly off as out-of-date annoyances, nor did Simeon and Anna scorn the young parents as clearly too young to parent the Messiah. Simeon hadn't let himself become a "cranky old man." Luke said he "eagerly anticipated the restoration of Israel," even though the mighty Roman army firmly controlled Judea, and Israel's religious leaders often quarreled and were at times corrupt. How can you nurture a hopeful sense of "eager anticipation" about what God is doing today, through people of many ages?

Pray - God, one of your names in the Bible was "Ancient of Days." I'm thankful you are the Lord of all my days, from birth through old age. Keep me aware of your presence with me. Amen.

Thursday, July 22

Read - 2 Corinthians 4:6-10, 16-18

Notice - The apostle Paul wrote 2 Corinthians after a painful time, when many Christians in Corinth had turned against him. Later in the letter, he catalogued the many challenges he had faced in carrying out God's mission (cf. 2 Corinthians 11:23-28). Yet Paul did not let any of that destroy him. In verse 10, Paul tied his struggles to Jesus' death, which seemed the worst defeat of all, and yet became a victory when he rose from the dead three days later. When did you last feel confused, harassed, or knocked down? What resources helped you avoid being crushed, depressed, or knocked out? Have you ever seen, in yourself or anyone you know, the truth of "even if our bodies are breaking down on the outside, the person that we are on the inside is being renewed every day"?

Pray - Jesus, on the days when life feels dark, when nothing seems to go right, help me not to be crushed or destroyed. Remind me always that "the worst thing is never the last thing." Amen.

Friday, July 23

Read - Hebrews 2:14-15, 1 Corinthians 15:51-57, Revelation 21:3-5

Notice - From ancient Rome to today, the “ultimate” human threat is, “I will kill you.” Roman officials puzzled over how little that threat seemed to affect Jesus’ followers. Jesus, who died and rose again, set his followers free from even the fear of death. In 1 Corinthians 15, the apostle Paul boldly proclaimed a divine victory so sweeping that death would be “swallowed up.” In John Wesley’s sermon “On the Resurrection of the Dead,” he quoted Paul and said, “Let this especially fortify us against the fear of death: It is now disarmed, and can do us no hurt.” The Bible ended with Revelation’s glorious vision of a world in which “death will be no more.” When someone we love faces death, we often use “combat” language, sadly saying things like “she lost the battle.” But Paul quoted the prophet Hosea to deny that death “wins”: “Where is your victory, Death?” (cf. Hosea 13:14). For a Christian, death is not a defeat, but a transition into a new phase of our victorious walk with Christ. Does the idea of death cause you fear and anxiety? How can internalizing the full meaning of Jesus’ resurrection lead you toward greater peace as you await God’s eternity, where death will be no more?

Pray - Jesus, you went where most of us most dread going—the realm of death—and you emerged victorious! You offer me the choice to join you in that victory. I accept your offer of a life that lies beyond the power of death. Amen.

Saturday, July 24

Read - Psalm 111:7-10, Proverbs 2:2-6, 2 Corinthians 7:1

Notice - This sermon series has called us to live above and beyond many of our most common fears. We’ve learned therapeutic tools that work along with our trust in God by not letting our fear have the final say in our lives. There is one kind of “fear,” however, that the Bible fully endorsed: “the fear of the Lord.” “While we tend to associate the word ‘fear’ with a ‘hair standing on end’ or ‘fight or flight’ feeling, ‘the fear of the LORD’ is best understood as awe or wonder. God is ‘fearsome,’ but not in the sense that some want to run away from or escape from God’s presence. Rather, we are called to approach the Lord with a sense of awe while in the presence of the holy.” * Can you recall times when you have experienced this healthy, lifegiving kind of fear in a particularly vivid way? Why would this type of fear cause you to want to draw closer to God, rather than to shrink away?

Pray - God, let me never lose a sense of awe at the privilege you offer me to accept your love and to walk through my life in your presence, with you as my Lord and guide. Amen.

* Nancy L. deClaissé-Walford, study note on Proverbs 1:7 in *The CEB Study Bible*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2013, p. 1007 OT.

WORSHIP LEADERS: Rev. Nate Nims, Senior Pastor; Anna Mullen, liturgist; Ann Gerdorn, organist; Michael Gookin, pianist.

Resources used in this service

Call to Worship and Opening prayer modified from @BlackLiturgies (Cole Arthur Riley) on Instagram, posted July 12, 2020

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

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Hymnals: United Methodist Hymnal (UMH); The Faith We Sing (TFWS); Worship & Song (W&S).



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Like us on Facebook and follow us on Twitter at GraceDesMoines

Worship in-person with us at 10:15 a.m. Sunday morning, or join us online.

Watch the livestream of the 10:15 am service on the GraceDesMoines Facebook page,