

***No matter who you are,  
or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here.***



**GRACE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST  
128 East Baltimore Street  
Greencastle, PA 17225  
(717) 597-2983**

Pastor: Rev. Mark Ruzicka  
Choir Director: Patty Stepler  
Organist: Susan Alsip-Lawson  
Ministers: All Those Present

April 6, 2025 Fifth Sunday in Lent (A Healing Service)  
Scripture Readings: Psalm 126 \* James 5:13-18 \* John 12:1-8

**WE WELCOME GOD'S PRESENCE**

**WELCOME**

**VIDEO**

“Encounters With Christ: Mary of Bethany” by The Skit Guys

**MISSION STATEMENT**

Leader: Welcome to Grace Church where we are God's people.

**All: United through Jesus Christ on a journey to grow, to share our faith and  
serve others in the Greencastle area and the world.**

**PRELUDE MUSIC**

What Wondrous Love Is This?  
-folk hymn/Hayes and Gaspard

## Call to Worship

Leader: The voice of God proclaims of Jesus, "You are my beloved, and I love you."

**All: We, too, are God's beloved children, loved and embraced.**

Leader: With all the voices reminding us that we are not enough or don't belong,  
it is tempting to forget who we are.

**All: With the waters of baptism and the voice of God's promises,  
we can face the temptations of any wilderness or desert that would draw us away from God.  
We rejoice in God's unending love for us!**

## \*PRAISE SONG

Were You There #228



## Prayer of Confession

**All: O God of love, as Jesus was driven out to be tempted in the wilderness, we too, face wildernesses  
of our own. We are tempted to forget Your promises, to rely upon our own strength, and to listen  
to the destructive and seductive voices of power.**

**We confess that we, at times, have given in to those temptations.**

**Have mercy on us.**

**Help us again by planting and rooting us in Your love.**

(a time of silent prayer)

## Words of Assurance

Leader: Friends, remember that you are a child of God,  
held tenderly in the embrace of our Creator.

Remember your baptism.

Remember, that in Christ Jesus you are forgiven and made whole.

**All: Amen.**

## WE READ GOD'S WORD TOGETHER

### PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION OF SCRIPTURE

### SCRIPTURES

Psalm 126 Please open to Old Testament, page 704

James 5:13-18 Please open to New Testament, pages 281

**CHOIR ANTHEM**  
Were You There? -Lloyd Larson



John 12:1-8 Please open to New Testament, page 129

**WE RESPOND TO GOD'S WORD**

Leader: This is the Word of God for the People of God!

**All: Thanks be to God!**

**SERMON**

**Apostles' Creed (Please Stand and Recite Together)**

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,  
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,  
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,  
born of the Virgin Mary,  
suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died, and was buried;  
he descended to the dead.**

**On the third day he rose again;  
he ascended into heaven,  
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,  
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy catholic Church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

**A TIME OF INDIVIDUAL ANOINTING WITH OIL AND HEALING PRAYER**

**OPEN SHARING OF PRAYER CONCERNS, JOYS & CELEBRATIONS**

**PASTORAL PRAYER**

**LORD'S PRAYER** (Please Pray Together)

**Our Father, who art in heaven,  
Hallowed be thy name.  
Thy kingdom come,  
Thy will be done,  
On earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread  
And forgive us our debts  
As we forgive our debtors  
And lead us not into temptation  
But deliver us from evil,  
For thine is the kingdom, and the power,  
and the glory forever.  
Amen.**

**WE GIVE BACK TO GOD**

**Invitation to Generosity**

Leader: Our generosity is born out of our identity in a God whose love is unending and offered to all. In gratitude and joy, we are invited to share a portion of our treasure to ensure that all may come to know of this love of God that never ends.

*(Please sign the attendance pads found in the pews,  
and pass the top sheet to be collected during offering.)*

**OFFERTORY MUSIC**

At the Cross -Hudson/Sewell

**\*WE SING A SONG OF THANKSGIVING TO GOD**

(Please Sing Together)

**Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;  
Praise Christ, all people here below;  
Praise Holy Spirit evermore;  
Praise Triune God, whom we adore.  
Amen.**

**Prayer of Dedication**

**All: Abundant God, receive these gifts of love from Your servants  
and use them for the breaking in of Your Kingdom of love and light.  
In the name of Jesus, whose way calls us forth in service, we pray. Amen.**



## Holy Communion Liturgy

### Great Prayer of Thanksgiving

Leader: God be with you.

**All: And also with you.**

Leader: Lift up your hearts.

**All: We lift them up to the Lord.**

Leader: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**All: It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

Leader: Our hearts are filled with joy as we lift our glad songs to You, Great Covenant Maker.

You created us in Your image, planting seeds of Your love deep within us.

But they could not bear fruit, for we preferred death's darkness  
to the light of Your grace.

Despite our sin and arrogance,  
You remained steadfast in Your love,  
calling to us through the prophets to return to Your side.

When we loved our way  
more than Your heart's desire for us,  
You sent Jesus to restore us to Your joy.

And so, we open our lips  
to join our songs of praise with the faithful  
of every time and place,  
singing to the glory of Your name:

### We Sing the Sanctus Together

**Holy, Holy Holy...**

**Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Sabaoth**

**Heaven and earth are full,**

**are full of the majesty of thy glory,**

**Hosanna, hosanna, hosanna in the highest!**

**Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord,**

**Hosanna, hosanna, hosanna in the highest!**

Leader: You alone are holy, Master of the Universe,  
and blessed is Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord.

Baptized as Your Beloved, he became one of us, sharing our life in every way.

When the hour had come for him to be glorified,  
he went to the cross to be broken.

He who called life into being at creation suffered death for us,  
planted like a seed in the cold, friendless tomb,  
so You could save him.

You raised Him from the grave, so we could follow Him  
into the life everlasting with You.

As we come to this Table,  
remembering all that Jesus has done for us,  
we proclaim the mystery of our faith:

**All: Christ died, lifted up for all people.  
Christ was raised, called forth from death for all.  
Christ will come, the source of eternal life for all.**

Leader: You provide the gifts of the bread and cup for us,  
so that we might taste Your grace and hope.

As we come to the feast you have prepared for us,  
plant the seed of Your Spirit deep within our hidden hearts,  
so we may serve without expecting recognition;  
so our generous spirit might ease the poverty around us;  
so the good news we have heard may be proclaimed authentically.

Then, at last, when all people are free,  
when all brokenness is made whole,  
when all creation is once more new,  
we will gather around Your Table of joy,  
singing your praises forever and ever,  
God in Community, Holy in One.

Come, for all things are now ready.

#### **Distribution of the Elements**

*(We partake together at the cue of the pastor)*

#### **Prayer of Thanksgiving for Communion**

Leader: Let us pray.

**All: We thank You, God, for inviting us to this table where we have known the presence  
of Christ and have received all Christ's gifts.**

**Strengthen our faith, increase our love for one another,  
and let us show forth Your praise in our lives; through Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.**

## WE GO OUT CARRYING GOD'S LOVE

### **Benediction**

Leader: May God go before you to lead you,  
May God go behind you to protect you,  
May God go beneath you to support you,  
May God go beside you to befriend you.  
Do not be afraid.  
May the blessing of God the Father, Son,  
and Holy Spirit be upon you always.  
Go in peace...to love and serve the Lord.  
**All: Amen.**

### **\*PRAISE SONG**

In the Cross of Christ I Glory

#213



### **\*POSTLUDE MUSIC**

Fanfare and Trumpet Tune  
-Purcell/Smith



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Holy Communion Liturgy written by Thom Shuman, permission granted at <https://lectionaryliturgies.blogspot.com>. Adapted by the Rev. Mark Ruzicka.

“Temptation: Service Prayers for the First Sunday in Lent Year B” was written by The Rev. Dr. Chad Abbot, Conference Minister in the Indiana-Kentucky Conference (UCC). Adapted by the Rev. Mark Ruzicka.

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**Contributions Received Week of 3/30:**

Regular Offering: \$1025 / Loose Change: \$20 / OGHS: \$20

**Worship Attendance on 3/30:** In-House: 32 / Online: 8

**Total Tithes for the Month of March:** \$6450



*The Reverend Ralph S. Geiman, Pastor, 1967-1995*





**Grace United Church of Christ**

128 E. Baltimore Street – PO Box 448 – Greencastle, PA 17225

Pastor: Rev. Mark Ruzicka

Pastor's Cell Phone & Email: (717) 504-2923 & [markruzicka3349@gmail.com](mailto:markruzicka3349@gmail.com)

Office Phone & Email: (717) 597-2983 & [gucc128@outlook.com](mailto:gucc128@outlook.com)

Website: [www.graceuccgreencastle.com](http://www.graceuccgreencastle.com)

Facebook Page: [www.facebook.com/GraceChurchGreencastle/](http://www.facebook.com/GraceChurchGreencastle/)

Week of April 6, 2025

**Greeters/Ushers:** Barry & Carolyn Shoemaker **Reader:** Lu Miller

**Communion Servers:** Barry & Carolyn Shoemaker

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**Special Healing Prayers will be held during today's worship:**

*To remember that Jesus was anointed (that oil was placed upon him) before Holy Week, we will have a time of anointing and prayer which will take place in our Pastoral Prayer Time.*

*From the Book of James, we see the early church practiced anointing and prayerful laying on of hands for those who were sick in the congregations. Those interested will be invited to come forward to the chancel area where Pastor Mark is. You can ask for prayers for yourself (being as specific as you choose to be) or you can ask for prayers for another person. Then, olive oil will be placed on your forehead in the sign of the cross, a hand will be put on your shoulder, and you will be prayed for. After this, you can return to your pew. We hope this will be a meaningful time for all involved. Pastor Mark*

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**Greeters/Ushers:**

We need (2) two more volunteers for next Sunday, April 13<sup>th</sup>. Please sign-up today!

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**Sunday Volunteer Sheets** – There are open dates for greeters/ushers, communion servers and readers that need to be filled for April. The May list is also available. Find both on the front welcome table. For information about volunteering, contact the church office or a board member. Thank you.

**One Great Hour of Sharing** – We thank you for your donations for OGHS last Sunday. This is one of four special mission offerings of the United Church of Christ which supports the disaster, refugee, and development ministries of the United Church of Christ within Wider Church Ministries. The theme is “Be the Light”. **OGHS** offering envelopes can be found on the table in the front vestibule and the elevator area if you would still like to donate.

**Our Easter Season Service Schedule** is available on the welcome table in the vestibule and elevator area. Please take a copy and invite a friend to join us during this Lenten Season!

**Palm Sunday / Cantata Service** is next Sunday, April 13<sup>th</sup>, at 9:30am. Invite friends & family! Refreshments and fellowship will be held in the social hall following service.

**Maundy Thursday Worship** is being held on April 17<sup>th</sup>, at 7pm. Take a flyer from the welcome table or elevator area to pass on and invite your family and friends. This is a shared service, as Greencastle Presbyterian Church in Greencastle will be joining us.

**Easter Breakfast** is planned for Sunday, April 20<sup>th</sup>, at 8:15am, in our social hall. Easter Sunday Worship service will follow in the sanctuary, starting at 9:30am. Everyone invited to join us!

**Easter Flower Dedications** – The Easter flowers that were ordered will be displayed in the sanctuary on Easter Sunday. You may take them home after our Easter Service or contact the church office to make other arrangements.

**We Thank Our Volunteers** who helped serve and prepare the meal for First Saturday this past weekend. Contact Chet if you would like more information about volunteering opportunities.

**Attendance Pads** are located at the end of each pew. We ask everyone who attends worship to please sign and pass the top sheet to be collected during offering. If it's found that your booklet is out of sheets, our greeters/ushers can refill your booklet, as extra pads are located on the back ledge in the vestibule.

**LENTEN BIBLE STUDY** continues Wednesday evenings from 6-7pm, now through April 16<sup>th</sup> in the Chapel. We are studying from the book *Finding Jesus in the Psalms: A Lenten Journey* by Barb Roose.

**Chancel Choir** – Weekly rehearsals are held on Wednesday evenings, at 7:15pm, in the sanctuary. Please contact Patty regarding any questions.

**Live Streaming of Worship Services:** Join us on YouTube or Facebook on Sunday's at 9:30am to watch us live.

**Grace's Free Closet** is opened on Monday & Wednesday's, from 9:30am till 12:30pm. Stop by if you are looking for some new spring clothing. Donations are accepted during their open hours. Contact Nancy Myers if you have any further questions.

**Grace Church Website:** The history of our church, Moller organ and updated book from Jack Webb about the German Reformed Cemetery and be found on our website! Plus, you can download our weekly worship programs, newsletters, or donate online.

**Upper Room Daily Devotional Guides** for May/June are now available. Pick up your free copy from the front vestibule, elevator area, or stop by the office during the week.

**GUCC Scholarship Applications** received will be reviewed by our Educational Committee. The recipients will be announced on Educational Sunday on June 8<sup>th</sup>. Contact Lorna if you have any questions.



**SPECIAL MUSIC SPONSORSHIP:** In the months when our choir isn't singing, it would be great to have some special music in worship (June, July, and August). In the past, we have worked with the Cumberland Valley School of Music as a clearing house for musicians. The Worship and Spiritual Life Committee has decided to offer the congregation the ability to sponsor Special Music in honor or memory of someone. This concept is well received for things like flowers at Christmas and Easter, so we thought it could be used for music too. Maybe it would be a way to celebrate a wedding anniversary or the birth of a grandchild. To sponsor a musician for a Sunday service, you can work with Pastor Mark as to what you would like (what kind of instruments or singers), when, and how much it would cost. Please express your interest to Pastor Mark or call Elaine at the church office so that we can get started on this exciting new initiative.

**Church Bulletin Board** – Please check the bulletin board weekly for updated information about upcoming events, fundraisers, community news and more!

**Grace United Church of Christ Facebook:** Please like our Facebook page to keep updated on our church activities and connect with others in the community. If the worship service needs to be cancelled due to inclement weather, it will be posted on our Facebook page.

**New Member Sunday** - We will receive new members on Sunday, May 11th. If you are interested in joining our church family, please let Pastor Mark or church office know by April 27<sup>th</sup>.

**Movie Outing** – The Worship & Spiritual Committee has put together an opportunity for anyone interested in watching 'The Chosen' at the Warehouse Cinemas on Leitersburg Pike in Hagerstown. If you are interested in joining us for 'Last Supper Part 3', it will be showing on Saturday, April 12<sup>th</sup>, at 11am. Contact Marg by April 7<sup>th</sup> to order your tickets.

**The deadline** to submit articles for our May/June **Newsletter is April 10<sup>th</sup>**.

**Consistory Reports** for the month of March need to be turned into the church office by April 10<sup>th</sup>.

**Board Meeting** will be held on Sunday, April 27<sup>th</sup>, 8am, in the meeting room.

**April Birthday Wishes** go out to Bobbie Sponseller, Grace Gearhart, Steve Miller, Sydnae Vanner, Marley Walck, Jean Oliver and Lu Miller! Happy Birthday and many more!

**Calling all seniors!** You are invited to our next **Social Seniors Gathering**. We will be meeting on Wednesday, April 9<sup>th</sup> at 2 pm at Church of the Apostles (336 Barnett Ave). With a spread of Abe Lincoln's favorite snacks for all to enjoy, Pastor Mark Ruzicka will be sharing a program called "**The Humor of Lincoln**." He will be sharing a few, historically documented humorous anecdotes that President Lincoln used to enjoy. He will also have a collection of Lincoln-themed items on display. We hope you can attend!

**Grace Snyder Circle** is holding a meeting on April 14<sup>th</sup>, at 1pm, in the meeting room.

**Called to Care Committee** is meeting on Tuesday, April 22<sup>nd</sup>, at 1pm.

### **Worship Volunteers for Palm/Cantata Sunday, April 13, 2025:**

**Greeters/Ushers:** Kate Kennedy, Mark Stahl (two more needed)

**Reader:** Steve Miller

