



March 2025 Newsletter

Some Thoughts of the Season from Pastor Bob Gutekunst

A few years ago, my wife and I were fortunate to be able to travel to Ireland for a friend's wedding. It was a wonderful experience. But, for many reasons, it was also a challenging one. For one thing, they drive on the wrong side of the road over there (they would say the same thing about us, I guess:). And the only rental cars we could get were manual transmission. Neither my wife or I had driven a stick shift in over twenty years, so that was a bit of an adjustment. Also, we discovered that a lot of the streets, even in the bigger cities, don't have street signs, which meant we got lost a few times. There were many things about the country that were different from our country, that were different from what we were used to.

Of course, some of those differences were positive ones. Like, for example, the fact that even though we did get lost on a few occasions, we discovered that, in Ireland, you can never really get lost, because every road, eventually, will take you out to a main road. In America, many people are isolated, spending inordinate amounts of time in front of a screen. In Ireland, people like to congregate together, with actual live human beings. The malls we went to were packed with people (I didn't see a single Amazon truck over there), and the pubs were filled every night of the week. Oh, and there was hardly any traffic over there. Sure, there was no air-conditioning in the middle of July. But it never got over 65 degrees, so we didn't really need it. And there were literally no bugs - no insects at all - on the entire island. So, overall, some challenges, but a lot of great new discoveries as well. I think all of the places I've been lucky enough to travel to have been like this. Journeying to someplace new, out of your comfort zone, can be difficult and rewarding at the same time.

CHURCH CONTACT INFORMATION

Pastor:

Bob Gutekunst

- office phone: 610-262-7186
- cell: 484-714-9245
- email: gutekunst66@hotmail.com
- email: revgraceucc@rcn.com

Minister of Music:

Marisa Deshler

- cell: 484-226-7298
- email: mdeshler@ptd.net

Church Office:

Mary Dobish

- office phone: 610-262-7186
- email: graceuccchurch@gmail.com

Church Website:

www.graceuccchurch.com

Find Us on Facebook:

www.facebook.com/grace.northampton

Hospital Code: #436

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

Some Thoughts Continued...

I saw an interview with the travel writer, Rick Steves. He has become rich and famous for writing travel guides, and his travel philosophy is to travel to the less-touristy part of countries and to immerse oneself into the lifestyles of the people who live there. Rick Steves is also a person of faith. In the interview that I saw, he talked about how, for him, travel has become a spiritual practice. This made sense to me, because, no matter if we have travelled far and wide across this world, or never ventured far from home, we are all traveling spiritual journeys. No matter how young or old, experienced or inexperienced, whether we participate in a church or not, I believe that God is always calling us and pushing us, sometimes out of our comfort zones, to discover new things, and places, and people that bring us closer to God. Our spiritual journeys often challenge us, but they reward us as well.

The theme of "Travel" or "Journey" will be our theme for the season of Lent. Lent is a season that might seem challenging to many, as many equate this season with sacrifice, and "giving things up for Lent". The season is actually about turning more toward God, and discovering all of the wonderful rewards of a life following Jesus. And as we move through the season of Lent, we, in a spiritual sense, journey alongside Jesus, as he and his disciples journey toward Jerusalem and the cross. My aim, throughout the season, is to, hopefully, explore some of the spiritual components of our own travel experiences, and to connect the journeys of characters in the Scriptures - Jesus, Moses, Abraham and Sarah, Isaiah- with our own spiritual journeys. I hope and pray that you will join me on this journey. And don't worry. Even if we get lost a little, God promises us that we will always find our way home.

Many blessings as we enter the holy season of Lent,

Pastor Bob

Grace United Church of Christ



Message from Consistory March 2025

The next Consistory meeting is Wednesday, March 12, 2025 at 6:30 pm

There are a few Deacon positions available on Consistory. **The terms will begin in March, 2025.** If you are interested in serving on Consistory and would like more information, please fill out the designated form on the table inside the sanctuary entrance and return it to a Consistory member or to the office.

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

March 5, 2025 - Ash Wednesday Services will be held with a brief service at 11:00 am, Drive through Ashes from 1:00-3:00 pm in the church parking lot, and a worship service at 7:00 pm.

April 17, 2025 - Maundy Thursday, Service 7:00 pm

April 18, 2025 - Good Friday - Service at 7:00 pm

April 19, 2025 - Easter Egg Hunt - Franklin School Playground - 10:00 am - light lunch to follow in Fellowship Hall.

April 20, 2025 - Easter Sunday - Worship Service at 8:00 am and 10:30 am - Continental Breakfast between worship service.

Save the Date - Pork and Sauerkraut Dinner, Basket Raffle & Bake Sale will be held on May 17, 2025. Time to be determined.



Consistory Meeting Highlights – February 12, 2025

- Fellowship Committee – crab cake dinners March 7th , 14th , 21st , 28th
- Church received donation of \$100 from Quoto Club USA
- Sharon emailed Lynn for clarification – Betty calculated soup sale \$819.64 profit; Lynn reported \$792.64.
- Property expenses higher due to weather snow care.
- March 16th – St. Patrick’s Day potluck luncheon in Fellowship Hall.
- April 6, 9:00 a.m. – St. John’s in Coplay will be hosting Sunday School
- April 13th – family Sunday school – bring a friend.
- Grace to join St. John’s in Coplay Vacation Bible School – July 28 – August 1st , 2025.
- Need liaison since Sue going off consistory. Debbie Menio will take over.
- Worship committee – theme ‘The Journey’; March 5th Ash Wednesday Services: brief service 11:00 am, drive through ashes 1:00 – 3:00 pm; evening service at 7:00 pm.
- Hear Us Out – discussion and consistory assignment for next month meeting:
For next month (March meeting): think of the stories we like and how might God be speaking through the story. Would it be applicable to discuss these at church services...
- Sharon and Bonnie to reactivate the ‘Office and Personnel Committee’ and plan to conduct performance review April/May timeframe.
- New trash container purchased by Jim. Thank you.
- Mark reported 2/11/2025 at 9:15 pm, pressure tank above hot water heater exploded/cracked – water everywhere. Jeff Galgocy came over Tuesday at 10:00 pm to stop the leak and Wednesday returned to replace the pressure tank. Senior Center was closed due to no water.
- Jeff Galgocy suggested replacing hot water tank, cost \$550. All approved.
- Ceiling above organ, few cracks from when AC leaked a few years ago. Had someone look at it. Don suggests holding off until other issues are addressed.



2025 February Consistory Meeting Minutes Highlights (continued)

- Lift update
 - o 1/13/2025 car/driver drove down sidewalk and hit the lift. Lift is badly damaged and closed until can be replaced.
 - o Stellar Construction was going to provide an estimate; however, they use same company used by Butz.
 - o Butz estimate, \$68,000 going to Brotherhood. Sign contract when payment is received.
 - o Stellar gave bill, \$2,958.20, for Northampton emergency call at time of accident on 1/13/2025.
 - o Sharon /Mary– to check if lift service contract can be put on hold.
- Brotherhood Insurance 2025-26 Renewal – roofing contractor inspected roof, no problems, provided report and the report was turned into property insurance requesting to remove exclusion.
- Letter requesting Senior Center rent increase to \$1,100/month. 2/12/2025 - no response yet.
- Hoagie fundraiser through Galyean's Deli – February 83 sold; profit \$170.50.
- Corrections to January 2025 report:
 - Brotherhood Insurance correction – the deductible is increasing to \$5,000, misstated as the policy was increasing.
 - NCG is the Agent, Brotherhood remains the Insurance company.
 - Sharon noted that Bonnie helped compose the Senior Center letter.
 - Black box was \$44 not \$40.
- QR Codes – Bonnie – work in progress
- String Art event – Bonnie - March 1, 2025, 1:00 p.m. \$5.00 deposit, \$35 cash due day of; \$5 going to church as fundraiser.
- Easter candy – \$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
- Continental breakfast between Easter services.
- Pork & Sauerkraut dinner – May 17th .
- Northampton Street Fair – September 13, 2025, 11:00 AM – 4:00 PM – Yes, will send in form; \$30 fee.
- March elder, deacon, prayer selected; 3 consistory members needed.

Next Consistory Meeting: Wednesday, March 12, 2025, 6:30 pm

Respectfully submitted,
Bonnie Horwith, Recording Secretary

FUNDRAISERS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Hoagie Fundraiser

Our monthly Hoagie Fundraiser has begun! We will be using Galyean's Deli here in Northampton. 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 in the bulletin and website.

Orders and Payments are due to the office by Tuesday, March 4th. Delivery date will be Wednesday, March 12th 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.

Easter Candy Sale - Ready for some delicious chocolate! Order Forms are now available for placing your order. Deadline for submitting orders and payment is **Sunday, March 30, 2025**. Candy making will begin on Monday, April 7th. If you would like to volunteer, please let the office know.



Upcoming Events -

Fellowship Committee - will be hosting the **Lenten Crab Cake Dinner soon..** The dates are Friday, March 7, 14, 21, and 28th. Dinners will be available from 4:00 pm - 6:00 pm. Dine in or take-out. Pay at the door - no preorders. Crab Cake Dinner include 2 crab cakes, baked potato, cole slaw, roll and brownie for dessert - cost \$15. Adult Chicken Finger Dinner includes chicken fingers, baked potato, cole slaw, roll and brownie for dessert - cost \$10. Children Chicken Finger Dinner - cost \$4.



String Art Class to be held in Fellowship Hall on Saturday, March 1st beginning at 1:00 pm. Cost is \$5.00 as a deposit - balance of \$35.00 at time of class. There is a reservation form included in this newsletter.

Easter Flower Sale - with Easter right around the corner, please consider helping adorn the Sanctuary with beautiful Easter flowers. **Orders and Payments are due to the office by Sunday, March 16th.** An order form is included in this newsletter as well as on our website.

EASTER FLOWERS

Please help us adorn the sanctuary for our Easter Services by sponsoring Tulips, Daffodils, or Lilies. **Deadline for ordering is March 16th.** Please return this form with payment to the church office Mon-Fri 9 am-1 pm or by mail. All flowers must be picked up after the 10:30 am Easter Service. Thank you!



Purple Tulips (\$6.75 each) _____ # Lilies (\$9.75 each) _____

Pink Tulips (\$6.75 each) _____

Yellow Daffodils (\$6.75 each) _____

Total \$ due _____

Ordered by _____ Phone _____

Sponsorship Info

Please indicate how you want each flower sponsored in the Easter Bulletin. If you are ordering multiple flowers that have different messages, **please complete one "Sponsorship Info" section per flower.** Leave extra sections blank.

1. Circle One: (tulip / daffodil / lily)

Circle One: (In Memory of / In Honor of)

Presented by _____

2. Circle One: (tulip / daffodil / lily)

Circle One: (In Memory of / In Honor of)

Presented by _____

3. Circle One: (tulip / daffodil / lily)

Circle One: (In Memory of / In Honor of)

Presented by _____

4. Circle One: (tulip / daffodil / lily)

Circle One: (In Memory of / In Honor of)

Presented by _____

5. Circle One: (tulip / daffodil / lily)

Circle One: (In Memory of / In Honor of)

Presented by _____

6. Circle One: (tulip / daffodil / lily)

Circle One: (In Memory of / In Honor of)

Presented by _____

7. Circle One: (tulip / daffodil / lily)

Circle One: (In Memory of / In Honor of)

Presented by _____

Organization: _____ Name: _____

Pick-up Person: _____ Phone # _____

Heavenly Chocolates 2025

Grace UCC Church Northampton 610-262-7186

Order Deadline Sunday, March 30, 2025

Turn orders and payment to the church office.

Office hours are 9:00 am – 1:00 pm Monday thru Friday or give to Trisha Daniels
Pickup date is Saturday, April 12, 2025 from 10:00 am – 12:00 Noon or after worship on
Sunday, April 13, 2025

	Milk Chocolate		Dark Chocolate		Amount Due
	Lbs.	½ lbs.	Lbs.	½ lbs.	
Peanut Roll Eggs	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
	\$15.00	\$8.00	\$15.00	\$8.00	
Coconut Cream Eggs	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
	\$15.00	\$8.00	\$15.00	\$8.00	
Peanut Butter Eggs	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
	\$15.00	\$8.00	\$15.00	\$8.00	
Nonpareils	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
	\$15.00	\$8.00	\$15.00	\$8.00	
Nonpareils (White Chocolate Only)	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>			<input type="text"/>
	\$15.00	\$8.00			
Raisin Clusters	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
	\$15.00	\$8.00	\$15.00	\$8.00	
Peanut Clusters	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
	\$15.00	\$8.00	\$15.00	\$8.00	
Peanut Butter Delights	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
	\$15.00	\$8.00	\$15.00	\$8.00	
Peanut & Pretzel Clusters (White Chocolate Only)	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>			<input type="text"/>
	\$15.00	\$8.00			
				Total Amount Due	<input type="text"/>
				Number of Items	<input type="text"/>

Thank you for your order. Make checks payable to Grace UCC
Please note: This candy is not made in a peanut-free environment.

Notes of Thanks

We extend our sincere gratitude to those who contributed by purchasing balls for the **2024 Remembrance Tree**. We received donations totaling \$4,210, which will significantly assist with winter heating as well as snow and ice removal expenses. Your support is deeply valued and appreciated.

Thank you, Sandra and Terry Andrews, for purchasing a new American flag, Christian flag, flagpoles, and toppers for the sanctuary in memory of their daughter, Christina Kiriposki. Christina's church memorial fund covered part of the cost.

Thank you, Rob and Tina Daku, for refurbishing the two sanctuary flagpole stands.

Lancaster Theological Seminary

Your gift today is guiding our students as they join in God's redemptive and liberating work so that all creation may flourish. Thank You!

Dear Grace, 1/29/2025

Thank you for hosting the funeral service for Dan Horvill. The service was beautiful and church helpers were wonderful as usual.

Love, Cindy & Paul



444 E. Susquehanna Street
Allentown, PA 18103

Phone: 610.797.0530
Fax: 610.797.0585
www.turningpointlv.org

24 Hour Helpline: 610.437.3369
Toll Free: 877.438.4957

January 17, 2025

Rev. Bob Gutekunst
Grace United Church of Christ
902 Lincoln Ave.
Northampton, PA 18067

Dear Friends,

I wanted to personally thank you for your contribution to our Annual Spirit of Empowerment Gift Card Drive on 12/16/2024, valued at \$375.00.

The Spirit of Empowerment Gift Card Drive celebrated its 6th year as an invaluable part of our community, offering individuals impacted by domestic and intimate partner abuse something transformative: the power to choose.

For many survivors, the ability to make decisions about their own lives had been out of reach for far too long. Your support made it possible to restore this essential right, empowering survivors to take steps toward rebuilding their lives with dignity and autonomy. To learn more about how your contribution has made a difference, visit us on social media or at www.turningpointlv.org.

Thank you for being a part of this impactful mission.

In peace,


Lori Sywensky
Executive Director

Thank you, we are all appreciate you!



Turning Point of Lehigh Valley is a not-for-profit, tax-exempt, charitable organization as defined under the Internal Revenue Service code section 501(c)(3). Tax exemption entity ID 23-2100651. Please consult with your professional tax advisor as to what deduction may be available to you. The official registration and financial information of Turning Point may be obtained from the PA Department of State by calling toll-free within Pennsylvania 1-800-732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement.

Our Mission is to eliminate domestic and intimate partner abuse in the Lehigh Valley through empowerment, education, and engagement.

String art event at Grace UCC, Fellowship Hall

March 1, 2025 – 1:00 P.M.

If you cannot sign-up via the Facebook Event page or QR code below, complete this form:

Provide your name _____

\$5 deposit (remaining \$35 cash will be due March 1st)

Art choice – circle one (see flier with art designs)

- | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------|
| Yankees | Bunny Head |
| Daisy's | Home |
| Bunny Family Reversed Strung | Lavender Sprigs |
| Camper | Mets |
| Flower Tree | Eagles |
| Three Bunny Butts | Penn State |
| Prick Cactus | Flyers |
| Birds | Giants |
| Three Flowers in a row | Phillies |
| Two Hearts | Dandelion Gnome |

Turn reservation and deposit into Grace UCC Office or Bonnie Horwith

(Reservation due by February 23, 2025)

String Art with Lisa
Grace UCC Northampton
March 1st 1pm



Choose board from photo above and select on ticket link. Boards already nailed. More details on event page or on FB page Just Stringing Around string art by Lisa

Made with PosterMyWish.com



scan me

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.

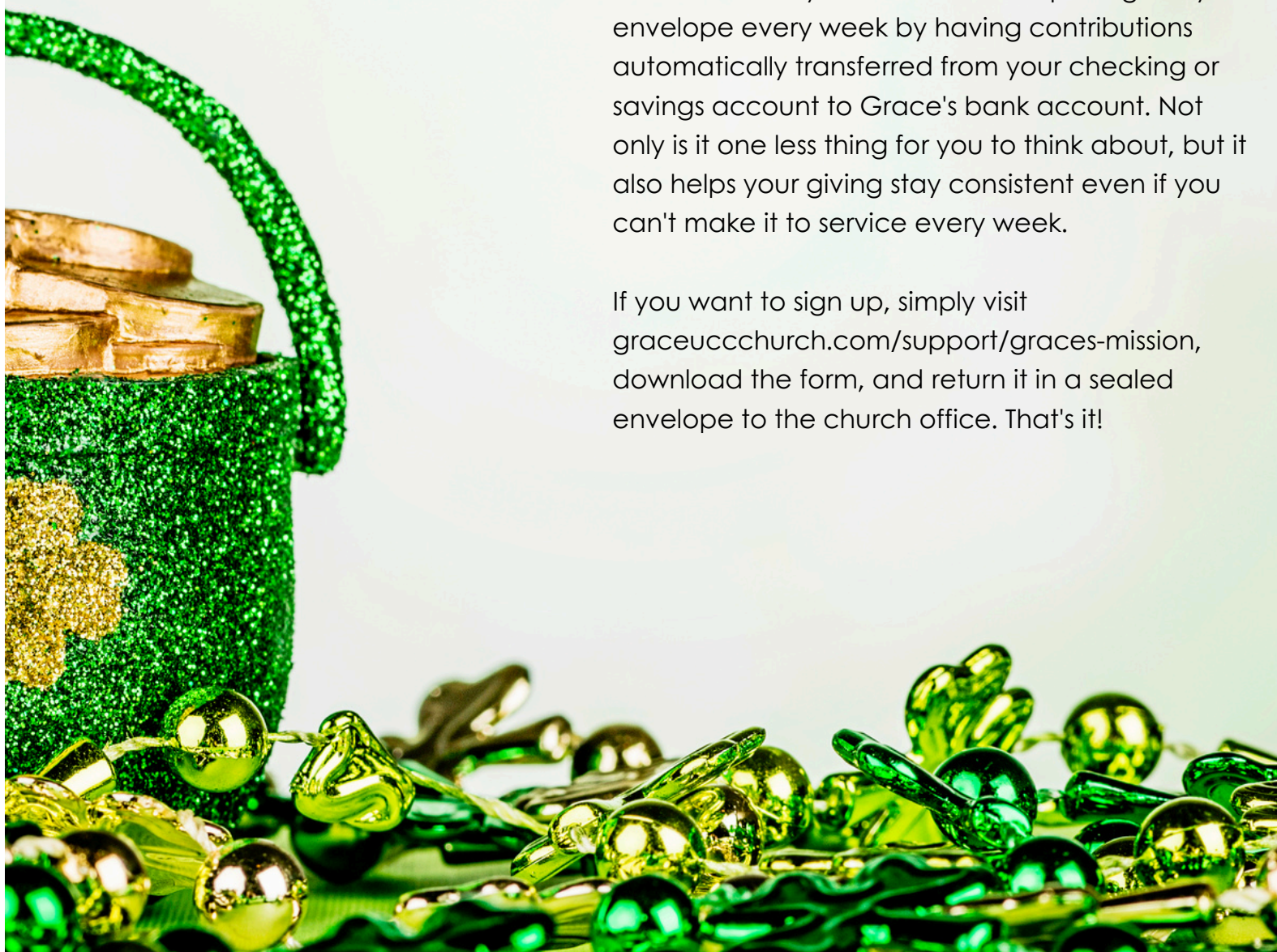
Inclement Weather Update

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.

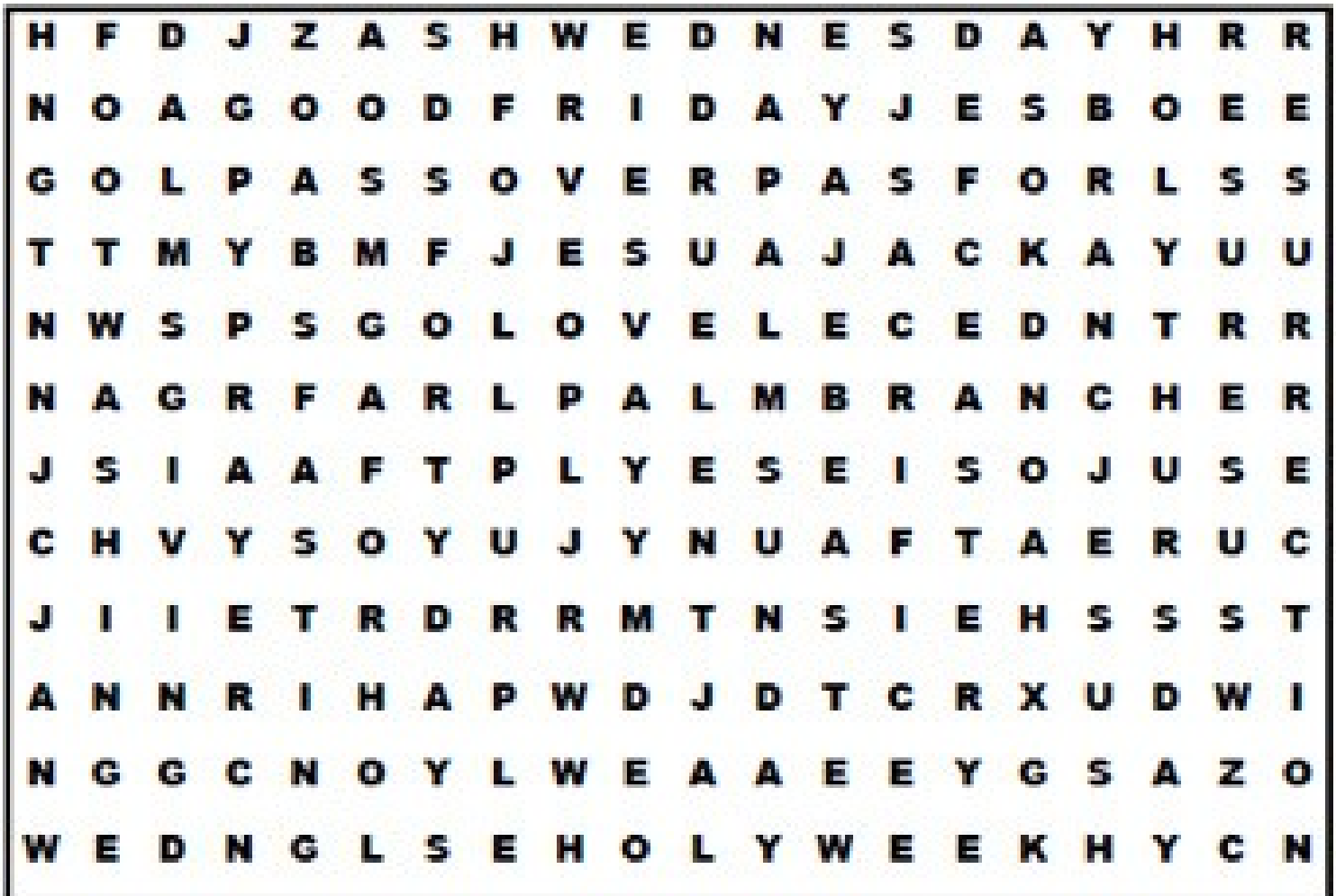
If you want to sign up, simply visit graceuccchurch.com/support/graces-mission, download the form, and return it in a sealed envelope to the church office. That's it!



March 2025

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1 String Art Class 1-3:00 pm
9:00 am Sunday School 2	3	4 Hoagie Orders due	Ash Wednesday Services 11:00 am; 7:00 pm 5 Drive Thru Ashes 1-3:00 pm	6 Choir Practice 6:00 - 7:00 pm Handbell Choir 7:15 - 8:15 pm	7 Crab Cake Dinners 4:00- 6:00 pm	8
9:00 am Sunday School 9	10	11	Consistory Meeting 6:30 pm Hoagie Pickup 4-6:00 pm 12	13 Choir Practice 6:00 - 7:00 pm Handbell Choir 7:15 - 8:15 pm	14 Crab Cake Dinners 4:00- 6:00 pm	15
9:00 am Sunday School 16	 17 Deadline for Easter Flower Orders	18	19	20 Choir Practice 6:00 - 7:00 pm Handbell Choir 7:15 - 8:15 pm	21 Crab Cake Dinners 4:00- 6:00 pm	22
9:00 am Sunday School 23	24	25	26	27 Choir Practice 6:00 - 7:00 pm Handbell Choir 7:15 - 8:15 pm	28 Crab Cake Dinners 4:00- 6:00 pm	29
9:00 am Sunday School 30	31					
10:30 am Worship Service						

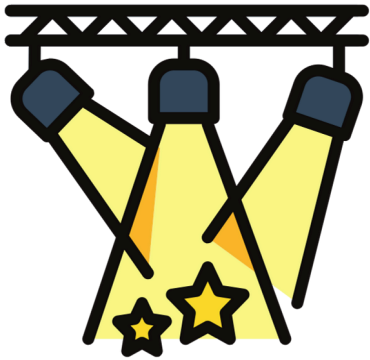
ON THE ROAD TO EASTER WORD SEARCH



- | | | |
|------------|---------------|--------------|
| Ash | Holy Week | Palm Branch |
| Wednesday | Holy Thursday | Forty Days |
| Sacrifice | Good Friday | Jesus |
| Almsgiving | Holy Saturday | Passover |
| Prayer | Easter | Foot Washing |
| Fasting | Palm Sunday | Resurrection |
| Lent | Purple | Love |



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!



610-264-5507

www.DakuAutoBody.com


Click on "EZ Estimate Tool" Collision/Insurance Estimates Many Factory Certifications Family Run - Est. 1948



326 East 21st Street
Northampton, PA 18067
610-261-0440



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US POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT # 627
LEHIGH VALLEY, PA
18002-9652



This edition of our newsletter
is presented by: Joan Matura

"In Memory of my husband Steve Myers,
Happy Heavenly Birthday on March 19th 2025.
73 years. We all miss you. We keep our cherished memories
of you close. We say your name several times a day.
Love you Steve - until we meet again. Joan."

Visit our Website
www.graceuccchurch.com

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

Sunday Worship: 10:30 am

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

Office hours: M-F 9 am-1 pm