

Grace United Methodist Church



April 21, 2024 - 10:00AM

**Order of Worship
Fourth Sunday of Easter**

**Grace United Methodist Church is a Family of Faith
striving to share God's love with all.**

****Please Stand If You Are Able***

Opening Voluntary – Fairest Lord Jesus
S. Volkslieder, Arr. T. Wilhemi

Choral Introit

Welcome/Greetings

*** Call to Worship**

L: The Lord is my shepherd, I will fear no darkness.

P: We will love one another, as Christ loves us.

L: Christ, the Good Shepherd, has compassion for all.

P: We will love one another, as Christ loves us.

L: Open your hearts to goodness and mercy today.

P: We will love one another, as Christ loves us.

L: Love, not merely in thought and word, but in truth and action.

P: We will love one another, as Christ loves us.

*** Opening Hymn #128 – “He Leadeth Me: O Blessed Thought”**

HE LEADETH ME

*** Opening Prayer**

Shepherding God, guardian of our souls, you offer us rest in the safety of green pastures. Shower us with your love, and offer us fullness of life in your name. When our spirits are parched, you lead us beside still waters and quench our thirst for righteousness; you restore our souls and heal our battered spirits. Touch our hearts and minds, that your goodness and mercy may follow us every day of our lives. May we abide in your love and grace for all eternity. Amen.

Children's Message

Scriptures

New Testament - Acts 4:5-12

⁵ The next day the leaders, elders, and legal experts gathered in Jerusalem, ⁶ along with Annas the high priest, Caiaphas, John, Alexander, and others from the high priest's family. ⁷ They had Peter and John brought before them and asked, "By what power or in what name did you do this?" ⁸ Then Peter, inspired by the Holy Spirit, answered, "Leaders of the people and elders, ⁹ are we being examined today because something good was done for a sick person, a good deed that healed him? ¹⁰ If so, then you and all the people of Israel need to know that this man stands healthy before you because of the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene—whom you crucified but whom God raised from the dead. ¹¹ This Jesus is the stone you builders rejected; he has become the cornerstone! ¹² Salvation can be found in no one else. Throughout the whole world, no other name has been given among humans through which we must be saved."

L: The Word of God, For the People of God. **P:** **Thanks be to God.**

New Testament - 1 John 3:16-24

¹⁶ This is how we know love: Jesus laid down his life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers and sisters. ¹⁷ But if someone has material possessions and sees a brother or sister in need but refuses to help—how can the love of God dwell in a person like that? ¹⁸ Little children, let's not love with words or speech but with action and truth. ¹⁹ This is how we will know that we belong to the truth and reassure our hearts in God's presence. ²⁰ Even if our hearts condemn us, God is greater than our hearts and knows all things. ²¹ Dear friends, if our hearts don't condemn us, we have confidence in relationship to God. ²² We receive whatever we ask from him because we keep his commandments and do what pleases him. ²³ This is his commandment, that we believe in the name of his Son, Jesus Christ, and love each other as he commanded us. ²⁴ Those who keep his

commandments dwell in God and God dwells in them. This is how we know that he dwells in us, because of the Spirit he has given us.

L: The Word of God, For the People of God. **P: Thanks be to God.**

Old Testament - Psalm 23

The LORD is my shepherd. I lack nothing. ² He lets me rest in grassy meadows; he leads me to restful waters; ³ he keeps me alive. He guides me in proper paths for the sake of his good name. ⁴ Even when I walk through the darkest valley, I fear no danger because you are with me. Your rod and your staff—they protect me. ⁵ You set a table for me right in front of my enemies. You bathe my head in oil; my cup is so full it spills over! ⁶ Yes, goodness and faithful love will pursue me all the days of my life, and I will live in the LORD's house as long as I live.

L: The Word of God, For the People of God. **P: Thanks be to God.**

*** Gospel – John 10:11-18** (*Please stand if you are able*)

¹¹ “I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. ¹² When the hired hand sees the wolf coming, he leaves the sheep and runs away. That's because he isn't the shepherd; the sheep aren't really his. So the wolf attacks the sheep and scatters them. ¹³ He's only a hired hand and the sheep don't matter to him. ¹⁴ “I am the good shepherd. I know my own sheep and they know me, ¹⁵ just as the Father knows me and I know the Father. I give up my life for the sheep. ¹⁶ I have other sheep that don't belong to this sheep pen. I must lead them too. They will listen to my voice and there will be one flock, with one shepherd. ¹⁷ “This is why the Father loves me: I give up my life so that I can take it up again. ¹⁸ No one takes it from me, but I give it up because I want to. I have the right to give it up, and I have the right to take it up again. I received this commandment from my Father.”

L: The Word of God, For the People of God. **P: Thanks be to God.**

*** Hymn before Message #419** – “I Am Thine, O Lord”

I AM THINE

Message - “Wilderness Wanderings”

Pastor Penny Gadzini

Pastoral Prayer

Lord's Prayer and Choral Response

Prayer of Confession

Loving Creator, you have placed within us the spark of your Divine Light. As people of your justice and mercy you cause us to shine. We long to grow closer to you and to walk in your ways. And yet, we usually do whatever we want. We point fingers at others and serve our own interests. We satisfy ourselves with an hour in worship each week when there is so much more you ask of us. When we fail to heal your world, forgive us. Give us hearts that are open, generous, and unafraid, that your divine spark might ignite within us and make us shine as beacons of your kindness and your love. Amen.

Words of Assurance

You are welcome at the table of the Lord. The Good Shepherd beckons all to come and be restored.
Rejoice in the knowledge that you are loved!

Passing of the Peace of Christ

May the peace of Christ make you ready for love to flow around and through you. May you boldly share his love as you pass the peace of Christ with one another this day.

Invitation to Tithes and Offering

The Spirit of Christ visits us in this place. Let us respond by giving the best of our treasures and talents for the work of God's church in the world.

Choral Selection - Come to Me

D. Forrest

* **Hymn No. 95 - Presentation of the Offering**

* **Prayer of Dedication**

As the Good Shepherd lays down his life for his sheep, may we, too, strive to serve our neighbors. Whether next door, across town, or around the world, may God bless our prayers, our gifts, and our ministries. In Christ's name, we present these gifts. Amen.

* **Closing Hymn #700 – “Abide with Me”**

EVENTIDE

* **Dismissal with Blessing**

Closing Voluntary – Postlude, A. W. Marchant

(Please remain seated for the Closing Voluntary)

Pastor: Penny Gadzini, Pastor	Counting Team: Debbie Nicosia
Liturgist/Reader: Allison LaVoie	Ushers: Everett Fitch, Carol Provenzano, Michael Provenzano
Director of Music: Kenneth Richardson	Audio-Tech: Brandon Gauntlett



♥†♦Family of Karen Kiernan, ♥†Family of Dr. A.B.A Prempeh (Pat Eshun's brother), ♥†Family of Selah Matthews, ♥Manny Kurz, ♥†Family of James Keidel, ♥Jasmin Whittaker, ♥Debbielee Thomsen, ♥Emma Donnelly, ♥Veronica Stone (friend of Margo Morrison), ♥Everon Palmer (son of Enid Simpson), ♥Eugene (Gene) O'Brien, ♥Hedy Kling, ♥Gene Marks, ♥Declan Jurgens, ♥Pat Hamilton, ♥Karen Kiernan, ♥Carol Whyte, ♥Winston Scarlett (brother-in-law of Maudlyn Scarlett), ♥David Biegler, ♥Vivian (4 months old) Peeples and sister Emilia (4 years old) Peeples, ♥Mary Turbeville (cousin of Lenore Kurz), ♥Jennifer LaRochelle, ♥Michael Ciampi (friend of Kim Neri), ♥Michael Kurz, ♥Walter McKnight, ♥Vin Dowling, ♥Suella Fredrick (friend of Lorna McKenzie), ♥Juliana Bonds (sister of Eleanor Phillip), ♥Garvin Phillip (nephew of Eleanor Phillip), ♥Elaine Treske, ♥Marilyn Eller (sister of Elaine Treske), ♥Charles Zipperlen, ♥Jim Poch, ♥All our Military men and women, ♥Ken Richardson, ♥Barbara Siegl, ♥All UMW in Rehabilitation and Nursing Homes, ♥Castells Family (family of Elaine Treske), ♥Iris Molina, ♥Olga Molina (sister of Iris Molina), ♥Milly Molina (sister of Iris Molina), ♥Evelyn Neber (friend of Elaine Treske). **Note.** Prayer List names will continue to be listed for two weeks. After that period of time, the names will be removed unless you call us with current information.

† - Death in family, ♦ - New entry

REMINDERS

Every Wednesday – Bible Study 7:30PM/Zoom
Every Saturday – Prayer Meeting 8AM/Zoom

GRACE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
21 South Franklin Avenue, Valley Stream, NY 11580
Church Phone Number: 516/825-1182; Church E-mail: GraceVSNY@aol.com