



## Love Language

February is the month of love in our culture. In the weeks leading up to Valentine's Day, the stores are full of candy and cards and flowers ready to be delivered as expressions of friendship and affection. In other years, restaurant reservations are made long in advance for those either proposing or celebrating romantic love and marriage. This year will require more creativity.

The color is red. The shape is heart. The expression can be anything from funny to earnest. The holiday is for all ages and for all kinds of relationships. The sentiment is happiness.

Every month is the month of love in the church. Candy, cards, flowers and candlelight meals can be a sweet and tender way to ask someone to be our valentine. But those things fall far short of exhausting the range of expressions of love we are to have for one another. As brothers and sisters in Christ, we are called to abide, to live, in God's love for us and to show and share that love with others.

*"As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you; abide in my love... This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends. You are my friends if you do what I command you."* John 15:9-13.

God's love is poured out abundantly for each of us to love others. All others. Without regard to

color, shape, age, or relationship. Even our enemies. This is the path of true joy.



### Looking Ahead

#### Events May Be Postponed or Moved Online or Outside

#### February

- 3 - Wednesday at Grace
- 7 - Youth Sunday
- Souper Bowl Food Drive
- 12 - Youth Valentine Parents Date Night Out
- 13 - Food Assistance Event Training
- 17 - Ash Wednesday
- 24 - Lenten Program
- 27 - Sanctuary Loop Work Day

#### March

- 3, 10, 17, 24, 31 - Lenten Program
- 14 - Teacher Appreciation Luncheon
- 21 - Quilt Sunday
- 28 - Palm Sunday
- 31 - Hops for Haiti

#### April

- 1 - Maundy Thursday
- 2 - Good Friday Vigil
- 3 - Egg Hunt

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### ***God is Love***

There are so many wonderful blessings going on at Small Blessings, from babies showing big smiles, learning to stand and walk. Toddlers helping and playing with each other while learning about themselves and each other. Learning about the color blue, the square shape and the number five. Depending on age group some are learning about animals, birds, insects, counting numbers and Australia! There is so much to love and learn about God's wonderful world.

Bible verses this month are:

1 John 3:23 "Love one another"

John 3:16 "God so Loved the world"

James 1:17 "Every good and perfect gift is from above"

Love, love, love our Small Blessings childcare mission on GCPC campus. Covid 19 gave Small Blessings some challenges this past year. But through the grace of God and many prayers God has made it good. GCPC thanks God for SBCC families and staff. They are our blessings.

### ***Ruth Circle***

On Monday, January 11, Ruth Circle met for their monthly meeting. Our ongoing Bible study is on Joshua: A Journey of Faith. We have learned about leadership, the compassionate and merciful God of Joshua, and the promised land. We learned about living securely and freely and our role in realizing God's intentions, and ways to resolve conflict.

The fifth lesson coincidentally fit very well with what is happening in our country and the world today. Reference was made to Romans 12:17-21 where we are told to live peaceably with all men and the Lord said: "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord".

Concerns on what happened at the US Capitol on January 6 were expressed.

Reference was made to Ephesians 6:10-12:

*Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his power. Put on the whole armor of God, so that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For our struggle is not against enemies of blood and flesh, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers of this present*

*darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.*

As people of faith, we asked what can we do as individuals and as a church. How do we promote peace, listen to others of differing views, agree to disagree, have honest discussion and seek the truth?

There is much to pray about. Let us continue to seek council from our loving Lord.

### ***Still Stitchin' with Grace***

Due to the pandemic the quilters have been working at their homes. When the pandemic started, Winnie Palmer asked if we would make masks for first responders. We made masks which were completed using whatever fabric we had on hand.

As you will see below the love and work that was done to give comfort to abused women and children at Harbour House and to children and teenagers with cancer at Winnie Palmer.

Quilts and pillowcases donated for 2020:

June 17 - 58 quilts donated to Harbour House

October 15 - 58 quilts (Halloween and regular prints) and 28 pillowcases to Winnie Palmer Hospital

December 16 - 65 quilts (Christmas and regular prints) and 40 pillowcases (Christmas and regular print.

Total - 181 quilts and 62 pillowcases.

Since the group started in 2004 a total of 3,127 quilts have been donated. A special thank you to those who have donated fabric and contributed cash donations and also to Outreach for their contribution to our group this year.

Thanks to our ladies on a job well done.

### ***Cooking With Grace***

Cooking With Grace is a once a month cooking group via Zoom. Pastor Melanie will be leading on February 15 at 6 p.m. She will be making a pie crust and pie. We begin promptly at 6:00. Anyone can sign up to lead, share recipes or join in the fun learning to make new dishes with friends. Sign up to receive a list of ingredients, steps to prep food in advance and the Zoom link. Email Carolyn Castagno at

[carolyn@findingnewjoys.com](mailto:carolyn@findingnewjoys.com)

**ONE CHURCH † ONE BOOK**

**JAMES**

**Has your Bible reading gone stale?  
Do you just want to dig a little more?**

Welcome the Book of James into your heart and home for the Lenten Season!

The Christian Education committee is preparing a Journey through the Book of James for Lent: including at home, zoom and on-site activities that will encourage and challenge you! Pastor Melanie will be preaching five sermons on James during Lent, helping us to learn and GROW together.

Here is a little information to get you started:

*Few New Testament writers achieve the clarity or the "punch" of James. He doesn't spend time expanding subpoints or worrying about the literary structure. As a result, the book of James reads like a collection of proverbs.*

*As leader of the headquarters church in Jerusalem, James knew how to speak with authority. You don't have to look for hidden meaning in this book. James tells you clearly how you should act. As we read together let's keep in mind the diverse audience he was addressing, which included the rich and the poor and we will also see his "asides" to specific groups.*

C S E R V A N T O F G O D  
X R D O L E P R J C W E M  
P B E P I S T L E D K T E  
E R K S R N R E S W Z A L  
A O A J U L Y L U I F C A  
C T P Y C R O P S S V O S  
E H O T I E R M K D M V U  
M E S I D N M E J O N D R  
A R T R J T G T C M H A E  
K N L I M O C A Q T L D J  
E L E P R B T R Z A I T Q  
R J P S K E P T I C G O U  
P G E C O D M I S S I O N  
H K N E E S O F C A M E L

**ADVOCATE  
APOSTLE  
BROTHER  
EPISTLE**

**JERUSALEM  
RESURRECTION  
KNEES OF CAMEL  
MISSION**

**PEACEMAKER  
JESUS  
PRAYING  
SPIRIT**

***Lenten Programs***

Kristen Stieffel will pose "Questions to Ponder" about the Book of James to "ponder" at your own pace anywhere and anytime. Each week Kristen will post questions on the church website for reflection and application for one of the five chapters of James.

Scott Porter will lead a study on "Different Ways to Study the Bible" using the Book of James as a model.

We will go over different ways to read, study, understand and apply scripture by yourself to your life. The study will be Wednesday nights 6:45-7:30 p.m. online and in person in Conway Hall Reception. Handouts will be supplied by email. Starts February 24. A practice session to test your personal technology will be offered on February 23. Call the church office for information and to register.



7:30 a.m.

***Easter Services***

April 4  
8:45 a.m.

10:45 a.m.



### **Book Club**

The GCPC Book Club selection for February is *The Giver* by Lois Lowry. The haunting story centers on twelve-year-old Jonas, who lives in a seemingly ideal, if colorless, world of conformity and contentment. Not until he is given his life assignment as the Receiver of Memory does he begin to understand the dark, complex secrets behind his fragile community. Book Club has been meeting on Zoom on the fourth Tuesday of each month so February will be the 23rd at 7:00 pm. Contact Jane Heppner for more information.

### **Parent's Night Out**

Have you made your Valentine's Day weekend plans yet? Maybe a romantic dinner out – check! Present – check! Time with your significant other – check! Babysitter – *OOPS!* Let the Youth Dept. help you! We will once again have our annual **Parents Night Out fundraiser**, Friday, Feb. 12 from 5pm-9pm. We will watch your children while you go out for a romantic

evening for a donation + \$5 for pizzas. Use us as an outreach for your friends. All monies raised go to help offset costs for our summer conferences at Montreat, which cost each student over \$800 to attend. To sign-up, contact Mike at: [mike@grace.to](mailto:mike@grace.to) or (407) 898-6571.

### **ROOTED Youth Group News**

On Saturday, Feb. 13<sup>th</sup> at 10am-2pm, we'll be helping our Outreach Committee by going to the Good Samaritan Outreach Food Drop located at 900 E. Lancaster St., Suite #6. And on Saturday, Feb. 27<sup>th</sup> with time TBA, Buildings and Grounds needs help digging holes and planting shrubbery. (Monty Python anyone?)

**ROOTED** meets Feb. 21<sup>st</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> from 5:15-7pm. We'll have dinner, games, music, prayers, announcements, and a lesson. Bring your friendz!!! For more details on our events and other news, friend us on Facebook: Grace Covenant PC Youth, and on Instagram: @rootedgcpc



Please contact the church office if you would like a copy of the birthday and anniversary list.

### **Sanctuary Loop Work Day**

Mark your calendar for Saturday, February 27th.

Join Building & Grounds and the Boy Scouts as we work together to complete the landscaping of the sanctuary loop. If you have a green thumb or just want to help beautify the church for Easter, we will be glad to have you!

### **New Address**

Emma Lou Marquis

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Please submit articles to [churchoffice@grace.to](mailto:churchoffice@grace.to)  
**Next Deadline - February 15**

## **Session Summary**

January 2021

Session welcomed new elders for the class of 2023 who joined in taking up the recommendations of committees of the church and other business including:

Approval of the annual statistical report of the congregation for filing with the PCUSA.

Receipt of the annual report of the committees of the church to be presented at the annual congregational meeting on January 31.

Receipt of the slate of nominations from the Officer Nominating Committee 2020 for the members of the Officer Nomination committee for 2021, the officers of the corporation for 2021, and the trustees of the foundation.

Approval of the terms of contract of the interim pastor.

Receipt of the financial reports of the congregation reflecting the continued generosity of the members of the congregation in support of the ministries of the church.

Removed with sadness Verna Eckholm and Birnie Greer as members due to their recent deaths.



### ***Are you a new church officer?***

Or a church leader who would just like to learn more in order to better serve your congregation? Or a Presby-Nerd who just loves to delve deeply into all things Presbyterian? If you answered "Yes" to any of these questions, COLE is a great training opportunity for you. It's being held via Zoom on Saturday, February 20th. The registration packet with information on all the workshops is available on our [CFP Website](#). [On-line registration](#) is open until Friday, February 12th.

## **Help Feed the Hungry**

The Outreach Committee is planning to organize a food distribution event at our church in cooperation with Second Harvest Food Bank and the Good Samaritan Outreach Center. In order to be qualified to do such an event, we need to assist at one of their scheduled events to learn how the process works and to demonstrate our commitment. We need volunteers to help on Saturday February 13 from 10 AM to 2:30 PM. There are various tasks to be done, some of which are not strenuous. The event will take place at the Good Samaritan Outreach Center at 900 East Lancaster Rd, Suite 6. If we are able to sponsor our own event it probably would take place in March. Please contact the church office as soon as possible to sign up for February 13. Thank you!

## **The Scholarship Committee**

The Grace Covenant Scholarship Fund helps meet the financial needs of our college students. This is especially needed during this time of the pandemic. The fund is not part of the church budget but relies solely on contributions from individual members, Sunday School classes, Presbyterian Women, Circles and other groups within the church. Our PW Handbag Bingo fundraiser had to be cancelled last year and may not be possible this year. Perhaps we can schedule a virtual fundraiser. But, in the meantime, if you would like to make a personal donation to the fund, make checks payable to the church and indicate "Scholarship Fund" on the memo line or place cash in an envelope labeled Scholarship Fund. Thank you for helping our youth meet their educational goals!

## **Pastor Nominating Committee Report**

The Ministry Information Form for the church has been approved by Presbytery and posted online where it will be matched with pastors seeking a call to a church. Keep praying for the members of our hard working PNC.

Robert Taylor, PNC Chair, Danielle Alchin, Brian Gallagher, Maxine Gokee, Gary Munson, Scott Porter, Laura Regier, Joe Waddell

**February 2021**

Non-Profit Organization  
U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
Permit No. 3597  
Orlando, FL

**GRACE COVENANT  
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**

Return Service Requested

**Sunday Worship**

8:45  
10:45 a.m.  
Online

**Office Hours**

Monday–Thursday: 8:30 a.m.–3 p.m.  
Friday: 8:30 a.m.–noon

1655 Peel Ave., Orlando, FL 32806  
Phone: 407.898.6571  
E-mail: [churchoffice@grace.to](mailto:churchoffice@grace.to)  
**WWW.GRACE.TO**

To:



***Ash Wednesday 2021***

Ash Wednesday Service  
Feb. 17 at 6:45 p.m.  
Sanctuary

"Ashes to Go"  
Feb. 17 from 7:00-10:00 a.m.  
Sanctuary Drop Off

Commuters, neighbors, Small Blessing parents, Meals on Wheels and Share the Care drivers and others can pull in for the imposition of ashes as they start their day. Church members who are unable to attend the evening service are also welcome to come in the morning.

Please continue to support the work of the church by mailing your tithes and offerings to the church or by making a donation through the church website. Go to the "Online Giving" page at [www.grace.to](http://www.grace.to) and click on the "Give Now" button.