

Grace United Church of Christ



April 21, 2024

Fourth Sunday of Easter

Today's Theme:

Of Flocks and Shepherds

Celebrant: Rev. Sheresa Simpson-Rice

WE GATHER

*During this Easter worship, we encourage you to know and to remember that this is a **Quiet Meditative Space**, that this is a **Safe and Loving Place, a Sanctuary**, for worship, praise and reflection; and to remember that **'No Matter Who You Are or Where You Are on Life's Journey, You are Welcome Here!***

Prelude - My Shepherd Is the Living God - arr. Dale Wood

Welcome

Preparing Our Hearts

Ringling of the Bell

Introit - Guide My Feet - African-American Spiritual, arr. Joyce Johnson

***Call to Worship**

Leader: In Christ Alone our hope is found. You are our light, our strength and our song.

ALL: You lead us in green pastures, beside still waters, and restore our souls.

Leader: We are grateful for Your sacrifice, which brings us life and gathers us into your fold.

ALL: For you are with us, Your rod and Your staff, they comfort us.

Leader: Let us worship the One who bore our sins on the cross, securing our salvation and offering us new life.

All: Alleluah! Alleluah! Alleluah!

ALL: Amen

Gathering Prayer

Leader: Loving God, we gather here in the name of Your Beloved, who is our one true Savior. Open our hearts to fully embrace the grace You have offered us, and let our worship today be a reflection of our gratitude and love for You. Guide us in fellowship and in worship, that we might grow closer to You and to one another in the bond of Your spirit.

ALL: Amen

*** Opening Hymn** “My Shepherd Is the Living God” NCH 247

1 My shepherd is the living God,
I therefore nothing need;
In pastures fair, near pleasant streams
you settle me to feed.
You bring my wandering spirit back
when I forsake your ways,
And lead me for your mercy's sake
in paths of truth and grace.

2 When I walk through the shades of death,
your presence is my stay;
A word of your supporting breath
drives all my fears away.
Your hand, in sight of all my foes,
does still my table spread;
My cup with blessings overflows,
your oil anoints my head.

3 The sure provisions of my God
attend me all my days;
O may your house be my abode,
and all my work be praise.
There would I find a settled rest,
while others come and go -
No more a stranger or a guest,
but like a child at home.

*** Passing of the Peace**

We Listen

Epistle Lesson: Acts 4:5-12

Introduction: In this passage, Peter and John face interrogation by the religious leaders in Jerusalem after healing a crippled man and sharing the power of the risen Christ with the stunned crowd. Listen to a reading from the Book of the Acts of the Apostles.

Gospel: John 10:11-18

Introduction: In Acts, Peter and John were only doing what they had seen Jesus do before them. In this gospel passage, we hear Jesus' own testimony to authorities who question His miracles. He offers a metaphor that underscores the intimate and protective relationship Jesus offers to those who follow Him. Hear now the Gospel of John.

Children's Moment

Anthem - I Am His Lamb - text, J. Paul Williams; music, Lloyd Larson

Sermon: *Of Flocks and Shepherds* (Rev. Sheresa Simpson-Rice)

We Respond

Pastoral Prayer

Offering - The King of Love My Shepherd Is - arr. Wilbur Held

***Doxology** (music #780, text #778)

Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise God, all creatures here below;
Praise God for all that love has done;
Creator, Christ, and Spirit, One. Amen

Prayer of Dedication

Pastor: Let us present with joy our offerings of commitment and support for the work of Grace Church;

ALL: Let us bless the offerings on this altar for the good they will do in this church and the world around us. Amen.

The Lord's Prayer (in unison)

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, the power, and the glory forever. Amen.

We Are Sent

Announcements

Closing Prayer (In Unison)

Gracious and Loving Spirit, as we prepare to leave this sacred space, we carry with us the profound truths we have celebrated here today. Thank You for the gift of salvation through Your boundless love and the sacrifice of Your Beloved. Strengthen us, we pray, to be bearers of this good news, living out Your love in action and words. Guide our steps in peace, inspire our hearts with courage, and keep us steadfast in faith until we gather again. Amen.

*Closing Hymn "How Firm a Foundation" NCH 407

1 How firm a foundation for you has been laid,
by God in the Word, in the sacrifice paid!
What more can God say than to you has been said,
to you, who for refuge to Jesus have fled?

2 "Fear not, I am with you, oh, be not dismayed,
for I am your God, and will still give you aid;
I'll strengthen you, help you, and cause you to stand
upheld by my gracious, omnipotent hand."

3 "When through the deep waters I call you to go,
the rivers of woe shall not over you flow;
For I will be with you, your troubles to bless,
delivering you from your deepest distress."

4 "When through fiery trials your pathway shall lie,
my grace all-sufficient shall be your supply;
the flame shall not hurt you; for I have designed
your soul to make pure just as gold is refined."

5 "The soul that on Jesus has leaned for repose
I will not, I will not desert to its foes;
That soul, though all hell should endeavor to shake,
I'll never, no never, no never forsake!"

Pastoral Blessing for the Journey

Choral Benediction - Savior, like a Shepherd Lead Us - text, Dorothy Thrupp; music, William Bradbury

Postlude - Processional on "Thine Is the Glory" - David Lasky

~ The Postlude is still part of our worship; we invite you to sit and reflect as we prepare to depart. ~

THIS WEEK AT GRACE UCC:

Sunday 4/21:	11:00 AM - Worship Service –Fourth Sunday of Easter
Mondays:	7:00 PM - 9:00 PM Nar-Anon Meeting
Monday - Saturday:	12:00 PM - 1:00 PM NA Meeting
Mondays + Wednesdays:	7:30 PM - 9:30 PM AA Meeting
Wednesday 4/24:	7:00 PM - Book Club (zoom)
Wednesday 4/24:	7:00 PM - Pat Hanberry Voices Book Club in Room 3
Thursday 4/25:	7:00 PM—NA (Woman and Children Meeting)
Sunday 4/28:	11:00 AM– Worship Service– Fifth Sunday of Easter

REFUGEE WELCOMING COMMITTEE

In 2024 Grace Church is starting a team to help a refugee family, under the guidance of the Refugee Welcoming Coalition of Frederick (<https://www.rwcfrederick.org/>). The RWC is an alliance of faith communities, civic organizations, and individual volunteers founded in 2021 in recognition of the influx of refugee families who need help establishing themselves in our area. Assistance indeed includes transportation, furnishing household items, and assistance with bureaucracies like school enrollment and health services.

Interested in making a difference? Contact Michael Davies (fluidmosaic@gmail.com) and Missy Moxley.

Until we form our team, you can make donations!

- Certain items are on their Amazon wishlist, for shipping directly to the RWC:
<https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/8F1P1KKUOUZH>

- If you wish to donate furniture, or supplies that are in urgent need (shower curtains and bathmats; pillows, sheets and blankets; and almost any type of kitchen supply): please email us at info@rwcfrederick.org to arrange pickup

- To donate cash, you may send a check to **AACF: 45 E. All Saints St., Frederick, MD 21701**, with a note on the memo line that the funds are for RWC.

- Alternatively, you can donate through PayPal on their website,
- <https://rwc frederick.org>.

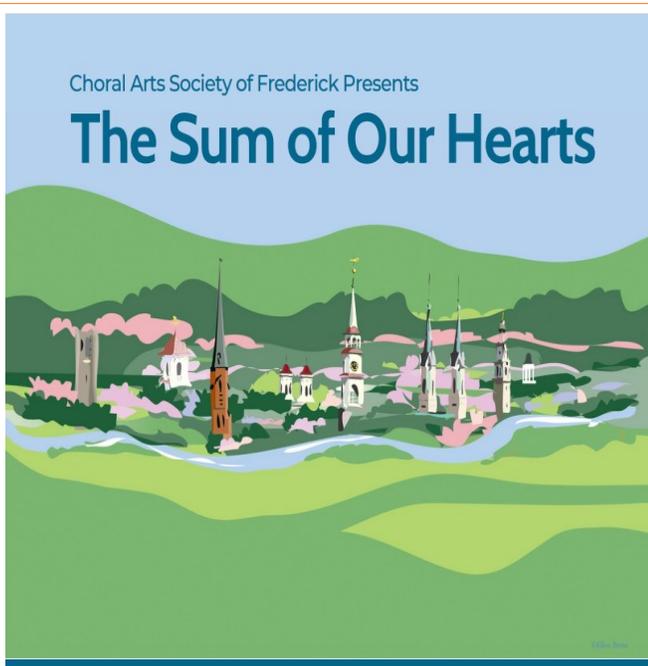
Important Announcement !

May 12th– Join us for Mother’s Day with Hot dogs & Ice Cream. We want to Welcome Rev Chance. Sign up sheet for Deserts!

June 16th- Join us for Father’s Day with Hot Dogs & Ice Cream

July 14th– Church Picnic at Mt Tabor in Rocky Ridge, MD. Service at 11am, Lunch will follow.

Save the date for NYC Day Trip on December 11th. Leave Frederick at 6am & return at Midnight. Price: \$80 per person. Seating Limited. Contact: Tonyhemler0@gmail.com or Tricia at admin@grucc.com



May 10 | 7:30 p.m.

May 11 | 3 p.m.

Jack B Kussmaul Theater at FCC
casof.org/tickets



Across 80 seasons, the hearts of many have been touched. Join us for a concert that we hope will truly represent something greater than the sum of our individual parts: the sum of our hearts, conveyed to yours through the power of song as only music can do.

Wesleyan Hymn Festival

Oh, For a Thousand Tongues to Sing!
Sunday, May 19, 2024
5:00 p.m.

Calvary United Methodist Church
131 West 2nd Street
Downtown Frederick
Free and Open to the Public

This collaborative hymn festival will feature Massed Choir and Massed Bell Choir with singers and ringers from numerous Frederick Downtown Churches. All hymns will be accompanied by the newly installed Calvary UMC Pipe Organ

A Free Will Offering will be collected for Literacy Council of Frederick County



Grace United Church of Christ

An Open and Affirming Congregation

25 East 2nd Street, Frederick, Maryland, 21701

301-662-3312 ~ Office Hours: 9AM-2PM/M-F

Admin@grucc.com ~ www.grucc.com

Celebrant: Rev. Sheresa Simpson- Rice

Director of Music: Nathan Strite

Music@grucc.com

Bell Choir Director: James Taylor

Bells@grucc.com

Children & Youth Ministry: Amy Duray

worshipgraceucc@gmail.com

Nursery Attendant: Joan Princler

Joan.dancer@comcast.net

Custodian: Hunt Hughes

Admin@grucc.com

Church Admin: Patricia Baptiste

Admin@grucc.com

Choir Section Leaders: Anna Kovacsics, James Taylor, & Donald Toms

SUNDAY WORSHIP — 11:00 AM — Virtual and in person

Holy Communion is celebrated on the first Sunday of every month.

WORSHIP ASSISTANTS

Liturgist:

John Brehmer

Children's Message:

Amy Duray

Children's Church

Catherine Kern

Altar Guild:

N/A

Greeter:

John Brehmer

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OF CHRIST**

