



April 2025 Newsletter

Some Thoughts of the Season from Pastor Bob Gutekunst

As I sit down to write this newsletter article, I am also preparing for a funeral service four days from now. The service is for one of my best friends, someone who truly was my “best” friend for about 15 years of my life. I met Carl when we were nine years old, in the fourth grade, and we were probably best friends until our mid-twenties. When we got married and had kids, we kind of drifted apart a bit, but we always stayed in touch, we always saw each other at least a few times a year since then, we always stayed a part of each other's lives. What I'm struggling most with right now, I think, is the finality of death. I just can't believe that I'm never going to see or talk with my friend again in this life. That feeling of loss is very difficult.

I'm sure we all have gone through similar experiences and emotions. Of course, all of us deal with these things in different ways. But, in reflecting upon my friend, what comes to mind, for me, is how Jesus' friends must have felt between Good Friday and Easter Sunday. Obviously, Jesus predicted his Passion and death many times for them, and assured them of his Resurrection as well, but in those dark three days before Easter, they didn't seem to get the memo. They were filled with fear and dread, as well as grief and sorrow. The brutality of Jesus' death most certainly added to their trauma. I think of Mary, eyes filled with tears, dragging herself to Jesus' tomb on Easter morning. What must have been going through her mind? Probably some of the same emotions I'm experiencing right now.

Of course, we all know how Jesus' story ends on Easter morning - with joy, with celebration, with Resurrection. I can't imagine how Jesus' friends must have felt when he appeared to them once again. How wonderful that must have been!

CHURCH CONTACT INFORMATION

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Church Website:

www.graceuccchurch.com

Find Us on Facebook:

www.facebook.com/grace.northampton

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Use this code when you're admitted so that we know you're in the hospital.

Some Thoughts Continued...

And I truly believe that the joy is sweeter because of the dark days, the grief and the loss and the sorrow that preceded it. That's what Resurrection is, after all - new life *after* death.

So many people nowadays want to avoid the hard and difficult part of the story. Very few people attend Holy Week services anymore. Very few people want to travel that part of the journey. I remember hearing a story about the Good Friday services at Joel Osteen's megachurch in Houston, Texas. His wife, Victoria, strode out onto the stage at the beginning of the service, in her expensive clothes and perfect hair and perfect teeth, and announced to the gathered crowd, while beaming with a huge, bright, smile, "Isn't it great that we worship a risen Lord!" followed by massive applause. Not to be judgmental, but I think Victoria is missing the point of Good Friday.

Good Friday reminds us that God is present for us in the grief and the loss and the sorrow as well as the joy and celebrations. And it makes the assurance of Easter all the more profound. Like Mary and Peter, and the rest of Jesus' disciples who were reunited with their friend on Easter, I hope to see my good friend again. And I hope I will remember to thank Jesus for making it possible.

Have a blessed Holy Week and Easter

Pastor Bob



Grace United Church of Christ

Message from Consistory

April 2025

The next Consistory meeting is Wednesday, April 9, 2025 at 6:30 pm

Save the Date - Upcoming Worship Services and Events for the Lenten Season:

April 13, 2025 - Palm Sunday

April 17, 2025 - Maundy Thursday, Service 6:00 pm in Fellowship Hall. There will be a pot-luck supper followed by worship with communion. Bring a favorite dish or dessert to share.

April 18, 2025 - Good Friday - Service at 11:00 am and 7:00 pm in the sanctuary

April 19, 2025 - Easter Egg Hunt - Franklin School Playground - 10:00 am - Refreshment served afterwards in Fellowship Hall. Children of all ages are welcome.

April 20, 2025 - Easter Sunday Communion Services - Worship Service at 8:00 am and 10:30 am - A continental breakfast buffet will be available from 9:00 am - 10:00 am.

If you ordered Easter Flowers, please pick them up after the 10:30 am Easter worship service, or contact the office to make other arrangements (the church office will be closed on Easter Monday, April 21st).

Pork and Sauerkraut Dinner, Basket Raffle, and Bake Sale

Saturday, May 17, 2025, 4-7 pm. All-You-Can-Eat. Dine-in or Take-out. Pork, sauerkraut, mashed potatoes, green beans, applesauce, dinner roll, dessert, and beverage. Adults \$15; Children ages 10 and Under, \$5. -- Hotdogs can be substituted for Children. Tickets will be available at the door. **Donations of baskets or gift cards and baked goods are needed. Baskets and gift cards for the raffle can be dropped off at the church, preferably by Tuesday May13th.**



Consistory Meeting Highlights – March 12, 2025

- County of Northampton replied that they are unable to increase the rent at this time.
- April 6, 9:00 am – St. John's in Coplay will be hosting Sunday School.
- Grace to join St. John's in Coplay Vacation Bible School – July 28 – August 1st, 2025. Committee to meet after Easter. They have plenty of material.
- Crab dinner - \$1,234.31 profit from first week crab dinner.
- Hear Us Out – For April meeting personal story that has shaped you.
- Sharon – PNEC PA Annual report filing, 2025 PA requires businesses included churches to file a financial report... June 30 filing due date. Pastor Bob to review with Mary and file.
- Don purchased two new outside trash cans.
- Fire alarm proposals – received two estimates, Protect Alarm and Kistler O'Brien; significant variation in quotes; Don met w/Kistler O'Brien, he reviewed the proposal, and his proposal will cover new system. Monitoring is cheaper w/Kistler O'Brien. Smoke detectors (40) will be tested (and replaced if not working) when system installed; if want annual inspection, would be \$900 annually. Protect Alarm included some items that would not need to be replaced. o Several had positive feedback about Kistler O'Brien. All agree to go with Kistler O'Brien. Don will give to Mary to forward to Kistler. Don cancelling Protect Alarm service since not functioning.
- Jeff Galgocy replaced hot water tank. Thank you.
- Lift update – received first check today; will send to Butz. Need to pay Stellar. \$3,800 deductible will be paid, when second check gets sent to Butz; our insurance tries to get recovered from driver's insurance.
- Sign out front is not lighting up – Don thinks the bulb is out or timer is off from time change. Don will correct.
- PayPal account – Lee Ann, church Auditor, stated that the Treasurer, should not be owner of the account, Lynn is outgoing monies; the Financial Secretary, Trisha, is incoming monies. Bonnie will work on making changes.
- Consistory officer nominations:
 - o President – Sharon Braker was nominated and accepted the nomination
 - o Vice President – Gary Trively was nominated and accepted the nomination
 - o Secretary – Bonnie Horwith was nominated and accepted the nomination
- All in favor? Yes.

2025 March Consistory Meeting Minutes Highlights (continued)

- Office and Personnel Committee – Gary T, Sharon, and Bonnie to start review process.
- Easter candy reminder – \$15 and \$8. Order sheet will be available March 2nd, order deadline March 30th, April 7-11 candy making. Pickup April 12th and 13th. Will be looking for volunteers.
- Easter Egg hunt date - Saturday April 19, 2025, 10:00 am. Sharon, Deb, Gary Henry. Need more plastic eggs. Bonnie providing hot dogs and rolls. Sharon providing snacks. Gary H providing case of bottled water.
- Continental breakfast between Easter services. Sharon, Bonnie, Joan providing food.
- Pork & Sauerkraut dinner – May 17th. May need more help to make the pork and sauerkraut. Try to get baskets in earlier in week.

NEXT Consistory Meeting: Wednesday, April 9, 2025, 6:30 pm

Respectfully submitted,
Bonnie Horwith, Recording Secretary



FUNDRAISERS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Easter Flower Sale - Thank you to everyone who purchased Easter Flowers to help decorate our Sanctuary. . Reminder - pickup your flowers after the 10:30 am service on Easter Sunday. If you can not do so, please contact the office to make other arrangements. The office will be closed on Monday, April 21st.



SAVE THE DATE Easter Egg Hunt
Everyone is invited to our annual Egg Hunt at the Franklin Elementary School at the playground to be held on **Saturday, April 19th at 10:00 am**. Since the price of eggs is out-of-control, this year we will be using plastic eggs filled with candy. If you would like to donate, please bring packs of plastic eggs and small types of candy that would fit in the eggs to the church by April 14th. Our Senior Center members volunteered to fill the eggs during the week of April 14th.

Easter Candy Sale - Thank you to everyone who supported our Easter Candy sale. Orders will be ready for pickup on Saturday, April 12th - between 10:00 am - 12:00 Noon or after worship service on Sunday, April 13th.

Volunteers are needed to help make Easter Candy in Fellowship Hall during the week of Monday, April 7th. There is nothing too difficult, and no experience needed! Join us anytime from 9 am up until 5:00 pm. (A lunch break is taken at 12 Noon.) Bring a friend and join us!



Hoagie Fundraiser

The hoagie types are Italian, Turkey, Roast Beef, Tuna and the cost is \$6.00. Sandwiches are Pastrami, Swiss Cheese on Rye (\$6.00) or Ham/Cheese or Turkey/Cheese on a Kaiser Roll cost is \$4.00. Order forms are posted in the back of the sanctuary as well as website. **Orders and Payments are due to the office by Tuesday, April 8th. Delivery date will be Wednesday, April 16th with pickup hours of 4:00-6:00 pm in Fellowship Hall.** Thank you for once again supporting this fundraiser. **An order form is included in this newsletter.**

Grace UCC Church
 902 Lincoln Avenue, Northampton, PA 18067
 Phone: 610-262-7186 ---- Office Hours M-F 9:00 am - 1:00 pm
 Website: graceuccchurch.com
 Email: graceuccchurch@gmail.com

Orders & Payment due by Tuesday, April 8, 2025
Our New Supplier is Galyean Deli/Island Expressions, Northampton, PA

Pickup Date: Wednesday, April 16th from 4:00 - 6:00 pm in Fellowship Hall

Customer Name & Phone Number:

Qty.	Type of Hoagies	Cost	Total
	Italian - Everything	\$6.00	
	Italian – Onions/No Peppers	\$6.00	
	Italian – Peppers/No Onions	\$6.00	
	Italian - Plain	\$6.00	
	Turkey - Everything	\$6.00	
	Turkey – Onions/No Peppers	\$6.00	
	Turkey – Peppers/No Onions	\$6.00	
	Turkey - Plain	\$6.00	
	Roast Beef	\$6.00	
	Tuna	\$6.00	
	Type of Sandwiches		
	Pastrami, Swiss Cheese on Rye Bread	\$6.00	
	Ham & Cheese on Kaiser Roll	\$4.00	
	Turkey & Cheese on Kaiser Roll	\$4.00	
	Next Hoagie Sale is May 14, 2025		
	Total Hoagies		
	Total Sandwiches		
		Total \$\$ Due	

Redner's Receipts

Don't forget to save your Redners'

receipts. Submit your receipts to Grace and we will earn 1% of your purchase total. Use your Rewards Card as usual and save your receipts to give to the church office. It must be the full receipt for us to receive credit.

Northampton Food Bank Donations

The first Sunday of every month is our Food Bank Donation collection. Please be supportive for our community Northampton Food Bank. Your generosity is greatly appreciated.

Free Shredding Event - Hosted by Rep. Zach Mako and the Borough of Northampton will be held on Saturday, April 26, 10 am to Noon at Northampton Memorial Community Center 1601 Laubach Ave., Northampton. Please enter Smith Drive and take Pany Drive to the event. Exit on Laubach Avenue.

Protect yourself from identity theft by bringing discarded documents containing sensitive personal information to my free, on-site shredding event. There is a limit of four bags or boxes per household. No businesses, please.

Examples of items you may want to bring include bank and credit card statements, tax documents, insurance claim forms and anything that lists a Social Security number. Staples, paper clips and manila folders are acceptable. X-rays and hanging folders are prohibited.

Inclement Weather Update

In the event of inclement weather, church service delays and/or cancellations will be posted on WFMZ 69 News Storm Center stations (TV and online) and on Grace UCC's Facebook page and Website. However, please use your discretion whether you can make it to church safely. In the event of inclement weather Monday thru Friday, the office may be operating under various hours.

Or, have you considered E-Giving?

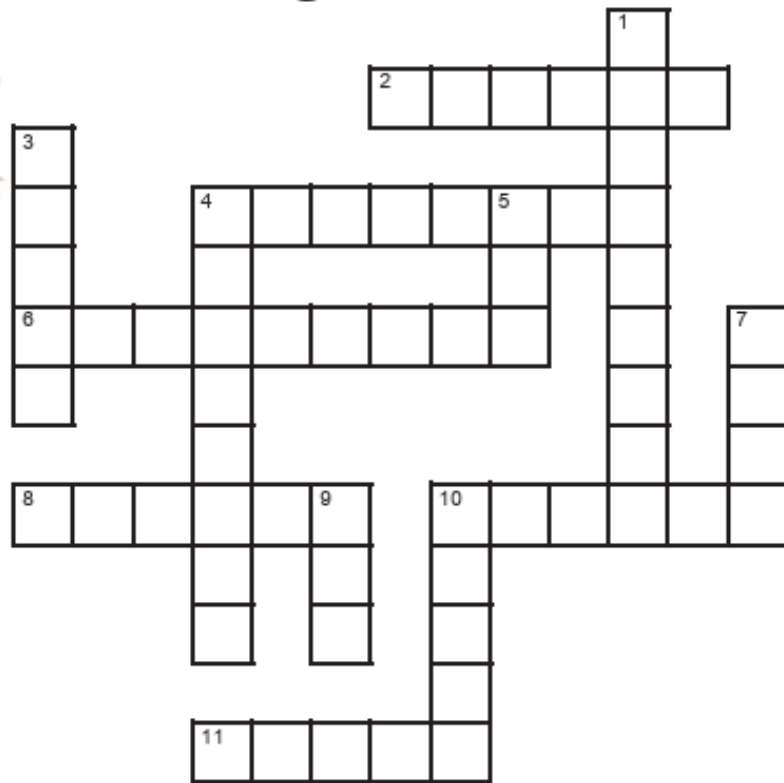
Electronic giving is all about convenience for you and consistency for the church. Skip filling out your envelope every week by having contributions automatically transferred from your checking or savings account to Grace's bank account. Not only is it one less thing for you to think about, but it also helps your giving stay consistent even if you can't make it to service every week.

If you want to sign up, simply visit graceuccchurch.com/support/graces-mission, download the form, and return it in a sealed envelope to the church office. That's it!



HAPPY EASTER

Crossword



ACROSS

- 2. Container for gathering springtime treasures
- 4. Trumpet-shaped sunshine on a stem
- 6. Sweet treat that melts in your mouth
- 8. Marching celebration down Main Street
- 10. Fancy hat for a special Sunday
- 11. Sugary delights that dentists frown upon

DOWN

- 1. Colorful candy oval you might find in a basket
- 3. Fluffy yellow ball that says "peep"
- 4. Make things pretty with ribbons and paint
- 5. Magical liquid that changes plain to colorful

- 7. Search high and low for hidden surprises
- 9. Oval treasure often filled with goodies
- 10. Hopping critter with long ears and cotton tail

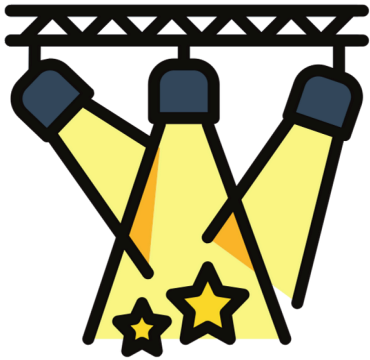


- BASKET
- BONNET
- BUNNY
- CANDY
- CHICK
- CHOCOLATE
- DAFFODIL
- DECORATE
- DYE
- EGG
- HUNT
- JELLYBEAN
- PARADE

April 2025

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4	5
<p>6</p> <p>9:00 am Sunday School - St. Johns Coplay</p> <p>10:30 am Worship Service - Communion</p>	<p>7</p> <p>Candy-making all week</p>	<p>8</p> <p>Consistory Meeting 6:30 pm</p> <p>Hoagie Orders due</p>	<p>9</p>	<p>10</p> <p>Choir Practice 6:00 - 7:00 pm</p> <p>Handbell Choir 7:15 - 8:15 pm</p>	<p>11</p>	<p>12</p> <p>Pickup candy 10:00 am - Noon</p>
<p>13</p> <p>9:00 am Family Sunday School</p> <p>10:30 am Palm Sunday - Worship Service</p>	<p>14</p>	<p>15</p> <p>Choir Practice 6:00 - 7:00 pm</p> <p>Handbell Choir 7:15 - 8:15 pm</p> <p>Hoagie Pickup 4-6:00 pm</p>	<p>16</p>	<p>17</p> <p>Maundy Thursday - potluck supper & service at 7:00 pm</p>	<p>18</p> <p>Good Friday Service 7:00 pm</p>	<p>19</p> <p>Easter Egg Hunt 10:00 am</p>
<p>20</p> <p>Easter Services 8:00 am & 10:30 am</p> <p>Continental Breakfast</p> 	<p>21</p> <p>Office Closed - Holiday</p>	<p>22</p>	<p>23</p>	<p>24</p> <p>Choir Practice 6:00 - 7:00 pm</p> <p>Handbell Choir 7:15 - 8:15 pm</p>	<p>25</p>	<p>26</p> <p>Northampton Community Center - Shredding event 10:00-12:00 Noon</p>
<p>27</p> <p>9:00 am Sunday School</p> <p>10:30 am Worship Service</p>	<p>28</p>	<p>29</p>	<p>30</p>	<p>31</p> <p>Choir Practice 6:00 - 7:00 pm</p> <p>Handbell Choir 7:15 - 8:15 pm</p>		

GRACE'S SPOTLIGHT ON LOCAL BUSINESS



Grace is committed to supporting our community, which is why we'd like to take a moment to shine a spotlight on some of our local businesses. By supporting local, you're helping your neighbors provide for their families, offer more jobs in the area, and keep more money circulating in the community where it can be reinvested. If you would like to join Grace in supporting local, please check out some of these great businesses below. And don't forget - please let them know you heard about them through Grace!

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www.DakuAutoBody.com

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Attorney
1731 Main Street
Northampton PA 18067
610-262-0230
jlobrecht@verizon.net

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Owner: 484-767-5045
pingzing@rcn.com

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Northampton, PA 18067
610-261-0440

3 DAUGHTERS
CONSTRUCTION
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Anthony Kutzler

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The background of the page is a vibrant collage of spring-themed elements. It features a variety of flowers, including white daisies, purple and white tulips, and small white baby's breath. There are also several colorful Easter eggs in shades of yellow, green, pink, and blue, some with speckled patterns. A small woven basket filled with more eggs is visible on the right side. A butterfly with orange and black wings is on the left. The entire scene is set against a light green background.

This edition of our newsletter
is presented by: Evelyn Ross

“Wishing Everyone a Wonderful Spring
and a Blessed & Happy Easter!”

Sunday Worship: 10:30 am

**Holy Communion is the first
Sunday of every month.**

Visit our Website
www.graceuccchurch.com

Find Us on Facebook
www.facebook.com/grace.northampton

Office hours: M-F 9 am-1 pm