



the Grace Messenger

A monthly publication of Grace University Lutheran Church
APRIL 2021 — VOLUME 118 — ISSUE 4

PASTOR'S PAGE

I remember an Easter Sunday fifteen years back. Worship started in dark and quiet. There were no Easter flowers; not a candle was lit and the black shroud was still on the high altar from Good Friday. The service began with a nod of solidarity to the women who came to the tomb expecting death, prepared to tend Jesus' lifeless body.

The crowd of worshippers passed a large cross overhead, up and down the pews, while a singular voice sang "Were you There". Then the Easter Gospel was read, the Alleluia responses declared, and an Easter hymn introduction on the organ, with all the stops pulled out, shattered the somber tone. The choir processed in with flowers, candles, paraments, communion elements, a large Bible, with the processional cross leading the way.



In the sermon I asked this rhetorical question: when you arrived for worship today, did you think we had forgotten it was Easter? From the back of the packed church, the voice of a six-year-old boy yelled definitively: NO!

Theologian Martin Niemoller wrote: "Easter is not part of the old accustomed divine order, of the ordered world in which we live. It is an

absolutely new, unexpected act of the living God, which interrupts and runs counter to the uniform rise and fall of the world's rhythm. Here we have the beginning of something new."

Martin Luther King, Jr. used to say, you can only keep going against what seems to be impossible odds if you have "cosmic allies. To nourish the Easter faith is to allow oneself to hope that despite eons of injustice, pain and death, in some way that now eludes our most vivid imagination, God's shalom will triumph in the end."

With Easter as our storyline, we locate ourselves on the side of God's love, and hatred stands in the wings. We stand on the side of God's justice and mercy, and greed and oppression stand in the wings. We stand on the side of Jesus' kindness and compassion, and stinginess and small-mindedness stand in the wings. We stand on the side of openness and trust, and cynicism and judgment stand in the wings.

From a virtual tent in the land of zoom, people gather for daily prayer for the healing of the city. As the Chauvin trial gets underway, we pray for the

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in APRIL

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The deadline for submissions to the MAY Grace Messenger is MONDAY, APRIL 19.



Graceattheu.org

[Grace University Lutheran Church Facebook Page](#)

[Grace University Families on Facebook](#)

[Grace University YouTube Channel](#)

WORSHIP *in* APRIL

We worship apart, but together. Worship information is emailed on Saturdays at 5 pm and is also posted on our website. Worship videos are on our YouTube channel.

Sundays at 9:30 am join us for "Live: Stories & Songs" on our Facebook page – a worshipful and fun time for all ages.

Maundy Thursday, April 1 & Good Friday, April 2
See lower right for details

Sunday, April 4

Resurrection of Our Lord – Easter Sunday

Facebook Live Easter Sunrise at 6:30 am

Live Worship at 10:30 am via Zoom with Holy Communion (see p. 3 for connection info)

Acts 10:34-43 *God raised Jesus on the third day*

Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24

1 Corinthians 15:1-11 *Witnesses to the risen Christ*

Mark 16:1-8 *The resurrection of Jesus is announced, and the response is one of terror and amazement*

Sunday, April 11

Second Sunday of Easter

Pre-recorded worship provided by the Minneapolis Area Synod staff

Acts 4:32-35 *The believers' common life*

Psalm 133

1 John 1:1—2:2 *Walking in the light*

John 20:19-31 *Beholding the wounds of the risen Christ*

Sunday, April 18

Third Sunday of Easter

Lutheran Campus Ministry Sunday

Table of Mercy Setting

Acts 3:12-19 *Health and forgiveness through the risen Jesus*

Psalm 4

1 John 3:1-7 *The revealing of the children of God*

Luke 24:36b-48 *Eating with the risen Christ*



Sunday, April 25

Fourth Sunday of Easter

Creation Sunday

Acts 4:5-12 *Salvation in the name of Jesus*

Psalm 23

1 John 3:16-24 *Love in truth and action*

John 10:11-18 *Christ the shepherd*

Pastor's Page continued...

jurors, the accused, the judge, George Floyd's loved ones, those who carry their own stories of loss and violence, those reeling from economic loss. We pray that new life would emerge in our city in the form of justice, non-violence and change in structures and systems unfairly stacked against brown and black bodies and lives.

May Easter be the greening of our lives, our hopes, our ways of being together as a beautifully diverse and intricate community.

I close with St. 4 from the new hymn *Christ Has Risen While Earth Slumbers*, written by John Bell.

Christ has risen and forever lives to challenge and to change

All whose lives are messed or mangled, all who find religion strange.

Christ is risen, Christ is present making us what he has been:

Evidence of transformation in which God is known and seen.

Pastor Mary

HOLY WEEK WORSHIP

Maundy Thursday – April 1

Pre-recorded worship available beginning at 6 pm

Good Friday – April 2

Pre-recorded worship available beginning at 12 noon

Easter Sunday – April 4

Live at 10:30 am via Zoom, with Holy Communion

(will be uploaded to YouTube post-service)

Prepare at home by gathering bread and wine or grape juice.

Details for connecting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81974677822?pwd=YXlFVFhB4NXI2MzMxCHJXcFpQdzdaUT09>

Meeting ID: 819 7467 7822

Passcode: 006258

CELEBRATING OUR PASTORS

Please reserve the weekend of May 15 and 16 to celebrate and say farewell to Pastor Mary and Pastor Dan as they embark upon their retirement

At 7:00 pm on Saturday, May 15, you are invited to participate in a Zoom send-off party (planning now underway—read on for more information for ways to become involved!). On Sunday morning May 16, Dan and Mary will lead their final worship service at Grace via a live Zoom.

If you would like to share ideas or become involved, please contact Kirsten Bansen Weigle at kbansenweigle@gmail.com or (612) 396-3976.

Farewell Party for Pastors Dan and Mary — help us plan!
Saturday, May 15, 7:00pm

Oh, how we wish we could gather in person! But Zoom will have to do for a May party for Pastors Dan and Mary. Their wish is for an evening filled with music and laughter—and of course we'll be a bit sentimental as well.

We want your input and involvement in planning!

Please join a creative brainstorming session on **Wednesday, March 31, 6:30-7:30pm** via Zoom.

(Use this link for the brainstorming session:
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82212751934?pwd=b2xNekZxenVzWitpUk8rbWF4ZTgzUT09...>

Meeting ID: 822 1275 1934, Passcode: 090431).

We'll talk themes, memories, elements of the program, and how to make it all fun on Zoom. We'll of course be looking for people who want to help with preparations, so this is the time to raise your hand to volunteer as well!

Can't make the session? Share your ideas by clicking [HERE](#). Submit by March 31 at 5:00pm. Thank you! Contact Liz Address with any questions (email info@graceattheu.org with "Farewell Party" in the Subject and it will be forwarded).

OFFICE VACATION

Jill Abenth will be on vacation from all church office tasks April 5-11. Emails will be checked by another staff member. For urgent church matters, please reach out to another staff member — Pastors Mary and Dan or Heidi (pastormary@graceattheu.org, pastordan@graceattheu.org, cyf@graceattheu.org).

CREATION SUNDAY

April 25, 2021

Grace's Global Climate Change study group invites you to a virtual information-sharing climate change presentation and discussion on **Sunday, April 25 at 11:30** following the church service. Creation Sunday coincides with Earth Day, our national observation of our love for the earth. This group's main focus is on food and food production, but we're also interested in all the major climate change fields including energy generation and transportation.

In preparation for the discussion, we suggest that you watch the eye-opening film, "Kiss the Ground," available on Netflix. It presents the concepts of regenerative farming and carbon sequestration, and the role they could play in the battle against climate change.

On average each of us Americans is responsible for releasing 16 tons of carbon into the atmosphere annually. That's a lot, especially if the goal is to be carbon neutral by 2050, not to mention we've been releasing excess carbon for longer than most other countries. Gulp. Does that mean we need to take responsibility for even more of the current problem?

Don't get depressed. Join with fellow Grace community members to learn about options, discuss being part of the solution and set goals for ourselves.

Zoom connection information for the gathering will be shared in upcoming communications.



EASTER SEASON DAILY DEVOTIONALS

This season's Day by Day with Grace emailed devotions will begin on April 12 (so, we're going to take a break for the week after Easter).

You are invited to contribute!

Please send photographs that show "new life" to Jill in the office (info@graceattheu.org).

Submission Criteria:

a quality photograph (Jill may edit and crop as needed) that you or a family member has taken, jpg or png file, 1 or 2 submissions per person (maybe more 😊), and if a human is included in the composition, please gain their permission for it to be used. There is no guarantee that every photograph submitted will be used, but we will make every effort to include as many as possible. You can start sending in photos immediately:) Indicate in the subject line of your email "New Life Photo".

FOUNDATION FOR CANCER CARE IN TANZANIA FUNDRAISING GALA

You can support the legacy of Helmet and Ro Diefenthal.

The annual fundraising Gala for Foundation For Cancer Care in Tanzania is **Saturday, April 17, 7-8pm CDT**. Registration is free.

Donations can be made at this website:
<https://tanzaniacancercare.org>

NOTES FROM YOUR GRACE COMPANIONS IN GOOD GRIEF

Not only has COVID changed our lives dramatically: Grace Church is soon to undergo a transition in pastoral leadership. These events most certainly create a sense of anticipatory loss and grief.

On March 2 the NYT published an article titled *"There is no vaccine for grief: but there are ways to prepare to face it."* Author AC Shilton admits that grief is unique and often experienced and managed very differently amongst people. Shilton proposes ways you may be able to "inoculate" yourself against feelings of loss by remembering a few key strategies:

1. Share your love with the people you love
2. Nurture your network—lean on loved ones and friends
3. Immerse yourself in nature

There are also ways you can foster resilience in the face of anticipatory loss and grief. Frank Picone MSW, a therapist at the CTARI Institute, believes resilience helps us deal with adversity and uncertainty. He urges us to live with five intentions that can help us build our resilience. These include the following:

1. Live in the present moment, not the past or the future. We have power over the present and are free to ask ourselves, "What are my options now?"
2. Focus on the things we control as opposed to things beyond our influence.
3. Choose and energize positive thoughts; change the meaning of an event by re-framing it. In Picone's words, "Feed the flowers, not the weeds: what you feed will grow."
4. Practice self-care; be kind to yourself.
5. Learn ways to re-set your emotions when you are facing a high stress situation. Mindfulness, visualization activities and deep breathing can all be helpful, along with regular exercise.

In his poem *"The Way It Is,"* William Stafford uses the metaphor of a thread to represent one's calling, conviction, faith, even resilience to illustrate how we navigate challenging times:

The Way It Is

There's a thread that you follow. It goes among things that change. But it doesn't change.
People wonder about what you are pursuing.
You have to explain about the thread.
But it is hard for others to see.
While you hold it you can't get lost.
Tragedies happen; people get hurt
or die; and you suffer and get old.
Nothing you do can stop time's unfolding.
You don't ever let go of the thread.

Good Grief continued...

As we journey together, we can be reassured by Jesus' words in Matthew 28:20:

And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.

Blessings to each and every one of you, as well as your loved ones during this challenging time.

Your Grace companions in Good Grief

References:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/02/well/family/grief-vaccine.html>

<https://www.cge-nj.org/the-ctari-institute/>

Ask Me: *100 Essential Poems* by William Stafford. Minneapolis: Graywolf Press. 2014, p. 7.

CALL PROCESS

Grace's website now holds a Call Process page to serve as a clearinghouse for all information related to the discernment process for transition to new pastoral leadership: <http://graceattheu.org/call-process/>.

In addition, the Call Committee can be contacted confidentially through this email: transitions@graceattheu.org.

PASTOR NOMINATION FORM

A nomination form to submit names of pastors to be considered in our search is now available. Find it on our website at <http://graceattheu.org/call-process/> or use this link: [Pastor Nomination Form](#)

STEPPING ON WORKSHOP

Mondays, April 12 – May 24, 12:30 PM – 2:30 PM

Online via Zoom — Zoom orientation and introductions Monday, April 5, 12:30 PM

Reduce your risk of falls, and learn techniques for maintaining an active and fulfilling life.

No cost to participate All materials are provided Donations are appreciated. See the full flyer here: [STEPPING ON](#)

For questions, please contact Nurse Cheryl: nurse@graceattheu.org

COMMUNITY NOTES

Death:

Karen Sneed, a Grace member and mother of member Sara Sneed Miller, died on March 20. A service to celebrate her life was held at Grace on March 26 and the livestream recording is hosted on Grace's YouTube channel.

FOR YOUR CALENDAR...

Our spring Congregational Meeting (usually held in late May/early June) is scheduled for **Sunday, May 2 at 11:30 am**. Please mark your calendar and plan to attend.

FROM THE RACIAL EQUITY TEAM:

Join in prayer daily at 8:00 AM Central Time for the [Healing Our City Virtual Prayer Tent](#) (a zoom gathering), an approximately 20-minute prayer experience which begins with a timely reflection by a different religious/spiritual leader each day (leaders are announced ahead of time – visit the website at the link so see who is scheduled). The reflection is followed by a period of 8 minutes and 46 seconds of silent prayer/meditation, and an invitation to offer your own prayers and thoughts in writing. The virtual prayer tent **will continue daily** throughout the course of the Chauvin trial.

During the Chauvin Trial, **opportunities for protests and vigils** will be popping up all over in the coming weeks. Events like these are typically planned just days in advance. To stay in the loop, we recommend you [follow the Racial Justice Network \(RJN\) on Facebook](#).

APRIL BIRTHDAYS

Lauren Beckstrom	1
Anders Odden	1
Dylan Eckstrom	2
Donna Wain Erickson	2
Julia Weigle	2
Solveig Wolf	2
Peder Garnaas-Halvorson	4
Eleanor Reuer Welton	4
Sophie Anderson	6
Emily Ostrow	6
Emily Regan	6
Francis Randall	8
Ted Weigle	8
Janet Jacobson	9
Greta Regan	9
Ryan Warren	10
Andrea Bungum	12
Kirsten Christensen	12
Julie Anderson	13
Kubisa Muzenende	14
Miles Tangen	14
Terry Foecke	16
Leland Johnson	16
Kari Anderson-Hermann	17
Ellie Schober	18
Kersten Warren	18
Elsa Hoehn	19
Madeline Schacht	19
Maria Fewer Lee	20
Freya Ode	21
Barbara Lundblad	23
Drew Schwab	23
Beatrice Ehler	24
Sara Vandeventer	24
David Bergren	25
Noemi Lange	25
Bill Rottschaefter	25
Suzy Roy	25
Vicki Buttery	26
Dick Graves	26
Neal Young	27
Madeline Derbis	28
Andrew Jacobson	28
Aaron Browne	30
Evelyn Knotek	30
Irena Wilson	30

GRACE COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, February 10, 2021 – 6:30-8:00 PM by Zoom technology

Attending: Pastor Mary Halvorson, Pastor Dan Garnaas, Stan Olson, John Edmundson, Niki Johnson, Becky Hunter, Drew Schwab, Joe Carlson, Lisa Linnell

Not attending: Kirsten Bansen Weigle

Call to Order by Stan at 6:34pm

Opening Word – John

January Council Minutes – Lisa

Action: Motion to approve minutes as distributed. Motion by Lisa, second by Drew. Motion approved.

Minutes of the January 24 Annual Meeting

For review. No action needed.

January Financial Reports – John

Highlights from the Financial Reports

- \$1,000 earmarked for new computers.
- Paid the insurance premium for all of 2021.
- Postage rates are not expected to go up this year, so no need to pre-pay for postage. Postage is high because David needed to mail statements instead of handing them out at church.
- Heat was low in January because of mild temps, likely to not be that way in February.
- Question about money for ISAIAH came up at the Congregational meeting: Plan by Pastor Dan and Sue Eng to select a core team to review the opportunity and involvement to decide a path forward. The biggest concern is not the money, it is the need to have people engaged. When the time comes, we can appropriate the money as needed.
- No need to adopt a new budget; merely correcting small items from last year.

Action: Motion to receive financial reports as distributed. Motion by Drew, second by Joe. Motion approved.

Pastors' Reports – Pastor Mary and Pastor Dan

Notes from Pastor Mary

- Second Zoom retreat. Now into all things Lent and Easter.
- Gift to Grace in memory of Helmut and Ro Diefenthal: \$40,000 from the Diefenthal children. Discussion of ideas for how to use the money to best honor them and their work (e.g., health care, worship, youth scholarships, social justice, trips to Tanzania for students). Pastor Mary will write to the family with ideas to see what they think. Target the March agenda for discussion and decision.

Council Minutes continued on p. 7...

Notes from Pastor Dan

- Four days into registration for Grace University 52 people have signed up for classes. Bringing people together during the pandemic. Grace is a highly educated place.
- Men’s Retreat a couple of weeks ago on Zoom. Deeply meaningful. Four men have set up a Men’s Retreat Committee, Pastor Dan will help them get on the schedule at Heartwood to ensure those continue.

Building Task Force Update – Pastor Dan

Anna, Rolf, and Pastor Dan will meet with Mortenson to share our plans to delay the building project and to get any insights they may have.

Rolf is in the process of getting bids for the roof.

Pastor Dan continues to be in touch with the University of Minnesota to keep them apprised of our building project plans.

Personnel Policies draft – Niki

Comments about the composition of the personnel committee; references the Constitution.

Trying to revise multiple documents that reference each other.

Discussion about health coverage and pension contributions for employees.

Question about inclusion of leave for foster care – what about families that are only fostering for a short amount of time?

Parental leave: Does it need to be taken consecutively or not? The Synod does not provide guidance on this.

Possibility of welcoming a part-time volunteer intern – Stan

See letter from Amy Chatelaine seeking a seminary internship with Grace. Would be seeking a broad experience: preaching, work with committees, Bible study, work with young adults, 5 hours/week. Main role will be as a resident at Regions Hospital.

General support for the concept by the Council but no official action taken.

Policies & practices during the pandemic – no review needed at this time

Pastoral Transition – Pastor Mary and Pastor Dan exit the meeting as customary for discussion about transition.

Farewell Planning: Try to have several small task forces for farewell, grieving, last service, gift or tribute, program, letters or videos. Build it block by block. Fun Committee is interested. Pastor Dan and Pastor Mary contemplating an open house at their farm. Kirsten Bansen Weigle will serve as a coordinator of the small committees. Their last Sunday is May 16.

Discussion of revised transition timeline and use of an interim pastor

Sunday, February 14 at 11:30: Call Committee will host conversation about Ministry Site Profile. New email address for people to send in emails with questions or comments, send out occasional news: transitions@graceattheu.org. *(This conversation was subsequently moved to March 14; the February 14 conversation to take place without the bishop.)*

Other Business - None

Adjourn

Action: Motion to adjourn. Motion by Becky, second by Niki. Motion approved. Adjourned at 8:09pm.

COMMITTEE CHAIRS

<i>Adult Education</i>	Nancy Laskaris
<i>Archives & History</i>	Gordon Folke
<i>Children & Youth</i>	Jenny Odden
<i>Congregational Life</i>	Frieda von Qualen
<i>Hawkinson Fund</i>	Jared Oasheim & Stan Jacobson
<i>Outreach</i>	Susan Wooten
<i>Property</i>	Rolf Carlsen
<i>Sunday Service Coordinator</i>	Rose Carlsen
<i>Social Justice Coordinator</i>	Anita Hill
<i>Stewardship</i>	
<i>Worship and Music</i>	David Grandall
<i>Leadership Development</i>	Jean Stilwell, David Anderson, Sara Sneed Miller

GRACE COUNCIL MEMBERS

<i>President</i>	Stan Olson
<i>Vice President</i>	Drew Schwab
<i>Vice President</i>	Nicole Johnson
<i>Treasurer</i>	John Edmundson
<i>Secretary</i>	Lisa Linnell
<i>Council-at-Large</i>	Kirsten Bansen Weigle
<i>Council-at-Large</i>	Becky Hunter
<i>Council-at-Large</i>	Joe Carlson

Grace University Lutheran Church

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612-331-8125

www.graceattheu.org
info@graceattheu.org



Lutheran Campus
Ministry

Address service requested

STATEMENT of MISSION

The primary mission of Grace University Lutheran Church is to proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ as an instrument of God's reconciling love in the world. We do this so that reconciliation with God may become a reality for all. (2 Corinthians 5:18-21)

STATEMENT of AFFIRMATION

Grace University Lutheran Church is a spiritual community that celebrates the gifts of God that empower us to engage in the struggles of life, to care for each other, and to serve Christ where we work and live. Grace is a Reconciling-in-Christ congregation. We welcome the participation of people of all ages, ethnic backgrounds, sexual orientations, gender identities, educational backgrounds, and economic conditions—all who want to join in community to honor God and be of service to people.

OFFICE/BUILDING HOURS

Temporarily suspended during the pandemic

THE PEOPLE of GRACE

Ministers The Grace Community

Grace Staff

- Mary Halvorson* Co-Pastor, pastormary@graceattheu.org
- Dan Garnaas* Co-Pastor, pastordan@graceattheu.org
- Heidi Johnson McAllister* Director of Faith Formation
and Member Engagement, cyf@gracattheu.org
- Jill Abenth* Office Manager, info@graceattheu.org
- Stephen Self* Organist and Choir Director, music@graceattheu.org
- Joan Christensen* Pianist, jerjoanchriste@hotmail.com
- David Anderson* Bookkeeper & Financial Secretary, akro davidmn@gmail.com
- Cheryl Lanigan* Faith Community Nurse, nurse@graceattheu.org
- Mechawit Simmons* Custodian
- Mike Lanigan* Sunday Attendant
- Jared Steven Coffin* Composer in Residence

Volunteer Staff

- Stefan Wolf* Second Sunday Singing Director, stefanjwolf@gmail.com
- Janelle Bussert* Keyboard Choir Director, jbussert2@aol.com
- Patti Regan* Handbell Choir Director, regan.patti@gmail.com
- Carolyn Winters Folke* Offering Counting Coordinator, cbwf40@gmail.com

Lutheran Campus Ministry Staff

- Kate Reuer Welton* Lutheran Campus Pastor, pastorkate@umnlutheran.org
- Michelle Greene* Administrative & Development Assistant, info@umnlutheran.org
- Dana Rademacher Hansen* Program Associate, dana@umnlutheran.org
- Ben Cox* St. Paul Outreach Intern, ben@umnlutheran.org
- Jenna Van Holtum* Student Admin & Development Intern, jenna@umnlutheran.org