

# Reflections of Grace

APRIL / MAY 2024

Grace Community Christian Reformed Church

## *The Resurrection and Ascension of Jesus*

Jesus' body was hastily placed in a tomb on that Friday afternoon. There was no time to properly prepare the body for burial with spices and ointments according to Jewish customs. No work could be done on the Sabbath, so that task had to wait until Sunday.

Early Sunday morning, Mary Magdalene and several other women went to the tomb with the spices they had prepared. When they arrived, they found the tomb had been opened already. When they went in, they did not find Jesus' body, and they wondered what had happened.

Suddenly, two angels in dazzling white clothes were there. The women were terrified, but the angels said to them, "Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here; He has risen! Remember how He told you that He would be turned over to sinful men, be crucified, and rise again on the third day!"

The women ran back to tell Jesus' apostles what they had seen. Peter and one other apostle went to the tomb to see for themselves. They looked in and saw the linen cloths that Jesus' body had been wrapped in but nothing else. Then they went home, amazed and confused.

When Peter and the other apostle went home, Mary Magdalene stayed outside the tomb crying. Suddenly she saw Jesus standing there, but she did not recognize Him at first. Jesus said to her, "Woman, why are you crying? Who are you looking for?" Mary thought He must be the gardener and said, "Sir, if you have taken Him away, tell me where, and I will take Him!"



Jesus said, "Mary!" Then she recognized Him and exclaimed, "Master!" Jesus said, "Don't hold on to me, because I have not yet returned to the Father. But go to my disciples and tell them, 'I am ascending to my Father

### IN THIS ISSUE:

- 1 THE RESURRECTION AND ASCENSION OF JESUS
- 2 THANK YOU COFFEE BREAK LADIES!  
"THE JOY OF JESUS"
- 3 4 LADIES SPRING CRAFT NIGHT  
"EARTH DAY" / CHRISTIAN SYMBOL BIBLE QUIZ
- 5 "PENTECOST"
- 6 "IN APPRECIATION"  
SOMETHING OLD, SOMETHING NEW CRAFT
- 7 AFLAME WITH FAITH  
"SUPERIMPOSED LOVE"  
SOLAR ECLIPSE—APRIL 8<sup>TH</sup>
- 8 APRIL PRAYER CALENDAR
- 9 "OPEN HANDS"  
"YOU ARE MY WITNESSES"  
JESUS' ASCENSION
- 10 TABLES OF GRACE INFORMATION
- 11 CHRISTIAN SYMBOL FOR MAY  
DATES TO REMEMBER  
FROM THE EDITOR
- 12 SCHEDULES
- 13 HOME COOKING
- 15 ACTIVITY PAGES
- 22 GRACE CHURCH INFORMATION  
OUR VALUES/SUBMISSION DEADLINE



and your Father, to my God and your God."

Then Mary Magdalene went and said to the disciples, "I have seen the Lord!", and she told them everything that had happened.

continued on page 3

# THANK YOU!

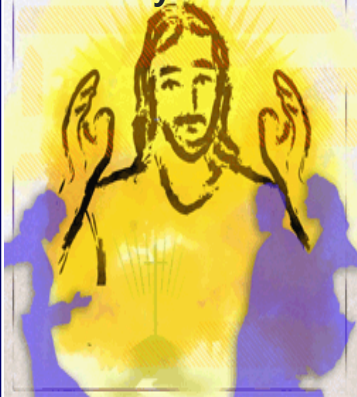


**Thank you to these ladies of our Coffee Break group who came out to make baby blankets for the Edwards Syndrome Association.  
A total of 55 blankets were made!**

*Your servant hearts and willing hands are a blessing!*



### The Joy of Jesus



The joy that Jesus offers his disciples is his own joy, which flows from his intimate communion with the One who sent him. It is a joy that does not separate happy days from sad days, successful moments from moments of failure, experiences of honor from experiences of dishonor, passion from resurrection.

This joy is a divine gift that does not leave us during times of illness, poverty, oppression or persecution. It is present even when the world laughs or tortures, robs or maims, fights or kills. It is truly ecstatic, always moving us away from the house of fear into the house of love, and always proclaiming that death no longer has the final say, though its noise remains loud and its devastation visible. The joy of Jesus lifts up life to be celebrated.

—Henri J.M. Nouwen, *Lifesigns*

## *The Resurrection and Ascension of Jesus*

continued from page 1

Later that same Sunday, two of Jesus' disciples, Cleopas and another man, were walking along the road to a village called Emmaus, which was about seven miles from Jerusalem. All day they had been talking and wondering about all the things that had happened.

Suddenly, Jesus was there with them, but they did not recognize Him. "What are you talking about as you walk along?" He asked. The two disciples looked sad. Cleopas asked, "Are you the only one in Jerusalem who doesn't know the things that have happened there in the last few days?" "What things?" Jesus asked. "The things about Jesus of Nazareth, who was a great prophet before God and all the people, and how our chief priests and leaders handed Him over to be crucified. We had hoped that He was the one to redeem Israel. Yes, and besides, it is now the third day since all of this happened. And now, some women of our group amazed us. They went to His tomb early this morning, but they did not find His body there. They came back and told us that they had seen angels there who said He was alive. Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women said, but they did not see Jesus." Then Jesus said to them, "Oh you are so foolish, and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken! Wasn't it necessary for Christ to suffer those things and enter into His glory?"

As they came near the village of Emmaus, the two disciples said to Jesus, "Stay with us, because it is late and the day is now nearly over." So Jesus went in to stay with them. As they were eating, Jesus took bread, blessed it and broke it, and gave it to them. Suddenly they recognized Him as Jesus, and He vanished from their sight. The two disciples quickly returned to Jerusalem and found the eleven apostles and some of Jesus' other followers gathered together. The apostles told them, "It's true! The Lord has risen and has appeared to Peter." Then the two disciples told everything that had happened on the road to Emmaus.

That same Sunday evening most of the apostles were together. They had locked themselves in a room in fear that the religious leaders would want them crucified next. Suddenly, Jesus was there among them. He said, "Peace be with you." Jesus showed them the wounds from crucifixion in his side and hands. The apostles were overjoyed to see Jesus alive again. Jesus said again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you." The apostle Thomas was not with the others when Jesus appeared to them. So the others told him, "We have seen the Lord." But Thomas said, "Unless I see the nail marks in His hands, and put my finger in the nail holes and my hand in the wound in His side, I will not believe it."

A week later the apostles were again locked in the same room, and Thomas was with them. Jesus again came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." Then Jesus said to Thomas, "Put your finger here and look at my hands. Put your hand in my side. Don't doubt it any more. Believe!" All Thomas could say was, "My Lord and my God!" Jesus said to him, "Have you believed because you have seen? Blessed are those who have not seen but have come to believe."

Jesus remained on earth for 40 days after He was resurrected from the dead on that Sunday morning (Acts 1:3). He appeared again to the apostles at the Sea of Tiberias (Sea of Galilee) and on a mountain-side in Galilee. He also appeared to more than 500 others (1 Corinthians 15:6). Jesus' parting words to His disciples were, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age." (NRSV, Matthew 28:18-20)

When it was time for Jesus to return to heaven, He led His disciples out to a place near Bethany, a village on the slopes of the Mount of Olives about 2 miles from Jerusalem. Jesus lifted up His hands and blessed them. Then He ascended to heaven, and the disciples lost sight of Him in a cloud.



**LADIES SPRING CRAFT NIGHT**  
*Friday, April 12 6:30-8:30pm*

**Sign up Today (in the foyer)**  
**and join us to make spring plaques.**

*Freewill offering would be gratefully accepted to help cover the cost of materials.*



Earth Day is an annual event to demonstrate support for environmental protection.

There were no legal or regulatory mechanisms to protect our environment until the spring of 1970, when Senator Gaylord Nelson created Earth Day as a way to force this issue onto the national agenda. Twenty million Americans demonstrated in different U.S. cities, and it worked!

First held on April 22, 1970, it now includes a wide range of events coordinated globally by Earthday.org, including 1 billion people in more than 193 countries.

EARTHDAY.ORG is unwavering in their commitment to end plastics for the sake of human and planetary health, demanding a 60% reduction in the production of ALL plastics by 2040.

Earthday.org's 2024 theme, **Planet vs. Plastics**, calls to advocate for widespread awareness on the health risk of plastics, rapidly phasing out all single use plastics, and urgently pushing for a strong UN Treaty on Plastic Pollution.

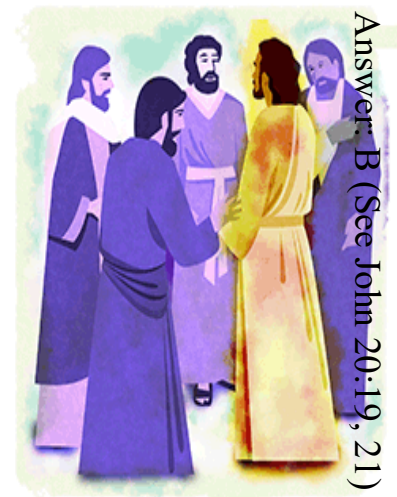
**APRIL CHRISTIAN SYMBOL:**  
**VICTOR'S CROSS**



Also called the conqueror's cross, the victor's cross is composed of the Greek cross, recognized by its four equal arms, adorned with Greek letters in each quadrant. The top left letters stand for *Jesus* and the top right letters stand for *Christ* (the horizontal lines above them indicate that they are abbreviations). The four letters across the bottom spell the Greek word for *conqueror*.

What does the newly risen Jesus tell his disciples — twice — when he appears in the locked room where they are hiding?

**BIBLE QUIZ**



- A. "Love one another as I have loved you."
- B. "Peace be with you."
- C. "The last shall be first and the first shall be last."



Pentecost is a Christian holiday which takes place on the 50th day (the seventh Sunday) after Easter Sunday. It commemorates the descent of the Holy Spirit upon Mary, mother of Jesus and the Apostles of Jesus while they were in Jerusalem celebrating the Feast of Weeks, as described in the Acts of the Apostles (Acts 2:1–31).

*While the Catholic Church believes the Holy Spirit descended upon Mary, this is not recorded in the New Testament.*

## The Holy Spirit Comes at Pentecost

**2** When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. **2** Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. **3** They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. **4** All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them. **5** Now there were staying in Jerusalem God-fearing Jews from every nation under heaven. **6** When they heard this sound, a crowd came together in bewilderment, because each one heard their own language being spoken. **7** Utterly amazed, they asked: "Aren't all these who are speaking Galileans? **8** Then how is it that each of us hears them in our native language? **9** Parthians, Medes and Elamites; residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, **10** Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya near Cyrene; visitors from Rome **11** (both Jews and converts to Judaism); Cretans and Arabs—we hear them declaring the wonders of God in our own tongues!" **12** Amazed and perplexed, they asked one another, "What does this mean?" **13** Some, however, made fun of them and said, "They have had too much wine."

## Peter Addresses the Crowd

**14** Then Peter stood up with the Eleven, raised his voice and addressed the crowd: "Fellow Jews and all of you who live in Jerusalem, let me explain this to you; listen carefully to what I say. **15** These people are not drunk, as you suppose. It's only nine in the morning! **16** No, this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel: **17** "'In the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams. **18** Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days, and they will prophesy. **19** I will show wonders in the heavens above and signs on the earth below, blood and fire and billows of smoke. **20** The sun will be turned to darkness and the moon to blood before the coming of the great and glorious day of the Lord. **21** And everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.'

**22** "Fellow Israelites, listen to this: Jesus of Nazareth was a man accredited by God to you by miracles, wonders and signs, which God did among you through him, as you yourselves know. **23** This man was handed over to you by God's deliberate plan and foreknowledge; and you, with the help of wicked men, put him to death by nailing him to the cross. **24** But God raised him from the dead, freeing him from the agony of death, because it was impossible for death to keep its hold on him. **25** David said about him: "'I saw the Lord always before me. Because he is at my right hand, I will not be shaken. **26** Therefore my heart is glad and my tongue rejoices; my body also will rest in hope, **27** because you will not abandon me to the realm of the dead, you will not let your holy one see decay. **28** You have made known to me the paths of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence.'

**29** "Fellow Israelites, I can tell you confidently that the patriarch David died and was buried, and his tomb is here to this day. **30** But he was a prophet and knew that God had promised him on oath that he would place one of his descendants on his throne. **31** Seeing what was to come, he spoke of the resurrection of the Messiah, that he was not abandoned to the realm of the dead, nor did his body see decay.



## IN APPRECIATION

SUBMITTED BY GLORIA KAMPER

**Rob & Laura Soucek** have been the directors of the *REACH Youth Ministry* since 20 years BC (Before Consolidation of the three churches). Over those years, in addition to working and raising their own family, they have been caring Christian mentors to many young people from junior high age into adulthood. Often using their own life experiences as they guide, they have been an inspiration and have given practical advice and encouragement to the youth of our congregation and beyond.

Reach out to non-believers

Equip ourselves to do Christ's work

Act on our faith

Connect with other believers

Honor God

Rob & Laura are deeply dedicated to the REACH ministry, which is so much more than just a bunch of teenagers hanging out, playing games, eating snacks and shooting Nerf darts in church on Sunday nights. For many years, REACH went on mission trips, to places where the group helped others less fortunate than they, learning and growing as a group, and in their individual lives as Christians. Over the years, lasting bonds of friendship have been formed between many of these youth.

Rob & Laura, you are an inspiration.  
*Thank You!!*

SOMETHING  
OLD,

Something New

Use scrap paper to fuel  
new growth and make a gift  
that keeps on giving.

### What you need:

- Scrap paper
- Water
- Herb or flower seeds
- Blender
- Strainer
- Cookie sheet
- Towel
- Adult help



### What you do:

1. Tear the scrap paper into strips and place in a bowl. Cover the paper with water and let it soak overnight.
2. Pour the mixture into a blender and blend about 10 seconds.
3. Strain and squeeze the paper pulp to remove excess water. Place in a bowl.
4. Sprinkle seeds over the pulp and mix to incorporate them into the pulp.
5. Shape the pulp into a flat layer on the cookie sheet. Use a towel to soak up excess water. Allow the paper to dry completely.
6. Tear paper into shapes or fold into a card. You can plant the paper directly into soil. Water it and then watch your plants grow!





### AFLAME WITH FAITH

In the Old Testament, fire often symbolizes the presence of God's Spirit. For example, God called to Moses from a burning bush (Exodus 3:2-6) and defeated the prophets of Baal on Mount Carmel (1 Kings 18:30-39). In the New Testament, tongues of fire rested atop the believers gathered on Pentecost (Acts 2:3).

Some Christians have described a burning or current-like sensation when they encounter God. Methodism founder John Wesley said his heart was "strangely warmed" during worship. After such an encounter, people often feel compelled to share the Good News of Jesus. The flame of faith inside one believer can spark a revival of faith in others. As Charles Spurgeon said, "A burning heart will soon find for itself a flaming tongue."



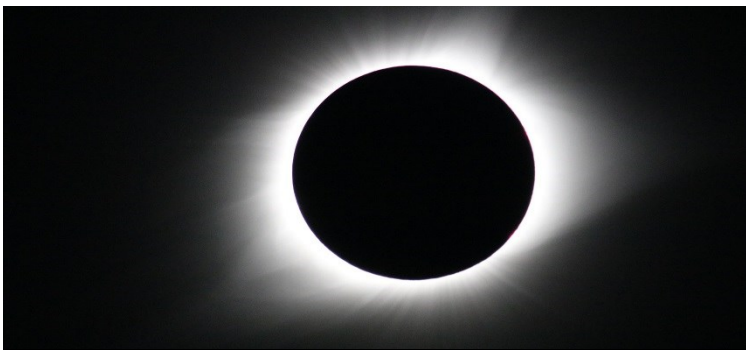
### SUPERIMPOSED LOVE

Maybe you've heard how salvation is like a total solar eclipse: God doesn't see our sins because Jesus' holiness covers them completely. Or maybe you've heard how trials can cause an "eclipse of faith."

At WorldChallenge.org, Pastor Gary Wilkerson explains that in Greek, *eclipse* means "I am absent" or "I cease to exist," because people once thought the gods temporarily extinguished the sun. "For Christians, a 'spiritual eclipse' is a dark hour when God seems to be absent from our lives," Wilkerson writes.

Wilkerson points to Peter being sifted like wheat, Elijah and Jeremiah facing extreme discouragement, and David collapsing morally. Amid Satan's attacks, "God seems completely absent," writes the pastor. "In that dark moment of eclipse, the devil has created such chaos we can't possibly see a way out." During times of testing, Christians must cry out to God and trust his faithfulness.

Completing the eclipse analogy, Wilkerson shares Titus 3:4, the "love of God our Savior appeared" (NIV). The Greek meaning of *appeared* here is *superimposed*, he writes. God looks on our fraught-filled times of eclipse and "superimposes his divine love over us."



On April 8, 2024, a total solar eclipse will cross North America, passing over Mexico, the United States, and Canada. A total solar eclipse happens when the Moon passes between the Sun and Earth, completely blocking the face of the Sun. The sky will darken as if it were dawn or dusk. Please use approved safety eyewear when viewing the eclipse.

# APR 2024

## Grace Church Prayer Calendar

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	<b>01</b>	<b>02</b>	<b>03</b>	<b>04</b>	<b>05</b>	<b>06</b>
	Pray for eyes to see our Risen Savior working in our church.	Pray for our Coffee Break ladies to serve the Risen Savior, Jesus.	Pray for those you know who don't yet believe in the Risen Jesus.	Pray for a readiness to give a reason for the hope within us.	Pray for those who struggle with doubts.	Pray for Jei as he prepares his sermon for tomorrow.
<b>07</b>	<b>08</b>	<b>09</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>
Pray for our worship service, and for good conversations at our Tables of Grace.	Pray for the joy of the Lord to be our strength.	Pray for the council meeting tonight; that they may lead with wisdom, humility and grace.	Pray for those who face challenges and adversity. May they have wisdom, patience and strength.	Pray that our church will be seen as a valuable asset in our community.	Pray for those who will attend the Ladies' Craft night.	Pray for our worship service tomorrow. Pray for those who sing, pray and read.
<b>14</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>
Praise God for our worship, and for all of our volunteers!	Praise God for volunteers who work with and care for the children.	Praise God for our Coffee Break leaders and kitchen helpers.	Praise God for those who work behind the scenes caring for those who are homebound.	Praise God for those who show hospitality while greeting and serving refreshments	Praise God for the tech team who make sure the Word is heard clearly.	Praise God for the praise team. Pray for Jei as he prepares his sermon for tomorrow.
<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>
Praise God for our worship. May we give God all of the glory today.	Pray that you will never be ashamed of the gospel. Pray for boldness in your witness.	Pray that all Christians will be united in their witness and love of God.	Pray for our church to be filled with courage to trust God's will.	Pray you will forgive others for past sins. Pray for restored relationships.	Pray that God will increase giving to our church. Pray that we will be faithful stewards.	Pray for our worship tomorrow and for the children's ministry.
<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>				
Pray that our hearts will be open to God's Word. Pray for REACH Youth group.	Pray for God's joy to be evident in our lives.	Pray for us to love one another and have the same humble attitude as Christ.				



## OPEN HANDS



Liturgical scholar Balthasar Fischer (1912-2001) shared an “a-ha” realization about the significance of praying with open, outstretched hands, an ancient practice. The opposite gesture, a closed fist, is used to threaten others or even inflict violence. We also grasp things in closed fists, refusing to let go, to share, to hold gently or loosely.

When we pray with open hands, Fischer explained, we’re saying before God that we renounce “all highhandedness, all pride in [our] own sufficiency, all violence.” We hold up our empty hands to God, saying, “I have nothing that I have not received from you, nothing that you have not placed in my empty hands. Therefore I do not keep a frantic hold on anything you have given me; therefore, too, I desire not to strike and hurt but only to give and to spread happiness and joy.”

## YOU ARE MY WITNESSES

John White (1924-2002) was a medical missionary, psychiatry professor, church planter and prolific author who wrote about faith and outreach. He refuted the notion that being an effective witness for Christ is akin to being a salesperson. Christians are representing and sharing a person, he said, not touting a product.

“A good witness is like a signpost,” he added. “It doesn’t matter whether it is old, young, pretty, ugly. It has to point the right direction and be able to be understood. We are witnesses to Christ; we point to him.”



Jesus’ ascension into heaven shortly after his resurrection was “one of God’s most audacious ploys,” according to Pastor Frank Ramirez. “Jesus, resurrected, is Master of space and time, yet he passes on the work of spreading the Good News to his imperfect disciples, who ultimately pass it on to us (who are also imperfect disciples).”



By contrast, most Old Testament patriarchs often stayed on the throne until they died. Many of them could have benefited from a timely “exit strategy,” Ramirez notes.

“As a child, I always felt that the world would have been a better place if the resurrected Lord had just taken over everything,” Ramirez continues. “But though Jesus is active with us (‘For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them’ — Matthew 18:20, NRSV), we’re part of the first team now.”

## TABLES OF GRACE

Tables of Grace are a means for the people of Grace to provide care for one another. Each group will be assigned a homebound person or two to also care for. Each group has a facilitator (**bold and marked with \***) The groups will meet together during the Fellowship Time on communion Sundays in order to catch up with one another; sharing how God is blessing them with joys, and how we might pray for one another. Group facilitators can introduce other means of care and staying in contact as they develop. The facilitators will stay in touch with Eleanor Lamsma, the leader of the Care Team, informing her of any special needs.

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### Group #1

**\*Ed** and Diane **Ritzema**

Bob Cooper

Hank and Carol De Vries

Rich Boersma

Jim and Gloria Kamper

Warren and Ruth Kuipers

Rich and Marilyn Vanden Bout

George Voss

- Lynne Wiegers
- Evelyn VanDellen

### Group #2

**\*Sue Weidenaar**

Karen Buikema

Carol Bruinius

Lois Huizenga

Joyce Jones

Mert Schutt

Pat Schuurman

Catherine Solle

Udom and Bounnak Insixiengmay

- Yvonne Deckinga

### Group #3

**\*Carol Den Besten**

Bill and Phyllis Johnson

Pam Johnson

Nancy DeRoos

Evelyn Luchtenburg

Jim and Barb Wassenaar

Rich and Bonnie Mulder

- Jeannette Veen
- Ismail family

### Group #4

**\*Jestine Ivy**

Theresa Dybala

Eleanor Lamsma

Patricia Schroader

Jean Kok

Barb Fallon

Jennifer Basso

Martha Limon

- Helena Creaney

### Group #5

Gary and **\*Joan Schutt**

Tom and Darlene Huisenga

Cindie Rymek

Jack Jerozal

Ray and Mary LeWan

Ann O' Connor

Dave and Joyce Phillips

Ken and Carol Schutt

- Alyce DeBoer
- Thaymer Jonker

### Group #6

**\*David** and Kaitlyn **Van Kuiken** family

Brian Kamper

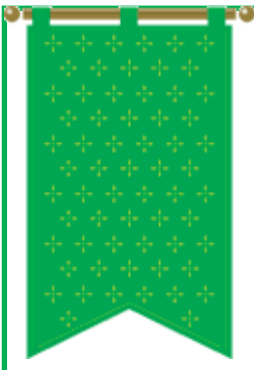
Pedro and Maria Kialanda family

Rob and Laura Soucek family

Sean and Sarah Sullivan family

Chris and Anna Van Kuiken

- Helen Noort



**Christian Symbol for May: GREEN** — Green is the traditional liturgical color for the weeks after Pentecost (as well as the season of Epiphany). The Pentecost season largely overlaps with spring and summer, which is fitting because green symbolizes growth: growth of plant life and crops, and growth of the church in discipleship and faith.



Join the Email Prayer Chain!  
**Contact Gloria at: [gloriakamper83@yahoo.com](mailto:gloriakamper83@yahoo.com)**



Can't you guys at least **PRETEND** that you're planning to stay awake?



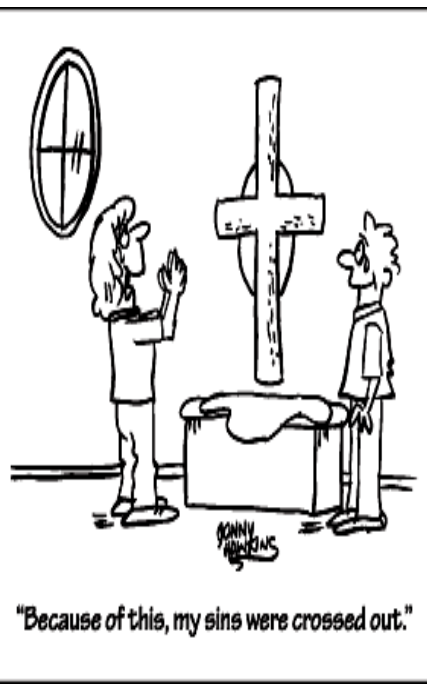
• Coffee Time •  
 friends and talk  
 ≈ ☕ ≈  
**SUNDAYS AFTER THE SERVICE**



**FROM THE EDITOR:**  
 Do you have a story you've read or seen that has affected your life in a positive way?  
 Or maybe you've had a "God" moment in your life that impacted you and your spiritual journey? When something happened that can only be explained as having come from God?  
 How about a great recipe that others may like?  
 We'd love to be able to share these stories and recipes in our newsletter.  
 Submit your one page story for the newsletter by placing it in the newsletter box on the wall outside the office. Or email it to the church at: [gracechurch@gccrc.org](mailto:gracechurch@gccrc.org). Articles/stories may be edited.  
 All articles/recipes must include your name. If the article was published in a magazine or any other way, you must include your name, the copy of the article, and permission from the source to publish, to be considered for the newsletter!



- DATES TO REMEMBER**
- APRIL**
- 1 April Fools Day
  - 16 Good Deeds Day
  - 18 National Exercise Day
  - 22 Earth Day
- MAY**
- 2 National Day of Prayer
  - 9 Ascension Day
  - 12 Mother's Day
  - 18 Armed Forces Day
  - 19 Pentecost
  - 26 Trinity Sunday
  - 27 Memorial Day



"Because of this, my sins were crossed out."

# APRIL Schedules



## GREETERS

Apr 7	Warren & Ruth Kuipers
Apr 14	George Voss & Evelyn Luchtenburg
Apr 21	Patricia Schroader & Theresa Dybala
Apr 28	Tom & Darlene Huisenga

## CHILDCARE

Apr 7	Joyce Phillips
Apr 14	Maria Kialanda
Apr 21	Hannah Soucek
Apr 28	Joyce Phillips

## PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Apr 7	Bob Cooper
Apr 14	Diane Ritzema
Apr 21	Ed Ritzema
Apr 28	Eleanor Lamsma

## TECH SCHEDULE

	Projection	Sound
Apr 7	Dave Phillips	Ed Ritzema
Apr 14	Ed Ritzema	Chris Van Kuiken
Apr 21	Aiden Soucek	Pedro Kialanda
Apr 28	Dave Phillips	Chris Van Kuiken

## ACCOMPANISTS

Apr 7	Bob / Diane
Apr 14	Diane / Pedro
Apr 21	Diane
Apr 28	Pedro

## PRAYER ROOM

Apr 7	Diane Ritzema Tom Huisenga
Apr 14	Eleanor Lamsma Jestine Ivy
Apr 21	Bob Cooper Theresa Dybala
Apr 28	Maria Kialanda Tom Huisenga

**VOLUNTEERS PLEASE NOTE:**  
**ALWAYS USE THE LATEST SCHEDULE**  
**YOU HAVE RECEIVED.**

**IT MAY HAVE BEEN UPDATED**  
**FROM WHAT IS POSTED HERE.**

# HOME COOKING

## CHICKEN ENCHILADA CASSEROLE

Submitted by Barb Wassenaar

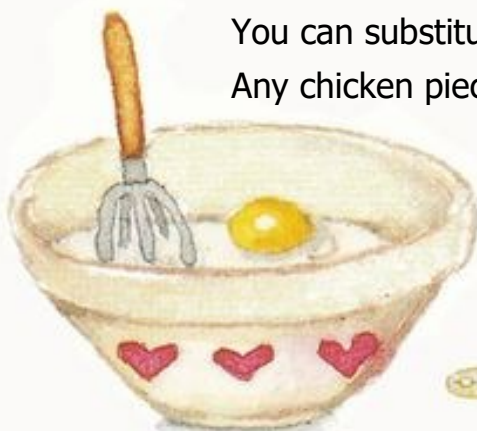
- |                                               |                                 |
|-----------------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1 (15 oz.) can tomato sauce                   | 1/4 cup water                   |
| 1 envelope taco seasoning mix                 | 1 1/2 Tbsp. chili powder        |
| 1 Tbsp. vegetable oil                         | 1 lb. chicken tenderloins       |
| 1 (15 oz.) can black beans                    | 1/4 cup cream cheese            |
| 1 cup shredded Mexican blend cheese (or more) | 1 (7.5 oz.) pkg. corn bread mix |
| 1 egg                                         | 1/3 cup milk                    |

Heat oven to 375° and grease a 9x9 baking pan.

1. In a saucepan, mix together tomato sauce, water, taco mix, and chili powder. Bring to a simmer over medium heat.
2. Heat vegetable oil in a skillet over medium heat and brown the chicken on both sides, about 5 minutes per side. Pour tomato sauce mixture over the chicken, bring to a simmer, and cook over medium-low heat until the chicken is no longer pink inside, about 8 minutes. Transfer chicken to a bowl and shred; return shredded chicken to the sauce. Mix in black beans and cream cheese until thoroughly combined.
3. Pour chicken mixture into the prepared baking pan and top with the shredded Mexican cheese. Whisk the corn bread mix, egg, and milk in a bowl, and spoon the batter over the chicken mixture.
4. Bake in the preheated oven until the casserole is bubbling and the corn bread topping is browned and set, about 30 minutes.

### NOTES:

You can substitute a box of gluten free corn bread mix.  
Any chicken pieces will work, boneless will cook faster.



# HOME COOKING

## AMISH SALISBURY STEAK

Submitted by Barb Wassenaar

- |                                         |                            |
|-----------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1 lb. ground beef                       | 1 cup milk                 |
| 1 cup crushed saltine crackers          | 1 onion, finely chopped )  |
| 1 tsp. salt                             | 1 tsp. ground black pepper |
| 1 (14.5 oz.) can cream of mushroom soup |                            |

Heat oven to 350°F

1. Mix ground beef, milk, crackers, onion, salt, and black pepper in a bowl. Shape the mixture into a narrow loaf and place onto a baking sheet. Cover and refrigerate for 8 hours or overnight.
2. Heat a large skillet over medium-high heat. Cut the loaf into 1 inch thick slices and sear in the hot skillet until browned, 2-3 minutes per side. The inside will still be pink. Arrange the slices in a roasting pan.
3. Spread the mushroom soup over the steaks.
4. Bake the steaks until the mushroom soup is bubbling and meat is no longer pink inside, about 1 hour. Steaks should be 160°F.
5. Bake in the preheated oven until the casserole is bubbling and the corn bread topping is browned and set, about 30 minutes.

### NOTES:

Add additional mushrooms and onion slices to the gravy for a richer, heartier gravy.

Substitute French Onion soup for the mushroom soup, then skip the tsp. of salt.

Steaks can be frozen after searing. Thaw and add them to a roasting pan, then continue the recipe starting with step #3.





# EASTER

How many different words can you make using these letters?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Make your own design on these eggs. Then color them!



## DID YOU KNOW?

Eggs are a sign of new life, just like our new life in Christ!



# JESUS IS LORD!



# HAPPY EASTER!

You can have new life too! Use the alphabet code and your Bible to solve the puzzle and find out how.

"IF YOU           WITH YOUR

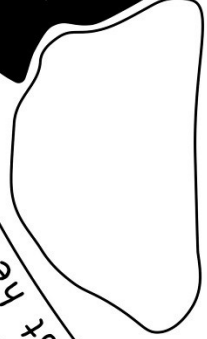
MOUTH THAT           IS LORD AND BELIEVE IN

YOUR           THAT GOD RAISED HIM FROM THE

DEAD, YOU WILL BE          ."

ROMANS 10:9, ESV

## HE IS RISEN!



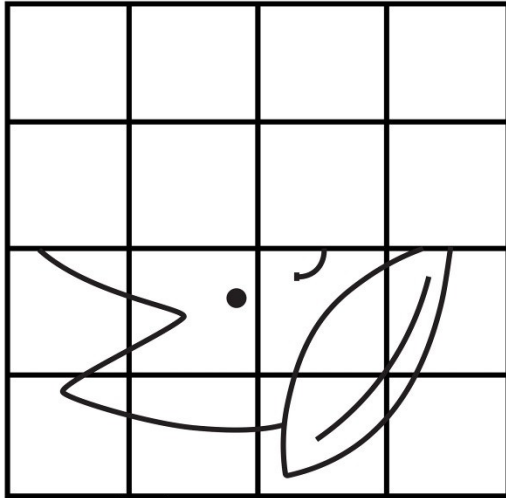
Matthew 28:6

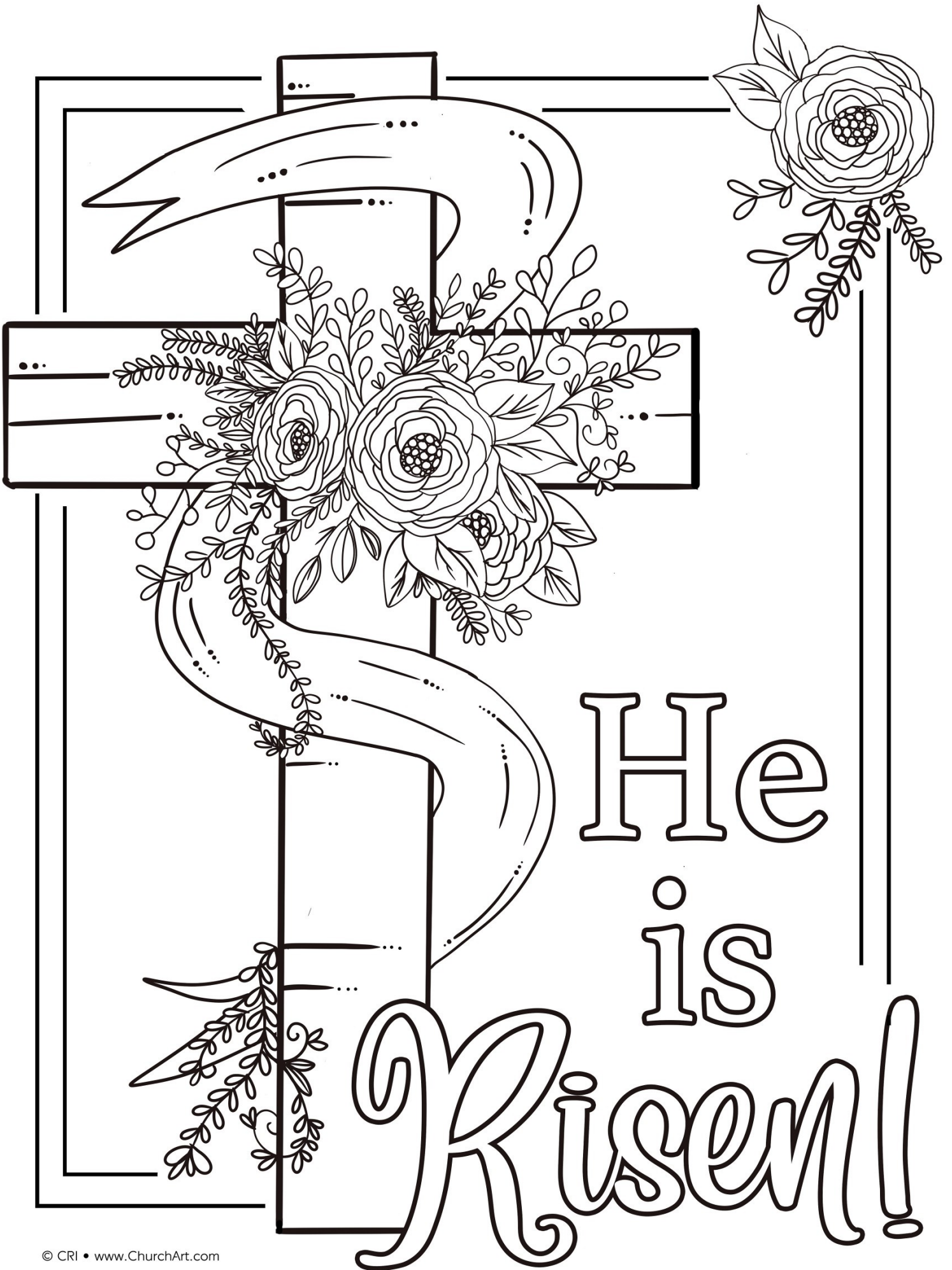
Can you find 9 other symbols of new life on this page? Circle each one, then color them!



He is not here, for...

Use the grid to draw the other side!

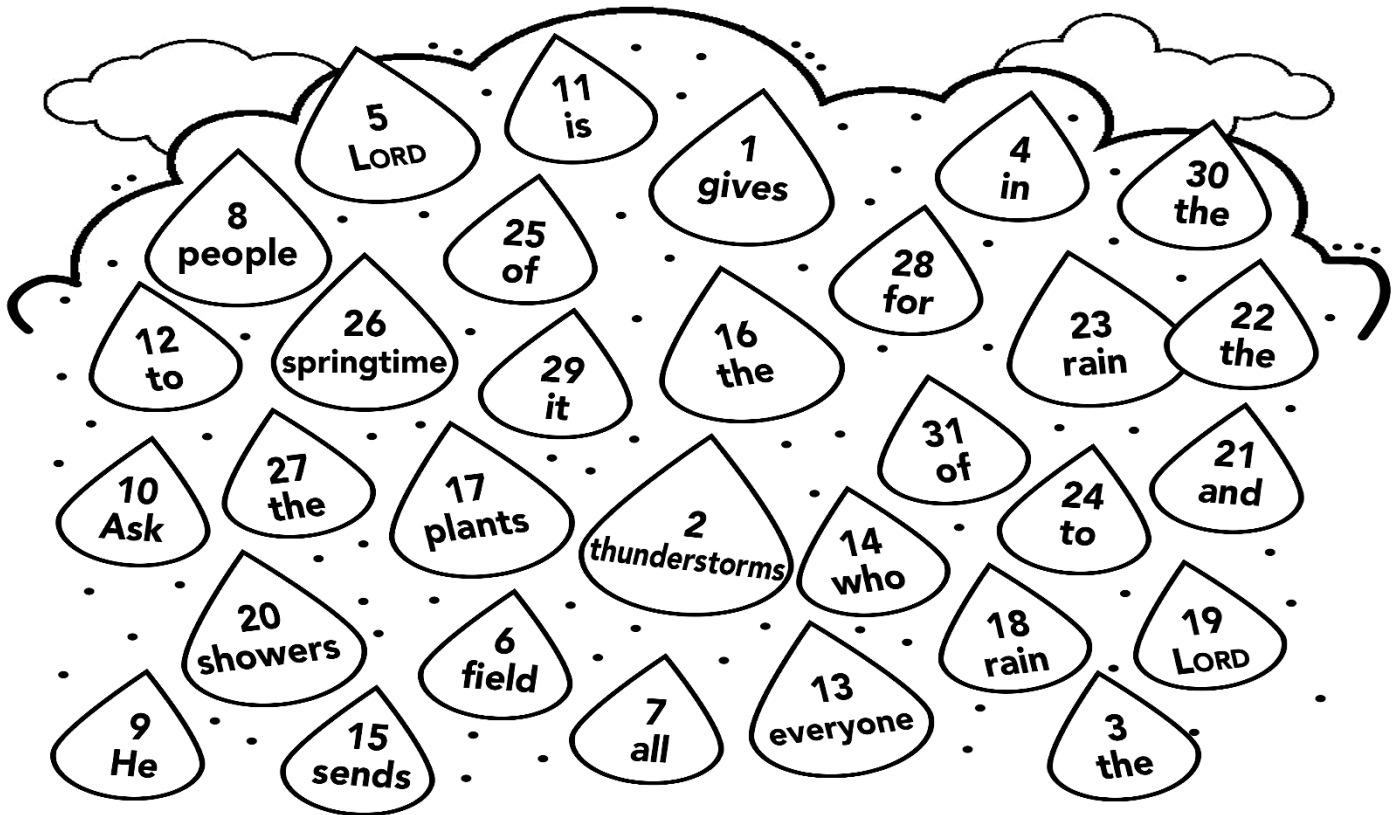






# Puzzle!

Complete a Bible verse about spring by writing the word from each raindrop on the correct numbered line below.



\_\_\_\_\_ 10      \_\_\_\_\_ 16      \_\_\_\_\_ 5      \_\_\_\_\_ 28      \_\_\_\_\_ 18

\_\_\_\_\_ 4      \_\_\_\_\_ 22      \_\_\_\_\_ 26 ;

\_\_\_\_\_ 29      \_\_\_\_\_ 11      \_\_\_\_\_ 3      \_\_\_\_\_ 19      \_\_\_\_\_ 14      \_\_\_\_\_ 15

\_\_\_\_\_ 27      \_\_\_\_\_ 2

\_\_\_\_\_ 9      \_\_\_\_\_ 1      \_\_\_\_\_ 20      \_\_\_\_\_ 31

\_\_\_\_\_ 12      \_\_\_\_\_ 7      \_\_\_\_\_ 8      \_\_\_\_\_ 21      \_\_\_\_\_ 17      \_\_\_\_\_ 25

\_\_\_\_\_ 30      \_\_\_\_\_ 6      \_\_\_\_\_ 24      \_\_\_\_\_ 13

Zechariah 10:1, NIV

Answer: Ask the Lord for rain in the springtime; it is the Lord who sends the thunderstorms. He gives showers of rain to all people, and plants of the field to everyone. Zechariah 10:1, NIV



HAPPY  
MOTHER'S  
DAY

# PUZZLE



## PLANT, WATER, GROW

Building a faith community takes work. How did the church in Corinth come to be?

*Directions: Use the code to fill in the words and complete a teaching of the apostle Paul.*

### KEY



= God



= seed



= planted



= watered



= grow



= one



= anything



= only

I \_\_\_\_\_ the \_\_\_\_\_, Apollos \_\_\_\_\_ it,



but \_\_\_\_\_ has been making it \_\_\_\_\_.



So neither the \_\_\_\_\_ who plants nor the



\_\_\_\_\_ who waters is \_\_\_\_\_,



but \_\_\_\_\_, who makes things \_\_\_\_\_.



1 Corinthians 3:6-7, NIV



# PUZZLE



## UNFADING BEAUTY

Peter says beauty shouldn't come from outward adornment.  
How does a godly woman adorn herself on the inside?

*Directions: From each list, write the word that doesn't belong.  
Then insert the circled letters in order below to complete 1 Peter 3:4, NIV.*

flower, stem, bee, leaf

—○—

pink, red, yellow, blue

—○—

mother, sister, brother, aunt

—○—

purple, dress, skirt, blouse

—○—

necklace, ring, bracelet, braid

—○—

diamond, emerald, heart, ruby

—○—

orange, cherry, potato, kiwi

—○—

my, our, she, your

—○—

faith, family, love, hope

—○—

sunny, rainy, snowy, temperature

—○—

cookie, cake, pie, sandwich

—○—

silver, white, gold, bronze

—○—

“Rather, it should be that of your inner self,  
the unfading beauty of a g \_\_\_\_\_  
and qu \_\_\_\_\_ p \_\_\_\_\_, which is  
of great worth in God’s sight.” 1 Peter 3:4, NIV

**GRACE  
COMMUNITY  
CHRISTIAN  
REFORMED  
CHURCH**

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**This newsletter is a publication of Grace Community Church. Contributions to the newsletter are welcome and will be considered for publication provided they are one page and are within the guidelines and tone of this newsletter.**

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**Contributions for the  
JUNE/JULY 2024 issue  
are due no later than  
May 18, 2024.**

**Grace Community  
Church**

Called to be a community of externally focused people who foster authentic, grace filled relationships.



**Our Values**

**Care** is expressed in being open and accepting, in being non-judgmental and respectful, and in welcoming people from diverse backgrounds and experiences. We continue to learn to be authentic in our caring by being honest about the ways our brokenness takes shape. In humility, we treat others with respect and integrity, as we would want to be treated.

**Compounding** recognizes that God's grace is fruitful; it brings deep change and growth in our life. As we follow Jesus, God multiplies our efforts into something more than we can ask or imagine. God multiplies our efforts of acceptance and care for people outside our circles of relationships. We will be enriched by others because we can see God at work in them.

**Cultivating** is the act of building others up, encouraging each other to share God's gifts. Each person matters. We are not passive. We foster personal responsibility for spiritual growth. In our worship and life together, members are welcomed to participate freely. Filled with the Spirit, we all grow as participants share what God is doing in their life.

**Connecting** to God through Scripture and prayer. We want to see clearly what God is saying to us in the Bible, enabling us to live freely for God. In worship, we connect our story with God's story. We respond to God in ways that show how the truth of the Bible fits into our life. We pray together, believing that all growth is the result of God's work.

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