

March 2021

Graceful Greetings



MARCH 2021 WORSHIP SERVICES

If you prefer to worship online, our services can be found on our website under the "Worship" tab & on our Facebook page or YouTube channel.



Sun., March 7—3rd Sunday of Lent
Sun., March 14—4th Sunday of Lent
Sun., March 21—5th Sunday of Lent
Sun., March 28—Palm Sunday
Thurs., April 1st & Friday, April 2nd—Maundy Thurs. & Good Friday

Worship update:

Grace's church council continues to monitor and address the safety of in-person gatherings each month at our meetings. We are feeling optimistic about the direction that Montgomery County is heading in, with gradual decreases in new cases, hospitalizations & use of ventilators. Grace is hoping that this trend continues, and that the county's recommendations to remain virtual are relaxed soon. We, too, are very eager to see each other in person!



Please remember that churches follow these recommendations voluntarily. Grace's leadership places a strong value on Jesus' mandate to love our neighbor; our decisions reflect the desire to help stop the spread of this virus to our members, their families and our community. In the meantime, stay connected online or on the phone!

What can you do? Do what you can to stop the spread of the virus. Mask, social distance, wash hands frequently, and get your vaccine!

CALLING ALL GARDENERS.....Oh what a winter we have had. More snow than in a few years with a bit of ice to top it all off. Well, it will be spring before you know it, this will all melt and the garden will be ready to start its 9th year. We are always looking for members to join this fun outdoor ministry that brings fresh vegetables to our local community residents in need. Please contact Kurt Meyers at kmeyers413@verizon.net if you would like to be a part of this ministry.



Pastor's Points:

It was a year ago this month, when the new threat of Corona virus caused a rapid and unexpected shift in how we “do” church. Sunday morning worship—the “highlight” of how we practice Christianity—changed. We moved out of the sanctuary. This was hard. There’s a solid hope that comes from being in a sacred place that has stood for more years than any of us. There’s a comfort from gathering with others who share the same love of Christ. Being together in that place meant so much.

And while I miss it so very much and I look forward with great longing to the time of our return, there are some lessons I pray that I don’t forget.

1-Worship is not centered on a “place”, other than our hearts. Where we find our heart, is where we find Jesus. A sanctuary is a great place to feel inspired, but truly the best sanctuary is made of flesh and blood, not stone and wood.

2-Community is vital to our faith. When we lose the gift of “each other”, our faith suffers. But community is more than sitting next to each other in a pew. Community is demonstrating love and care. We have learned the power of our words on social media and even zoom, and the strength of our actions by food drives, a vegetable garden, walking in Royersford’s Unity March, supporting local agencies with over \$10,000 of donations. The Grace community did not disappear.

Neither did the church. Neither did we. As we hope for a return to in-person worship soon, may we all remember to get out of the sanctuary a little more to “BE” Christ in our world through our words and our actions.



From The Deacon's Desk: Faith in the Public Sphere (and why we do Bible Study)

On January 6th, among those who stormed the capitol, were many who brandished the cross and other trappings of Christianity and who claimed to follow the same Jesus Christ that you and I do. Somewhere along the line, a message got missed. The violence perpetrated that day came from a framework that has been twisted from the source.

The public display of faith that day was as far from the faith of Christ as you could get.

One of the reasons we gather in faith formation and bible study is to grow (as per our mission statement) and to expand our understanding of our relationship with God and each other. It is to give us a good theological framework, centered on God’s desire for us to love and serve God & our neighbors (again, as per our mission statement). While worship and sermons are important, one half-hour of formation a week doesn’t give us the full theological base we need in order to have an active, engaged faith. There’s a lot of misuse of the Word of God out there that forgets to center on love and relationship. I hope you will join us in one of our weekly or monthly faith formation opportunities to help build up your own solid base and to build relationships with others in our community of faith. One of the best parts of bible study is sharing with each other.

New Prayer List Coordinator—After serving as the Prayer List Coordinator for many years, Jan Slack is passing the baton on; we thank her for her faithful service. Our new Prayer List Coordinator will be Joanne Palmer. Please contact her with any prayer requests at 610-207-6409 or email: jpalm@wedgpc.com. We welcome Joanne to this ministry!



Check Out These Other Great Ways to Stay Connected

Conversation & Community (formerly Pub Theology) -

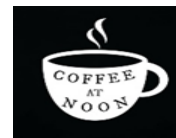
We've changed the name but the idea is the same! Pub Theology is now "Conversation & Community" to better give everyone an idea as to what we are all about. It is a time to gather in conversation with others from the congregation (and any friends we bring along) to build relationship even when we can't be together in a physical space. We will discuss events and topics relevant to our faith or to things going on in the world around us. **Our next Zoom gathering will be on Thursday, March 18th at 7pm.** Contact Deacon Allison or the church office at 610-948-3684, if you'd like a link or to be on a list of ongoing participants. (note: C&C is also making the change of moving to the third Thursday of the month. So mark your calendars)!



Deacon Allison's Zoom Bible Study—Our Zoom Bible Studies continue at 7:00pm on Monday evenings and at 10:00am on Thursday mornings. Both groups will study the Gospel of Mark, as we enter the year of Mark in our lectionary. We'd love to have you join us at one of these times! Contact Deacon Allison or the church office at 610-948-3684, for more information about this or our current studies.



Coffee Hour with Deacon Allison on Sundays at noon. Missing seeing your Grace friends? You don't have to! Join this zoom meeting just to chat and check in with one another. You'll be glad you did! Call church office for zoom link.



2 Facebook Live Opportunities —Join Deacon Allison on Fridays at 10:00am for a deeper dive into one of the week's devotionals. See our Facebook page for more details. Also, either Pastor Kraiss or Deacon Allison will lead Facebook Live prayer time on Sunday mornings at 11:00am.



Daily Devotions written by Deacon Allison. These are a beautiful & faithful way to begin your day with God. Find them on the Grace fb page, or go to <https://gracemorningdevotion.blogspot.com/>.

Mothers and Cake! Please accept your invitation to join in conversation with a warm and caring group of mothers full of life and faith on Sunday mornings at 9:30. This group of moms gathers by Zoom to spend some time encouraging & being encouraged. For information & the zoom link, please contact Jan Slack at mjkk13539@comcast.net.



Stay "connected" wherever you go! We're all over social media!!

Website: www.gracelutheranroyersford.com

YouTube Channel: [gracelutheranroyersford](https://www.youtube.com/gracelutheranroyersford)

Facebook search: Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church

Email: gracelutrn@verizon.net

Instagram search: [grace.lutheran.royersford](https://www.instagram.com/grace.lutheran.royersford)

Twitter search: [@gracelutheran12](https://twitter.com/gracelutheran12)



Lent Opportunities to Learn and Grow: Our Wednesday evening series, “Life from the Ashes” continues until March 17th. Join us on zoom on Wednesdays at 7 pm for an hour of prayer and devotions and exploring where God is in our grief. Upcoming topics: Mar 3: Individual Grieving, Mar 10: Grief of the Other, Mar 17: Grieving as a Community. Join us to lament and to find hope! (Contact church office, Deacon Allison, or Pastor Kraus for zoom link)

Holy Week Services:

At this time, Holy Week services are being planned for virtual (Livestream on YouTube and saved to our website), but if that changes, we will joyfully let you know!!!



Palm Sunday, March 28 (9 am) What if Jesus entered our town today? Grab a branch from your yard that you would wave, and worship “the One who comes in the name of the Lord”. This will be a service of celebration!

Maundy Thursday, April 1 (7 pm) Hear Mark’s gospel story of the suffering of Christ – the last supper, betrayal and arrest of Jesus. We will celebrate communion and strip the altar.

Good Friday, April 2 (7 pm) The Seven Last Words of Christ will be read with reflections as the church slowly darkens in anticipation of the sealing of the tomb.

YOUTH NEWS



Facebook & Instagram Live Posts:

Watch for Kelsey on Facebook & Instagram, doing live posts Wednesdays around 4PM for a more family focused post & Thursdays for a sing-a-long song!

G.R.A.C.E. Place Newsletters: We are going to continue online G.R.A.C.E. Place for March as weekly newsletters. They will be sent via email, so please let Kelsey know if you do not receive a newsletter! These newsletters will contain our lent programming on the movies *Incredibles & Incredibles 2!* We will meet Sundays at 9:00-9:30am and talk about sections of the movie with discussion questions! We will also offer this opportunity on Wednesdays from 7-8pm to watch a section of the movie and then have conversation around it. **The schedule for March is: Mar. 14th, 21st, & 28th Zoom. March 7th Supply-pick-up!** Supply pick-up for March is our Lent-in-a-box which includes a daily devotion on the movies, some coloring pages, Faith5 directions, and tools to make a sacred space at home.

High School: Kelsey misses you all! Watch out for texts to stay connected!



Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church
Grace Lutheran Youth Group
“Like” us to see recent news & events



Grace's "Green" Good News

A new column written by Rose Hlavac (Kelsey's mom)

Plastics – Convenience at a Price

Where would we be without them? Personally, I wouldn't be able to write this right now without my plastic framed glasses, typing on my plastic keyboard, in my comfy Crocs. Those probably aren't the first things you thought of when you read the headline were they? Plastics are everywhere and they are convenient. But at what cost?

Unlike glass and metal that can be continually recycled into new products, plastics that are recycled can only be recycled once, and only into lower grade plastics. Plastics that aren't/can't be recycled end up in a landfill and may sit for decades before leaching toxins into our precious groundwater. And that isn't the worst of it. There is a lot of plastic in our oceans: bottle caps, straws, plastic bags and fishing nets for example.

Where does all this plastic come from? Much of it comes from simple littering. Wind & rain moves it from parks & streets to streams & storm drains. The [World Economic Forum](#) estimates that as much as 30% of plastic "leaks" out of the collection system and is unaccounted for; scattered in local waterways or the ocean.

But even what is in the plastic ends up in our oceans. Microplastics added to our products such as shampoo, body scrubs, lipstick and even our toothpaste contains particles smaller than 0.5 millimeters. It is estimated that there may be [8.3 million pieces of microplastics per cubic meter of water](#) in our oceans and ingested by the fish we eat!

So what are we to do? Eliminating plastics isn't a viable option. But we can reduce what we use, maximize our reuse, and make the most out of that 1x virgin plastic we purchase before recycling.

Reduce – Choose wisely

- Canvas/Fabric reusable bags vs plastic store bags
- Choose products in glass or cardboard over plastic when possible
- Reusable/Refillable water bottles vs 1x use plastic bottles
- Keep mismatched silverware in your desk or glove box to use vs plastic ware
- * Clean green – replace some cleaning supplies with good old fashion [vinegar mixes](#)

Reuse / Upcycle Plastic Containers to ..

- Send leftovers to family and friends. No need for them to return, or worry about tomato sauce stains • Store the broth or suet makings from previous articles
- Make your own salad dressing? Put it in store bought dressing containers (cleaned of course)
- Convert milk jugs to mini rain barrels – rain water is better for plants anyway
- Crafty? Convert 2 liter pop bottles to [planter drip systems](#) or use to make your own [mini planters](#)
- Reuse non-recyclable bags. Great for picking up after the dog, tossing out gross-stinky kitchen garbage

Recycle

- Be sure to wash your plastics before putting in the recycle bin and check the recycle code to be sure they are acceptable for pickup
- Purchase recyclable plastic when possible
- Check your plastic bags from deliveries & items like toilet paper and paper towels. Many of them have a note that they can be recycled with grocery bags you already recycle.

Think bigger: Take a bag on walks to pick up litter, reuse plastic bags to [make mats to donate to the homeless](#).

The glasses I'm wearing? When I replace them, I'll be donating them to the [Lions Club Eyeglass](#) recycling program. My keyboard too will be recycled, check out [Best Buy, Staples or any number of locations](#). Note PA law requires all computers to be recycled.

